



# Eagle County

2019 Annual Report

Creating a Better Eagle County for All

## Message from the Commissioners



Long-term success generally requires patience, partnerships and planning, and in 2019 we saw years of work culminate in the completion of several strategic capital projects which will serve the community for decades.

Traffic in Edwards is flowing smoothly through a new roundabout at U.S. Highway 6 and the Edwards Spur Road. The improvements came through a collaboration between the Colorado Department of Transportation, the Edwards Metropolitan District and Eagle County. The project has increased both mobility and pedestrian safety at one of the county's busiest intersections. Work will resume in the spring of 2020 to widen the Union Pacific bridge and finalize trail connections.

Thanks to community-minded property owners in Wolcott, the county celebrated the official opening of the Horn Ranch bridge and dedication of Mott's Landing in September. The project was completed as part of the Eagle to Horn Ranch Open Space segment of the Eagle Valley Trail. The dedication honored the contributions of Dave and Sue Mott, who provided an easement allowing a shorter bridge span and eliminating the need for a pier in the middle of the river. To date, 51 miles of the planned 63-mile trail are complete. Our challenge now is to finish the remaining 12 miles, which are the most difficult and costly due to land availability and topography. Estimates show the cost at \$20 million, and at current funding levels it will take 15 to 20 years to complete. We'll be looking for creative ways to significantly speed this up.

After 22 months of construction, our beautiful new terminal at the Eagle County Regional Airport is welcoming guests with four jet bridges, bright and open passenger spaces and expanded concessions. New deicing pads are also in place, increasing efficiency for travelers. The terminal expansion was completed without a disruption in air service, a testament to our project team's understanding of the importance of the airport to our regional economy.

Of course, sometimes success comes quickly when the right people, issues and timing converge. Early in the year, local high school students sounded the alarm on the sharp rise of vaping and its effects on their fellow students. As they met with officials across the county, they made the case for raising the age for purchasing tobacco products to 21, as well as for increasing the cost of those products. In November, Eagle County voters overwhelmingly agreed. The county now joins several towns and neighboring Pitkin and Summit counties in using an increased tax on tobacco and related products to help combat youth vaping.

**STRATEGIC GOALS 2015 - 2020**

-  **EAGLE COUNTY IS FINANCIALLY SOUND**
-  **EAGLE COUNTY IS A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE FOR ALL**
-  **EAGLE COUNTY PROTECTS THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**
-  **EAGLE COUNTY PROMOTES A DIVERSE AND RESILIENT ECONOMY**
-  **EAGLE COUNTY IS A HIGH-PERFORMING ORGANIZATION**

View the entire plan at [eaglecounty.us/strategicplan](http://eaglecounty.us/strategicplan).

During the year, we also laid the groundwork for additional initiatives to meet community priorities. Construction is underway at Two10 @ Castle Peak, which will bring 22 affordable rental units to Eagle Ranch. The project will be LEED Gold certified and will strive to achieve electric net zero. Rents will be affordable to households earning 80% of the area median income, and all

tenants will be required to live and work in Eagle County.

In addition, Eagle County Open Space has been awarded a \$700,000 grant from Great Outdoors Colorado for the purchase and preservation of the Ridgway Ranch. The property will add approximately 129 acres to the recently conserved Brush Creek Valley Ranch and Open Space, and includes roughly a mile of frontage along Brush Creek. Nearly a dozen partners supported the grant application and the protection of this critical wildlife habitat. Closing on the parcel is anticipated in late spring.

As we celebrated the completion of projects and planned for new ones throughout the year, we also furthered our efforts toward making government participatory and accessible. We're now airing our work sessions live on Eagle County Government Television, and making them available for on demand viewing at [www.ecgtv.com](http://www.ecgtv.com). We are hosting monthly community ski and ride days in both the Eagle River and Roaring Fork valleys to allow for personal connections with our constituents. We've been pleased to welcome dozens of folks for open office hours during our "Roaring Fork Fridays" in El Jebel. These efforts ensure we stay in touch with the issues that matter most to our community, now and into the future.

Our theme in 2019 was "Bending the Curve," which means when we see the trajectory of an issue going in a direction that is not optimal, we put our resources toward bending that negative curve. Through the hard work of our staff, engagement with our communities, and collaboration with our partners, we believe we've changed the trajectory for the positive in creating a better Eagle County for all.

*Kathy Chandler-Henry*     *J. McQueeney*     *Matt Scherr*  
 Kathy Chandler-Henry     Jeanne McQueeney     Matt Scherr

## Meet your elected officials



**Mark Chapin**  
Assessor



**Regina O'Brien**  
Clerk & Recorder



**Kara Bettis**  
Coroner



**James Van Beek**  
Sheriff



**Kelly Miller**  
Surveyor



**Teak Simonton**  
Treasurer  
Public Trustee

## Eagle County is Financially Sound

Successfully completed the 2019 reappraisal of all property in Eagle County resulting in \$3,536,959,480 taxable assessed value. The office handled under 3,000 appeals of real and personal property in May and June, the lowest number of appeals experienced in the past six reappraisal cycles. In so doing, the Assessor's Office continues to estimate realistic, impartial and equitable value on all Eagle County properties, while being fair and respectful of the people who own those properties.

### Assessor

Received grants totaling \$32,000 from the Electronic Recording Technology Board to enhance the security and preservation of historical document images and improve the searchability of public documents. Also used grant funds to purchase larger, higher resolution computer screens at public research stations, improving customer experience.

### Clerk & Recorder

Implemented a new pavement management system to help prioritize road improvements and make the best use of Road & Bridge funds.

### Engineering, Road & Bridge

Increased sponsorships for the Eagle County Fair & Rodeo by 12% over 2018, ensuring a memorable 80th annual event.

### Facilities

Earned the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association for the 20th consecutive year. The award is given to organizations recognized for accurate and transparent financial reporting.

### Finance

Received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers Association for the county's 2019 budget. The award recognizes the budget's effectiveness as a policy document, financial plan, operations guide and public communications device.

### Finance

Published a Popular Annual Financial Report for the first time. The financial report is designed to be readily accessible and easily understandable to the general public.

### Finance

Received grants totaling over \$725,000, including \$700,000 from Great Outdoors Colorado and \$10,000 from the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Habitat Partnership Program toward the acquisition of the Ridgeway Ranch; and an additional \$15,200 from Great Outdoors Colorado to be administered by the Colorado Youth Corp Association.

### Open Space

Managed the design and construction of the Old Courthouse first floor remodel, Attorney's Office remodel and Treasurer's Office remodel, which created efficient workspaces and kept these projects on time and on budget.

### Project Management, Attorney, Treasurer & Public Trustee

Completed a multi-year project to design and construct a new perimeter fence and gate system for the Sheriff's Office, increasing efficiency and security.

### Project Management, Sheriff

Completed 4.8 miles of fabric overlay on the Frying Pan River Road; and leveraged gravel resources and trucking to complete over 12 miles of gravel replacement. These projects improved safety while protecting county infrastructure.

### Road & Bridge

Received over \$20,000 in rebates from the State of Colorado for operating free public recycle drop off sites.

### Solid Waste & Recycling

Increased the interest revenue received by the county from long- and short-term investments by 22% or \$389,000 over 2018, which was 29% over budget. The increased revenue allows the county to provide additional service to its constituents and/or increase the reserve balance.

### Treasurer & Public Trustee

Implemented a strategy for selecting long term bonds which resulted in 2019 earnings that yielded an average of 3.31%, exceeding the ICE Bank of America 0-3 U.S. Treasury Index returns for the year. Increases in interest revenue benefit many internal fund balances, allowing additional programs to be funded within the operation and/or increasing the county's reserve balance.

### Treasurer & Public Trustee

2020 Budgeted Revenues \$136,436,631		2020 Budgeted Expenditures \$134,309,644	
23%	Sales & Use Taxes	46%	Salaries & Benefits
21%	Property Taxes	19%	Purchased Services
17%	Charges for Services	11%	Other Expenditures
14%	Grants & Intergovernmental	11%	Capital Outlay
12%	Internal Service Fund Charges	5%	Supplies
9%	Rents & Royalties	5%	Debt Costs
5%	Other Revenues	3%	Grants & Contributions

## Eagle County is a Great Place to Live for All

Increased pet adoptions from 327 in 2018 to 409 in 2019; and transferred 252 animals from high-kill areas around the county to assist them in finding forever homes.

### Animal Services

Successfully conducted the 2019 Coordinated Election with 100% accuracy in the post-election risk-limiting audit. In addition, all members of the Clerk's Office election team are now certified Colorado Election Officials with the Secretary of State's Office.

### Clerk & Recorder

Began live broadcasting, streaming and archiving Board of Commissioners work session meetings at [www.ecgtv.com](http://www.ecgtv.com), increasing transparency and access to decision making.

### Communications

Increased opportunities for in-person dialogue with county officials through community ski and ride days, community hiking days, ice cream socials, and new "Roaring Fork Fridays" office hours in El Jebel.

### Communications

Fast tracked 40% of all building and peripheral permit applications and performed 6,112 inspections, providing a quicker approval turnaround for many residents and lowering costs of construction.

### Community Development

Graduated 16 participants from the Family Leadership Training Institute, increasing their civic knowledge and empowering them to make positive community impacts.

### CSU Extension

Provided 211 one-on-one consultations on horticultural or agricultural topics; and conducted over 30 hours of free classes and trainings for Eagle County residents.

### CSU Extension

Hosted 17 students from Zealous School in Eagle for a 22-hour My Preparedness Initiative class, which teaches youth and their families how to better prepare and respond to disasters.

### CSU Extension

Completed a 200-foot long pedestrian bridge and trailhead parking lot at Mott's Landing in Wolcott, providing public access to the Horn Ranch Open Space and the Eagle Valley Trail.

### ECO Trails, Facilities, Project Management

Established a ride-hailing program to provide free transfers between ECO Transit's Freedom Park bus stop and the Mountain Family Health Center office in Edwards. The service is provided in partnership with Ride Taxi and the Mountain Ride One Click/One Call Center, and improves access to critical health services for some of our most vulnerable residents.

### ECO Transit

Improved flash flood emergency notification for residents and first responders on the Lake Christine burn scar through the placement of additional weather stations and refining National Weather Service alerting protocols.

### Emergency Management

See Great Place – page 3





## Great Place

– From page 2

Completed the construction of a new roundabout at U.S. Highway 6 and Edwards Spur Road and a new crosswalk at Bull Run, improving vehicular and pedestrian circulation and safety.

### Engineering

Completed improvements at Lake Creek Village, including landscaping with grant funding from Eagle Valley Outdoor Movement; and replacement of 11 boilers with high efficiency models utilizing rebates from Energy Outreach Colorado. In addition, the property's electrical usage is now entirely offset by wind energy credits.

### Housing

Received the 2019 YES! In My Backyard award for Community Development and Finance from the Colorado National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials for the Eagle County Loan Fund. The award recognizes best practices in housing agencies and authorities. In 2019, the loan fund matched its record year by originating 47 down payment assistance loans.

### Housing

Broke ground at Two10 @ Castle Peak and reached approximately 50% completion on the 22-unit workforce housing project. Issued debt at a low interest rate to pay for the construction of the project.

### Housing, Finance, Attorney, Project Management

Advocated for the use of county owned property to increase employee housing inventory by five beds, which contributed to successfully staffing ECO Transit for the winter season.

### Human Resources

Invested over \$1.5 million in the early childhood system and programming, supporting families accessing care, the early childhood workforce, and centers and homes providing quality care.

### Human Services

Successfully assisted 83% of Employment First participants in finding and securing employment, including supporting seven of those to escape homelessness.

### Human Services

Exceeded the Colorado state benchmark for the 5th year in a row for child support collections, which ensures all children receive financial and medical support from each parent.

### Human Services

Replaced desktop computers with updated mobile models that utilize cloud-based computing tools in the county's Emergency Operations Center. The upgrade will allow staff to better support the community in the event of an emergency.

### Innovation & Technology, Emergency Management

Recycled 30 computers by giving them to students in the Eagle County School District's Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics program, who then refurbished them from the provided parts. The improved machines were distributed by lottery to students that signed up to receive one.

### Innovation & Technology

Responded to the youth vaping crisis by partnering with policymakers and the community to implement measures to curb use, including a voter-approved increase to tobacco taxes. In addition, the county joined a lawsuit against Juul Labs, Inc. to prevent marketing to youth.

### Public Health & Environment

Launched a more inclusive engagement model in collaboration with L'Ancla to help ensure the voice of the Latinx community is present and heard in civic work. This has led to the development of a year-long collaborative effort "Mi Salud, Mi Charco," or "Health in Place," which builds trust with residents, improves leadership capacity, and fosters a more inclusive community.

### Public Health & Environment

Worked to improve the quality and health of affordable housing through an \$800,000 grant. Engaged residents to better understand their needs and challenges; drafted policies to protect mobile home park residents against retaliation or discrimination from park management; and provided recommendations for West Edwards that promote social equity, environmental justice and ecological sustainability.

### Public Health & Environment, Community Development

See Great Place – page 4



## Eagle County Protects the Natural Environment

Secured \$2.8 million in federal and state funding to assist with the purchase of three new electric buses and associated charging infrastructure. These no-emission vehicles will be on the road in the second half of 2020 and will reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transit as well as contribute to lower long-term maintenance and fuel costs.

### ECO Transit

Provided assistance for projects funded through a Natural Resources Conservation Service grant toward the Lake Christine Fire recovery effort, mitigating risk and improving wildlife habitat.

### Engineering

Received a Great Outdoors Colorado grant in collaboration with Eagle Valley Land Trust to

acquire the Ridgway Ranch. This parcel is an inholding to Brush Creek Valley Ranch and Open Space, and acquiring it will forever conserve 129 acres of Eagle County's agricultural heritage and an additional mile of Brush Creek.

### Open Space

Successfully established trailheads and seasonal wildlife closures on the Brush Creek Valley Ranch to balance recreation and wildlife values, leading the county's Open Space Program to be recognized in 5280 Magazine as having "some of the most progressive trail management policies in the state."

### Open Space

See Natural Environment – page 4



## Eagle County Promotes a Diverse and Resilient Economy

Increased number of summer flights, and overall increase in annual traffic of nearly 10%. The improved flight options strengthen the airport as a significant piece of the economic engine of the community, making it a vital amenity for maintaining international accessibility to our world-class recreation opportunities, and allowing the many types of businesses that rely on that trade to continue to grow.

### Airport

Completed the \$34 million terminal expansion project at the Eagle County Regional Airport.

The project included jet bridges as well as expanded passenger space and concessions, contributing to a better traveler experience.

### Airport, Project Management

Completion of new deicing pad/operation, ensuring that planes operating in winter conditions can be turned around quickly to safely fly to their next destination. This allows for a higher volume of air traffic at the airport during peak ski season.

### Airport, Project Management

See Resilient Economy – page 4



## Eagle County is a High-Performing Organization

Launched the "ECG Community" internal messaging platform and created a "forms and resources" internal site for mobile-friendly, anywhere/any device employee access to the county's internal services. In 2019, the platform saw 70% of staff directly logging in and active in the system. For those who don't regularly log in, the system also generates emails to help keep employees informed.

### Administration

Introduced and deployed Google Apps Scripts in-house to build complex workflows, dramatically reducing the costs, complexity and security issues associated with outside solutions. Examples include document and email

notifications based on form submissions for a variety of offices and departments.

### Administration

Gained national recognition with two awards, including Local Government Innovation Leader of the Year from StateScoop magazine; and the Local Government Innovation Award for the use of Google Platform tools for the Lake Christine Fire Response from the Center for Digital Government/Governing Magazine.

### Administration

See High-Performing – page 4

## Great Place - From page 3

Constructed a debris basin above the Town of Basalt to help with flood mitigation on the Lake Christine Fire burn scar.

### Road & Bridge

Trained over 60 participants in the Eagle County Detentions Center Volunteer Program to administer programs ranging from Alcoholics Anonymous, to religious programs, to yoga. In addition, the office initiated a backpack program which prepares inmates for release with resources such as food, clothing and community support program information.

### Sheriff

Expanded mental health programming within the jail for a total of 52 hours per week. With these resources, over 50% of inmates are receiving mental health and substance abuse treatment on a weekly basis.

### Sheriff

Added an additional School Resource Officer to help promote student safety. Also added a second K9 to the team. K9 Zane will join K9 Echo in keeping the community safe.

### Sheriff

## Natural Environment - From page 3

Diverted waste products from the landfill for beneficial use, including approximately 1,016 tons of clean tree wood, wood chips, and metal, plus an additional 1,417 tons of construction and demolition material. Approximately 93 and a half tons of electronics were recycled through the Household Hazardous Waste Facility, and 2,395 tons of recyclables were processed at the Materials Recovery Facility.

### Solid Waste & Recycling

Offset all of the carbon footprint emissions through energy efficiency, solar photovoltaic projects, and Holy Cross Energy's "Powered by Renewable Energy" program following the County Commissioners' resolution adopting 100% renewable energy for county facilities. These efforts helped achieve our internal environmental policy goal of 50% carbon pollution reduction by 2030, 11 years ahead of schedule.

### Sustainable Communities

Installed the first 50-kw direct current fast charging electric vehicle charging station in the Eagle River Valley, utilizing a State of Colorado Charge Ahead grant.

### Sustainable Communities

Utilizes a \$50,000 grant from First Bank to partner with numerous property owners in the Roaring Fork Valley to complete undergrowth fuels thinning and wood chipping to reduce the potential threat of future wildfires to homes and buildings.

### Sustainable Communities

Developed the Community Resilience Plan which includes actionable recommendations to prepare for and adapt to a changing climate in partnership with community stakeholders. The plan includes focus areas of Health and Wellness, Economy and Tourism, Infrastructure, and Natural Resource Protection and is available at [resilienteaglecounty.com](http://resilienteaglecounty.com).

### Sustainable Communities, Public Health & Environment, Emergency Management

## Resilient Economy - From page 3

Began offering free open source geospatial data through the GIS Department. Previously, the department charged for most of their data. This new approach will increase constituent engagement, improve government transparency, and facilitate better decision-making.

### Community Development

Completed construction of the Airport Terminal Remodel Project by December 2019. This project was more than a five-year effort involving multiple facets of Eagle County Government. Managed design and construction of the Eagle County Regional Airport deice facility construction project as well as the north apron rehabilitation project.

### Project Management

Supported new businesses and jobs by facilitating over \$275,000 in grant dollars from the state to the Northwest Loan Fund. The fund offers loans to startup businesses in Eagle County and other northwest Colorado communities.

### Finance

Implemented gate virtualization technology at Eagle County Regional Airport that now provides all airlines with the ability to seamlessly transition their proprietary passenger management systems between any gate, as daily operational needs dictate. This new technology allows the airport to expand the existing air service footprint beyond the previous maximum limit of six airlines.

### Innovation & Technology, Airport

## High-Performing - From page 3

Initiated Service Area Reviews, which provide department directors a chance to give updates to the county managers in the areas of budget performance, culture and safety, and key performance indicators. This has served as an opportunity to communicate urgent or pressing items, assistance or resource requests, and celebrate successes.

### Administration

Obtained "Fear Free" certification for all animal shelter staff to help lower stress and increase an animal's well-being during its stay at the facility.

### Animal Services

Successfully passed the final report for the 2019 Colorado Property Assessment Study. According to this yearly audit conducted by the state, the Eagle County Assessor's Office was found to be in compliance with all valuation requirements as mandated by Colorado law.

### Assessor

Moved to a four day per week work schedule for the Motor Vehicle team, increasing the number of customer service stations open each day, especially during the busy mid-day periods, and improving employee job satisfaction.

### Clerk & Recorder

Amended the county's land use regulations' administrative procedures, created a Customer Service Planner position, and initiated more frequent and transparent communication, making the land use application process easier to understand.

### Community Development

Facilitated the growth of 495 pounds of fresh produce by Eagle County employees in garden beds located at the CSU Extension Office. All vegetables grown through the Garden Produce Challenge were donated to the Golden Eagle Senior Center, helping to provide healthy food to our senior community.

### CSU Extension

Advocated for and received compensation adjustments for transit and law enforcement staff in an effort to remain market competitive, ensure retention and attract quality talent.

### Human Resources

Implemented a new HR and payroll software system, resulting in efficiency gains in processing payroll and enhancing the job candidate experience.

### Human Resources, Finance, Innovation & Technology

Implemented advanced wireless technology to improve network services at the Eagle County Fairgrounds and at the county's Solid Waste & Recycling facilities, creating operational efficiencies at both locations.

### Innovation & Technology

Finalized the roll-out of Google Shared Drives as the county's file management service, allowing county staff flexibility and access to information whenever and wherever they need it.

### Innovation & Technology

Collected more than 40,000 property tax payments over the course of five months and distributed funds to school districts, municipalities, metro districts, special districts and the county according to each entity's mill levies. The collection and timely distribution of these taxes allows our local tax authorities to fund their operation, including but not limited to educating our students, providing law enforcement, fire protection, recreational services and municipal and county programs.

### Treasurer & Public Trustee

## Connect with the County



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