

AN ADVISORY SERVICES PANEL REPORT

Eagle County Colorado



**Urban Land
Institute**

Eagle County Colorado

A Regional Approach to Affordable Housing

December 11–15, 2006
An Advisory Services Panel Report

ULI—the Urban Land Institute
1025 Thomas Jefferson Street, N.W.
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About ULI—the Urban Land Institute

The mission of the Urban Land Institute is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. ULI is committed to:

- Bringing together leaders from across the fields of real estate and land use policy to exchange best practices and serve community needs;
- Fostering collaboration within and beyond ULI's membership through mentoring, dialogue, and problem solving;
- Exploring issues of urbanization, conservation, regeneration, land use, capital formation, and sustainable development;
- Advancing land use policies and design practices that respect the uniqueness of both built and natural environments;
- Sharing knowledge through education, applied research, publishing, and electronic media; and

- Sustaining a diverse global network of local practice and advisory efforts that address current and future challenges.

Established in 1936, the Institute today has more than 35,000 members from 90 countries, representing the entire spectrum of the land use and development disciplines. Professionals represented include developers, builders, property owners, investors, architects, public officials, planners, real estate brokers, appraisers, attorneys, engineers, financiers, academics, students, and librarians. ULI relies heavily on the experience of its members. It is through member involvement and information resources that ULI has been able to set standards of excellence in development practice. The Institute has long been recognized as one of the world's most respected and widely quoted sources of objective information on urban planning, growth, and development.

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About ULI Advisory Services

The goal of ULI's Advisory Services Program is to bring the finest expertise in the real estate field to bear on complex land use planning and development projects, programs, and policies. Since 1947, this program has assembled well over 400 ULI-member teams to help sponsors find creative, practical solutions for issues such as downtown redevelopment, land management strategies, evaluation of development potential, growth management, community revitalization, brownfields redevelopment, military base reuse, provision of low-cost and affordable housing, and asset management strategies, among other matters. A wide variety of public, private, and nonprofit organizations have contracted for ULI's Advisory Services.

Each panel team is composed of highly qualified professionals who volunteer their time to ULI. They are chosen for their knowledge of the panel topic and screened to ensure their objectivity. ULI's interdisciplinary panel teams provide a holistic look at development problems. A respected ULI member who has previous panel experience chairs each panel.

The agenda for a five-day panel assignment is intensive. It includes an in-depth briefing day composed of a tour of the site and meetings with sponsor representatives; a day of hour-long interviews of typically 50 to 75 key community representatives; and two days of formulating recommendations. Many long nights of discussion precede the panel's conclusions. On the final day on site, the panel makes an oral presentation of its findings and conclusions to the sponsor. A written report is prepared and published.

Because the sponsoring entities are responsible for significant preparation before the panel's visit, including sending extensive briefing materials to each member and arranging for the panel to meet with key local community members and stakeholders in the project under consideration, partici-

pants in ULI's five-day panel assignments are able to make accurate assessments of a sponsor's issues and to provide recommendations in a compressed amount of time.

A major strength of the program is ULI's unique ability to draw on the knowledge and expertise of its members, including land developers and owners, public officials, academicians, representatives of financial institutions, and others. In fulfillment of the mission of the Urban Land Institute, this Advisory Services panel report is intended to provide objective advice that will promote the responsible use of land to enhance the environment.

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Acknowledgments

Both personally and on behalf of ULI, the panel members and staff would like to express their deep appreciation for the support and cooperation provided by the mayors and members of the town councils of Eagle County and the more than 56 community members who were interviewed.

The panel also expresses thanks to the Economic Council of Eagle County, particularly Don Cohen, Kathy Chandler-Henry, and Tori Franks.

Particular thanks are due to Harry Frampton, former chairman of ULI, for his hospitality, support, and encouragement.

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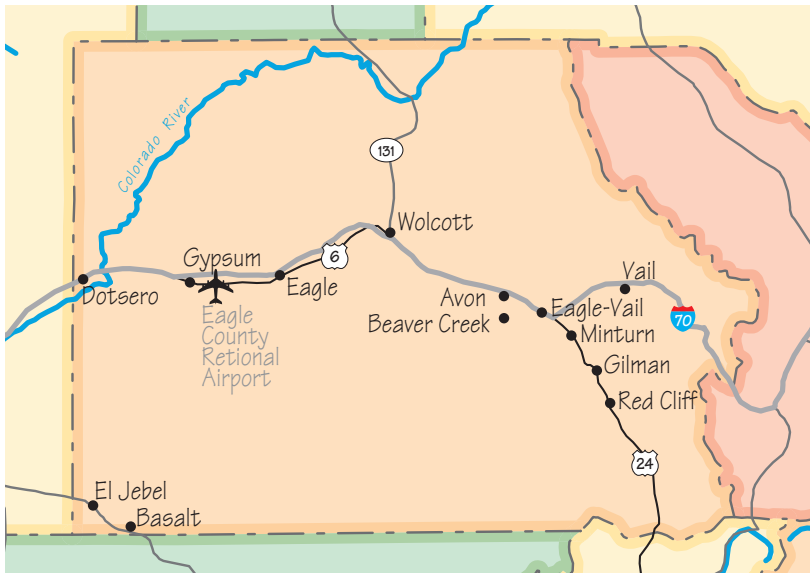
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County map.

rounding red quartzite cliffs, was the first county seat. The county government moved west to the town of Eagle in 1921, and the Eagle County courthouse was built in 1932. With the exception of activities related to mining, early development in Eagle County followed transportation routes along streams, rivers, and valley floors. Shallow slopes in these areas held good soil and were easy to access, irrigate, farm, and ranch, resulting in a linear development pattern along valley floors.

In the years preceding 1962 and the opening of the Vail ski area, the local economy was typical of the western slope of Colorado, relying on mining, timber harvesting, and agriculture. Workers at the New Jersey Zinc Mine on Battle Mountain lived in the historic towns of Red Cliff, Gilman, and Minturn. The mine was shut down in the 1980s and is now the site of a proposed development by the Ginn Company. Eagle and Gypsum were two small self-sufficient agricultural towns to the west. Cattle and sheep grazed many lowland meadows, and others were irrigated for crops and hay production. Logging in the Gore and Sawatch Ranges and on the Flattops supplied local sawmills.

The evolution of Vail from a quiet sheep pasture to an international resort is credited to the famous 10th Mountain Division ski troops who were introduced to the valley while training at Camp Hale in the 1940s. Following World War II, a group of former Army buddies returned to the Gore Creek

valley to fulfill their collective dream of developing a ski resort.

In 1964, Eagle County adopted its first set of subdivision regulations and in 1974 applied zoning to all unincorporated county lands. With the success of Vail, growth began to accelerate, establishing a pattern that continued to follow rivers and valley floors. The town of Avon grew out of a sheep ranch in the 1970s, as did the unincorporated community of Edwards. The Beaver Creek ski area opened south of Avon in 1979.

Eagle County has evolved from communities dependent on ranching and mining to a mix of towns and unincorporated areas all dependent to some extent on the tourism industry. Communities in Eagle County include Avon, Beaver Creek, Bond, Burns, Dotsero, Eagle, Eagle-Vail, Edwards, Gilman, Gypsum, McCoy, Minturn, Red Cliff, Vail, and Wolcott. Eagle County has a total area of 1,692 square miles and a 2005 population of 47,530.

The Study Area

The towns of Eagle County are mostly situated along the Interstate 70/U.S. 6 highway corridor. This corridor is defined by the natural topography of the watersheds that start at the top of Vail Pass (Gore Creek) and follow the Eagle River to where it flows into the Colorado River at Dotsero and then runs into the mouth of Glenwood Canyon. In the southwest corner of the county are the communities of Basalt and El Jebel. These two communities are home to over 18 percent of the county's population but are a circuitous 45- to 60-minute drive from the county seat (Eagle); economically and culturally, they belong to the Roaring Fork River valley anchored by Aspen to the south and Glenwood Springs to the north. For the purposes of the Eagle County Advisory Services Panel, Basalt and El Jebel have been excluded from the study area, which focuses on the Eagle River and Colorado River watersheds.

The 1980s and 1990s saw significant growth. Development pressure, the strong market for second-home real estate, and a political climate that favored development pushed housing and resort construction toward private lands once considered too remote to develop. Developers ac-

cessed side valley benches, hillsides, and ridge tops, which became locations for subdivisions, golf courses, and gated communities. Eagle County had become, and remains today, a place where virtually any large agricultural tract of land with water rights represents a significant prospective development asset to the owner, with the potential to become a golf resort, a high-end second-home community, or both.

Land available for development in Eagle County is limited. Of the 16 percent of the county that is in private ownership, approximately 80 percent is encumbered by steep slopes, floodplains, or other development constraints. As a result, only 3 or 4 percent of the total land area in the county is actually available for development, and much of this land has already been developed.

The Panel's Assignment

Eagle County asked the panel to consider how it will house and sustain a solid middle-class workforce given the following considerations:

- The Colorado State demographer's office estimates the county population will grow from 50,000 to more than 80,000 in the next 20 years. This growth will create the demand for 100,000 jobs.
- The average cost of a single-family home in Eagle County in 2006 is \$1.2 million.
- Continuing competition from owners of second homes and affluent retirees places external upward pressure on the cost of housing.



The ULI advisory panel tours Eagle County.

- The federal government owns 84 percent of the land in Eagle County.
- A chronic shortage of full-time employees has been developing in surrounding counties, making the potential supply of workers willing to commute from outside the county less dependable.

To keep and house a sustainable workforce in the county, county officials and local businesses need to know where people will live and how they will get to work. The topography, the extent of federal land holdings, and the cost of housing present challenges to Eagle County in creating necessary and affordable housing. The county asked the advisory panel for its recommendations for addressing these challenges.

Introduction

Eagle County's beautiful mountains and wonderful outdoor recreation make it a very special place. People from all over the world come here to visit and often to invest in second homes. Eagle County is no longer a mining and ranching community but a world-class recreation destination with a year-round population to service visitors and the service workers themselves.

The county's success, however, has brought with it a number of challenges. Increased demand for homes in the county, particularly second homes, has fueled construction and service industries. Jobs in these industries have contributed to the growing population of the county, but the limited supply of housing and rising real estate prices make Eagle County an expensive place to live for both entry-level professionals and service industry workers. To find more-affordable housing, these workers must either commute a long distance or live in units of multiple households with often as many as ten persons per unit. Traffic congestion and long commutes have resulted from this unmanaged growth. Employers find they need to provide employees with transportation and higher wages and in some cases to develop employee housing, to master lease housing, or to provide housing allowances, all of which further contributes to higher housing prices.

These effects ripple throughout the entire county, affecting everyone's quality of life. According to population projections, Eagle County's population will nearly double in the next 25 years, further exacerbating these problems. This projected growth requires the county to consider the following new questions:

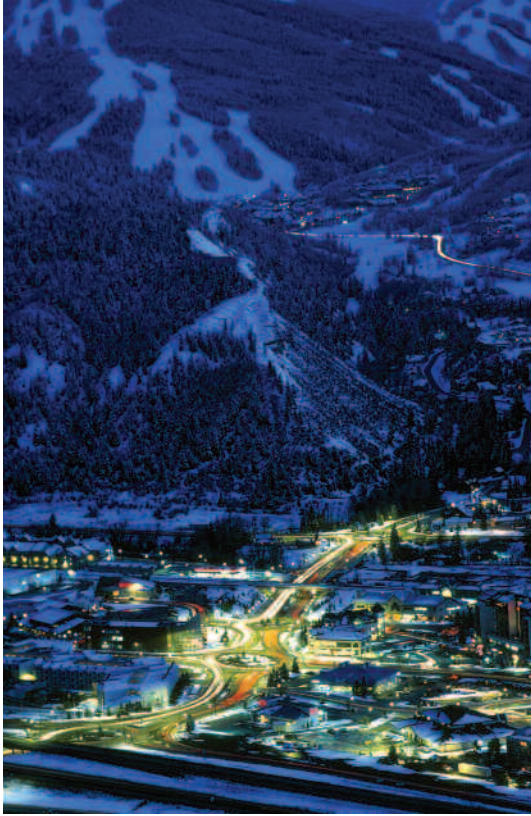
- Will adequate housing be built that is within reach of these new residents, and if so, where will it be?

- If adequate affordable housing will not be built, will workers still travel long distances to service jobs without adequate transportation or housing assistance?
- How will these divergent scenarios affect the schools, hospitals, and retail centers?
- How will the different ethnic groups, particularly the burgeoning Hispanic population, become assimilated into the community?

Eagle County is headed for difficult times, but it has not yet reached the tipping point. The county still has time to take action, but failure to act could threaten the social and economic viability of the county. These housing, planning, and community development issues can be managed and solved over time. Now is the time to start.

The panel believes that the towns and communities here have much more in common than is the general perception locally. The panel noted that each town or village has operated in its own "silo" for so long that each fails to see the differences among them are really only minor.

The panel strongly advises that the towns and villages come together to acknowledge their common values and translate them into a common vision. This action is not difficult but will require entering openly into a public/private partnership that includes government representatives (the county and every town); the business community, including developers; transportation agencies; school officials; and health institutions. A county-wide partnership, working in concert, can have an enormous positive effect on the creation of attainable and affordable housing for the workforce. The partnership can manage future growth to create long-term sustainable communities that adequately house their people and are respectful of the environment.



The growing affordable-housing problem will not self-correct or magically go away. The private market will not generate adequate high-quality housing for low-to-moderate-income workers. Nor can the problem be solved by government fiat. It will require a conscientious effort by leaders from various sectors with vision to create the opportunities.

Avon, Colorado, is home to spectacular views and world-class skiing.

Eagle County is known as one of the top ski resort destinations in the world. The challenge for the county is to gather the political will to commit to becoming a diverse, well-balanced community: one that houses its citizens regardless of income; one where a shared sense of belonging exists, regardless of which town or village is home, and where all parents see a bright future for their children within Eagle County.

Eagle County Demographics

Over the past several decades Eagle County, much like other successful North American winter ski resort areas, has seen a surge of affluent visitors coming for a few days or a week or more to enjoy the winter ski season. More recently, the visits have been expanding into the summer season as well.

With the expansion of this resort-based economy has come an influx of second homebuyers who now account for almost 50 percent of all Eagle County home sales. This influx of wealthy out-of-town buyers has significantly increased the median Eagle County home price (now in excess of \$535,000 for single-family homes and over \$365,000 for condominiums). As a result, many year-round Eagle County residents who provide critical services for the community, including the visitors, have been effectively priced out of the housing market.

According to the Eagle County Housing Department (ECHD), the county has an estimated shortfall of 3,500 affordable-housing units. The 2002 Eagle County Needs Assessment, conducted by RRC Associates, a Boulder-based market-research firm, identified 4,100 households paying more than 30 percent of their household income for housing. RRC adjusted that figure to 4,200 to account for sampling error. Since that needs assessment, 700 affordable units have been built at Miller Ranch, Middle Creek, and Buffalo Ridge. Thus the identified need of 3,500 affordable units is the difference between the 4,200 households identified in 2002 and the 700 affordable units built since then.

Population Growth Projections

The Colorado Department of Local Affairs, the state agency responsible for demographic projections, and the ECHD project that over the next two decades the county's year-round resident population will grow significantly:

- The county's population is projected to grow by 15,700 year-round residents in the next decade from an estimated 49,300 to 65,000 in 2015.
- The county's population is projected to grow by an additional 15,700 year-round residents to 80,700 by 2025.

Job Growth Projections

The Colorado Department of Local Affairs, the ECHD, and RRC Associates have projected significant employment growth over the next two decades as well:

- The county's employment is projected to grow by 18,265 jobs by 2015.
- The county's employment is projected to grow by an additional 18,283 jobs by 2025.

Although some of these new employees will continue to live outside the county and commute from surrounding areas, competitive pressures from surrounding ski resort areas in Summit County (Keystone and Breckenridge) and the restarted oil and gas industry in nearby Garfield County are likely to create more pressure on Eagle County to provide for the housing needs of its future workforce.

Area Median Income

The area median income (AMI) for a family of three—according to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the current average Eagle County family size is 2.74 persons—was \$72,000 in 2005. The majority of the projected new jobs would be in the service sector, paying annual wages in the range of \$36,000 (50 percent of current AMI) to \$86,400 (120 percent of AMI) in 2005 dollars.

Figure 1 Eagle County Housing Affordability Example

All figures in US\$ unless otherwise stated.

Percentage of AMI ^a	50%	80%	100%	120%
Annual income	36,000	52,200	72,000	86,400
Income per hour ^b	17	25	35	42
Affordable annual housing budget ^c	10,800	15,660	21,600	25,920
Affordable monthly housing budget	900	1,305	1,800	2,160
Affordable home price	126,411	183,295	252,821	303,385
Downpayment ^d	(6,321)	(9,165)	(12,641)	(15,169)
Mortgage principal	120,090	174,130	240,180	288,216
Debt service ^e	7,205	10,448	14,411	17,293
Debt service (monthly)	600	871	1,201	1,441
Real estate taxes, insurance, HOA ^f	120	174	240	288
Affordable total monthly housing cost	721	1,045	1,441	1,729
Median 2005 home price	535,350	535,350	535,350	535,350
Downpayment ^d	(26,768)	(26,768)	(26,768)	(26,768)
Mortgage	508,350	508,350	508,350	508,350
Debt service ^e	30,515	30,515	30,515	30,515
Debt service (monthly)	2,543	2,542	2,543	2,543
Real estate taxes, insurance, HOA ^f	509	509	509	509
Total monthly housing cost	3,051	3,051	3,051	3,051
Less monthly affordable housing budget	(900)	(1,305)	(1,800)	(2,160)
Monthly affordable housing shortfall	2,151	1,746	1,251	891
Additional hours to meet housing shortfall ^{b, g}	31	17	9	5

^a Area median income (AMI).

^b Assumes a 40-hour workweek, 52 weeks per year.

^c At 30 percent of annual income.

^d At 5 percent of affordable home price.

^e Assumes a 30-year fixed-rate loan at 6 percent.

^f Homeowners association (HOA) maintenance cost.

^g Additional hours per week at annual income to meet affordable housing shortfall.

Housing Affordability Gap

Given current financing terms available in the marketplace (30-year, 6 percent, fixed-rate loan, with 5 percent down payment and 20 percent of

monthly payment for real estate property taxes, insurance, and homeowners association fees) and limiting to no more than 30 percent household income used for housing payments, 2005 estimates provided by HUD and RRC Associates indicate



the average three-person Eagle County household can afford a house worth about \$253,000. With the median Eagle County home selling for \$535,350 in 2005 according to the local Multiple Listing Service, the household can afford to purchase less than half of the median-priced house sold in this marketplace.

Another way of looking at this issue is to calculate how many additional hours a week the AMI Eagle County household (earning \$72,000 per year) would have to work to be able to afford to purchase a single-family house or condominium at 2005's median sales price (see Figure 1):

- To be able to purchase a single-family house at a median price of \$535,350, the AMI household of three would have to work an additional nine hours a week.
- To be able to purchase a condominium at a median price of \$365,000, the AMI household of three would have to work an additional six hours a week.

Current apartment rents appear to be somewhat more affordable. However, an aging apartment inventory coupled with strong demand coming from increases in population and market pressure to replace apartments with second homes is likely to cause apartment rental rates to increase rapidly in the near future.

Likewise, the affordability gap that now exists between current median household income levels and the cost of available housing in the marketplace is likely to become even greater over the next ten to 20 years because of continuing pressure from buying of second homes and increasing scarcity of developable housing sites in the county.

Projected New Housing Demand

On the basis of the same average Eagle County household size of 2.74 persons, at least 11,500 new housing units will be needed over the next two decades. This increase represents a demand for 500 to 600 new housing units per year to service year-round Eagle County residents over this period, excluding any additional housing demand created by the second-home housing market.

Projected Affordable Housing Demand

RRC Associates' 2005 report *Eagle County Nexus/ Proportionality Analysis for Employee Housing Mitigation Programs* suggests that a minimum of 50 percent of these new housing units will be purchased by households requiring some form of housing assistance because their housing costs will exceed 30 percent of their annual income.



Affordable housing in Eagle County comes in various shapes and colors; much of it is not of acceptable quality, however, and units are often overcrowded.

The panel asserts that the current 3,500-unit shortfall in affordable housing in Eagle County, coupled with the continuing pressure to redevelop areas in the eastern portion of the county for the second-home market, will put even greater stress on the supply of affordable units in the future. The panel estimates that in addition to satisfying the current 3,500-unit shortfall, more than 75 percent of new units built in the future (that is, more than 400 units per year) must be affordable to satisfy the demand for workforce housing over this period.

Employee Housing Assistance Plans

More than 25 local companies have initiated some form of housing assistance for their employees. Why would a diverse group of local companies feel compelled to provide this added benefit to their employees unless they were forced to do so to attract and retain skilled employees? Several of these companies interviewed by the panel indicated that they believe this housing assistance keeps their overall labor costs lower by retaining employees longer and avoiding additional retraining costs.

Historically, most of the employee assistance programs in the area have catered to seasonal em-

ployees of the large resort companies. More recently, as the affordability gap has increased for a broader cross-section of year-round residents providing basic services like medical service, several companies have begun to offer a broad range of assistance, including mortgage assistance and housing subsidies.

Without action, the current affordability gap between the median Eagle County year-round resident's annual salary and the cost of housing will continue to widen over the next decade. Even now a substantial shortfall exists in the number of affordable-housing units for Eagle County's workforce—the people that make the county operate efficiently. Addressing these issues efficiently requires organizing an effort at the county level to coordinate the development of affordable housing for the county's workforce.

Market Conditions

The economy of Eagle County has always been based on natural resources. Hunting and fishing provided the economic base when the Ute tribe was dominant. The European

settlers introduced ranching; mineral extraction was added in the 1870s. Today, however, these activities are very small compared with the current driver of the local economy, natural resources-based recreation.

The mountain slopes and prevailing weather patterns have secured the county's economic success since the opening of the Vail ski resort in 1962. Today Vail and Eagle County have some of the best alpine skiing in the world. The resort's distance from most source markets, however, required that skiers be prepared to spend several days to enjoy this unique powder-skiing experience. As a result, the full-service resort industry was born. Not only were skiers transported up the mountain for the price of a lift ticket, they also required lodging, restaurant meals, shops, and entertainment. This recreation visitor-oriented economy has proved to be remarkably sustainable and has experienced continual growth over more than 45 years.

Buildings were constructed near the base of the ski lifts to provide visitor services, and a real estate development component of the economy was born. In addition to commercial facilities, housing was built for the workers and managers who run the businesses that serve visitors. As skiers come and go, some of them fall in love with the valley and decide they want to own a residence and have more opportunities to enjoy all the recreational experiences.

Although these homebuyers are attracted by the skiing and natural resources of the valley, they change how the local economy works. They bring money with them from outside Eagle County

that is not generated by Eagle County employment. People who are wealthy enough to no longer need to work have the option of retiring in Eagle County on a year-round basis. In doing so, they infuse their stored wealth into the local economy. Those who still need to engage in business in other geographic areas out of choice or necessity have the option of buying a second home (or third or fourth home) in Eagle

County. In doing so, they infuse the local economy with wealth from elsewhere on a part-time basis.

Over the last 20 years or so, the second-home component of the local economy has become increasingly significant as an economic driver. Weekend getaway cabins for families in Denver have been augmented by second homes for vacationers from Chicago, Dallas, Florida, New York state, and elsewhere in the United States. As the fame and international reputation of the skiing grow, visitors from Australia, Germany, Great Britain, and Mexico buy second homes as well. As this demand pressure has continued to push up prices, early buyers have accrued substantial equity in their homes, establishing Eagle County as a good location for real estate investment. The global search for investment opportunities has created yet more demand for real estate in Eagle County. The significance of this trend is that the forces driving the prices of homes in Eagle County are now global in scale and far beyond the

“One of the soundest rules to remember when making forecasts in the field of economics is that whatever is to happen is happening already.”

—Sylvia Porter, 1913–1991
(U.S. journalist and finance expert)

abilities of Eagle County to control. As the economy of Eagle County has become stronger and more complex, the county's housing market has also become more expensive and complicated. The demand for housing is now more complicated than the original dichotomy posed by year-round and seasonal residents.

Market Segmentation

Figures 2 and 3 present a means of segmenting and thinking about the market for housing in Eagle County. The focus of the analysis is on the people and households who desire housing in Eagle County. The lefthand column suggests descriptive labels for loose categories of housing types that are found today in Eagle County. Beneath each label is an indication of the need for assistance beyond what the private market alone is likely to provide.

The last row of Figure 2 represents the original economic base for the economy with its need for seasonal housing through the winter for the young adults who show up for the skiing lifestyle and who operate the lifts and help serve the crush of winter visitors to Eagle County resorts. Major employers recognize that their businesses require a pool of seasonal workers, and they have found ways to build and own or otherwise subsidize housing for those seasonal workers.

Housing construction has become a year-round activity fueled by the tremendous global demand for Eagle County real estate, but the summer months still see a surge of construction. This pattern creates a countervailing seasonal need that in some cases is accommodated in the same housing vacated by departing winter workers. Whereas the young adults who work the ski season tend to be of European descent, a large number of the construction workers are Hispanic, some documented and some not. Note that a meaningful difference exists in the motivation of these people to be in Eagle County. Many winter workers are here for the lifestyle, and the job is the means of achieving the lifestyle. The seasonal construction workers, in sharp contrast, come to the county for the job and the income it provides.

This job-first motivation extends to a significant portion of the winter seasonal workers as well. As hotels and restaurants staff up for the ski-season rush, they hire service workers to clean rooms and wash dishes. These jobs tend to be filled not by the “kids” but rather by immigrant Hispanics along with some Eastern Europeans with temporary work visas and others. For these people the income is reasonably good, so long as they can find housing that fits within their ability to pay. Many of these workers prefer to stay in the area all year and hold multiple jobs to do so. In the early years at least, they need to rent permanent housing because they do not have the money to buy a home, are not yet committed to long-term residency, or are primarily working to send money back to their families. This segment of the market requires entry-level rental units, and the Eagle County resort economy cannot function without the labor services they provide. If the private market does not provide enough of these rental units, some assistance will be needed to keep the economy healthy.

At some point in their careers in the service industry, many of these workers are able to afford market-rate rental units. A supply of market-rate rental units, with vacancy rates about 5 percent, also allows children of residents to form households of their own and stay in Eagle County when they mature.

Figure 2
Eagle County Rental Housing Segmentation

Housing Characteristic/ Assistance Required	Source of Demand	
Rental/ None (market rate)	Year-round residents, possibly with multiple jobs	
Entry-level rental/ Financial assistance	Service industry workers, possibly with multiple jobs High percentage of Hispanics	
Seasonal rental/ Employer subsidy	Winter: November–April Ski resort driven Seasonal workers Young adults	Summer: May–October Construction driven High percentage of Hispanics

Figure 3
Eagle County Ownership Housing Segmentation

Housing Characteristic/ Assistance Required	Source of Demand
Very expensive/ None (market rate)	Second-home buyers for lifestyle and investment Independently wealthy and retirees
Expensive/ None (market rate)	Equity-rich long-term homeowners
Move-up ownership/ None (market rate)	Working middle class
Entry-level for sale/ Financial assistance required	Aspiring to middle class Working couples/young families

Moving to Figure 3, the ownership part of the Eagle County housing market, working couples and young families desire to buy their first home and move onto the bottom rung in America’s middle class. To find first homes, Americans everywhere need affordable units (rental and for sale) and often accept condominiums over single-family homes, smaller units, less-desirable neighborhoods, and longer commutes to achieve their dream. In the 1960s and early 1970s, as the town of Vail grew more expensive at the base of the resort, first-time buyers looked “down valley” in Eagle-Vail and Avon, then Edwards. In the 1980s and 1990s, this down-valley trend continued as real estate everywhere appreciated and first-time opportunities were more available in Eagle and Gypsum.

The economy suffers inefficiency, and commuters suffer inconvenience, as distances between jobs and homes increase. Although Eagle County residents might feel entitled to a more convenient lifestyle and a bucolic rural existence, the reality is that density, traffic, long commutes, and other urban inconveniences come with the growth of the economy and business opportunities that Eagle County enjoys.

With the dramatic run-up in residential real estate prices in the 2000s, however, the inefficiency and inconvenience of lengthy commutes has turned

into a threat to Eagle County’s economy. In other communities sufficient space still exists in commuter suburbs to house the middle-class flight. In Eagle County, however, the constraints on the availability of land have limited the ability of the starting-out middle class to continue to travel farther “down valley.” Eagle County is out of new distant development nodes, and the remaining land in the existing nodes is rapidly being depleted. As a consequence, the prices of all homes have skyrocketed and are now beyond the ability of the entry-level households to buy. Assistance is now needed to retain the growth segment of the middle class.

Without the youth, talents, education, and energy of a vital middle class, further economic development in Eagle County will be limited. Existing employers will be unable to recruit and retain critical skilled staff needed for operation of their businesses.

The private market is very efficient at providing for the housing needs of the remaining categories in figure 3 that represent the middle and top of the market in Eagle County. Those who have managed to secure a solid equity position in ownership housing in Eagle County have been able to continue working for a living in a hot economy, and their housing values have appreciated. Many have taken advantage of this to move up to bigger and nicer homes. Some have stayed close to their jobs, but many have moved “down valley” by choice and have willingly traded a longer commute for housing space, bigger lots, warmer weather, and schools.

Some have found that they are equity rich and live in homes that they recognize they could not afford if they had to purchase them today with their current incomes. Some residents have decided to cash out in recent years and take their wealth to live in less-expensive areas, buying a retirement home with a portion of their Eagle County equity and living off the income from the rest. Their former Eagle County home, however, will often be purchased by a much wealthier household from outside the area for use as a second home. This process constantly erodes the supply of middle-class housing within the existing stock.



The lower elevation in the west end of the county where Gypsum is located means the weather in this part of Eagle County is more moderate than in the area around Vail, with less snow and warmer winter temperatures.

The Community Is Larger Than Any One Town

A town that can accommodate all skill sets and income levels of labor required to run a self-sustaining economy within its borders is the exception rather than the rule. Across America the pattern that has emerged is that a strong local economy requires an integrated metropolitan area composed of multiple cities and unincorporated county areas to achieve a whole. For example, the high-amenity and expensive coastal city of Santa Monica relies on surrounding communities in the Los Angeles metropolitan area to provide service workers and many other components of its economy to achieve the lifestyle the local residents enjoy.

The resort economy that started with the opening of the Vail ski area in the 1960s is much less complicated than that of Los Angeles, but it has still grown beyond the limits of the town of Vail. The community that now supports the economy that has grown over the last 40 years comprises all of the Eagle County areas along the I-70 corridor from Vail Pass to Dotsero, including the Highway 24 corridor from Minturn to the county line (and reaches Leadville as well).

Market Forces Alone Will Not Solve the Problem

The difficulty in finding entry-level housing, especially for-sale housing, in Eagle County is widely recognized as a serious problem, and it has been getting worse over the last decade. Faced with rapidly escalating demand pressure, including global investment pressure, the private market can solve the problem only by creating significant new supply. In an unconstrained environment, such as Dallas or Phoenix, the market would probably be able to respond with only a minor time delay. Eagle County, in sharp contrast, is extremely constrained in the amount of developable land that is available for new housing supply. Coupled with extraordinarily high construction costs in the mountains, the market will continue to supply expensive units before affordable housing for the foreseeable future.

If only local workers were demanding housing, the market would likely achieve a balance, providing housing for all jobholders in the local economy. However, the demand for second homes in Eagle County by wealthy buyers from all over the world creates an external economic force that serves to constantly push the local market off balance.

In private-market theory, hotel housekeepers and restaurant dishwashers could become so scarce that wages would have to be dramatically bid up

by employers. If they have enough money in their pockets to pay high rents on apartments, the development industry will respond to service worker needs by building new rental housing at some future time. For this system to come into equilibrium, however, some portion of the higher wages would be passed on to patrons, and restaurants and hotels would have to become more expensive. The number of visitors to Eagle County would drop as today's number is replaced by a mix of fewer, but more affluent, visitors. Not only would the employed service workers have enough income to rent market-rate housing, but also fewer housekeepers and dishwashers would be needed to serve the lower number of visitors. As a result the county would see fewer skier-days, fewer jobs throughout the economy, less money

for resident incomes, fewer retail sales in down-valley shopping areas, and a general contraction of the economy.

The panel believes that Eagle County presents a case where laissez-faire market solutions would take years to find equilibrium—if they ever did. In the process, the economy of Eagle County would be weakened and slowed. The type of economic imbalance that Eagle County is experiencing requires a conscious, targeted intervention to keep the economy growing. The problem is already here. The need for immediate action is urgent.

Organizing for Success

Available affordable housing is vital to maintaining healthy regional economies as well as community and societal stability. Although this issue affects many individuals, it has a larger influence on the economy as a whole. Without affordable housing, businesses are not able to recruit and retain workers. Without workers, businesses are not able to function efficiently.

In many areas, the cost of housing is becoming a source of concern throughout the community. Population growth has increased the demand for housing beyond the capacity of many communities to supply it. This high demand has resulted in record prices for land, homes, and rental dwellings, even in the face of a softening real estate market. When housing affordability is discussed, local leaders often feel that the housing market is beyond their control, that local government has no role to play in proposing and executing solutions to housing problems.

Historically, local governments have intervened to make safe and affordable housing available to the community. This intervention has proven to stabilize the local economy while providing financial and social benefits of the community.

Eagle County needs to address many of the same challenges that communities across the country are facing today. During the panel's interview process, most of the interviewees representing a variety of local government and community organizations thought that solutions to the affordable housing challenge would require a countywide and multijurisdictional solution. To sustain its economic viability, the county must use all the resources at its disposal. Failure to do so will also make diversifying the local economy difficult in the future. When workers are forced to move farther and farther away from their place of employment to afford housing or live in stable neighborhoods with good schools, their quality of life is diminished, and when individuals face such trade-offs, communities ultimately suffer.

The panel's research has shown that both the public and private sectors have taken great strides to develop workforce and other affordable housing. In fact, as of 2004 more than 2,100 units of targeted housing had been developed throughout Eagle County. Most of the local governments as well as Eagle County have participated in the effort. Proof that housing availability is an economic as well as a social necessity is shown by the fact that more than 20 local employers of all sizes have participated in the development of housing through education, master leasing, loans, and wage increases.

The variety of methods that have been used to ensure that the affordable housing developed remains affordable is impressive. These methods include the following:

- Increased density;
- Deed restrictions;
- Development regulations;
- Land subsidies;
- Zoning code revisions;
- Infill housing;
- Mixed-income development;
- Mixed-use development;
- Downpayment assistance.

The variety of financial mechanisms that have been used over the years demonstrates the options available and the need to cobble together various programs to provide full funding. Such financing resources include the following:

- Colorado Housing Finance Authority:
 - Mortgage revenue bond program;

- Mortgage credit certificate program;
- Industrial revenue bonds;
- HUD-subsidized rents;
- Taxable bonds issued by Eagle County;
- Rural development 515 and 521 programs;
- Mountain Valley Residential Services;
- Real estate transfer tax;
- Tax exemption to enhance affordability;
- 63-20 tax-free bond financing;
- Low-income housing tax credits;
- Employer-supported financing programs;
- Section 8 housing assistance.
- Improve coordination and communications among the various segments of the community and agencies that provide housing and housing services;
- Improve the quality of information that forms the basis for making policies and implementing decisions;
- Promote countywide participation in planning, delivering, and maintaining an inventory of workforce housing;
- Work with local governments to establish compatible housing policies and housing production goals.

Eagle County Housing Coalition

After review of the history of affordable housing in Eagle County and on the basis of what it heard during the interviews, the panel has concluded that this community has reached a point where the methods and resources available for developing affordable housing need to be consolidated and maximized. Therefore, the panel recommends establishing a countywide organization that will bring together all the entities (public and private) that affect the development of housing in Eagle County. The mission of this organization is to plan, finance, and produce housing projects and programs for targeted employees working within Eagle County and to work with local governments on comprehensive housing planning. For the purposes of this report, the panel calls this organization the Eagle County Housing Coalition (ECHC).

The goal of this organization is to provide a central clearinghouse for available housing development information and data to the potential resident or housing developer and, at a minimum, perform the following functions:

- Provide a vehicle for the delivery of workforce housing to a wide range of incomes, including land assemblage and financing;

ECHC Organizational Structure

The organization's structure should reflect its important goals. Providing the regional voice for advocating increased affordable-housing opportunities is an overarching mission of the organization. Although the panel proposes that this organization be more far reaching than a typical housing authority, the ECHC must indeed have the capabilities of a multijurisdictional housing authority.

Executive Director and Staff

The organization needs to be staffed at a level that matches its duties and responsibilities, with staff members who possess certain critical skills and experience to provide professional leadership in producing housing. For example, experience with various financing methods and the overall development process is crucial. Administrative abilities are important to oversee and implement detailed deed restrictions, loan agreements, and other technical documents. Political skills also are critical because this department must coordinate various public and private sector participants. The panel recommends that the housing staff and functions that exist in a couple of local governments be transferred to this coalition.

Board of Directors

The executive director would answer to a board of directors that consists of a member of each elected board from Avon, Eagle, Gypsum, Minturn, Red Cliff, Vail, and Eagle County. Each of the elected boards would select from its own mem-

bers the representative to serve on the ECHC board of directors.

Resource Board

Diversity of participation and expertise are brought to the coalition through a resource board, which will operate in an advisory capacity to aid the board of directors and staff. The composition of this advisory board should include representatives of the development and business communities and key public agencies, such as the Economic Council of Eagle County, the Eagle Valley Chamber of Commerce, the Eagle County Regional Transportation Authority, and the Eagle County School District. Also, each local government can appoint a member, who could be a manager or community development director.

Task Forces

Energy and forward momentum can be brought to the coalition through a series of task forces that accomplish specific, discrete assignments. Task force members can be drawn from the board of directors or resource board, but membership could also provide an opportunity to bring to a specific assignment needed expertise or representation from a particular segment of the community. After the specific assignment is accomplished, the task force is disbanded, but additional task forces are formed to deal with other tasks.

Following are examples of assignments for these task forces:

- Standardizing deed restrictions, loan agreements, and other documents across the various jurisdictions;
- Preparing an inventory of existing housing stock, potential sites for future development, and other resources that can be useful to the coalition;
- Working with local governments to consolidate housing studies, nexus analyses, and housing policies and goals, recognizing that some local diversity will remain.

Funding the ECHC

Sustained funding is essential to the success of this effort. The panel proposes that operating funds come from a variety of sources. Each town

within the service area and the county should contribute a share of operating funding. In addition, Vail Resorts, Beaver Creek, the Economic Council, the Chamber of Commerce, and other private sector entities should contribute to the operating costs of the coalition.

Other potential sources of operating funds include the following:

- Commissions from the sale of deed-restricted units;
- Land-lease payments;
- Stewardship fee for monitoring deed restrictions.

In addition, a reliable dedicated revenue source is needed to generate substantial funds for developments in Eagle County. The voters of Summit County approved a sales tax to support housing. Selecting the specific type of revenue to be applied—sales tax, property tax, or real estate transfer tax—requires careful deliberation with public participation to ascertain the citizens' preferred way to proceed. The system used to provide dedicated funding and that allocates the money also requires careful and transparent planning. Securing voter approval for such a tax requires a broad-based campaign and should be developed as a communitywide initiative rather than simply an ECHC proposal. All affected segments of the community must participate in organizing and supporting the campaign. It will not be possible to make consistent progress in addressing the housing challenges in the county without a dedicated revenue stream.

Potential Programs

The housing coalition can fill numerous needs, but getting started soon and moving quickly are important. It also is important, however, that the organization evolve deliberately and not overreach before sufficient capacity is in place. Examples of programs the coalition could undertake include the following:

- Forming partnerships among local governments, private parties, public agencies, and landowners to produce housing;

- Initiating and executing housing development for targeted population segments;
- Advising and assisting town and county staffs in reviewing and responding to the housing components of development proposals;
- Administering and enforcing deed restrictions and legal agreements;
- Setting standards for buyers and renters for newly available housing units;
- Accessing all available federal and state grant and loan programs;
- Working with the Vail Valley Foundation or other nonprofit organizations to cultivate philanthropic contributions for housing;
- Providing first-time homebuyer training.

The Eagle County Housing Coalition can coordinate the efforts of a diverse array of organizations and private parties. The focus of the organization on housing will emphasize and heighten the sharing of resources for the purpose of creating increased housing opportunities.

Implementation Principles

Healthy, vibrant cities have a diverse workforce and a range of housing choices for residents at all income levels. In recent years, rising housing costs, while providing significant wealth for those fortunate enough to own a house, have priced whole segments of society out of ownership. While some struggle not for ownership, but for safe, decent housing of any kind, many settle for much less.

The development of significant quantities of workforce and affordable housing in Eagle County can help ensure a more sustainable community: a place where employers can focus on their core business rather than expend inordinate time and resources on securing housing so they can attract and retain employees, and a place where residents can achieve the American dream and afford to live and thrive in communities near where they work.

The housing challenges in Eagle County did not materialize overnight, and seeing tangible results in resolving those issues may take many years.

Through the proposed ECHC, this effort can achieve efficiencies of production using the strengths of the private and public sectors in a coordinated effort to achieve sustainability. This commitment should be informed by planning efforts that regularly assess the housing situation in Eagle County and shift priorities as needed.

Vail is consistently ranked as the top ski resort in the country. The Eagle County community needs to channel the same passion that created a renowned resort and tourism industry toward creating a more balanced community. Following are principles that if applied to the housing challenge will ensure that affordable housing will be a valued, communitywide asset.

Create High-Quality Design

Architecture and site planning that fit the context of the surrounding area will add to the perception of quality. Building and landscape materials that age well over time will maximize community acceptance and minimize operating expenses. Well-designed buildings can provide densities that create efficiencies without alarming or disturbing existing residents. Most casual observers will have a wide range of responses when asked “what is the density of this development?” They may not know what 30 dwelling units to the acre looks like compared with 20 dwelling units to the acre, but they sure know what they don’t like.

Locate Housing Sensibly

Workforce housing should be located near services—grocery and retail, transit, schools, parks, and employment. Given Eagle County’s short supply of land, all of these location criteria may not be achievable. The best locations, however, will have the fewest effects on the surrounding community: commute times will be shorter and trip-generation rates will be smaller, lessening traffic and air-quality effects. Locations near transit will encourage the use of local bus service.

Use Sustainable Development Practices

Workforce housing should incorporate sustainable design practices and construction techniques. This housing can be a laboratory for good design, energy efficiency, and sustainable development practices. Redevelopment of brownfields, recycling of underused land, and mixed-use and transit-oriented

development all contribute to long-term financial viability and community acceptance.

Target Specific Market Segments

- **Families:** Amenities to support families, everything from family-friendly design within an apartment, to on-site amenities such as tot lots, basketball hoops, and pedestrian linkages should be considered.
- **Seasonal employees:** Create efficient housing to serve basic needs of short-term employees, such as common areas for eating and gathering places adjacent to private rooms. Housing for seasonal employees should ideally be located within walking distance of their place of employment or within easy reach of transit.

Serve a Range of Incomes

A range of housing types and affordability will serve the widest segment of the community. This approach also allows for upward mobility—someone renting an apartment at 50 percent of market rate will have the ability to save for a downpayment on a house.

- **Rental housing:** Traditionally, rental housing serves families earning 50 to 80 percent of AMI. Most rental subsidies are available for developments serving up to 60 percent of AMI.
- **For-sale housing:** Most restricted for-sale housing programs target 80 to 120 percent of AMI. In Eagle County, a variety of approaches has been tried to target this market. Some programs also restrict buyers to those employed in Eagle County. These programs establish initial sales prices based on maximum incomes and allow a specified amount of appreciation with a cap, usually about 3 to 6 percent annually.

Perceive as a Community Asset

Community acceptance is important to long-term sustainability. Workforce housing developments that pay their fair share of impact fees can help communities pay for needed infrastructure improvements. Construction supports the local economy by creating jobs and using local suppliers and contractors.

Also, residents of workforce communities are an integral part of the larger community, and con-

tribute to the local economy, schools, and civic life. They are responsible for the physical appearance of the development and must participate in the long-term maintenance and management to ensure maintenance over time.

Create a Community Not a Project

A community, a place where people are well integrated with each other and with the larger community, can be created with good design and effective management. Residents will become more engaged in civic and social affairs. Design elements can inspire residents to take pride in and care for their homes. A high-quality common area available to residents improves the quality of life, and the desire for improved quality of life can be contagious, allowing people to take more interest in their own space and possessions. This participation includes not only the physical appearance of the development but also the long-term maintenance and management to ensure the development is well-maintained over time.

High-quality amenities, such as the ballfields at Miller Ranch, also contribute to the well-being of the wider community.

Provide Homeownership Counseling for Renters

In rental developments, providing counseling can help guide residents onto the path of first-time homeownership. This assistance may include the need for credit counseling and advice on repairing damaged credit, or classes promoting financial literacy to help families learn to budget both for everyday expenses and for long-term goals like education and homeownership. Classes in English as a second language may also be desirable, because gaining proficiency in English is the fastest way to improve job skills and wages.

Implementation Tools

Following are descriptions of an assortment of tools that may be helpful to the Eagle County community in addressing the lack of affordable housing. Some may be appropriate for this community, some not. The panel offers them as a broad range of choices.

Land Use Planning and Regulatory Relief

Local land use decisions can either impede or promote the development of housing affordable to the local workforce. Incentives to produce workforce housing are needed if the private sector is to be a willing participant. By offering incentives, the cities and Eagle County can encourage the type, location, and affordability of new housing desired. Those engaged in the production of workforce housing cannot rely only on private and public funding subsidies. Increased costs for land and construction mean that if significant amounts of housing are to be produced, local jurisdictions must contribute through the use of specific tools to minimize production costs, increase efficiency, and reduce regulatory barriers and consequently the risk associated with development.

County and state agencies can also promote workforce housing development through their regulatory powers. One example would be if the ECHC allocated “fair share” housing goals to local jurisdictions that would encourage cities to participate in the production of workforce housing on a more regional basis. If cities understand they are not being asked to bear a disproportionate share of the region’s workforce housing, they may be more likely to aid in its production. If a city does agree to take on a larger share of the region’s housing need because it has the land, political will, and infrastructure to support it, that city could be compensated to help pay for the effects on local resources such as water and sewer capacity, transportation, emergency services, and schools.

Inclusionary Housing Programs

In Eagle County, most if not all local jurisdictions have some type of inclusionary program or inclusionary zoning. The panel’s interviews indicate that the programs vary widely and are often interpreted or applied loosely, usually becoming part of the larger negotiation during the approval process for new development. These programs may be voluntary or mandatory. Both typically include some incentives, such as density bonuses, reduced fees, or reduced parking standards.

Most programs require a percentage of workforce or affordable housing units (10 to 20 percent) to be produced at specified affordability levels (50 to 120 percent of AMI). The threshold size of projects subject to inclusionary programs varies, as does the term of affordability, timing for delivery, and whether the housing will be rental or for sale.

This approach is a popular response across the country because it can create a range of housing choices, housing that would not otherwise be produced by the market. The housing is dispersed throughout the community and because it comes with land, it relieves the challenging problem of finding land for affordable housing. Another advantage of inclusionary zoning programs is that the housing is produced and managed by the private sector. In many instances, market-rate builders unfamiliar with all the financing sources available will team up with a nonprofit developer to produce and manage the inclusionary housing units within their project. These developments are the most successful in markets where, like Eagle County, demand is strong for workforce housing.

Generally speaking, rental housing is more cost-effective to produce under these programs because numerous sources of subsidy are available—specifically, low-income housing tax credits and tax-exempt bonds, which are described in detail later. Income-restricted or deed-restricted for-sale housing, although very desirable for community

acceptance and for a lucky few buyers, is often more expensive to produce. Communities can tailor their inclusionary zoning programs to encourage the production of for-sale housing by giving extra credit or density bonuses in exchange for building for-sale rather than rental housing. All things being equal, a city can produce a larger quantity of restricted rental housing compared to for-sale housing with the same amount of subsidy, such as land, incentives, funding, or all of these.

Inclusionary zoning can be an effective tool, but it should not be used as the only approach for producing workforce housing. The experience with this production model throughout the country seems to suggest that the most successful inclusionary zoning programs are clearly written so the development community knows what to expect; developers need to reduce uncertainty wherever possible. Inclusionary zoning requirements should not unfairly burden the cost of market-rate homes (20 percent seems to be the upper limit). Cities must apply the requirements firmly and consistently while also offering incentives. This carrot-and-stick approach will allow the market to function and inclusionary units will get built.

Payment in lieu of actually building the housing is a common safety valve in many inclusionary zoning programs. Communities need to carefully structure these payments to encourage the development community to build the housing. Another strategy is to allow a land donation in lieu of building the housing; this mechanism solves the most challenging problem in affordable housing production—finding land. If the ECHC accepts land, it can then orchestrate the affordable housing development using private or nonprofit partners.

Zoning

Cities should zone sufficient land for residential uses at densities that encourage the production of workforce housing. Mixed-use zoning can create opportunities for workforce housing to take advantage of air rights over retail and other uses. It also places workforce housing in proximity to retail and other services.

Additional flexibility in the zoning code should allow production of accessory dwelling units (granny flats). Even if these units are not deed restricted,

they will add to the supply of housing that is affordable by design. The recent development at Eagle Ranch has proven the market acceptance of this housing type; many new homeowners have chosen to include the option. Existing homeowners should be allowed to add accessory dwelling units to their properties as long as development standards such as parking and setbacks can be met.

Density

Density is not a word most communities favor, but it is certainly one of the most important tools local jurisdictions have at their disposal. Eagle County's shortage of developable land means that every appropriate parcel should be developed to its maximum, consistent with local housing needs and plans and particularly near schools, parks, public transportation, and retail centers.

User-Friendly Permit Process

The development process entails great risk. Most developers are comfortable taking appropriate risk; it is a fact of life and part of the reason they are compensated—the more risk, the more profit. Developers of workforce housing have smaller profit margins and less ability than market-rate developers to overcome delays in processing, construction price increases, and other variables outside their control. For example, if construction costs increase, affordable-housing developers cannot pass these costs on to renters or buyers because rents and sale prices are restricted. One way communities can encourage the development of affordable housing is to minimize the time and risk associated with permit processing. Providing this relief may be a tall order, given the scrutiny these developments receive.

The American Planning Association's Growing Smart project has established a model statute for development permit processing. It includes time frames for acceptance of and decision making on permit applications. It also authorizes a single, all-inclusive master permit that allows a developer to move forward with a project (see www.planning.org/growingsmart).

Fee Waivers

Most communities impose a variety of fees, including impact fees, capital facility fees, utility connection fees, and school fees, to pay for the marginal

Figure 4
Eagle County Tax-Credit-Financed Developments

Development	City	Number of Units Affordable/Total
Buffalo Ridge	Avon	132/176
Eagle Villas I, II	Eagle	119/120
Holy Cross Village	Gypsum	60/61
Middle Creek	Vail	97/142

Source: Colorado Housing and Finance Authority.

cost burden associated with new development. These fees vary widely but can be quite significant, especially where new infrastructure is triggered by the development. To promote affordable housing development, many communities will waive all or part of these fees. This mechanism can be a great help in reducing the gap associated with affordable housing development, but it can also be a source of anger from others in the community who want everyone to pay a fair share.

Financing Tools

The financing tools available to produce affordable housing are many and varied. Typically the most powerful programs available target housing that is affordable to families earning up to 60 percent of AMI. The majority of these target rental housing. Very few programs are available for workforce housing, targeted at 80 to 120 percent of AMI. In Eagle County, some very successful developments, such as Miller Ranch, targeted this range of housing, but it was only possible because the county gave the land for the project at zero cost to the homeowners.

63-20 Corporations

This vehicle has been used successfully throughout Eagle County to finance and own affordable housing developments. It offers tax advantages while maximizing the benefits of public/private ventures. In this scenario, private development companies with the cooperation of public agencies establish single-purpose nonprofit entities that finance, own, and operate housing. The public

agency is shielded from liability, and the bond financing is backed solely by the revenue from the development. In many cases, development fees are deferred and a portion is paid over time from project revenues. This mechanism ensures the private sector's long-term interest in the financial success and efficient operation of the development. As the bonds are paid off, the real estate asset becomes the property of the public agency without further financial consideration, thereby increasing permanent affordable-housing stock in the community.

Linkage Fees

The basis for collecting linkage fees is the fact that commercial development increases the demand for workforce housing. These programs seem to be highly evolved in jurisdictions in Eagle County. These fees are popular in resort areas where a large number of service jobs are created by resort-related development. The revenue from linkage fees can then be used to provide loans to affordable-housing developers or to acquire land on which to build affordable housing.

Bond Financing

State or local governments can issue taxable and tax-exempt bonds to help fund affordable and workforce housing. This debt instrument is commonly used in multifamily development where project revenues are underwritten to support permanent financing in the form of a mortgage. When developing a portion of a project as affordable, tax-exempt bonds can be used to lower the interest rate relative to taxable bonds or conventional financing.

Low-Income Housing Tax Credits

Established by Congress in 1986, this program has been described as the most successful housing program ever devised, in part because the private sector is responsible for all aspects of financing and production with oversight from public agencies (local, state, and federal). This program uses market forces that help ensure efficiencies. The Colorado Housing and Finance Authority administers this program using a competitive application process. It allows the private sector to garner tax credits in return for providing rental housing at levels affordable to families earning up to 60 percent of the AMI. These tax credits are sold to in-

stitutional investors, and the equity generated is used for the development of rental housing. Several tax-credit-financed developments have been built in Eagle County over the past few years (see Figure 4).

Community Development Block Grants

This program provides a limited amount of federal funding that can be used for predevelopment expenses, such as legal and development fees or site acquisition costs, and downpayment assistance for first-time homebuyers.

HOME Funds

These funds can be used for a similar range of costs as Community Development Block Grant funds.

Section 8 Vouchers

Section 8 is a federal rental-assistance program. Eagle County has a total of eight vouchers for the entire county.

Public/Private/Nonprofit Cooperation

By combining what government does well with the strengths of the private sector, affordable housing production can be streamlined to take advantage of production efficiencies. The proposed Eagle County Housing Coalition will be responsible for setting policy, providing funding, and maintaining oversight throughout the development process and will provide long-term monitoring of affordable housing. The private sector will bring to this effort expertise, creativity, focus, and adaptability to changing conditions.

Affordable housing development has all the complications and risks associated with market-rate development *plus* the complicated regulatory issues related to affordable housing finance. A clear division of labor in this effort is critical. Not uncommonly, public agencies, who by definition demand a certain level of control, get carried away and actually impede the process or take on tasks to which they are not well suited. A classic example is cities that end up owning apartments or mobile home parks, only to discover that every time a rent increase is passed along or a problem arises, the council chambers fill up with irate residents. This scenario does not seem to be in anyone's interest. By selecting competent development partners from the private sector and structuring deals

A Local Model of Mixed-Income Development

The town of Vail has acquired an existing apartment building called Timber Ridge at a high cost to protect the rental stock from being converted to market-rate condominiums. The apartments have not been well maintained and are nearing the end of their useful life. The city is now in negotiations with an affordable-housing developer to replace the apartments with affordable rental units, add additional affordable apartments, and pay off the city's acquisition debt. The economics of the project require that the developer be allowed to build luxury condominiums in addition to the affordable apartments. The main obstacle to this approach appears to be the density of the resulting project. The city is evaluating the proposal. Financing for the project may include a payment by Vail Resorts to purchase affordable/workforce units that are needed to meet the city's inclusionary zoning ordinance for other projects. The town of Vail and Eagle County may also help finance this \$200 million project.

This approach—where the city brings land and land use approvals, a private party acts as the developer/manager, another private party (Vail Resorts) provides funds to meet its inclusionary housing requirement, and the city and county cooperate to provide gap financing—could be a model for future developments in Eagle County. Given the project's location and the proposed amenities (a pedestrian bridge over I-70 to allow Vail employees to walk to work), this project appears to have all the elements needed for success as long as the community understands the benefits of the project and is willing to accept some density in return for those benefits.

correctly, public agencies can afford to “let go” and allow the private sector to do its job.

Land Mining/Land Banking

The shortage of land in Eagle County calls for creative approaches in finding land for housing. While in Eagle County, the panel saw and heard about property that is currently not available but that with some effort could be brought to market. The local school district owns surplus property that could be developed jointly to include housing for teachers and school staff. The Union Pacific Railroad owns significant property, much of which is in superior locations near services and transit, although some of it may require remediation to clean up contamination. The Eagle County fairgrounds could be creatively redeveloped to allow for additional uses while maintaining this important community asset. Scattered site development of small infill parcels could add significant housing opportunities while knitting the fabric of disparate uses together. Finally, the redevelopment of existing developed properties could also be used for workforce housing.

The ECHC can play an important role in advocating for bringing land that is unavailable into play for affordable housing. Many of these cases will require multiyear efforts to realize, a role to which the private sector is not well suited. The ECHC can assemble and acquire land as it becomes available, holding it in preparation for future affordable housing development. The ECHC could then make it available to the private sector through a request for proposal process. In this scenario, land could be leased by the ECHC for rental housing, or, with deed restrictions, used as for-sale housing.

Ground Lease

Ground leases are particularly well suited for rental housing development. Housing can be sold on a ground lease, but it presents significant problems. Public agencies like the proposed ECHC can maintain long-term control through a ground lease that establishes all of the ground rules upfront (affordability, lease payments, participation, reporting). Leases should include performance criteria for management that, if not met, will allow the public agency to replace the property manager; this provision ensures the property is well managed over the life of the project.

Ground leases can also be beneficial for long-term landowners looking for an annuity. Often these individuals will gain tax advantages by taking their compensation over time, rather than in a lump-sum payment that triggers a significant tax event. This structure can also help make rental housing more competitive with for-sale housing, as long as the landowner can afford to take the long view.

Mixed-Income Development

Communities that provide a range of housing, from market rate to affordable, in one development can be more acceptable to adjacent neighbors than 100 percent affordable projects, and they provide a better long-term return on investment (see sidebar page 29).

Planning and Design

Henry Cisneros implies that housing should be more than just shelter and a place to take a shower; it should enhance the quality of one's life. In addressing the problem of providing affordable and workforce housing in Eagle County, the housing and the workers must be integrated into the community so they both benefit from and are a benefit to the larger community. For this reason, the planning and design recommendations grow directly out of and support the observations and recommendations made earlier in this report.

Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles should not be controversial. All the communities in the county can use them as a unifying framework for the planning and design of affordable housing.

- *Provide sufficient land area in appropriate locations for residential uses.* Although small projects are useful and should not be discouraged, the scope of the problem both existing and in terms of anticipated growth requires action on a large scale. Therefore, larger parcels of land in appropriate locations must be designated for affordable housing.
- *Accommodate the daily needs and activities of the residents.* The neighborhood should benefit residents' quality of life. It should have the kinds of uses, amenities, and activities that make the place convenient, enjoyable, and enriching, such as pathways to nearby open space and retail shops.
- *Integrate public spaces with private spaces through site design and architecture.* Good site design, good neighborhood planning, and good urban design are necessary to ensure that everyone in the community has access to community amenities, open space, and an attractive public realm.
- *Respect the existing visual quality of the region.* The views, the setting, and the landscape are very beautiful in Eagle County. They are major contributors to the successful resort environment. Every effort should be made to enhance these features in the process of developing affordable housing by locating buildings so they do not block scenic vistas. Redevelop those older, less-appealing projects that detract from the visual quality of the community.
- *Protect the existing unique qualities of each town or community.* Each town up the valley has its own unique qualities. These qualities need to be protected and enhanced so that the towns do not all evolve into look-alike imitations of one another. Growth can have a homogenizing effect, but good planning and attention to each community's special qualities can prevent that.
- *Produce livable and flexible housing units.* The homes should be well designed, attractive, and

“Everyone needs a place to call home. When night falls, every person confronts the need for a place that is safe, decent, and restful, a place to stow one’s possessions, to clean up, to recharge for the challenges of the next day....”

“These are basic human needs that require the physical space we call home, whether for a night or a lifetime.”

—Henry Cisneros
Former HUD Secretary and
chairman and chief executive officer, American City Vista

Edwards, Colorado, autumn scenery in Eagle County.



well appointed. The quality-of-life benefits that are so important to the resort economy should extend to the homes of the workers. The homes also should be designed for flexibility as the occupants and the community age.

The Process

Good location and design are important for a community to thrive and endure. How affordable housing fits in with the rest of the community and how it is perceived by the residents already there will set the stage for how future projects will be accepted.

Identify the Potential Development Sites

New development should be located close to existing towns and villages, preferably adjoining or close to the town center. Where possible, disturbed sites or sites with existing development that are prime for redevelopment should be used. Finally, the development should be located near existing or future public transportation hubs.

Establish Planning and Development Design Guidelines

Traditional neighborhood design (TND) encourages a development pattern that reflects the characteristics of small, older communities of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In TND the emphasis shifts from the automobile to the pedestrian. Traditional neighborhoods are characterized by mixed land uses, grid street patterns, pedestrian circulation, intensively used open spaces, architectural character, and a sense of community. The panel recommends the use of TND for the following reasons:

- High densities can be accommodated in a manner that makes the community more livable and improves the quality of life.
- TND creates a sense of community.
- TND creates a sense of safety.
- Creative site design and detailing establish aesthetic excellence and instill pride in community.

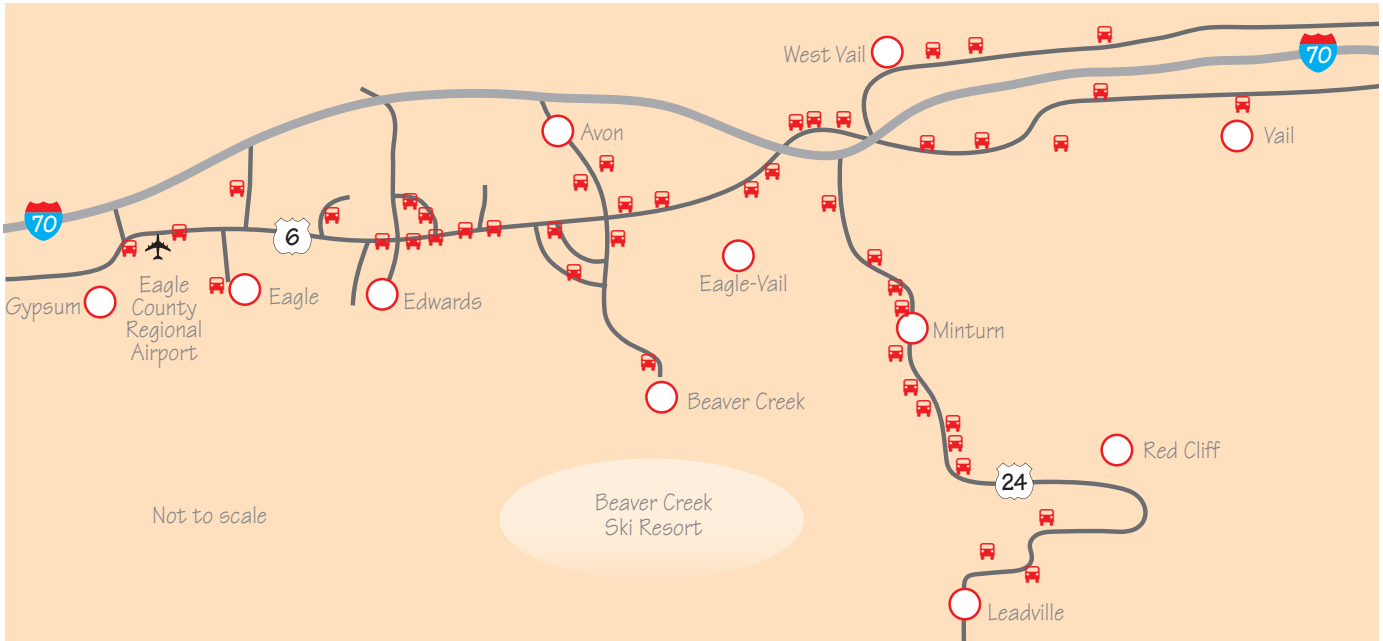
Integrate public open space and connectivity with the existing town or village center and use mixed-income neighborhoods to create a “village” atmosphere. Architectural design should be compatible with the “Mountain Village” vernacular in the style of Beaver Creek. The following neighborhood and community services and amenities should be considered to make the neighborhood complete:

- Community center;
- Post office;
- Day care center;
- Teen center;
- Village green;
- Hiker/biker/walking trails that are connected to the regional system.

Use sustainable and green building design practices and technology to reduce utility and maintenance costs for the residents. Housing for temporary residents should be flexible and useful for other purposes in the off season.

Eagle County Community Implementation Matrix

Translating design goals and objectives into real projects in Eagle County will be complex because of the variation in needs and priorities across the valley. The panel prepared the planning matrix (Figure 5) based on its analysis of each of the geographic areas in the county. The matrix is intended to provide a flexible tool for the county housing authority to rank policies based on the local need, housing type, influence on transit, type of development, and land use.



Public transport map.

The matrix can be expanded and modified in accordance with changes in the county's governing structure or changes in its economy and demographics, and when special opportunities present themselves. The panel envisions that the county will expand the matrix to include other tools, policies, or practices the housing authority may wish to consider.

Terms used in the matrix are discussed in the following sections.

User Need Priority

The panel categorized potential residents of affordable housing into three groups based on their motivation for living in Eagle County:

- *Lifestyle:* Those who live in Eagle County by choice; they may be single or married and strive to participate in the local community. They may have children and they depend on locally available community services.
- *Experience:* Those who come to encounter the lifestyle for a time; they are in Eagle County for a personal life experience. These people are primarily single and enjoy recreation and outdoor life. They may be seasonal workers and will take low wages.

- *Service:* These are people who work in the county primarily for the income. They are willing to commute; they can be single or a family unit and are skilled, semi-skilled, or unskilled workers. They are most dependent on local social services and are willing to move on if work runs out.

Housing Type Priority

Each of the users requires a certain type of housing determined by their motivation. Some will transition through multiple housing types as their situation evolves over time.

- *Rental apartment:* Units are designed for roommates with individual bedrooms around shared common space with higher density. They are multistory with mixed and integrated uses. Rental apartments offer an opportunity to be without a car if they are integrated with transit.
- *Condominium:* Units are designed for individual, family, or shared use. They are often owned and offer an opportunity to build wealth through equity. Designed for higher density and multistory, condominiums can be mixed use. The units are convenient to community amenities and need ready access to both transit and auto.

- *Townhome*: Designed for a beginning family, townhomes are generally less dense than the previous housing types. The townhome community has public green space as well as connectivity to community and transit but also accommodates automobiles.
- *Single-family residence*: Privately owned family residence, private green space, least dense, linked to community and transit but also accommodates the automobile.
- *Link to hub*: Housing location may be remote from the location of a transit hub but nevertheless accessible by local transit linkage or automobile. The transit hub must have adequate parking to accommodate commuters who will drive.
- *Adjacent*: Housing is adjacent to the transit hub and is incorporated with or adjacent to other uses at a low density, such as retail, public buildings, or office space. In communities adjacent to a transit hub, residents can walk or cycle to the hub.
- *Transit-oriented development*: High-density, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly development.

Transit Priority

Each of the housing types and users dictates a relationship to transit often defined by need, land use, type of development, and affordability.

Figure 5
Eagle County Community Implementation Matrix

Priority	Dotsero	Gypsum	Eagle
User Need			
First	Service	Lifestyle	Lifestyle
Second		Service	Service
Third			Heroes ^a
Housing Type			
First	Detached single family	Detached single family	Detached single family
Second	Townhome	Townhome	Townhome
Third	Condominium	Condominium	Condominium
Transit			
First	Link to hub	Link to hub	Link to hub
Second			Adjacent
Third			
Development Type^c			
First	Type 4	Type 4	Type 3/4
Second			
Third			
Land Use			
First	Single-family residential	Single-family residential	Single-family residential
Second			Mixed use
Third			
Sustainability			
First	Sustainable community	Sustainable community	Sustainable community
Second			Financially based
Third			

^a Includes doctors, nurses, teachers, firefighters, and police officers. ^b Transit-oriented development. ^c Type numbers correspond to de

Transit is thoroughly integrated into the design of the community and is easily accessible.

Development Type Priority

The housing type and relationship to transit and community amenities (schools, fitness, medical) dictate the characteristics of the land use and types of sites appropriate for the development. Affordable housing may be integrated with other uses (hospitality, commercial) or may stand alone. The matrix is a guideline for the preferred accommodation and does not exclude consideration of other housing types. The preferred accommodation is, however, strongly recommended because

of the specific socioeconomic situation of each geographic location.

1. *Rental apartment—vertical mixed use—integrated with transit:* Development should be on a transit hub (above retail/commercial); it can be adjacent but separated from a hotel. Projects should be designed to minimize visual effect on the environment and on the valley floor; views are not critical for occupants. The highest level of sustainable design that will have a zero environmental impact on the site should be used.
2. *Condominium—vertical mixed use—adjacent to transit:* Development should be within a

Edwards	Avon	Minturn/ Redbluff Valley	Vail
Lifestyle Service Heroes ^a	Lifestyle Service Heroes ^a	Service Lifestyle	Seasonal Lifestyle
Detached single family/Townhome Condominium Rental apartment	Condominium Townhome Detached single family	Rental apartment Townhome	Rental apartment Condominium
Link to hub Adjacent	Adjacent Link to hub	Adjacent	TOD ^b
Type 3/4	Type 2/3	Type 1/2	Type 1
Single-family residential Mixed use	Mixed use	Mixed use: Midrise	Mixed use: High density
Sustainable community Financially based	Financially based	Sustainable building	Sustainable building

velopments described in text.

quarter mile of a transit hub above retail/commercial but is more likely to be with similar uses sharing common amenities. This development can be on the valley floor or at some elevation; views are valued. Exterior design fits the context; the degree of sustainable investment is financially based. Condominium developments accommodate cars and can be integrated with hotel use.

3. *Townhome—horizontal mixed use—linked to transit*: Development is located with a link to a local transit hub; uses are mixed with similar housing types; it encourages pedestrian links to stores, community, and public uses. Green space is held in common; development is less dense and view corridors are essential. Exterior design fits the context; the degree of sustainable investment is financially based but strives for sustainable infrastructure. This development type accommodates cars.

4. *Detached single family*: Predominantly single use with integration of community uses (schools, community centers), detached single-family development has private green space as well as public. It is the lowest density, and views are high priority. Exterior design fits the context; sustainable community infrastructure. Development is linked to a transit hub with a local transit connection, but it depends on the car.

The matrix can be expanded to include development strategies, assistance, ownership, or amenities appropriate to the locally determined vision.

Conclusion

The Eagle County housing market is subject to upward price pressures that are global in nature. These global pressures are intense and relentless. For this reason, the consequence of not taking concerted action will be the continued worsening of Eagle County's affordable-housing dilemma.

The panel concludes that now is the time to act; but the action must be coordinated across the boundaries of the towns and county. The housing-affordability problem cannot be resolved by jurisdictions working on their own. The solution to this challenge will be found in regional cooperation, a regional vision, and a regional organization to promote and develop affordable housing. This county-wide organization that the panel calls the Eagle County Housing Coalition will bring together all the entities involved in the development of housing in Eagle County. The private sector on its own will not produce affordable housing—especially on the scale that is needed. The public sector on its

own does not have the necessary skills and resources to produce the required housing. The regional public/private partnership the panel has proposed in the ECHC and particularly the organization process to create it are what is truly needed.

For too long the communities in Eagle Valley have stood apart from each other and neglected to communicate or cooperate. This opportunity is perfect to change that. The panel has shown that each community in the valley has its own unique qualities that can be honored and enhanced in the process of resolving the housing affordability crisis. If done in good faith, the process of putting together the ECHC can also show how cooperation and communication can help the communities of Eagle County solve other problems together.

About the Panel

Tony M. Salazar

*Panel Chair
Los Angeles, California*

Salazar oversees all development activity for McCormack Baron Salazar in the western United States, including initiating development, which involves coordinating the planning process; acting as liaison with joint venture partners; interfacing with government officials and local community groups; and coordinating the final design process with marketing, construction, and building management disciplines. He has been instrumental in developing more than 4,000 residential units located in Kansas City, Los Angeles, Pittsburgh, Phoenix, and San Francisco. Developments include six HOPE VI projects, two projects of housing for seniors, seven mixed-income developments, three transit villages, a single-room occupancy project, and five earthquake recovery projects. He has been with the company since 1985.

Before joining the firm, Salazar served as executive director of the Kansas City Neighborhood Alliance, a citywide intermediary, and as executive director of Guadalupe Center, Inc., a social service agency. He currently serves on the boards of the Center for Urban Redevelopment at the University of Pennsylvania and the Enterprise Home Ownership Program in Los Angeles. He is also on Bank of America's National Community Advisory Council. Previously, he served as chair of the board of the National Council of La Raza, the largest Hispanic advocacy organization in the country, and as director of the California Community Foundation, Enterprise Social Investment Corporation, Community Development Research Center at the New School of Social Research, and with several private sector companies.

Salazar has a master's degree in social work, specializing in administration, from the University of Michigan and a BA from the University of Missouri at Kansas City.

Gary Altergott

Houston, Texas

A Morris Architects principal, Altergott is a graduate of the University of Kansas and a member of the American Institute of Architects and Registered Interior Designer. As director of the firm's corporate/commercial studio, he oversees a wide variety of comprehensive architecture and interior design services. For the past 27 years, he has been involved in most of the firm's commercial office buildings, including office, retail, and hospitality projects.

Altergott has served as the firm's director of interior design, providing leadership in a wide variety of projects, including corporate, health care, public assembly, and hotel/resorts. This multidisciplinary experience has enabled a natural transition for his most recent professional focus on urban mixed-use projects. Common traits of this work include public/private partnerships, sustainable design, and connectivity to public transit. Current projects involve a combination of both market-rate and affordable housing, office, retail, and hospitality uses in a single development.

Altergott is a LEED™-accredited professional and heads the firm's Sustainability Task Force. He also currently serves on the executive committee of the Houston chapter of ULI.

Rich Centolella

Santa Monica, California

Centolella is a principal with the planning and landscape architecture firm of EDSA based in Santa Monica, California. Since joining the firm in 1985, he has specialized in resort design, community planning, and large-scale master planning. He was named a principal in 2002 and manages EDSA's Los Angeles office.

Most recently, Centolella was project manager of phase I and II for Sun International's Atlantis Resort and Casino on Paradise Island in the Bahamas. During his work on Atlantis, he was responsible for concept development, construction documentation, and on-site construction observation for the 35-acre resort complex.

Along with his work on Atlantis, Centolella's site design and project management experience include the following: Mohegan Sun Resort, Uncasville, Connecticut; Ritz-Carlton Grand Cayman; Bahia Resort, Benslimane, Morocco; Cabo Negro, Tetouan, Morocco; Doral Golf Resort and Spa, Dade County, Florida; Xanadu, Antalya-Belik, Turkey; Port de Plaisance, St. Maarten, Netherlands Antilles; Vira Vira Country Club, Barquisimeto, Venezuela; and Awosting Reserve, New York.

He is an active member of the American Society of Landscape Architects, American Resort Development Association, and the Urban Land Institute.

Bill Collins

Jackson, Wyoming

Collins has more than 25 years of professional planning experience in communities grappling with critical planning issues. He served as planning director for over two decades in three diverse communities, two of which were resort areas. He served in the oceanfront community of Nags Head, North Carolina, and more recently as the planning director in Teton County, Wyoming. He also served as planning director for Dover, New Hampshire.

In 2004, Collins began a private planning consulting practice and has provided a variety of services to more than 40 clients in the public and private sectors. Among his clients are the resort communities of Teton County and Jackson, Wyoming; Flathead County, Montana; Blaine County, Idaho; and the city of McCall, Idaho.

His career has covered the full range of planning issues encountered in high-growth communities but has focused on growth management, affordable housing, and natural resource protection. Collins is an active member of the American Institute of

Certified Planners and the American Planning Association. He has a master's degree in urban and regional planning.

Diana M. Gonzalez

Miami, Florida

Gonzalez is the president of DMG Consulting Services, Inc., and The Consulting Group of South Florida, Inc. Both firms provide management consulting services in the areas of project management and facility development for nonprofit, government, and for-profit clients. Current clients include the Beacon Council; Miami-Dade County, Florida; Carter Goble Lee; MGT of America; Fitch and Associates; and the Dade Community Foundation.

Before entering the private sector, Gonzalez was employed by Dade County as the director of the Department of Development and Facilities Management. This agency provided central support services in the areas of real estate acquisition and leasing, facility management, and building construction.

She began her career with Metro-Dade County in 1979 and worked for most of her county career in the capital improvement field. County land acquisitions, architect and engineer selection, and capital budget expenditure oversight were some of her responsibilities in the Capital Improvements Division. This division was responsible for the development and implementation of the \$200 million criminal justice program, a general obligation bond program that modernized the county's criminal justice system through the development of new courthouses, jails, and police and support facilities. In 1989, the Capital Improvements Division was merged with the county's facilities and construction management divisions, and Gonzalez was named director of the new Department of Development and Facilities Management.

Gonzalez received her BA from the University of Florida and her master's degree from Northeastern University in 1979. In 1989, she also attended the Senior Executive Program in State and Local Government at the John F. Kennedy School of Government.

Vince McBrien

Chicago, Illinois

McBrien is a managing director of Gryphon Realty Capital Advisors, a Chicago-based partnership focused on acquiring residential properties with potential for adding value.

He has had a broad range of residential investment, financing, and development experience. As president of the Fordham Company, he developed more than 500 luxury condominium units in downtown Chicago. He was active in developing innovative affordable housing product (HUD code and modular) as chief financial officer and vice chairman of Hometown America, which became the largest owner of land-leased manufactured housing communities in the country. He was chief information officer of Boston-based Berkshire Realty, a major owner of market-rate and affordable housing. He also held senior investment positions at Commonfund Realty, an institutional investment adviser serving the educational endowment market, and JMB Realty.

McBrien has been active in ULI, serving on several Councils and Advisory Panels, most recently on the Affordable Housing Council and the ULI/LISC joint panel seeking to increase cooperation between ULI and local not-for-profit community development groups. He received his BA from Columbia University and his MBA from the University of Chicago. He has also been active in his local community, serving on the Plan Commission of Wilmette, Illinois, as the community explores new planning and development initiatives, including providing affordable workforce housing.

Steven E. Spickard

San Francisco, California

In support of the nationally prominent consulting practice in urban development of Economic Research Associates (ERA), Spickard advises private interests and public policy makers on the development and operation of commercial entertainment complexes, museums, convention centers, sports facilities, and other attractions, as well as on the hotel, retail, office, and residential

components that typically round out mixed-use urban developments. Implementation of most of his projects has required both public and private participation.

After assisting in project concept formulation from a market perspective, he typically evaluates project alternatives from perspectives of private developer pro forma financial feasibility and public sector concerns regarding job creation, economic development, and fiscal impacts. During his 28 years with ERA, Spickard has managed projects such as resort community development, waterfront mixed-use development, urban mixed use, coastal lodging in open space, urban entertainment, adaptive use, and military base reuse.

Spickard graduated magna cum laude from the University of California, Berkeley, with a BA in economics. He later returned to Berkeley to earn a master's degree in city and regional planning. He is a charter member of the American Institute of Certified Planners.

Brad Wiblin

San Diego, California

Wiblin joined BRIDGE Housing Corporation in 1994. Before joining BRIDGE, he worked as a land planner and urban designer primarily responsible for the design elements of residential and mixed-use communities. Since joining BRIDGE, he has completed the development of more than 1,100 units of affordable and market-rate housing in Carlsbad, Irvine, San Diego, San Jose, and San Marcos, California. In 1998, Wiblin opened BRIDGE's Southern California office and is currently managing the development of more than 750 units in five developments in four cities.

Wiblin is a former board member of the San Diego Housing Federation, served on the San Diego Inclusionary Housing Task Force, serves on the University of San Diego Residential Real Estate Advisory Board, and is a member of Building Industry Association and the Urban Land Institute. He holds a BS in design from Arizona State University and a master's of city planning from the University of California, Berkeley.