

**Vail Valley Partnership  
Candidate Questionnaire  
2018 Election**

Office Sought: County Commissioner

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**1. Please list past and present community service:**

Community and public service is my passion! As a full time Eagle County resident for the past 27 years I have participated in many great causes ranging from single events such as the highway and river cleanup, Starting Heart's health fairs, Kaboom! playground and Habitat Build days to years of commitment on boards and commissions.

Governor appointed service: Early Childhood Leadership Commission (current), and Early Childhood Councils Advisory Team (2009-2011)

2018-present	Child Welfare Allocation Committee, member
2017-present	Communities that Care, Key Leaders Board, member
2017-present	Early Head Start policy council, member
2015-present	Rural Resort Workforce Investment Board, member
2015-present	Northwest Colorado Council of Governments, board member
2015-present	Climax Area Community Partnership Panel, board member
2015-present	Eagle County Regional Transportation Authority, board member
2015-present	Roaring Fork Transportation Authority, Board chair
2015-present	Golden Eagle Elderly Housing Corporation, board member
2011-present	Family Leadership Training Institute, founding partner, Civics Design Team member
2015-2017	Family Learning Center, Board member
2007-2014	Eagle County School Board, President / Director
2005-2010	Eagle County Head Start Policy Council, Member
2005-2016	Eagle River Youth Coalition, Board member/Secretary
1998-2016	Rocky Mountain Early Childhood Council, Co-Chair

**2. Why are you running for office?**

My goal in running to be your Eagle County Commissioner is to make Eagle County a place where working families succeed, children thrive, young adults find opportunity, and senior citizens age as vital members of the community. This was my campaign promise in 2014 and continues to be my promise to Eagle County voters in 2018.

Every day as your commissioner I strive to create a better reality for our community. Eagle County's new mission and strategic plan is a reflection of these goals: Creating a better Eagle County for all.

In my next term I am committed to working hard to....

**Find ways to Support working families**

Eagle County is a beautiful place to raise a family, but the high cost of living is challenging for many. I will continue to work to assure that our working families have affordable access to health care, child care, transportation, housing and opportunity.

**Cherish and protect our natural resources**

The natural beauty of our county is an integral part of our lives and livelihood. I will continue to protect these resources and ensure that development is strategic, balanced, and mindful of our magnificent landscapes.

**Sustain the momentum of economic recovery**

The economic recovery brings opportunities to re-invest and re-focus our resources for maximum impact. I am committed to overcoming challenges in recruiting, retaining and training quality employees.

Innovation and collaboration is the mechanism to achieving these shared goals. Healthy dialog and cooperation between residents, local governing agencies, businesses, and non-profits supports proactive planning for community success.

**3. If you are elected, what are three accomplishments you would like completed by the end of your term, and how will you work to get them done?**

I'm proud of what Eagle County accomplished over the past 4 years and we have laid the ground work for many more accomplishments in the next four.

1. I want to assure anyone needing mental health services can easily assess those resources. Thanks to voter-approved new revenue for mental health supports, Eagle County facilitated a citizen's advisory committee to guide and recommend initiatives to develop a comprehensive mental health system. An early success of this initiative is that in 2018 public, private, and parochial schools throughout the county will have significantly more school-based counselors serving children and youth in-need. More services are on the horizon.

2. The Eagle County Climate Action Plan, written in 2016 and adopted by 18 towns, municipalities, businesses and organizations, is a reflection of my commitment to protect our natural environment. The county will continue to lead on this issue and support efforts to achieve our community goal of 25% CO2 reductions by 2025. Some of Eagle County's many multi-faceted approaches include enhanced recycling innovations at the landfill, reductions in energy use internally, community education, and public will-building.

3. The open space purchases over the past 10+ years have been a crucial to helping maintain our quality of life here in the valley. A renewal of the Open Space tax will likely be on the ballot this year. An extension will allow the Open Space Program to plan for future open space acquisitions, improvements,

short and long-term maintenance, restoration and stewardship of its open space lands and assure our ability to protect the beauty that makes Eagle County special.

Additionally, I commit to supporting our workforce by increasing the availability of affordable housing and high quality childcare programs.

#### **4. What do you think are the top three economic priorities for Eagle County the next three years?**

Eagle County is an amazing place to live but it can be hard for young adults and newcomers to get that first foothold. The Eagle County Economic Development Plan provides us a roadmap for economic sustainability. Our economy will benefit if we tackle issues like transportation, workforce housing, health care costs and quality child care.

As a member of the ECO transit board we recently completed the Transit Development Plan (TDP) and immediately implemented many of the recommendations. We have made transit use easier through route changes, increased service to accommodate demand, improved payment options through the implementation of a smartphone fare payment option, and improved coordination with Avon, Beaver Creek and Vail for a more seamless rider experience. In the next year we are looking to initiate a comprehensive multimodal transportation plan which will include strategies for completion of the Eagle Valley Trail and sustainable funding for flight guarantees at the Eagle County Airport.

Quality transportation services and affordable housing are closely linked. An improvement to the regional bus system with faster and more convenient service supports our affordable housing neighborhoods.

The current lack of child care means parents can't work. Poor quality child care leads to stress, dissatisfaction and absenteeism. Supporting high quality child care contributes \$2.25 of economic development for every dollar spent. Eagle County has completed a countywide early childhood strategic plan and the first recommendations have been implemented. A million dollars in investments supports child care worker retention, increased quality, and subsidized care for working families. We need to continue these investments as there are benefits for parents, employers and our economy.

#### **5. How will you make the business community a priority in the budget & legislative process?**

I believe that the budget always reflects the priorities of an organization. I will continue to make the business community a priority by financially supporting the Vail Valley Partnership's develop and implementation of the Eagle County Economic Development Plan. In 2017 I also supported the creation of the Small Business Development Center by the Vail Centre.

Eagle County is the fiscal agent for the North West Colorado Council of Governments (NWCCOG) and will continue in that role, benefiting new businesses in Eagle County and the region through the lending of low cost loans for new businesses.

Increased flights to our local airport bring visitors to our community and supports businesses. I will continue to support the flight guarantees necessary to entice airlines to add service.

The Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP) is a state funded program which provides financial support to parents in need of child care in order for them to work or increase their education.

Unfortunately, there are more families in need than the funding provided by the State. For the past 4 years Eagle County has doubled both CCCAP funding and number of families enrolled. I will assure that funding is continued.

Legislation that impact businesses is more easily addressed at the State level but I will do whatever is necessary to advocate at the state and local level for adjustments to the Gallagher Amendment which unfairly burdens business with taxing levels and impacts the budgets of our local taxing authorities.

**6. Will you support and sponsor legislation to support the creation of Multiple Employer Welfare Arrangements (“association group”) health care plans?**

Eagle County has waited years for a Federal or State level health care affordability fix, but with their failure to act, we must. I have been involved with the efforts to create this type of innovative plan from its inception. I applaud the efforts by Vail Valley Partnership’s, Chris Romer, and the Eagle County Mayors and Managers group to find creative innovative solutions to the complicated problem of health care affordability. I am impressed by Vail Valley Partnership’s persistence, optimism and innovative leadership to overcome every identified roadblock. I am confident that by working collaboratively we will find an effective solution. I would be available to provide testimony to legislators if necessary and would be happy to advocate with key decision makers as needed.

In February 2018 we issued three challenges to our employees—Civility, Collaboration and Innovation. This health care solution is an excellent example of all three.

Civility is often thought of as just being polite but it so much more. Civility is about disagreeing without disrespect, trying to find common ground for dialogue and listening beyond one’s own point of view. Interactions with stakeholders including the Commissioner of Insurance have been an opportunity to exercise civility.

I believe our only way forward in solving complex issues is through collaboration and there aren’t many problems more complex than health insurance. The advice provided to staff in February is fully applicable to this solution—“Be bold in your vision, and relentless in execution. Together, we will learn from our failures and celebrate our successes”. I look forward to seeing what we can accomplish together.

**7. How will you work to make Eagle County a more business friendly environment? Please explain how you would work to engage business leaders.**

As in most situations, communication is key! How do we best insure that a business owner or perspective business looking to operate here in the valley can access the information and resources they need? Strategies identified in the 2016 Economic Development Plan outline a strategic way forward and I support the implantation of the Economic Development Plan and the development of the Vail Valley Means Business website for the tools it provides and for being the single source of contact for inquiries.

The VVP Workforce Survey provides annual and trend data regarding the factors influencing business success. With this information we have been able to strategically address the most pressing issues. In 2018 housing continues to be the top priority to address for our workforce. We have engaged business owners, developers and other key stakeholders in the development of the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee. This provides us an ongoing opportunity to engage the business community, test ideas and engage them in finding solutions.

Closely tied to the affordable housing issue is the rewrite of our land use codes which is underway. The rewrite will have a direct impact on the development community, making the process more predictable, understandable and easier to navigate. Communicating directly with the developers is key to getting the rewrite correct. We have engaged them for input and feedback at every stage of the rewrite. We want a business friendly product when the codes are complete.

**8. Colorado is forecast to continue to grow, including our region. How should we plan for growth, if at all?**

It is imperative that Eagle County plans for growth and changing demographics. Some of the ways Eagle County is preparing for this transformation are through the utilization of smart growth principals, transportation planning, land use regulations, and environmental sustainability.

When considering modes of transportation throughout the valley the changing demographics will require that a multimodal transportation plan prepares for the transportation needs of an older population.

Smart growth principals are being incorporated into the current re-write of the land use codes so developers can begin to shift their proposals to incorporate our changing needs.

The demographer's projection of an additional 30,000 people in the county by 2040 requires that we work to intentionally protect our environment. People are drawn here for the natural beauty and the recreational opportunities it provides. The protection of our wildlife, clean water and open spaces will entice people to both relocate and remain here.

Although net migration into the county is increasing it is the changing demographics of the migration that we need to look to influence. We need to support working families to remain in the county and

slow their outward migration. Affordable housing and child care efforts underway will help to slow this trend. We also need to plan for the inward migration of older retirees and the changes they can create in a community. Careful and continuous monitoring and analysis of business, employment, and demographic indicators will provide decision-makers and stakeholders the tools needed to make thoughtful, data-based decisions to manage growth.

**9. What role should the county (or state) have in addressing affordable (workforce) housing?**

I believe Eagle County has a huge responsibility in addressing affordable and workforce housing. Housing costs, whether renting or buying, is a major factor affecting the high cost of living in Eagle County. Our ability to retain families and middle income earners is vital to the sustainability of a healthy community. The ability to recruit and retain a high-quality workforce is directly correlated to a worker's ability to establish roots in the community near their workplace.

Eagle County has approved 683 affordable housing units since 2015 and through focused attention and collaboration over 1,200 units have also been approved throughout the county. Eagle County has created an Affordable Housing Advisory Committee which is developing a set of tools for affordable housing projects. We commissioned the completion of the Housing Needs and Solutions Report in 2018 and multiple developers and municipalities are using that information to develop affordable projects.

Eagle County operates the Valley Home Store which manages most of the affordable housing inventory for the many towns and the county. They also coordinate the down-payment assistance program, and offer home buying and credit counseling classes.

We have an obligation to not only increase our affordable housing stock but also to assure that the housing and neighborhoods created are at a quality level in which our residents want to live and create their community. The implementation of The Healthy Community Index assists developers and planners in understanding expectations of key components of a welcoming, vigorous, healthy community. Eagle County is leading the way on affordable housing utilizing the many tools available and the collaborative efforts of our partners.

**10. What role should the county (or state) have in addressing regional transportation (including traffic on the I-70 corridor and increasing flight service to Eagle County Regional Airport) solutions?**

Eagle County has a major stake in assuring I-70 traffic runs smoothly so the county needs to do everything possible to assist C-Dot in maintain and improving service on I-70.

We are fortunate to have Commissioner Ryan participating on the I-70 coalition on our behalf which provides us the opportunity to testify regarding our regional needs and assures that the coalition understands and priorities our local projects.

The Eagle County Airport is an important economic driver for the valley. Knowing that guests who arrive through the airport stay longer and spend upwards of \$350 per day, we have supported the EGE air alliance with a contribution each year. The EGE Air Alliance works to entice airlines to increase their travel schedules to the regional airport through the use of flight guarantees. And, although flight guarantees have been successful the Air Alliance has to work each year to secure funding from the County, municipalities and business partners. A more permanent funding source should be folded into a multimodal transportation plan.

The airport is the first and last impression visitors have of our valley and the new 30 million dollar renovation and expansion project will assure that it is a world class experience for all travelers. The addition of flight bridges will enhance the loading and unloading experience and the additional lounge and restaurant spaces will make awaiting a flight more enjoyable. Visitors who have a positive experience will return, leading airlines to add flights and reducing the need for flight guarantees. It is a positive investment loop.

**11. All candidates have been invited to participate in the Vail Board of Realtors/Vail Valley Partnership sponsored Candidate Debate (date TBD). Do you plan to participate? If no, please explain why.**

Of course I will be there to participate. Dialogue is good! My plan is to work to win this election and continue as your commissioner which means I need to take every opportunity to engage constituents who hold a range of perspectives. It is the varied perspectives that make Eagle County what it is.