



# Eagle County

2020 Legislative Policy Statement





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# OVERVIEW

Eagle County's Legislative Policy Statement identifies the county's key policy principles on legislative issues. The county will utilize the Legislative Policy Statement as a guiding document when reviewing and analyzing specific bills that impact Eagle County interests.

The policy statements included in this document are necessarily broad and by no means all-inclusive. Eagle County will take Official County Positions on a limited number of significant bills. Official County Positions are not automatically assumed on bills simply because they are congruent with the policy statements contained in this document. The Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) has discretion in determining Official County Positions.

Additionally, as a member of the legislative advocacy groups [Counties & Commissioners Acting Together](#), [Colorado Counties Inc.](#), and [Colorado Communities for Climate Action](#), the BoCC helped to formulate the 2020 policy agendas of these three organizations. Eagle County is aligned with these agendas, and their positions are reflected in this document.

When significant legislation is identified that might warrant an Official County Position, the BoCC, other elected officials and county staff will coordinate review through the County Manager's Office. In coordination with the County Attorney's Office, the County Manager's Office will provide the BoCC with a brief summary of the substance of the legislation and, if warranted, a proposed Official County Position that is consistent with the principles of the Legislative Policy Statement. The BoCC will consider the Official County Position, and if adopted, the county will communicate the position to legislators and the public. Eagle County welcomes the opportunity to discuss the county's legislative priorities and positions. This Legislative Policy Statement provides a reference tool when considering legislation that may impact Eagle County.

# EAGLE COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN

With a mission of "Creating a better Eagle County for all," the Strategic Plan provides a roadmap as the county allocates resources, gauges progress and ensures the delivery of quality services to constituents. The strategic plan identifies underlying principles on which decisions are based, and includes goals and objectives to be achieved through 2020. The Eagle County Legislative Policy Statement is consistent with the Eagle County Strategic Plan's goals and objectives.

## Therefore, Eagle County:

- **Supports legislation that is consistent with and works towards the achievement of the County's strategic plan goals and objectives.**
- **Opposes legislation that runs counter to or prevents the achievement of the County's strategic plan goals and objectives.**



## MISSION

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Creating a better Eagle County for all.

## VISION

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Eagle County is made up of thriving communities for families and is home to a vibrant workforce, with personal health and wellness achievable for all. Our natural beauty is preserved through purposeful environmental stewardship. We are an international year-round resort destination with a diverse, resilient economy.

## VALUES

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# GOALS AND OBJECTIVES 2015 - 2020

## EAGLE COUNTY IS FINANCIALLY SOUND



- Define service levels based on available resources and community demands.
- Plan for facilities, infrastructure, staffing and maintenance within projected revenues.
- Deliver county services in the most cost effective and efficient manner possible.
- Enhance productivity and customer service through appropriate technology systems.
- Leverage county resources through grants, outside funding sources and partnerships.

## EAGLE COUNTY IS A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE FOR ALL



- Increase access to affordable health care and preventative services.
- Expand early childhood development opportunities.
- Encourage more affordable housing choices, including types and price levels.
- Become a more inclusive county welcoming to all.
- Expand services and opportunities to meet the needs of vulnerable populations.
- Expand trail connectivity.
- Complete major traffic improvement projects.
- Actively pursue code and zoning violations that affect health, safety, wildlife, and/or the environment.
- Create communities with a sense of place.
- Connect communities through a variety of transportation systems.

## EAGLE COUNTY PROTECTS THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT



- Protect surface and ground water quality and quantity.
- Protect the forest.
- Concentrate development in populated areas guided by smart growth principles.
- Preserve community buffers and open spaces.
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions in county government and our communities.
- Achieve a community waste diversion goal of 30% by 2030.

## EAGLE COUNTY PROMOTES A DIVERSE AND RESILIENT ECONOMY



- Increase the number jobs with livable wages.
- Promote business expansion, retention and attraction.
- Expand commercial air service.
- Encourage competition and cost reductions in health care.
- Encourage opportunities for businesses identified in the county economic development plan.
- Support innovators and entrepreneurs.
- Advocate to decrease congestion on I-70.
- Evaluate county policies and practices to support business development.

## EAGLE COUNTY IS A HIGH-PERFORMING ORGANIZATION



- Recruit, retain, and develop a top quality county workforce that reflects community demographics.
- Require all supervisors, managers and directors have management skills to set targets, meet goals, manage staff, and measure performance.
- Provide outstanding customer service.
- Maintain competitive compensation based upon market and performance.

- Achieve strategic goals.
- Align the county organization with the mission and vision.
- Practice the core values.
- Require a high level of expertise among supervisors, managers and directors.
- Establish a culture of continuous improvement.

# STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Early childhood education programs create safe, healthy, nurturing and stimulating environments for infants, toddlers and preschoolers. Children who have access to early childhood education are more likely to do well in school, earn higher wages, live healthier lives, and give back to their communities. The first five years are crucial to a child's lifelong success, as 90% of a child's brain develops by age five.

Early childhood education is an investment that offers short and long term benefits for our kids, families, local businesses, and community. Research shows that high-quality birth-to-five programs for disadvantaged children can deliver a 13% per year return on investment. Significant gains are realized through better outcomes in education, health, social behaviors, and employment (García, Jorge Luis, et al. Quantifying the life-cycle benefits of a prototypical early childhood program. No. w23479. National Bureau of Economic Research, 2017.). Supporting early childhood care and education options can help our local businesses attract and retain a workforce that is present, prepared and productive. Finally, programs in our communities will help hard-working Eagle County families stay in Eagle County, rather than moving to seek more options elsewhere.

According to Eagle County's Early Childhood Roadmap, there are 4,300 children ages 0 to 5 in Eagle County and that number is expected to grow. Approximately 2/3 of those children have all available parents employed, yielding 2,881 children who may need childcare. Currently, 1,500 of these children are in licensed care, leaving 1,381 others whose parents may need or want childcare, but may not be able to obtain it.

### Eagle County:

- **Supports legislation that promotes access to affordable, quality early childhood education opportunities.**
- **Supports legislation that expands the early childhood professional workforce, including scholarship programs, concurrent enrollment, apprenticeships, and streamlining and improving credentialing system/process.**
- **Supports increased state funding for the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP), including state financial support for unfunded mandates such as tiered reimbursement and parental discounts.**
- **Supports county-level management of CCCAP to meet the needs of families and childcare providers, including fully reimbursing providers at their private rates.**
- **Supports quality initiatives for family, friends and neighbor care.**
- **Supports additional investments in early childhood mental health and development through expansion of home visitation program funding and mental health screenings and consultations (for families and child care providers).**

## HEALTH CARE ACCESS AND COSTS

Eagle County promotes the availability of and access to quality, culturally appropriate, and affordable health care, including preventative care. Access to care includes being able to gain entrance to and navigate the healthcare system. There are many barriers to accessing care in Eagle County including the lack of affordable, adequate health insurance plans, a lack of providers who accept public insurance such as Medicaid, and a growing rate of uninsured residents, which is reducing the capacity of the safety net systems. According to Mountain Family Health Centers, the growth in uninsured patients has outpaced any other type of patient in the past two years. According to the American Community Survey 2018 estimates, 12.2% of Eagle County residents do not have health insurance, compared to 8.6% for the State of Colorado as a whole.

### Eagle County:

- **Supports legislation that promotes quality health care access and improves the affordability of care for all populations.**
- **Supports adequate funding of federally qualified health centers.**

- **Supports a public option buy in program.**
- **Supports reinsurance programs that provide a stop loss against large claims, and help to stabilize the market.**
- **Supports insurance policies and co-ops that cover pre-existing conditions.**
- **Supports transparency that enables health systems to be studied, costs to be analyzed and published, costs to be reduced, and efficiencies found.**
- **Opposes legislation that may create barriers and fears in immigrant communities, which leads to potential decreases in accessing necessary services and resources.**

## HOUSING

Affordable housing is a critical workforce issue in Eagle County and across the state. Since the end of the recession, around 2011, jobs and population have been growing more rapidly than housing inventory, and that has created many challenges including frustration for employees seeking housing; employers facing unfilled positions, high turnover, higher training costs, and lost productivity; a precipitous increase in home prices, well beyond the means of most local residents; and extremely low vacancy rates, resulting in limited choices and rising costs for renters.

If forecasts prove accurate, these tensions are poised to increase, with about 7,150 new jobs coming to the Eagle River Valley by 2025. The Edwards area is anticipated to have the most new jobs, but the Vail area is not far behind. If the economy remains strong and no new housing is created, these growth pressures will translate into higher numbers of unfilled jobs and continued rapid escalation of housing prices.

### **Eagle County:**

- **Supports legislation that creates more opportunities for attainable and affordable housing, including securing State funding for new development.**
- **Supports legislation that will increase the supply of affordable housing in multifamily buildings by limiting construction defect litigation.**
- **Supports legislation that identifies a permanent funding source for the statewide Affordable Housing Trust Fund.**
- **Supports legislation that continues the Private Activity Bond program which can be used to issue revenue bonds for the purpose of financing qualified residential rental projects or single-family mortgage loans to low- and moderate-income persons and families.**
- **Supports legislation that provides mechanisms for regulation, taxation, and restriction of the short-term rental market.**

## MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health is the leading community health priority in Eagle County. Based on Eagle County's 2017 Community Health Assessment, about 1 in 5 adults experience mental illness, with 1 in 25 living with a serious and chronic mental illness. Suicide is the 4th leading cause of death in Eagle County (2017). According to Eagle Valley Behavioral Health, Eagle County averaged one suicide attempt everyday in 2018. One in four 7th and 8th graders considered a suicide attempt this past year. The Eagle County's Sheriff's Office also reported an increase in inmates with mental health issues. Due to the nature of criminal charges, a secure facility is needed. Therefore, Eagle County is focused on increasing awareness of mental health, improving mental health screening and referral, increasing protective factors among youth and families, and increasing access to in- and out-patient mental health services.

### **Eagle County:**

- **Supports funding for more mental health services, especially for more crisis beds, across the state.**
- **Supports expanding the use of Medicaid and other federal dollars so schools can hire mental health professionals and provide mental health services.**
- **Supports legislation to strengthen laws requiring insurance companies to provide care and coverage for mental health and substance use disorders.**

- **Support mental health parity in insurance payments.**
- **Supports funding for more mental health bed space at the state mental health facility in Pueblo and an increase in the number of mental health beds on the western slope.**
- **Supports funding to address the service gaps for children and adults needing mental health assessments, evaluations, and culturally competent in-home evidence-based treatment.**
- **Supports funding of and public/private insurance payment toward a full continuum of behavioral health services, including prevention, screening, case management, transportation, tele-health, and crisis intervention.**
- **Supports alignment and coordination between state agencies to simplify, streamline, and align mental health funding to reduce duplication and fragmentation and enhance ease of access.**

## SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE PROTECTION

### COLORADO COMMUNITIES FOR CLIMATE ACTION

Eagle County is committed to climate protection and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions within county operations, in the community, and in the state. In 2016, Eagle County adopted the Climate Action Plan, which identified strategies in the building, transportation, power supply, waste diversion, and education sectors to achieve a 25% GHG reduction by 2025 and 80% GHG reduction by 2050. Eagle County also sets internal emissions targets beyond the Climate Action Plan, reducing carbon emissions from Eagle County operations 5% each year, equating to a 50% reduction by 2030.

Eagle County joined the Colorado Communities for Climate Action (CC4CA), and adopted a shared Policy Agenda for 2019-20 (attached as Exhibit 2).

#### **Eagle County:**

- **Supports collaboration between state and federal government agencies and Colorado's local governments to advance local climate protection.**
- **Supports state and federal programs to reduce carbon pollution, including adequate and ongoing funding of those programs.**
- **Supports analyses, financial incentives, and enabling policies for the development and deployment of clean energy technologies.**
- **Supports locally driven and designed programs to support communities impacted by the clean energy transformation.**
- **Supports prioritizing policies that put people at the center of decision-making, do not exacerbate or create disparities in growing the green economy, and enhance equitable outcomes for all.**

### WASTE DIVERSION AND RECYCLING

Eagle County set an objective through the Climate Action Plan to achieve a waste diversion goal of 30% by 2030. According to the CDPHE, Colorado recycles only 19% of its waste, which is well below the national average of 35% calculated by the EPA. Residential curbside recycling is available in less than half of counties statewide and more than 65% of Coloradans never recycle or recycle only sporadically.

There are many innovative strategies which could help change behavior of residents in Eagle County and increase the diversion rate. Options include increased access to disposal options like national bottle law and bottle deposits, computer take-back, and recycling leftover paint, in addition to control of toxics found in electronics. The development of local end-markets for recycled materials would decrease transport costs of materials and GHG emissions.



Studies also show that adoption of market-based pricing strategies similar to those used in the energy and water sectors, will result in increases in recycling and composting rates and reductions in the overall amount of materials sent to landfill. “Pay-as-you-throw” (PAYT) pricing, as it is often described, accomplishes this by charging the consumers the same amount for every unit of trash that they dispose of. Finally, continued inquiry and investment in new technologies like waste-to-energy and brownfield redevelopment can further increase waste diversion.

### **Eagle County:**

- **Supports legislation to increase the level of recycling and composting in Colorado and provide Colorado’s residents and businesses with increased access to waste reduction services.**
- **Supports setting statewide recycling goals with interim targets, ensuring that all Coloradans have access to recycling services.**
- **Supports legislation and other means for promoting and advancing product stewardship and local markets for recyclable materials.**
- **Supports legislation to provide statutory counties with authority to implement pay-as-you-throw pricing structures.**
- **Supports waste-to-energy and brownfield redevelopment incentives.**

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Eagle County believes that safe and efficient movement of people and goods is vital to the continued economic success of the State of Colorado, and to the maintenance of the high quality of life that Coloradans enjoy. In order to ensure these conditions, Colorado voters, the Colorado Legislature, the State of Colorado and federal government must be willing to make significant investments to maintain and improve the state’s transportation system, including roads, bridges, and multimodal systems. Colorado’s unique TABOR Amendment, which limits the collection of state revenue, coupled with a lack of increases in the state and federal gas tax” since the early 1990’s, results in the Colorado Department of Transportation experiencing a \$1 billion per year revenue shortfall. This translates to municipal and county governments taking on greater construction, maintenance, and financial responsibilities and costs for transportation infrastructure.

### **Eagle County:**

- **Supports long-term transportation funding at the state and federal levels in the form of new revenue streams, to meet Colorado’s growing transportation and transit needs.**
- **Supports innovative transportation funding mechanisms like a Vehicle Miles Traveled (user) tax.**
- **Supports financing tools, including, but not limited to bonding, public private partnerships and the issuing of state tax credits as options for expediting transportation projects, when offset by new revenue streams or other rational funding mechanisms.**
- **Supports extending transfers from the state general fund to transportation (enacted under SB09-228), and supports expanding the uses of these funds for maintenance, provided new funding for transportation construction projects is in place.**
- **Supports initiatives and programs that provide multi-modal funding opportunities, including infrastructure for trails, transit, and passenger rail.**
- **Supports legislation and programs that enable affordable, safe and efficient public transportation in resort-based communities, including efforts to better integrate transportation and land use policies.**
- **Supports initiatives and programs that facilitate the implementation and integration of new transportation and transit delivery technologies to improve safety and increase mobility.**
- **Supports policies that promote alternative modes of transportation and alternative fuels to achieve a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.**

- **Supports efforts to reduce closures on I-70 during the winter months.**
- **Supports new infrastructure, road improvement projects, and travel demand management programs as contemplated in the I-70 Mountain Corridor Record of Decision.**
- **Supports the availability of federal Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) dollars for road and bridge needs.**
- **Supports an equitable Highway Users Transportation Fund (HUTF) allocation formula and restrictions on the use of “off the top” diversions.**
- **Supports legislation that ensures local shareback is provided for transportation projects from all transportation revenue sources.**
- **Supports state funding for the Safe Routes to School program.**
- **Opposes financing mechanisms that are not offset through new revenue streams or other rational funding mechanisms.**
- **Opposes efforts to pass along additional State roadway construction or maintenance responsibilities to local governments, without increased and adequate funds to meet these additional responsibilities.**
- **Opposes funding mechanisms which eliminate or reduce local shareback for transportation projects.**
- **Opposes any reduction in the Funding Advancements for Surface Transportation and Economic Recovery Act of 2009 (FASTER).**
- **Supports the availability of higher quality and real time crash data on local and state roads to improve motor vehicle safety and reduce serious injuries and deaths from motor vehicle crashes.**

# ADDITIONAL POLICY PRINCIPLES

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A resort economy faces threats of fluctuation in reaction to the greater U.S. and worldwide economy as well as environmental and weather-related threats. About 60 percent of Eagle County’s workforce is employed in the hospitality/tourism industry. Hospitality positions are classified in one of the lowest wage and benefit brackets by comparison to other industries. The county promotes a strong economic foundation and works with regional and state partners on economic strategies. Eagle County hosts the Small Business Development Center and supports the economic development efforts of the Vail Valley Partnership. Strategies that the county supports include direct business incentives, workforce training and development, healthcare, and tax policy.

### **Eagle County:**

- **Supports the development of a statewide economic development strategy that addresses issues of business climate and economic direction at the state level, but seeks local input and respects local control of economic development.**
- **Supports appropriate state tax policies and incentive programs, including enterprise zones, business incentive agreements, or other legislative initiatives that encourage business expansion, retention, and attraction through primary job creation, investment in capital equipment, and employer facility development.**
- **Supports giving county commissioners authority to approve the use and amount of the county’s portion of revenues designated in a proposed urban renewal plan for tax increment financing.**
- **Supports workforce development, including higher education funding, relevant pre- and post-secondary vocational training, and STEM curriculum for K-12.**

- **Supports efforts to reduce the high costs of healthcare and health insurance premiums that have a significant impact on the workforce and employers.**
- **Supports tourism-centric economic development that can lead to job growth and economic diversification.**
- **Supports small-scale cottage industries that assist in broadening the economic base in resort tourist communities.**
- **Supports efforts that respect county authority in fostering community beautification and enhancement.**
- **Supports programs that further sustainable recreation while protecting the environment on which the economy depends.**

## ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

### WATER RESOURCES

Protecting the quality and quantity of Colorado's water is vital to its environment, economy, and the public's health. Eagle County will advocate for legislation, regulations, and other policy approaches that focus on the critical goals of protecting water quality and quantity, and conserving water resources.

#### Eagle County:

- **Supports Colorado's doctrine of prior appropriation.**
- **Supports water conservation and reuse efforts.**
- **Supports the application of county powers related to water resources, including 1041 powers, to address local impacts on and protection of Colorado's water resources. 1041 powers must be broadly and liberally construed to ensure maximum flexibility and authority for counties.**
- **Supports cooperative statewide water planning efforts that do not negatively impact the basin of origin communities and are supported by such communities.**
- **Supports efforts to maintain and seek state primacy of federal water quality programs that adequately fund counties to ensure compliance with the Clean Water Act.**
- **Supports legislation that promotes efficient water use and water conservation. The Colorado State Water Plan provides sustainable water resource management practices, including linking land and water planning, public policy incentives and regulations to achieve greater conservation and more efficient use of Colorado's water supply.**
- **Opposes any attempt to limit application of local 1041 powers.**
- **Opposes attempts by the federal government to usurp the prior appropriation system when issuing federal permits.**
- **Supports restoring local control to allow local governments to adopt any ordinance, rule, resolution, or charter provision, or statute, concerning the use and application of pesticides within the jurisdictional boundaries of such local government in exercising its local police powers to protect public health, safety, and the environment.**

### FOOD SAFETY

Food safety programs are significantly under-resourced in Colorado. Restaurant licensing fees, which reside in state statute, were last increased in 2016 and still fall short of covering the cost of administering an effective retail food inspection program. Increasing restaurant licensing fees will better balance the public and private investment in food safety programming, allow Colorado's public health agencies and its restaurant industry to move closer to national best practices for food safety programs and better protect the public from food-borne illnesses.

**Eagle County:**

- **Supports legislation to increase the license fees for retail food establishments or to move the authority for establishing license fees to the state or local Boards of Health.**
- **Supports legislation that strengthens enforcement of the retail food code.**

**AIR QUALITY**

Outdoor air quality is a concern in Eagle County. Under the Clean Air Act, the EPA establishes air quality standards to protect public health, with special attention to the health of “sensitive” populations (children under 10 years, adults over 65 years, and asthmatics). Poor air quality has significant public health and environmental impacts, from increasing doctor and hospital admissions, to compromising the unique value of our open space lands and negatively impacting wildlife and habitat.

**Eagle County:**

- **Supports state and federal legislative, regulatory, and other efforts to protect public and environmental health by reducing the emissions of harmful pollutants.**

**WILDFIRE MITIGATION AND FOREST HEALTH**

Wildfire mitigation measures modify the forest environment surrounding a structure that is at risk from destruction by a wildfire, while forest health efforts improve the conditions of Colorado’s forests to restore ecosystems to a healthier state. Together, these efforts have the benefit of minimizing the devastating effects of wildfire in Colorado, a problem that is only growing larger due to the impacts of climate change. Activities such as developing and maintaining defensible space and a safe home ignition zone around homes, forest thinning, and prescribed fire are common and proven tools for reducing wildfire risk. Local governments have access to an array of tools to reduce the risk of wildfire by considering the amount and type of development that occurs in areas at risk for wildfire and establishing requirements for wildfire mitigation measures for any development within these areas.

**Eagle County:**

- **Supports funding for wildfire mitigation efforts through the reauthorization of the Department of Natural Resources’ Wildfire Risk Reduction Grant Program.**
- **Supports legislative efforts that promote forest health and restoration projects that improve overall forest conditions.**
- **Supports forestry projects that reduce fuels for fire and create fuel breaks and safe escape routes.**
- **Supports increased private homeowner awareness and participation in the creation and maintenance of defensible space and a safe home ignition zone; and increased use of ignition-resistant building materials in residential construction, renovations, decks, and additions in the wildland urban interface.**
- **Supports efforts to further develop partnerships with private entities, like insurance providers and Realtors, to create innovative approaches to motivate property owners to complete wildfire mitigation actions.**
- **Supports efforts to seek alternative federal funding options in lieu of United States Forest Service (USFS) for wildfire response and recovery. This would result in additional resources for much-underfunded forest management activities.**

**NATURAL RESOURCES**

Colorado’s natural environment contributes to its high quality of life and robust economy. Recognizing this, the state and its local government partners have developed an array of public policy and programmatic initiatives designed to preserve and protect Colorado’s land, water and natural resources. Examples include the Conservation Easement Tax Credit and Great Outdoors Colorado. Eagle County will continue to utilize these tools to protect our local environment and will advocate for their continuation and expansion to ensure the preservation of the environment and quality of life that Coloradans have grown to expect.

**Eagle County:**

- **Supports the development of tools the state and local governments may use to conserve and protect natural resources.**
- **Supports efforts to protect floodplains and riparian areas from encroachment.**

**HUMAN SERVICES** 

Eagle County Human Services' vision is a sense of connectedness and the opportunity to reach one's full potential. Human Services is the principal agency responsible for providing an array of essential services which support building well-being for community members across the age range.

**ABUSE PREVENTION, EDUCATION, AND INTERVENTION**

Eagle County prioritizes the health, safety, and welfare of children, families, and adults in the community. All children and teens should grow up in a safe, stable and secure family that supports their long-term well-being. At-risk adults should be able to live lives free of mistreatment and neglect.

**Eagle County:**

- **Supports funding to address increases in Adult Protective Services caseloads resulting from the implementation of mandatory reporting for elder abuse.**
- **Supports increased funding for the HB 04-1451 Collaborative Management Program.**
- **Supports legislation that helps facilitate the implementation of Family First Prevention Services Act in Colorado and locally through funding, resources, and required statutory/policy revisions.**
- **Supports expansion of early intervention services to prevent child and adult abuse and neglect.**

**FAMILY-CENTERED ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORTS**

Eagle County supports a two-generation approach, which serves children and their caregivers together to harness the family's full potential and to put the entire family on a path to permanent economic security. Policies should support aligning funding streams, programs, and resources to build a whole family's assets jointly and avoid further systemic fragmentation of services.

**Eagle County:**

- **Supports policies that reduce the "cliff effect" for people moving off public benefits toward self-sufficiency.**
- **Supports state-level efforts to provide paid sick leave to all workers. Women and minorities have disproportionately lower access to paid sick leave, and thus more negative economic and health impacts when sick.**
- **Opposes policies which, directly or indirectly, disproportionately, negatively impact immigrant populations' access to food, medical care, and other critical human services.**

**PROGRAM FUNDING AND ADMINISTRATION**

Programming required by state and federal legislation should be adequately funded by those entities to ensure successful, high-quality implementation and administration. The County Administration Allocation is intended to fund direct, common supportive staff and all operating expenditures for the two largest Human Services programs, Food Assistance and Medicaid. Currently statewide, this funding is expected to overspend by nearly 20 million dollars, potentially increasing the county share beyond expected twenty percent.

**Eagle County:**

- **Supports efforts under SB 190 to close the funding gap between state allocations and the costs of administering human services programs.**
- **Supports the federal-state-local structure for financing and delivering Medicaid services.**
- **Opposes legislation that would further shift federal and state Medicaid costs to counties.**

**LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT** 

Eagle County seeks to create communities with a sense of place. Land use authority is critical to shaping safe, well-planned developments, while providing economically and naturally sound environments to live. Eagle County accomplishes this through its master plan, various comprehensive plans, and land use regulations.

**Eagle County:**

- **Supports legislation which would maintain or increase county construction review and oversight authority, including timely adjudication and appropriate penalties for building code violations.**
- **Supports efforts to work with state departments and other regulatory agencies in order to allow counties more control over the fee structure regarding electrical permits.**
- **Supports establishing mechanisms ensuring proposed urban renewal projects meet the current statutory requirement of ameliorating blight or slum conditions.**
- **Supports right-to-farm ordinances and acquisition of conservation easements and conservation leases to maintain agricultural uses.**
- **Opposes legislation that would supersede, override, or preempt local land use authority both from regulatory and comprehensive master planning perspectives.**
- **Opposes legislation which would reduce county construction review and oversight authority.**
- **Opposes any state or federal effort to preempt or further limit local government regulatory authority over any extractive industry.**

**PUBLIC HEALTH** **HEALTH DISPARITIES AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE**

Environmental Justice encompasses the right to a safe, healthy, productive, and sustainable, and resilient environment where people live, work, and play. Environmental justice addresses disproportionate risks often experienced by socially disadvantaged populations due to inequities in policies, practices, and social norms and the inequitable distribution of resources that result in health disparities. Health disparities exist in Eagle County and are preventable differences in the impact of disease, injury, violence or opportunities among populations (CDC, Community Health and Program Services: Health Disparities Among Racial/Ethnic Populations, 2008). These disparities in Eagle County occur by populations of race, ethnicity, gender, education, income, disability, geographic location, and sexual orientation.

**Eagle County:**

- **Supports policies and legislation that are foundational to a healthy community, including health determinants such as affordable housing, a living wage, a healthy built environment, transit oriented development, affordable health care, and access to goods and services.**
- **Supports policies and practices that are culturally competent, inclusive and promote equity among all Eagle County residents.**

- **Supports funding for effective strategies that work to reduce physical, mental, and social health disparities and better understand the underlying causes of these disparities.**
- **Supports initiatives and efforts to better define and support environmental justice efforts to promote health equity.**

## **FAMILY PLANNING AND LONG-ACTING REVERSIBLE CONTRACEPTIVES**

By providing greater access to voluntary contraception, including long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARCs), Colorado has become a national leader in reducing unintended pregnancies. Since 2009, the Colorado Family Planning Initiative has increased health care provider education and training and reduced the costs of the most effective forms of long-term contraceptives, such as intrauterine devices and implants. As a result, the number of Colorado women choosing these methods has increased dramatically and Colorado has seen unprecedented declines in the birthrate and number of abortions. From 2009-2014, the teen birth rate in Colorado fell 50% and teen abortions declined by 50% thanks to a six-year program that distributed free LARCs to teens and young women (Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, January 2017). Unintended pregnancies have serious health ramifications for mother and baby, as well as high economic and social costs for the new family.

### **Eagle County:**

- **Supports legislation that funds LARC distribution efforts for family planning purposes.**
- **Supports policies that dedicate funding and resources to Title X Family Planning Clinics and other reproductive health care organizations in Colorado.**

## **INJURY PREVENTION**

Injuries are the leading cause of death for Americans ages 1 to 44 and are responsible for nearly 193,000 deaths per year. Motor vehicle crashes account for the highest number of unintentional deaths in Eagle County. Unintentional injuries and suicide are Eagle County's third and fourth leading causes of death. Slips, trips and falls from steps or stairs are by far the leading cause of hospitalizations nationwide. Adults ages 55 and older are more prone to becoming victims of falls, and the resulting injuries can diminish the ability to lead active, independent lives.

### **Eagle County:**

- **Supports legislation to enact a primary seatbelt law.**
- **Supports a first conviction (driving while impaired) ignition interlock law.**
- **Supports legislation using evidence-based practices to mitigate distracted driving.**
- **Supports laws that prevent early licensing of teens, such as those who go through driver's education.**
- **Supports other legislation aimed at reducing deaths and injuries from motor vehicle crashes.**
- **Supports legislation and policies that increase capacity and infrastructure in the behavioral health system to raise awareness about mental illness and suicide prevention.**
- **Supports legislation that enacts policies proven to reduce injuries, including, but not limited to a child helmet law and prescription drug monitoring programs.**

## **PUBLIC HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLANS**

Colorado's local public health agencies and the state have developed public health improvement plans as required by the Public Health Act of 2008 (SB 08-194). Developed through a stakeholder engagement process, these plans assess and set priorities for the public health system and guide the system in targeting core public health services and functions.

### **Eagle County:**

- **Supports funding of local public health systems. Adequate funding will provide accountability in the systems and assure positive public health outcomes through program development, implementation, and evaluation.**



## VAPING AND SMOKING

Tobacco use remains the number one cause of preventable death and disease in the U.S. and in Colorado. 5,100 Coloradans die every year from smoking alone. The vast majority of cigarette smokers start smoking as children, with almost 90% of all regular smokers beginning at or before age 18. To recruit new users, tobacco companies create new products that are appealing to youth such as vape products and candy-flavored products. High school and middle school students in Colorado now use vape products more than all other tobacco products combined. In fact, a 2018 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention study of high school youth vape product use across 37 states found Colorado's youth using at the highest rate in the nation at more than twice the national average.

State and federal-level enforcement of tobacco sales laws is not solving the problem, and only 50 percent of known tobacco retailers in Colorado are checked every year by state-level enforcement. Since 2017, communities within Eagle County like Avon, Basalt, Gypsum, and Minturn, as well as Eagle County itself, have passed comprehensive tobacco retail licenses and increased the minimum sales age to 21 (T21). Local taxes on all tobacco products have also been approved by Eagle County; and neighboring counties and several of their communities have passed similar measures to curb youth vaping and discourage tobacco use overall. These policy advances have happened despite declining state funding for tobacco control efforts, which hit rural Colorado communities the hardest.

### Eagle County:

- **Supports legislative efforts to clarify county authority to implement tobacco retailer licensing, unit price increase, sales age increase, flavor bans, and additional measures to curb youth initiation and use of all tobacco products.**
- **Supports the coordination of local efforts in our communities to adopt these preventative tobacco use measures.**
- **Supports any efforts of the State to make vaping and smoking less appealing and more difficult to obtain for youth.**
- **Opposes further cuts to the State Tobacco Education and Prevention Program funding stream for local public health grantees.**

## COLORADO IMMUNIZATION INFORMATION SYSTEM

The Colorado Immunization Information System (CIIS) is a confidential, population-based, computerized system that collects and disseminates consolidated immunization information for Coloradans of all ages. Operated by the Colorado Immunization Program at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), CIIS works to increase and sustain high immunization rates by consolidating immunization records from multiple providers, allowing providers to generate notices for individuals who are not up-to-date, minimizing over-immunization, and identifying missed opportunities for immunization. First implemented in 2011, CIIS has struggled with technical and other issues that have limited its acceptance and use by health care providers, an outcome which ultimately compromises its effectiveness. Broad, statewide implementation of CIIS will meet multiple public health priorities, especially for children.

### Eagle County:

- **Supports funding and other approaches to expand implementation of the CIIS.**

## PUBLIC LANDS

Approximately 85% of the land area in Eagle County comprises public lands. This greatly elevates the importance of federal and state policies related to public lands. Federal programs like “Payments in Lieu of Taxes” (PILT) help offset losses in property taxes due to non-taxable Federal lands within County boundaries. Secure Rural Schools (SRS) federal payments provide numerous critical services including infrastructure, conservation projects, search and rescue missions and fire prevention programs. Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) provides offset funding from oil and gas development to purchase and develop wildland and wetland areas. Eagle County appropriately benefits from these programs and supports permanent allocation of funding for PILT, SRS, and LWCF.

Eagle County also recognizes that protection of these lands is important. Not only do many residents and visitors utilize these lands for recreation, but a diverse array of species rely on this natural habitat.

### Eagle County:

- **Supports full Congressional appropriation of Payment-In-Lieu-of-Taxes (PILT) and Secure Rural Schools (SRS) to compensate counties for the costs associated with the presence of federal tax-exempt lands.**
- **Supports all efforts to compensate counties for lost property tax revenue from tax-exempt lands.**
- **Supports legislation that encourages the state and federal governments to provide sufficient funding to local governments to alleviate the burden from the negative impacts attributable to wildfire, fuel loads, road maintenance, search and rescue efforts, law enforcement, wildlife, predators, pests, noxious weeds, and undesirable plants originating on state and federal lands.**
- **Supports control of the allocation of USFS PILT remaining solely with the boards of county commissioners.**
- **Supports the permanent authorization and full funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund for land and water area purchases and recreational development.**
- **Supports proposed legislation that would allow the State Land Board to sell land directly to local governments.**
- **Supports legislation that encourages public land managers to develop and implement vegetation management programs that create and maintain healthy, diverse wildland communities and are consistent with affected county policies.**
- **Supports legislation intended for the recovery and preservation of endangered species considering all potential impacts and subject to local government involvement and approval.**
- **Supports legislation that would create special land designations that are consistent with land use policies within the county of designation. All proposed wilderness legislation should include county input.**
- **Supports efforts to improve hunting and fishing within the county consistent with local authority while minimizing and mitigating impacts from hunting and fishing on other affected areas and private property.**
- **Supports adequate opportunity for public input on state and federal land use changes.**
- **Opposes mandatory linkages among federal payment programs that reduce county receipts.**
- **Opposes legislation that would designate wild and scenic rivers or any other designation where Eagle County has not participated in the designation, or if such designation would conflict with local land use policies.**
- **Opposes reducing wilderness areas or redrawing wilderness boundaries to accommodate development.**

## PUBLIC SAFETY

Eagle County continually strives to provide a safe and secure environment for its residents and visitors alike, whether it be on the road, in the community, or out on public lands. Public safety agencies like the Eagle County Sheriff's Office, Eagle County Emergency Management, local police agencies, fire districts, and paramedic services coordinate to provide services to address a continuum of needs throughout Eagle County, including emergency management and mitigation, law enforcement, community outreach, education, and crime prevention.

### Eagle County:

- **Supports counties' emergency management roles while maintaining the effectiveness of our all-hazards public safety preparedness programs, and emergency responses to natural and manmade disasters.**
- **Supports additional state and federal resources be made available to enhance and expand community resiliency planning and mitigation for emergency disasters like wildfire, flood, and drought.**
- **Supports a continuum of evidence-based approaches to build individual and family resiliency, reduce crime, and prevent violence, including designing effective evidence-based prevention and early intervention programs for youth and families at risk.**
- **Supports the responsible expenditure of taxpayer funds in association with the safe and effective operations of Colorado's courts and public safety systems.**

## TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Eagle County stands behind the principle of local government retaining the ability to determine the services and amenities it will provide to its residents. Every Eagle County resident should have access to low-cost, redundant, high-speed broadband internet. In 2017, Eagle County voters supported a ballot issue to opt our county and our municipalities out of SB 152, which preempted local governments from providing telecommunication services without a vote of the people. Furthermore, Eagle County is aware of recent bills passed by the Colorado Legislature to fund rural broadband efforts. SB 18-002 provides \$100 million in annual funding until 2023, but uncoupled minimum broadband speeds from FCC standards.

Additionally, Eagle County has learned of recent efforts by the Federal Communications Commission to reduce cable television franchise fees. The proposal would allow cable companies to deduct the value of public, educational, and government (PEG) channels as "in-kind" support from its franchise fee obligations. This would diminish communities' ability to fund PEG channels. Across the nation, there are an estimated 3,000 PEG channels that broadcast tens of thousands of hours of programming produced by veterans, seniors, the disabled and ethnic, minority and second language groups.

### Eagle County:

- **Supports legislation to re-establish the rights of Colorado local governments to provide broadband internet services.**
- **Supports telecommunications policies that encourage equitable access to telecommunications services in both urban and rural areas.**
- **Supports the development of additional state and federal resources and other mechanisms to assist in providing telecommunications services, including both data and voice transmission, to all areas.**
- **Supports the use of high cost support mechanism funds for the purpose of maintaining and enhancing broadband Internet service in rural areas at speeds near or equal to urban areas.**
- **Supports universal service funds, which should be paid into by all communication service providers and should be used for the purpose of maintaining and enhancing service in high cost areas.**
- **Opposes any changes that diminish the public, educational, and government channel capacity and transmission.**



## GOVERNANCE AND FISCAL ISSUES

### UNFUNDED MANDATES

In order to effectively serve the needs of their communities, county officials must have the financial resources and authority commensurate with the responsibilities placed on them by state and federal laws, regulations and court decisions. In all decision making, state and federal governments should refrain from solving budget shortfalls with county government resources. State and federal government should base decisions about laws and regulations affecting county governments on comprehensive data and measurable outcomes. Relying on these two standards to scrutinize existing and proposed laws and regulations will help reduce unnecessary, unfunded or underfunded mandates, streamline government and utilize limited resources more efficiently.

#### Eagle County:

- **Supports the provision of adequate funding for any future state or federally-imposed mandates upon local government, including the need for technology improvements necessary to fulfill these mandates.**
- **Opposes cost shifting from state and federal government to local governments.**

### LOCAL CONTROL AND FLEXIBILITY

Eagle County believes that the authority to address issues that pertain to the county must reside firmly with the county, where state or federal authority does not already exist. Local governments are best suited to identify solutions to local issues, particularly in regards to the services it provides and the land use decisions that it makes. Local authority also includes the flexibility to determine use of funding for specific initiatives. The most effective governance results from local, state and federal officials working in true partnership toward the development and implementation of programs and services.

#### Eagle County:

- **Supports legislative efforts that strengthen and preserve local control and authority of county governments.**
- **Opposes legislation that reduces local control or weakens administrative flexibility of county governments.**

### RULE-MAKING

Eagle County believes county commissioners are important and necessary stakeholders in any rule-making process.

#### Eagle County:

- **Supports county participation in legislative and regulatory efforts that impact counties.**
- **Opposes the exclusion of counties from participating in legislative and regulatory efforts to promulgate rules and regulations that affect counties.**



## INTERGOVERNMENTAL PARTNERSHIPS

Eagle County recognizes the important role all levels of government play. Eagle County respects the unique and important roles of the federal, state and local government, and believes counties are more than an administrative arm of state government. Commissioners represent the interests of their constituents, and counties must be viewed as partners, not as a “special” interest.

### **Eagle County:**

- **Supports involvement of counties in executive department restructuring that directly affects operations and programs administered by county government.**
- **Supports commissioner representation on state boards, commissions and working groups appointed by members of the executive, legislative or judicial branch whose decisions affect county government.**

## LONG-TERM FISCAL STABILITY OF THE STATE OF COLORADO

Eagle County recognizes the importance of a state government that operates in a fiscally responsible way and advances the economic vitality and well-being of all Coloradans. Eagle County appreciates the transparency in the state budgeting process and the opportunity to provide input, and it seeks collaboration with the state, especially with regard to decisions and processes that affect our organization or our constituents. The state and its counties are intertwined in many different, significant ways when it comes to the delivery of services to Colorado residents. The conflicting priorities of the Gallagher Amendment, Amendment 23, and the Taxpayer Bill of Rights present a complex set of circumstances that must be addressed. Rising costs of doing business, including the costs of healthcare and health insurance premiums, present a significant challenge for the state and its counties.

### **Eagle County:**

- **Supports and will continue to engage with any substantive effort to evaluate and address the ongoing structural and budgetary challenges that negatively impact the fiscal stability and sustainability of the State of Colorado and by extension, its local government partners.**

## GOVERNMENTAL IMMUNITY

Eagle County recognizes that the complexity and diversity of its operations and services required to meet the needs of the community may expose the county, its officers, and employees to liability for damage and injury. The county strongly believes that public officers and employees need to be assured that this liability will not impair the lawful and proper provision of necessary services to the public.

### **Eagle County:**

- **Supports legislation that protects the interests of counties, their officers, and their employees in the lawful and proper performance of their duties and responsibilities.**
- **Supports legislation that discourages baseless and frivolous claims and demands made against counties, their officers, and their employees.**
- **Supports the availability of public liability insurance at reasonable costs and the ability of counties to reduce these costs through self-insurance.**
- **Opposes legislation that expands or increases county liability, or, conversely, further limits county immunity.**



## WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Eagle County recognizes that the Colorado Workers' Compensation Act was developed as a no-fault system established "to assure the quick and efficient delivery of disability and medical benefits to injured workers at a reasonable cost to employers, without the necessity of any litigation, recognizing that the workers' compensation system in Colorado is based on a mutual renunciation of common law rights and defenses by employers and employees alike." The county is concerned about any legislation that will erode the ability of an employer to control their claim costs and inhibit an employer's ability to get competitive quotes from the market for quality insurance coverage.

### Eagle County:

- **Supports legislation that maintains the spirit of the Colorado Workers' Compensation Act, for the protection of both Colorado employers and employees.**
- **Opposes legislation that creates presumptive eligibility coverage within the law, promotes litigation or adds significant insurance premium costs or administrative burdens to employers.**

## ELECTIONS

As with other counties across the state, most responsibility for administering local elections falls on Eagle County.

### Eagle County:

- **Supports equitable sharing of the costs of elections by all governmental entities with a stake in elections.**

## MOTOR VEHICLE FEE RESTRUCTURING

The Motor Vehicle responsibilities in county offices, directed by the Colorado Department of Revenue, are customer service centric, complicated and demanding. Despite the fact that sales of new and used cars and corresponding registration fee revenues have increased in recent years, county revenues to administer these services are relatively flat.

### Eagle County:

- **Supports increasing the Clerk Hire Fee and the county share of late fees to enable counties to keep pace with the necessary costs of providing this service at a level that meets customers' needs and expectations.**

## E-RECORDING SURCHARGE FEE EXTENSION

In 2006, the state instituted a surcharge on all recorded documents of \$1.00 per document. This surcharge was intended to help counties pay for systems, equipment and training for electronic recording of legal documents. Eagle County made this transition several years ago, but there are ongoing costs to maintain and upgrade the system every year. As protectors of the permanent public records related to real estate transactions, marriage and death certificates, loans, covenants, plats and maps, it is imperative that Eagle County preserve these documents in a manner that is readable for modern technology capabilities. The surcharge is about to sunset. Colorado's recording fees are among the lowest in the nation.

### Eagle County:

- **Supports legislation to extend the e-recording surcharge fee permanently, as well as to increase the amount retained by the county from \$1.00 per document for a total of \$2.00.**



# Contact the Eagle County Commissioners



From left:  
Commissioner Kathy Chandler-Henry  
Commissioner Jeanne McQueeney  
Commissioner Matt Scherr



**Address:**  
P.O. Box 850  
500 Broadway  
Eagle, Colorado 81631

**Phone:**  
970-328-8605

**Email:**  
[eagleadmin@eaglecounty.us](mailto:eagleadmin@eaglecounty.us)

**Website:**  
[www.eaglecounty.us/commissioners](http://www.eaglecounty.us/commissioners)