Eagle-Vail
Colorado

Sustaining Community in the Heart of Vail Valley

June 22-27, 2008
An Advisory Services Panel Report

ULI—the Urban Land Institute
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- 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.

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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. 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, participants 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, academics, 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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About ULI Advisory Services
On behalf of the Urban Land Institute, the panel thanks the Eagle-Vail Property Owners Association, Eagle County School District, and Eagle-Vail Metropolitan District for sponsoring this study of the Eagle-Vail community. The panel extends special thanks to Neil Mulholland, an Eagle-Vail homeowner and volunteer, for preparing comprehensive briefing materials, coordinating site visits, and arranging more than 100 interviews with community members and other individuals.

The panel also thanks the Eagle-Vail Development Committee as well as Tom Allender, Steve Barber, Paul Hields, Jeff Layman, Ken Marchetti, John Nichols, Brian Nolan, and Tracy Walters for contributing their time in helping prepare the panel. Finally, the panel appreciates the participation of the many community members of Eagle-Vail and other individuals who contributed their time, experience, and knowledge of Eagle-Vail and the broader Vail Valley. Their participation was vital to the recommendations set forth in this report.
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Eagle-Vail is a planned community nestled within the Vail Valley in unincorporated Eagle County, Colorado. The community is situated between the world-class Vail and Beaver Creek ski resorts, approximately 100 miles west of Denver, Colorado. Eagle-Vail has an enduring reputation as a family-oriented residential mountain community located within a top-tier resort area.

Today, Eagle-Vail's physical plan remains substantially true to the original vision established by the community's developer, Fred Green, in the early 1970s. Eagle-Vail includes approximately 1,480 residential units; a 104-acre golf course; 46 acres of pocket parks; swimming, tennis, and community facilities; and two schools. Eagle-Vail experienced continuous development from the 1970s through the 1990s.

With only about a dozen platted and vacant parcels remaining available, the community recently entered a more mature phase marked by a slower pace of development. In addition, some of Eagle-Vail's recreational assets are in need of capital improvements to address deferred maintenance and to meet contemporary expectations. By contrast, other areas in the Vail Valley are benefitting from significant investment, which is anticipated to continue into the foreseeable future.

In recent years, the popularity of the Vail Valley as a second-home and resort market has influenced the demographic composition of Eagle-Vail. At the time of its development, Eagle-Vail was considered too far west of Vail to be a true resort community. Homes and building sites were marketed to individuals living or relocating to the Vail Valley as well as to second-home owners. As in many other resort areas, however, housing in Eagle-Vail is becoming increasingly unaffordable to many families that wish to live and work in the area, despite substantial employment growth associated with the resorts—and, for many, the skyrocketing price of gasoline has made living reasonably close to work imperative.

These transitions have raised important questions about the direction Eagle-Vail should take in the future. The sponsors invited the ULI Advisory Services panel to help the community assess, rethink, and update the original Eagle-Vail master plan. The panel's challenge was to create a long-term and sustainable plan for Eagle-Vail's public and private assets to achieve “what it can and wants to be” rather than “what it has been for the last 30 years.” Although many Eagle-Vail residents and property owners are concerned that investment in and enhancement of Eagle-Vail are reaching an end, the ULI Advisory Services panel found that the community is now entering a promising new phase of opportunity based on the superior quality of its beauty, family atmosphere, and location.

**Background**

Because Eagle-Vail is a mature community where the physical, market, and social context is already well defined, the task of preparing a plan for it is
substantially different from creating a plan for a new development. This section provides background information on the existing community context in which the panel formed its recommendations.

Community Identity

Eagle-Vail’s character as a mountain residential community is one of its finest distinguishing features. Its open spaces, the Eagle River, mature pines, and resident wildlife are key elements of its unique identity. The gracious expanses of manicured golf turf and other parkland in the community ensure panoramic views of the Vail Valley from many locations throughout Eagle-Vail. Residents and visitors also have ski-out and hiking access to U.S. Forest Service land, offering a seemingly untrammeled nature experience.

Both full-time residents and second-home owners recognize Eagle-Vail as offering a safe and relaxed community for many types of families to enjoy abundant recreational opportunities. The community is home to aging, long-term residents and newer, younger residents with children. In fact, Eagle-Vail has a growing number of second-home buyers attracted by its moderate prices, location, and child-friendly atmosphere. The community serves the market for full-time residents, seasonal residents, short-term renters, and long-term renters with a mix of townhouses, condominiums, and detached homes.

Despite these qualities, the character and condition of some of Eagle-Vail’s housing stock has become outdated and deteriorated. Much of the community was constructed in the 1970s and 1980s, which set the architectural tone for Eagle-Vail. In addition, the exterior of some homes shows signs of deferred maintenance. Deferred maintenance, even if limited to a few houses, can have a detrimental effect on entire neighborhoods.

Recreational Assets

The golf course and other recreational assets spread throughout the community function as the basic unifying elements of Eagle-Vail. These assets were integral to the original design for Eagle-Vail and have been a key motivation for families to join the community and to stay. They offer a variety of individual gathering places for family or friends and suit diverse sporting and recreational pursuits. Because these
assets are dispersed, however, they do not provide community-scale gathering places that could effectively be used for arts, entertainment, or other programming that would promote community interaction.

Eagle-Vail’s leadership has called into question whether operation of the golf course constitutes the highest and best use for the land, and whether the fact that Eagle-Vail property owners invested in a master-planned golf community is important in making decisions about the course. Eagle-Vail’s golf course is one of 15 in the Vail Valley, and three more golf courses are reportedly in the planning stages. Although the golf course has historically been a revenue generator for the community, it is expensive to operate and has required property tax subsidies to cover operational shortfalls in recent years. This situation has caused some community members to raise questions about economic prudence and equity.

In addition, many recreational assets in the community, including the golf course, have suffered from deferred maintenance because the Eagle-Vail Metropolitan District has not fully funded its capital reserves.

Schools

Serving 5,100 students, the Eagle County School District (ECSD) covers 2,500 square miles of mountain terrain in the central Colorado Rockies. The ECSD serves diverse communities ranging from the international ski resorts of Vail and Beaver Creek to the small towns of Minturn, Red Cliff, Edwards, Eagle, and Gypsum. The ECSD serves the entire county, excluding Basalt, with eight elementary schools, four middle schools, two high schools, one alternative school, and one charter school.

The ULI panel considered three ECSD schools serving the Eagle-Vail area: Battle Mountain High School (grades 9–12), Meadow Mountain Elementary School (grades K–5), and Minturn Middle School (grades 6–8). In November 2006, Eagle County voters approved a $128 million bond question, and a portion of the proceeds is being used to construct a 1,000-student high school to replace Battle Mountain High School. Located in Edwards, the new Battle Mountain High School will be completed in January 2010. With the pending closure of the existing Battle Mountain High School, the ECSD is considering the future use or surplus disposition of this facility and the surrounding land.

Despite growth in the student population of the district, Meadow Mountain Elementary School and Minturn Middle School are underused locations because families have been migrating down valley (west) from the Eagle-Vail area in pursuit of larger, more affordable family housing. Enrollment at each school is about 175 students in buildings constructed for 300 and 420 students, respectively. Projections indicate that the student population in each school will level off at about 150 students. The ECSD has indicated a need for just one school in this area (Eagle-Vail or Minturn), comprising grades K–8, for approximately 350 students.

Governance

Eagle-Vail is remarkable for the depth of commitment and passion of its leadership. However, the panel found that the community is in search of a more effective and economical way to manage and govern itself. Currently, three entities govern various aspects of Eagle-Vail:

A community park.

Meadow Mountain Elementary School.
The relationship between the EVPOA and the EVMD has historically been uncoordinated. In recent years, however, the two bodies have derived mutual benefits from multiple cooperative efforts. The EVMD serves every owner who is part of the EVPOA, and recent recognition of the benefit of aligning vision and objectives has been fruitful to both entities and, consequently, to the community.

Eagle-Vail Metropolitan District. The EVMD is a political subdivision of the state of Colorado, governed by an elected board of five directors. The EVMD was originally established to provide services for fire protection, water distribution, and parks and recreation facilities to its constituents. Under its county-approved service plan, it is limited to those services. The EVMD’s current role is almost exclusively limited to maintenance and operation of the parks and recreational facilities in Eagle-Vail. Its role in providing fire protection services was abandoned with the creation and expansion of the Eagle River Fire Protection District, which now provides fire protection services for Eagle-Vail and most of the surrounding communities. Although EVMD maintains several valuable water rights, its water system was conveyed to the Eagle River Water and Sanitation District, which manages the water supply for most surrounding communities as well.

Eagle County provides police services, road construction and maintenance, construction permitting, zoning enforcement, zoning amendments, and uses by special review.

Eagle-Vail Metropolitan District (EVMD) owns and manages the recreational assets.

Eagle-Vail Property Owners Association (EVPOA) administers design review and covenant enforcement.

The panel was asked to focus its research and recommendations on land within the Eagle-Vail community and three Eagle County schools: Battle Mountain High School, Minturn Middle School, and Meadow Mountain Elementary School.

Eagle-Vail is located on U.S. 6 just east of the town of Avon and approximately ten miles west of the town of Vail. The study area boundaries for Eagle-Vail include all property within the EVMD. Eagle-Vail is bordered on the south and west by U.S. Forest Service land, on the east by ECSD and Colorado State Land Board property, and on the north by the Eagle River and Interstate 70. The community is primarily located south of U.S. 6 although some homes, commercial uses, two churches, and a portion of the golf course are located between U.S. 6 and the Eagle River.
The study area includes all recreational assets owned and operated by the EVMD, including the 104-acre, 18-hole golf course, practice facility, and clubhouse; a portion of the nine-hole, par-three golf course; passive parks; swimming, tennis, basketball, and skateboarding facilities; a baseball diamond and a soccer field; and a community clubhouse.

Battle Mountain High School and Meadow Mountain Elementary School share a campus on the eastern boundary of Eagle-Vail, south of U.S. 6. The campus includes the school buildings, the parking area, the school bus garage, and a running track. A portion of the nine-hole, par-three golf course is also located on the campus. Minturn Middle School is located in the town of Minturn, approximately 6.5 miles east of Eagle-Vail.

The Panel’s Assignment

The sponsors directed the ULI Advisory Services panel to focus on the following key questions:

- How would the panel recommend that the district move forward with the use or surplus disposition of the Battle Mountain High School, Minturn Middle School, and Meadow Mountain Elementary School sites, given that internal funding or bonding capacity is not an option for new school construction?

- Does golf in Eagle-Vail have a future? If so, what should be done to enhance Eagle-Vail’s golf course operations? If not, what should be done with the golf course facilities?

- On the basis of trends in other areas of the country, what can the EVMD do with its assets over the next ten years to proactively accommodate or facilitate the community’s pending cultural and recreational needs?

- Should Eagle-Vail offer extensive regional recreational facilities that depend on nonresident use and funding, or should the facilities be focused primarily for Eagle-Vail residents?

- What proven management methods can be effectively applied to the operation of Eagle-Vail’s recreation assets and programs?

- What physical facilities and infrastructure will be needed to support the panel’s recommendations? What should be done with the golf course clubhouse and pavilion? Would creating a unified Eagle-Vail community center be feasible? If so, what uses should the community center contain or support?

- What can Eagle-Vail do to encourage, support, and maintain on a long-term basis a balanced diversified residential population of primary and secondary homeowners, young families to retirees, full-time workers, and professionals?

- Would modifying Eagle-Vail’s residential zone lot bulk restrictions help property owners make the existing inventory of residential properties more accommodating and functional to live in?

- How can individual Eagle-Vail property owners be motivated to update their property facades and landscaping?

- What can Eagle-Vail do to encourage environmentally responsible and thoughtful developments and renovations?

- What can Eagle-Vail do to maintain a balanced diversity in housing?

- What can Eagle-Vail do to enhance the land uses along Eagle Road from the U.S. 6 entrance to Eagle Drive?

- What can Eagle-Vail do to facilitate better communitywide access to public transportation?

- What roles should the EVMD, the EVPOA, and the ECSD take to support the community’s needs and the panel’s recommendations?

- How should Eagle-Vail position itself relative to its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to create a positive community identity and planning strategy for the next ten years?

Summary of the Panel’s Recommendations

The panel’s recommendations focused on four main areas.

Market Potential

Market opportunities exist to increase the availability and diversity of housing in Eagle-Vail. Pursuing these opportunities will ensure the resiliency of the Eagle-
Vail community and create additional flexibility for residents and property owners to meet their changing housing needs. Providing housing available to and attainable by households with a wide mix of incomes will help meet the demand for new housing from the local workforce as well as retirees, young families, seniors, and those who want second homes. Increasingly, the economic vitality of the Vail Valley is being challenged by the lack of workforce housing, and Eagle-Vail can benefit by providing some of this need.

The market for Eagle-Vail’s 18-hole golf course is reasonably stable and will provide long-term sustainability for the community’s golf operations. Eagle-Vail should proactively market the course to summer visitors, who could potentially increase golf play and revenues. This strategy, however, will require limiting nongolf uses of the course to meet the expectations of such visitors. The par-three golf course should be redeveloped into mixed-income housing.

Development Strategies

The ECSD should redevelop Battle Mountain High School as a K–8 facility and relocate operations at Minturn Middle School and Meadow Mountain Elementary School to this location. This strategy will require renovation of the building, for which funding can be found from a variety of sources. Eagle-Vail should proactively encourage redevelopment of EVMD lands and a portion of the ECSD campus for a mix of housing, neighborhood commercial, and community and recreational facilities.

Planning and Design

Redevelopment in Eagle-Vail should fit in with the area’s ecological context, create new gathering places, and support environmentally sustainable building and land management practices. The development plan should be focused on establishing a community center (the “Village Greens”), a renovated Battle Mountain High School site, a waterfront mixed-use district, and a diverse mix of new housing.

Implementation

Uniting the leadership and authorities of the EVMD and the EVPOA in a single Eagle-Vail Leadership Board (EVLB) will be the single most important step in achieving the other recommendations advanced by the panel’s report. This integration will allow Eagle-Vail to find additional value in its community by expanding community management functions, improving recreational assets, raising additional revenues, and achieving stricter adherence to the community’s covenants and restrictions. Finally, the EVLB should hire its own master developer and provide a leadership role in future redevelopment activities.
Effecting meaningful community change requires a unity of vision, purpose, and action. The panel found that it needed to craft a common vision for Eagle-Vail and guiding principles to tie its recommendations together in support of a common goal.

The panel designed the vision to honor the community’s past while creating an exciting and sustainable future. The vision and guiding principles attempt to balance the diverse perspectives the panel heard during the interviews and the panel’s own observations during its tour and visits to the community.

The panel encourages Eagle-Vail’s leadership to engage property owners and residents around these subjects as broadly and inclusively as possible, and eventually to adopt a formal consensus-based vision statement and guiding principles of its own. Following is the panel’s proposed vision statement: “Eagle-Vail is a welcoming, sustainable mountain residential community, located between two world-class resort communities.”

The panel found that each of following guiding principles is an important element of fostering the panel’s vision for Eagle-Vail:

- **Evolve over time.** Vibrant communities should evolve over time, and this plan recognizes that new development should be part of a gradual process that unfolds over the next five to ten years.

- **Enhance lifestyle.** This plan seeks to provide for a present and future that are as rich as the past.

- **Provide gathering places.** Gathering places are essential for community cohesion. This plan includes plazas where all age groups can congregate, as well as open spaces and pocket parks.

- **Diversify housing.** The plan reflects a commitment to provide a variety of housing options—to welcome those who need attainable and workforce housing, so renters can become homeowner—
ers and so families can obtain different housing to meet their changing needs.

- Enhance community services and recreation options. Basic services are a part of a complete community. Daycare, post offices, cafés, and essential services should be available. In addition, Eagle-Vail should be a place where healthy living, outdoor activities, and recreation are at the center of community life.

- Achieve sustainability. Eagle-Vail has made a commitment to sustainability and the intelligent use of resources. This plan anticipates that new buildings in Eagle-Vail will respond to that principle and that future community decisions will take into account environmental impacts and benefits.
Eagle-Vail’s long-term sustainability and resilience will depend, in part, on its ability to maintain and enhance diversity in its housing stock. Diversity in housing is supported by diversity in people—who they are and how they live. This mix includes the young couple starting out, the growing family with children, the blended family with full- and part-time children, the divorced mom or dad with full- or part-time children, the single adult living alone or with friends or family, the empty-nester single or couple, and the full-time or visiting grandparent. All these different types of families, together, form community.

People today live in a lot of different ways, and this is particularly true of the Eagle-Vail community. Some live in the community full time; others are part-time or vacationing residents. The ebb and flow of residents at various seasons and stages of their life means that people want choice in housing and recreational amenities, and these choices change as their lifestyles change.

This section summarizes the existing and projected market for housing in Eagle County and provides recommendations for leveraging these trends to improve housing diversity and achieve a more complete community in Eagle-Vail.

National Trends

Two primary generational groups will drive household growth and demand for housing, nationwide, over the next five to ten years. They include what are referred to as echo boomers, defined as those born between 1979 and 1999 with the adults currently 18 to 29 years of age. The other large generational group is the baby boomers, defined as those born between 1946 and 1964, currently 44 to 62 years of age. Each of these groups contains approximately 78 million people.

The two much smaller generational groups are Gen-X and matures. Gen-X, accounting for 57 million people, is defined as those born between 1965 and 1978, currently 30 to 43 years of age. Matures account for 50 million people, 63 years of age and older.

Over the next five to ten years, baby boomers will become empty nesters, and some will retire (although most baby boomers will continue working to maintain their youthfulness and financial stability). Baby boomers are entering their peak earning years, a period when many purchase second homes. Resort and recreational properties will benefit as housing market conditions improve.

Meanwhile, the echo boom generation is just entering the housing market, and demand for housing from this segment will increase significantly over the next five to ten years. For primary housing, echo boomers will be the dominant homebuyer or renter. These households include a lot of singles, young couples, and young families starting out, primarily seeking to purchase or rent moderately priced smaller homes.

Demand for smaller homes will increase over the next five to ten years because of strong growth in smaller households, the rising costs of energy, and a greater consumer desire to live in locations that are more proximate to work and services. Current trends that affect housing choice include blurring of work and leisure time and location; demand for diverse leisure activities; time famine; growing desire to live in walkable, mixed-use communities with accessible...
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Consumers also increasingly select communities based on lifestyle preferences rather than according to their age or demographic group. Smaller, more functional homes with open plans and new technology also draw increasing consumer interest. Consumers demonstrate a preference for communities that support their physical, emotional, and spiritual health; provide the opportunity to live in a multigenerational environment; and help them grow social connections and a sense of community.

Eagle County Trends

Eagle County has approximately 53,000 full-time residents and 22,176 households. The county is growing at an annual rate of 2 to 3 percent per year, adding 1,000 to 1,500 persons and 400 to 600 households annually. Among full-time resident households, approximately two-thirds (64 percent) are homeowners and one-third (36 percent) are renters.

Another 18,891 households and approximately 45,150 persons reside in the county as second-home owners (representing 46 percent of total households). Although increasing in number annually, second-home owners have been declining as a percentage of total homeowners. Major reasons for this decline include growth in the local workforce and increasing personal use of second homes transitioning to primary residences. This trend is expected to continue in Eagle County, and the proportion of second homes will likely level off around 40 percent of total households.

Approximately 3,000 total residential units (new and existing homes) are sold each year in Eagle County, and approximately 20 percent of these (600 units) are new construction. Housing units in the county are valued roughly from $100,000 to over $10 million, including detached and attached units for full-time, part-time, or seasonal rental uses. Second homes for personal use tend to be larger and more expensive than primary homes. The average price of homes in the county is approximately $1.1 million to $1.3 million.

Current home values in Eagle-Vail average $329 per square foot based on a survey of the most recent home sales in the community. In comparison, home values in the Vail and Beaver Creek resort areas range in price from $1,700 to $3,000 per square foot. Eagle-Vail offers a significant value to the market, given that it is priced 86 percent below the resort communities.

Demand for short-term and long-term rental housing will also continue to be very strong over the next five to ten years. Given demographic growth in younger, less affluent households, combined with low inventory of affordable and workforce housing supply, demand for long-term rental housing will be very strong. The strongest net demand for housing is for workforce housing. This is defined as housing
for households with annual incomes in the $50,000 to $150,000 range (roughly 50 percent to 200 percent of median household income). This market is critical to the financial sustainability of the Vail Valley and Eagle County. Without sufficient workforce housing, future job growth is at risk. Workforce housing is quickly disappearing from the housing supply as pricing pressure increases.

Over the next five to ten years, support exists for approximately 500 to 600 new workforce and market-rate for-sale housing units per year in Eagle County. This number does not include additional demand for affordable and rental housing. The workforce and market-rate housing includes consumer support for a mix of various types of multifamily units and some single-family homes for full-time and part-time living or investment.

Residential Market Recommendations

Eagle-Vail is in an excellent position to benefit from and capitalize on consumer trends and growing demand for moderately priced workforce housing. Eagle-Vail should consider the following recommendations to maintain and expand housing diversity:

- Emphasize community lifestyle and maintain ongoing investment in recreational amenities, including intentional programming events and activities targeting the various consumer segments.
- Clarify the community bylaws and other governing documents to allow rental units in the community. Renters are vital to maintaining community diversity. Seasonal rentals can provide strong financial support for the EVMD’s operation of the community’s recreational amenities.
- Work with the Eagle County Community Development Department and the development community to encourage construction of smaller housing units in Eagle-Vail. This strategy will help the community maintain its competitive position and housing diversity.
Golf has historically played an important role in setting Eagle-Vail’s physical form, influencing community life, and providing an important recreational amenity. Nevertheless, significant questions exist about the future of golf in Eagle-Vail because of the declining number of golf rounds played at Eagle-Vail in recent years, the concern that golf facilities may become an economic drain on the community, and the belief that golf course assets may serve better uses.

Any decisions related to golf in Eagle-Vail have the potential to negatively affect or significantly benefit the community during the next decade and beyond. This section summarizes the panel’s identification of key market issues, findings, and recommendations related to Eagle-Vail’s golf assets.

National Trends

Market support for any recreational pastime ebbs and flows over time. It depends on the demographics of the underlying consumer base, where consumers happen to be in their professional and family lives, and what other venues compete for the scarce discretionary time and financial resources that a family or individual has to commit.

Golf development has gone through swings in popularity in response to such pressures. Golf had an upswing in popularity corresponding to the economic prosperity of the post–World War II era. This was followed by a period of flat demand in the 1960s as the baby boomers became a transformative force in national economic and political spheres. As the baby boomers emerged from their role as student to that of major consumer, they adopted very different recreational habits from their parents’ generation.

A period of renewed interest in golf started in the mid-1970s and 1980s as the baby boom generation matured, acquired economic resources, and modified its consumption habits related to housing and recreational pursuits. During this period, baby boomers expressed widespread interest in master-planned communities anchored by a golf course and in resort environments that included golf as a major focal point of recreational amenity offerings.

In the 1990s, market research on consumers’ recreational pursuits became more prevalent. Golf industry organizations began to analyze the market and developed benchmark data on who played, how often, where they played, their spending habits, and a host of other data points to guide and foster expansion of the game.

Related to this effort was a strategic initiative designed to bring new entrants into the game by targeting the consumer bases of other sports that had similar psychographic characteristics as golf players. Key industry leaders reported that a new course needed to open every day until 2000 to meet the demand anticipated to be generated by this initiative. This finding was quoted frequently, lending it additional credence and a sense of inevitability.

The development community, both public and private, responded to these projections by building enough courses to meet the goal of completing in excess of 400 per year by the millennium deadline. Unfortunately, by about 2000, industry organizations recognized that they had overestimated demand by a significant margin.

The industry had not achieved the level of growth in new players originally believed possible from recruiting new entrants into the game. Furthermore, the typical consumer was prone to overstate his or her frequency of participation. Thus, golf courses have been overbuilt in many markets throughout the country, which has led not only to course closures but also to the need to reposition facilities to adjust to the nuances of the markets in which they operate.

In reality, the participation rate in the sport has remained largely unchanged across the broader population since the industry began keeping records. Industry analysts have found that between 9 and 11
percent of the U.S. population over the age of seven claims to be an active golfer. Participation rates also rise in direct relation to income and age, although demand tapers off as players reach 65 years of age. While participation has remained relatively constant, the average frequency of play has declined because of an increase in the competing options for consumers’ recreation time and discretionary spending.

The consumer base for golf is not expected to expand in the near term because of structural barriers, although the sport continues to have appeal. Becoming proficient in the sport is difficult and time consuming. It is perceived as expensive. Finally, newcomers to the sport experience pressure by more experienced players behind them who may have little patience for the slower pace of play.

Eagle County Trends

Since 2000, the supply of golf in the Vail Valley has increased significantly, and Eagle-Vail is concerned about the competitive threat to the economic health of its golf facilities. Several observations can be made pertaining to that competition.

No doubt the increase in the supply of private golf courses in recent years has affected the play pattern on both of the Vail Valley’s public courses, Eagle-Vail and Vail. Before the introduction of private options in the Vail Valley, the Eagle-Vail and Vail courses shared a monopoly on the sport for any visitor seeking a golf experience. Now, many more options exist for both residents and visitors.

Private courses will continue to draw some play from the public courses as long as the private venues are undersubscribed for membership sales and compensate by targeting outside play. However, these courses are anticipated to attract only a limited number of players from the public courses because they are significantly more expensive.

Only two of the private courses listed in Figure 1 actively encourage daily fee play, the Eagle Ranch and the Cotton Ranch facilities. Although they are less expensive to the consumer than other private courses, they are at a geographic disadvantage to Eagle-Vail’s course. Both of these facilities are located down valley, requiring greater travel time and cost. In addition, these courses are located in residential

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communities that will build out over time, thereby diminishing their availability to the general public.

The other courses listed in Figure 1 have positioned themselves as private facilities with high initiation fees and dues. Because of the sheer number of facilities built within such a short time, memberships are presently undersubscribed and many of the private courses are accepting limited public play, but at a greens fee that is significantly above that of any of the public facilities and with severely limited access.

Eagle-Vail’s 18-hole course, in particular, offers a very well-regarded playing experience, and although it is challenging, it is not the most difficult or punitive course available. Thus, it provides a good value within the broader competitive set.

Other golf courses may be in the development pipeline, but they are not anticipated to pose a direct competitive threat to Eagle-Vail in the near to mid-term. The course with the highest potential to be completed is associated with the proposed Ginn Resorts development in Minturn. This facility is rumored to be a very high-end private facility and is several years from fruition, given the status of the project’s entitlement process. Others have been rumored, but no concrete development plans have been announced.

Given the current national economic condition and the status of the existing golf courses any further additions to the supply of golf courses in the Vail Valley seem very unlikely within five to ten years.

Demand Trends

Broad demographic and market transitions in Eagle County have influenced the dynamics of golf play at Eagle-Vail’s 18-hole course. Eagle-Vail has a growing second-home population, and these users have different consumption and recreational habits than primary residents. They are in residence less, but their use of the property is primarily recreational. Therefore, they use community recreational assets more frequently and in more concentrated, shorter periods of time than the primary population does.

The consumer estimated to have the biggest effect on demand for golf at Eagle-Vail, however, is probably the summer visitor to the Vail Valley.

As explored in other sections of this report, Eagle-Vail stands at the center of activity of the Vail Valley, physically surrounded by two of the top-rated ski areas in the country. These two areas have been successful in reinventing themselves as summer destinations as well. As a consequence, the portion of golf rounds generated from visitors to the Vail Valley has been steadily increasing and clearly makes a disproportionately large contribution to the economic performance of the golf course.
A substantial number of lodging units are officially accounted for between Vail, Avon, and Beaver Creek, not counting smaller management companies who control significant numbers of managed condominiums. The typical occupancy experience in the Vail area during the summer months averages approximately 50 percent.

Several major developments in construction will significantly add to that room inventory. In summer resort areas where golf is not the major focal point of the destination, the panel has found that each hotel/lodging room generates from 10 to 15 rounds of golf annually. In more established golfing destinations, this ratio is higher. A thorough market study is necessary to confirm the depth of demand for golf in the Vail Valley.

Although no formal analysis of the market was performed in conjunction with this panel, the summer visitor market is anticipated to be much larger than Eagle-Vail is currently exploiting, and Eagle-Vail needs to establish a very small capture rate of that market to operate at typically full capacity, excluding property owner and county resident play.

Eagle-Vail has never had, or made available, the resources to adequately market the 18-hole golf course to resort guests. Only an informal referral network with other golf courses and a small number of lodging facilities has existed. The panel believes that this user represents a large potential for the course, specifically because of the disproportionate economic contribution the resort player generates relative to other user groups. Marketing the course to resort guests would likely stimulate demand for play at the course.

Nonetheless, residents and resort guests frequently have different expectations of how a course is managed. Eagle-Vail residents are heavy users of the 18-hole golf course for other recreation, ranging from exercising their dogs to using the fairways for ballfields. To successfully attract the resort guest on a sustained basis, Eagle-Vail will need to modify management practices to limit some of the alternative uses, particularly during peak use times.

The level of play captured by the Eagle-Vail 18-hole golf course during the past few years is reasonably indicative of the potential going forward in the near term. In mountain communities with facilities located at high elevations, the operating season is relatively short. To preserve the quality of play and avoid crowding, starting times are spaced out. The difficulty of play in most courses also tends to slow play, which limits the absolute number of players per day. A comfortable level of play is between 20,000 and 22,000 rounds per year. Eagle-Vail has performed at these levels in previous years, and if better marketed to the resort community, it could easily do so again.

**Alternative Uses for the 18-Hole Golf Course**

As noted, the level of play historically achieved by Eagle-Vail's 18-hole course is within the norms seen for mountain courses and has not been as radically affected by additions to the golf supply as many believe. Changes in sources of play have occurred and will continue as the community evolves, but no substantive reason exists to believe the facility will be abandoned wholesale.

Nonetheless, the panel considered whether closing the 18-hole course in favor of alternative land uses was advisable. In the panel's opinion, closing the course would be very difficult without serious negative effects to the fabric of the community. The golf course was a defining element of the community's design at conception. It helped position the community in the marketplace, it was an organizing principle that helped define the types of real estate product offered, and it was designed to maximize real estate values.

From the collective experience of the panel, reengineering the community's physical plan to eliminate the 18-hole golf course land would be virtually impossible. The panel found that the fairways do not support development of new housing because of their narrow shape or topography. In addition, developing the fairways with additional housing would dramatically reduce the property values of existing homes that currently front the golf course, which raises serious issues of equity and fairness.

Allowing the 18-hole golf course to revert to passive open space is not a viable solution. Although open space can create a value premium for adjacent residential land uses compared to no amenity at all, it is a lower premium than adjacency to a golf course. Moreover, converting the golf course to passive open space would still incur ongoing maintenance costs but
without any potential to generate revenues. Maintaining open space at or near the condition of the golf course (open mowed meadow area) still requires significant manpower and other expenses.

In summary, the 18-hole existing Eagle-Vail golf course should remain in operation using its current layout. The major infrastructure of the course is in excellent condition, and the facility is well maintained. The deferred maintenance costs are relatively small and require only a modest amount of capital. Although ongoing operating shortfalls may be anticipated during the near to medium term, recognizing the condition of the economy and alternative play venues available in the Vail Valley, the panel believes these will be small.

In contrast, although the nine-hole, par-three course provides a social and learning experience for residents and their families, actual use is very limited. Revenues generated by the nine-hole course appear insufficient to cover its operating costs. Therefore, the panel recommends closing the nine-hole course.

**Golf Recommendations**

The panel recommends that Eagle-Vail consider implementing the following actions related to its golf assets during the next five years:

- Maintain the existing 18-hole golf course in its current configuration, and market it to summer resort visitors. The course is in excellent physical condition, is maintained to a high standard, and is perceived by the resort guest as a high-quality/good-value playing experience.

- Sell the existing golf clubhouse for housing development. This measure would provide a major source of funding for building a new clubhouse. Remodeling the existing facility is discouraged because it is poorly located, has a poor physical layout, and is outdated.

- Build a modern facility located closer to the driving and chipping area and proposed Village Green. This measure would improve the image and operational efficiency of the golf course operations. The new facility should address management needs and provide ancillary uses such as outdoor food and beverage service, day lockers, adequate bag storage, and similar functions. This amenity is anticipated to distinguish the course from other venues and allow Eagle-Vail to raise the course’s prices.

- Close the nine-hole course. The nine-hole course is not economically viable and should be closed. Closure does not need to occur immediately, but Eagle-Vail should recognize that the nine-hole course will remain a “loss leader” while alternative uses of the land are considered and agreed upon.

- Budget for periodic reinvestment in golf facilities. No other major changes in the golf course facilities are anticipated. However, periodic reinvestment in the golf facilities is required for minor cart path repair and the like. These expenses can be budgeted either as part of the EVMD's capital program or in a specific golf operations budget.

**Future Options**

Although the panel makes no specific recommendation, it notes that the land north of U.S. 6 that includes holes three through six of the 18-hole golf course offers prime riverfront sites and could be sold for redevelopment. If a suitable alternative site for these holes could be found, the estimated sales value of this land would easily be two to three times the cost of replacing the holes. Additional proceeds of this land sale could be used to fund operations or other capital improvements.

A preliminary analysis indicates land south of the school site could be linked to the existing course layout. This layout would not be operationally optimal, however, because the 18th hole would finish at some distance from the clubhouse. Pursuit of this option should be undertaken only after careful analysis of the likelihood of acquiring the property from the State Land Board at a price appropriate for the land use and after more detailed analysis by a qualified golf architect.
In today's turbulent economic times, traditional methods of funding public facilities have become increasingly difficult. Like so many school districts across the country, the Eagle County School District is seeking creative and innovative methods of providing a long-term sustainable revenue stream to meet capital construction and other costs in a district with changing needs.

The ECSD operates two schools in Eagle-Vail, Meadow Mountain Elementary School and Battle Mountain High School, on an approximately 18-acre campus. Middle school students from Eagle-Vail are bused to Minturn Middle School.

The ECSD is constructing a new 1,000-student Battle Mountain High School located at Miller Ranch in Edwards, which is scheduled to open in January 2010. At that time, the existing Battle Mountain High School will be closed. With appropriate upgrades and repairs, however, the building can serve future education or community uses.

Despite moderate growth in the student population of the district, Meadow Mountain Elementary School and Minturn Middle School are underused locations. Enrollment at each school is about 175 students in buildings constructed for 300 and 420 students, respectively. Projections indicate that the student population in each school will level off at about 150 students.

The ECSD needs one school in this area, Eagle-Vail or Minturn, comprising grades K-8 for approximately 350 students. A K-8 school ideally sits on a total of 12 to 15 acres; two acres for the school building; two acres for parking; and the balance in athletic fields, playgrounds, circulation, and landscaped areas.

The ECSD is considering consolidation of Meadow Mountain Elementary School and Minturn Middle School into a single campus, preferably without using the district's bonding capacity to fund the capital improvements necessary to accomplish this. The ECSD is also considering the highest and best use of district property at the existing Battle Mountain High School.

The district should address two key goals as it makes any decisions related to the use or disposition of surplus property at its Eagle-Vail campus: (a) finding the best long-term use of land and facilities, and (b) striving to maintain neighborhood schools.

**Status of Building Assets**

Meadow Mountain Elementary School is situated entirely on ECSD land. It is an underused school constructed for 350 students and currently has 175 students, creating an operating deficit of $500,000 per year. The school is challenged in terms of design, condition, and operational inefficiencies, and the ECSD does not consider it a viable structure for the future. Most people in the community, however, regard a neighborhood school as highly important to maintaining the appeal and atmosphere of Eagle-Vail.

Battle Mountain High School is primarily located on approximately eight acres of Colorado State Land Board property. The Colorado State Land Board provides this land to the ECSD under a perpetual right-of-way agreement as long as the land is used.
“for the purpose of constructing, reconstructing, operating and maintaining public school buildings and appurtenances and other use as may be directly connected with the school.”

The first phase of Battle Mountain High School was constructed in 1972 and consisted of two buildings connected by an enclosed walkway. In 1982, the second phase was initiated, which included a two-story addition to the main building. The auxiliary gymnasium and locker rooms were added in the third phase of construction in 1985. The fourth phase of construction occurred in 1990 and added a new two-story classroom wing to the south of the original classroom wing. Finally, a two-story addition was built during the last phase in 1999.

The common areas, such as the hallways and cafeteria, cannot be expanded to efficiently serve additional students. The high school was built before personal computers and related technologies. The “band-aid” approach used to address the need for new classrooms and technology over the past three decades has resulted in an extremely inefficient campus that does not meet the needs of the ECSD’s high school students, teachers, or community. It would not meet the needs of K–8 students in its present condition. To be used as a K–8 school, the existing Battle Mountain High School facility will require significant upgrades in heating, ventilating, and air conditioning; electrical, mechanical, and fire safety systems; and structural upgrades, including compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards, to meet current building codes. Initial cost estimates total approximately $11 million.

Minturn Middle School educates students in grades 6–8 and is located 6.5 miles southeast of Eagle-Vail in the scenic Maloit Park area in the town of Minturn. An underused school originally constructed for 420 students, it now serves only 175 students. The facility creates a net operating deficit of approximately $500,000 per year for the ECSD.

The ECSD operates a bus garage on its property at the Eagle-Vail campus. Another bus garage is located at the western end of the district. The school district needs to maintain a bus service facility at the eastern end of the Vail Valley for operational reasons; however, the existing facility is not strategically located given the changing needs of the Vail Valley. Alternative sites would be more effective and economical. For example, Beaver Creek needs a bus storage facility and is interested in partnering with the ECSD.

**Status of Land Assets**

The current school complex is on land owned by the Colorado State Land Board and the Eagle County School District. The panel’s recommendations, below, address the future disposition of both parcels.

**Colorado State Land Board Land**

The Colorado State Land Board has expressed willingness to explore various options for the 7.8-acre parcel that it owns at ECSD’s Eagle-Vail campus, including a market-rate long-term lease, an outright purchase, or a land swap. The Colorado State Land Board could complete a ground lease in a few months, whereas a purchase may take up to a year to complete. If the Colorado State Land Board parcel is abandoned or discontinued as an educational use for a period of 12 consecutive months, the right-of-way automatically terminates, with no economic benefit to the ECSD. If the ECSD continues to use Colorado State Land Board land for a K–8 school, the terms of the current right-of-way agreement would be met by making use of the asset for educational purposes.

The panel does not advise redevelopment of the Colorado State Land Board site for a mixed-use residential project. The panel believes that Battle Mountain High School is an asset that has value to the district after renovation, and continued use of the building is important to meet enrollment needs of the area.

If the school site were developed as a residential mixed-use project, any revenues would need to be shared among the developer, the ECSD, and the Colorado State Land Board. The preservation of this land for school purposes may prove to be more valuable to the ECSD over the long term as land values rise and large plots of affordable land for school sites become scarce.

**Eagle County School District Land**

The ECSD has suggested that some of its current landholdings may be required to accommodate the future growth needs of the district. Land that is
suitable for the construction of new school facilities is becoming increasingly scarce and expensive to acquire. Therefore, the ECSD needs to retain the holdings that are essential to meet future enrollment levels and other district needs as a hedge against rising land prices. Meanwhile, the ECSD should dispose of nonessential land to raise operating or capital funds.

At Eagle-Vail, the ECSD owns a ten-acre site on which are located a portion of Battle Mountain High School, all of Meadow Mountain Elementary School, and a portion of a nine-hole, par-three golf course constructed and operated by the EVMD.

The 100-acre Minturn Middle School site is in the area near the Ginn Resorts’ planned 1,700-unit ski and golf resort community, making the site and facility an asset worthy of retention by the ECSD to manage projected enrollment growth in the area as well as to provide the opportunity for the development of affordable housing to meet area needs. Retention of Minturn Middle School as an operating school is also consistent with the desires of the community of Minturn.

Development Options

With schools operating below capacity, the ECSD is considering combining schools to operate more efficiently by maximizing the use of existing facilities. In contrast, the Eagle-Vail and Minturn communities value neighborhood schools, which has been the tradition in the area for many years. Another dynamic in play is the recent creation of Eagle County Charter School, which is running to capacity and has attracted students from other ECSD public schools.

From extensive community input, the panel concluded that existing ECSD facilities should be used for neighborhood schools. This strategy may result in short-term operating inefficiencies. However, the operational efficiency of existing facilities, in the long term, is paramount. That may require renovations enabling current uses to continue or alternative uses to be implemented.

Option 1: Close Meadow Mountain Elementary School

One option is to close Meadow Mountain Elementary School and transfer its students to Minturn Middle School. By doing so, the ECSD realizes the operational efficiency of combining two student populations. However, it fails to achieve the Eagle-Vail community’s goal of preserving its neighborhood school.

Alternatively, Meadow Mountain Elementary School could be closed and moved to Battle Mountain High School once the latter is renovated, permitting elementary students to move to the renovated school and freeing the site for redevelopment for a mix of housing.

Option 2: Close Minturn Middle School

Another option is to close Minturn Middle School and transfer students to Battle Mountain High School. This option is viable only after the existing Battle Mountain High School closes in 2010 and has been renovated for use as a K-8 school. This option would require keeping Meadow Mountain Elementary School open for several years and would permit phased redevelopment of the ten-acre school site.

Option 3: Keep Both Schools Open

This option assumes that existing facilities should be used for neighborhood schools even if it means some short-term operating inefficiencies. Nonetheless, long-term efficient use of existing facilities is paramount and would likely entail renovation of one of the facilities, as described above, to provide for joint use as a K-8 school.

Funding Options

Like so many school districts across the country, the ECSD is seeking creative and innovative methods of providing a long-term sustainable revenue stream to meet capital construction and other needs in a growing district. The ECSD called on the panel to draw on its professional experience, proven industry trends, demographic trends, and trends in similar communities to respond to this challenge.

The anticipated revenue generated from disposition and development of the ECSD’s ten-acre site is not anticipated to cover the full cost of renovating Battle Mountain High School. Therefore, the ECSD should consider implementing some combination of the following options to fund this project.
Option 1: Develop School Land and Use Proceeds for Needed Facilities

The ECSD owns ten acres west of Battle Mountain High School where Meadow Mountain Elementary School and a bus garage are located. The panel recommends that this land be developed for affordable housing, which would generate between $3 million and $5 million. The opportunity exists to partner with Beaver Creek on a joint venture to construct and operate a common bus garage. Sharing the cost of this facility with Beaver Creek could offer real operational efficiencies.

Option 2: Negotiate Development Fees from New Projects

Local government and school districts are prohibited by Colorado law from assessing impact fees for new development. If new development is proposed, however, local jurisdictions can negotiate with developers to obtain voluntary fees to generate supplemental revenue to help meet the capital construction funding needed to house the students coming from new development. This approach should be moderated to avoid driving up housing costs.

Option 3: Use the Existing Battle Mountain High School for Alternative Education or Charter School Purposes

This option involves use of all or part of the existing or renovated Battle Mountain High School for alternative education or charter school programs. The ECSD defines “alternative education” as special education for handicapped students, English-language acquisition, preschool, expeditionary learning magnet school, and many other programs. Although this curriculum is offered by the school district and provides enrollment capacity within the system, an opportunity also exists to negotiate long-term leases with private nonprofit alternative education providers, including professional charter school operators, to generate both operating and capital construction revenue for the ECSD.

In Colorado, a charter school is a public school operated by a citizens board—separate from the local public school board—that is “chartered” to operate by either the local school board or the state chartering authority. The state of Colorado provides funding for capital construction, space leasing, and operations based on the charter school’s student population. To remain viable, charter schools must operate efficiently. Often, to achieve cost savings, they do not provide transportation to students.

In the past 15 years, the charter school movement has produced an interesting model that can efficiently provide high-quality education and facilities. A recent study conducted by Arizona State University surveyed 150 professional charter school management companies across the nation and identified about six companies that both manage and construct charter schools. One such company, National Heritage Academies of Grand Rapids, Michigan, has constructed 50 charter schools nationally, serving 35,000 students, including the Landmark Academy at Reunion in Commerce City, Colorado.

This model could be used by the ECSD to provide neighborhood K–8 schools. For the purposes of this analysis, renovation of existing facilities is assumed to be a more economical use of school district assets than demolition—given the cost for demolishing the current Battle Mountain High School.

The panel assumes a professional charter school operator that also constructs charter schools could execute a long-term lease with the ECSD for use of a renovated Battle Mountain High School and negotiate financial participation in the cost to renovate the school. The preliminary estimate is that a charter school operator could contribute up to $6.5 million to the cost of renovating Battle Mountain High School.

Alternatively, the ECSD could pursue a joint use agreement with a charter school operator for the existing Battle Mountain High School to share in the operating and capital construction costs for the facility. Denver Public Schools entered into such an agreement in the Stapleton neighborhood.

Option 4: Partner with the EVMD to Renovate New Facilities

Another option is for the ECSD to partner with Eagle-Vail Metropolitan District. The latter’s ability to secure bond financing could be used to share the cost to construct either new or renovated facilities and help minimize capital construction costs.
Option 5: Use the Existing Battle Mountain High School as a Community Resource

This option involves using all or part of the existing Battle Mountain High School as a community resource. The auditorium, gymnasium, and gymnasium annex offer opportunities for hospitality services, private nonprofits, community groups, or corporate sponsors to use the facility for concerts or conferences.

This option requires securing the capital to renovate the facility for the intended use as well as the funds to operate the facility. Typically, such uses do not generate enough operating revenues to offset the capital investment needed for renovation. In addition, this option may require negotiation with the Colorado State Land Board because it may not comply with the terms of the right-of-way agreement.

Option 6: Swap Land

Swapping land assets to generate revenue for the ECSD from development is possible if a significant difference exists between properties in either the current land value or an assumed value added by development. No sites have been identified within the study area that would meet these criteria.

Option 7: Use Bond Funds

As part of the 2006 ECSD bond election, a total of $3 million in bond proceeds is available for planning and renovation of the existing Battle Mountain High School. If the ECSD school board decides to pursue another bond election to fund the outstanding cost of renovating Battle Mountain High School, it could do so as part of a funding package that also includes proceeds from development of surplus school land, development fees, and long-term lease proceeds.

Recommendations

The panel recommends that the ECSD consider implementing the following actions related to its school assets in Eagle-Vail and Minturn:

• **Renovate the existing Battle Mountain High School building as a K–8 school.** In the long term, the panel believes combining Meadow Mountain Elementary School and Minturn Middle School operations into a single facility will be necessary to achieve operational efficiencies. Nevertheless, the ECSD should plan to keep Meadow Mountain Elementary School and Minturn Middle School students in place until such a renovation can be completed. The Minturn Middle School property is valuable and should be retained by the ECSD if it anticipates needing the facility to serve future growth in the student population, including the potential for new students entering the system as a result of the proposed Ginn Resorts project.

• **Close and demolish Meadow Mountain Elementary School.** This building will become functionally obsolete when its operations move to the renovated Battle Mountain High School building. This action would free this site for redevelopment.

• **Relocate the bus garage.** In its current location, the bus garage does not constitute the highest and best use of the land, nor does it offer optimal operational efficiencies. The district should identify a lower-value site in the east valley for the bus garage, including consideration of a potential joint use agreement with Beaver Creek or other interested parties. This step would free this portion of ECSD’s property in Eagle-Vail for redevelopment.

• **Form a partnership to redevelop the ten acres owned by the ECSD at Eagle-Vail.** Most of the land owned directly by the ECSD will be freed for development when Meadow Mountain...
Elementary School and the bus garage are vacated and demolished. The ECSD should partner with Eagle-Vail and a master developer to redevelop this site, including creation of additional mixed-income housing.

- Use revenues from site redevelopment for renovation of the high school. The panel estimates that the ECSD could raise between $3 million and $5 million by selling approximately ten acres of land in Eagle-Vail. These funds could be used to pay down the cost of renovating the existing Battle Mountain High School as a K–8 facility.

- Secure the balance of funding for the renovation from nontraditional sources. In addition to the $3 million to $5 million generated by sale of the Meadow Mountain site, and $3 million from the 2006 school bond, the panel recommends selecting additional nontraditional funding options as described in the previous section to fund renovations at Battle Mountain High School.
Eagle-Vail Development Strategy

Community change is a natural and inevitable process. Eagle-Vail has a unique opportunity to proactively manage changes in the community in a way that enhances the quality of life of its residents. If Eagle-Vail does not actively encourage reinvestment, the community may change in a way that not only forgoes development and property tax revenues but also may lose some of the intangible qualities that make it special.

This section describes the panel’s conceptual development program for Eagle-Vail, which includes new housing and neighborhood commercial land uses. This development program is designed to generate additional operating and/or capital funds, and to reinforce the panel’s vision for Eagle-Vail.

Housing Development

The panel recommends that future development in Eagle-Vail include a mix of housing types to meet the needs of a diversified population of owners and renters, second-home owners, and permanent residents. Eagle-Vail offers a prime location for new housing within the Valley, given that it is close to several resort areas that also happen to be among the area’s largest employers.

The panel recommends a slow and careful growth strategy that results in a moderate expansion of approximately 500 units in Eagle-Vail’s housing stock over a ten-year period. Based on consideration of the guiding principles and market factors, the panel recommends that Eagle-Vail’s master development plan include the mix of housing unit types and prices described in Figure 2.

New housing development will generate many benefits for Eagle-Vail. It will generate one-time development revenues from the sale of land, ongoing property taxes, and additional user fees for the community. In addition, new housing will diversify the population and create additional opportunities for families to stay within the community when their housing needs change. It will also create a community center with essential community services and bring new residents who will add to the community’s excitement and energy.

New housing development will enhance the community’s sustainability. Providing housing will reduce automobile commute times compared to building farther down valley; consequently, it will reduce the effect of global climate change, which is perhaps more important to the long-term sustainability of the Vail Valley than to many other locations throughout the country.

Although some community members may be concerned about traffic impacts caused by new development, these effects should be offset by a reduction in traffic after Battle Mountain High School is no longer in operation and the bus garage has been moved.

Commercial Development

Corner stores, post offices, and cafés meet basic daily needs and also provide community character and informal gathering spaces for residents to meet and socialize. In addition, neighborhood commercial uses provide an environmental benefit because residents can walk to a corner store, rather than needing to drive for the proverbial gallon of milk. Eagle-Vail lacks the types of basic commercial services that one would expect to find in a community of its size.

The panel recommends that neighborhood commercial uses described in Figure 3 be included in any development program advanced by Eagle-Vail. The panel also recommends consideration of providing for development of a small inn, which will contribute community character and offer a place for family and friends to lodge while they are visiting.

The panel does not anticipate a strong enough market to lease the neighborhood commercial spaces at market rates. The site proposed for neighborhood commercial use is located off Eagle Road and would not capture traffic passing through U.S. 6. Thus, the
the funds, Eagle-Vail should consider funding some of the community enhancements described in the Planning and Design section of this report.

The panel estimates that the sale of ECSD land will generate roughly $3 million to $5 million that could be used to fund renovation of Battle Mountain High School. As described earlier in the Schools section, the district could explore partnering with a charter school to redevelop the high school facility. This

panel views neighborhood commercial services primarily as a community amenity and not as a potential revenue generator for Eagle-Vail. To stimulate commercial development, the panel recommends writing down the cost basis of land associated with commercial uses to zero.

Development Revenues

In total, the panel estimates that Eagle-Vail will generate roughly $30 million to $32 million in proceeds from the sale and redevelopment of EVMD land. Although the panel does not propose specific uses for

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<td>Lot</td>
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<td>Upper Clubhouse Lot</td>
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**Average Unit Sales Price** $316,700

**Additional Annual Tax Revenue\(^4\)** $274,000

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\(^1\) All figures are planning-level estimates.

\(^2\) Land value was estimated by applying a 15 percent factor to the estimated market value.

\(^3\) Medium to high density.

\(^4\) Generated per year at current mill levy rate (14.835).
option could generate $6.5 million. Finally, the ECSD should apply $3 million from the 2006 bond issue for these purposes.

Recommendations

The development plan should enable Eagle-Vail to develop over a five to ten year timeline. Great communities evolve gradually over time. A longer development timeline will add to the character and resilience of the community. The development plan should address the following actions and priorities:

• **Develop a mix of 500 housing units.** This action will add vitality and diversity to the community, and will also generate revenues from land sales and an expanded property tax base.

• **Develop neighborhood commercial services.** These services will contribute to the community’s center, meet basic daily needs, encourage socialization, and reduce the community’s dependency on automobile travel.

• **Include gathering places.** Whether they come in the form of plazas, parks, cafés, or bars, great gathering places are vital to great communities.

• **Ensure new development abides by the community vision.** Eagle-Vail should work with all of the public and private parties that will participate in the community’s redevelopment to ensure that growth respects housing affordability, open space, and the community’s natural mountain setting.

• **Focus new development on ECSD/EVMD land.** The ECSD and the EVMD possess significant assets that will come into play if the other recommendations outlined in this report are implemented.

• **Enhance the community using the proceeds from the sale of EVMD land.** Eagle-Vail will have many options for using revenues generated by the sale and redevelopment of EVMD lands. The community should be strategic and decisive in its investments.

• **Renovate Battle Mountain High School into a K–8 facility using the proceeds from the sale of ECSD land and other resources.**
Redevelopment in Eagle-Vail should be focused on a few key sites that offer readily developable land to create the maximum positive community effect. The panel's proposed design for Eagle-Vail takes advantage of its natural setting, builds on its recreational resources, and maintains a neighborhood school while creating a mix of new housing options within the community.

Environmental Context and Sustainability

The community of Eagle-Vail is very fortunate to be able to enjoy and participate in a truly astonishing ecological system. The valley’s ecology is what makes it so beautiful and helps generate economic activity by providing a draw for residents, businesses, and tourists.

Although past development decisions have not always considered the environmental context, Eagle-Vail now has an incredible opportunity to seize on a growing body of expertise that will enable it to develop according to the panel’s recommendations while enhancing the community’s natural and environmental amenities.

Mountain Ecology

The panel’s starting point in creating a physical plan for new development in Eagle-Vail was to first look at the community’s ecological context. The physical plan responds to the basic ecological principle that natural systems operate in relation to each other.

In the Vail Valley, north-facing slopes are generally regarded as offering greater development potential because they provide more tree cover and greater vegetative density. Snowmelt and other precipitation run off the mountain tops and through the talus slope area, carrying boulders, sand, and dirt. Ultimately, water runoff reaches the floodplain in the upper reaches of the valley floor and finally flows into the riparian corridors. In the stream zones, riparian vegetation stabilizes the channel and prevents flooding. The south-facing slopes typically get more solar exposure, and less snowfall and rain. As a result, they have scrubbiest vegetation and are not regarded as desirable areas for development.

To take advantage of its ecological context, the physical plan for Eagle-Vail should include the following features:

- Develop only low-density housing on the talus slope area. These areas have unstable slopes,
Use stone vertical decks to collect solar energy. The vertical decks of new buildings should be constructed with stone to collect solar energy and radiate it through the structure.

Golf Course Landscaping

Eagle-Vail should modify the golf course’s landscaping to enhance environmental sustainability. As it is, the golf course is well maintained and manicured. However, the course’s natural setting is what makes it so unique.

and new development should minimize the removal of existing trees and other vegetation.

• Locate higher-density housing on the valley floor or floodplain. These areas are relatively flat and stable, lending themselves to more substantial and heavier structures.

• Use all building roofs as solar collectors. This strategy will maximize heat gain and minimize energy use.
Eagle-Vail should improve the environmental sustainability of the course by implementing the following recommendations:

• **Use vegetation and berms to screen housing** from the course, as appropriate.

• **Plant native vegetation** to distinguish the rough from the fairways.

• **Implement an ecologically sound maintenance program** to support habitat enhancements. Furthermore, Eagle-Vail could implement the Audubon principles, which would be a source of pride and distinction for the course.

**Planning Framework**

The panel organized its design concept for the physical plan into four “ribbons.” The panel proposes that each ribbon include different types of development that take advantage of its ecological features.

• **Route 6/Creekside Ribbon.** This area offers a potential site for medium- to high-density mixed-use development oriented toward the riverfront, provided that a new I-70 underpass connection to Eagle-Vail can be completed. The panel recommends pedestrian enhancements along the river, including a trail and benches.

• **Higher-Density Ribbon.** Because this area is located in the valley’s floodplain, the panel recommends that medium- to high-density housing be developed here in the future. Development in this ribbon should take advantage of views onto the open-space/green ribbon.

• **Open-Space/Green Ribbon.** The panel recommends that this area be improved with open space and park enhancements to establish a green corridor that connects to Eagle-Vail’s golf course. Views should be oriented to the hillsides and the array of mountain slopes south of Eagle-Vail.

• **Lower-Density Talus Slope Ribbon.** Future development in this area should be less dense and integrated into the woods.

**Transportation**

Eagle-Vail should improve its vehicular and pedestrian circulation system to support the Village Greens concept described later in this report. The accompanying circulation diagram illustrates the transportation framework proposed for the area. The transportation plan should address transportation connections, signage, and monuments to mark entrances to the community.

The panel recommends that Eagle-Vail develop new transportation options to reduce automobile travel, including the following:

• **Create pedestrian connections to potential light-rail stations.** Good pedestrian connections from the community to transit stations will enhance transit use.

• **Develop alternative transit services.** For example, establish a dial-a-ride program that provides connectivity to the ski areas, Vail, and other key destinations; implement a local circulator shuttle that connects east and west Eagle-Vail; start a ridesharing program to promote carpooling to major employment centers.
Circulation diagram.

“Four ribbons” scheme.

KEY
- Green: Primary Pedestrian Connections
- Blue: Secondary Pedestrian Connections
- Gray: Vehicular Connections
- Red: Parking

Route 6/Creekside Ribbon
Higher-Density Ribbon
Open-Space/Green Ribbon
Lower-Density Talus Slope Ribbon

NEW POOL AND COMMUNITY CENTER
NEW GOLF CLUBHOUSE
PAVILION
BASEBALL FIELDS
SCHOOL
NEW WINTER GARDEN

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• *Purchase a Zip/community car fleet.* This option would provide residents with access to a vehicle on a part-time basis, perhaps as a membership service or as an hourly rental.

**Phasing**

New development in Eagle-Vail should be phased to help enhance the community’s sense of place, which will add value to subsequent development. The panel recommends the following phases:

- **Phase I.** The community center should be developed first to add excitement and energy to future redevelopment. It should include parks and recreation improvements, as well as mixed-use residential and retail development.

- **Phase II.** The area currently occupied by the bus barn and other open-space property owned by the EVMD should be the second phase redeveloped.

- **Phase III.** The talus slope area should be developed third, after the nine-hole, par-three golf course and Meadow Mountain Elementary School are vacated.

- **Phase IV.** The area north of I-70 should be a longer-term consideration for Eagle-Vail, because it will require substantial planning to complete the underpass improvement.

**Community Design**

The panel focused its recommendation pertaining to redevelopment in Eagle-Vail in a few key areas to create the maximum effect and to take advantage of the most underused land. The panel proposes a new community center, redevelopment of Meadow Mountain Elementary School and the ECSD bus garage, a strong community center, integration of new housing and commercial services, and enhanced access to the Eagle River.

**Village Greens**

An improved community center, called the “Village Greens,” is a cornerstone of the panel’s design recommendations for Eagle-Vail. This area will provide an excellent venue for communitywide programming and events.

The Village Greens is proposed to include a variety of new recreational and commercial amenities that will create synergy with each other. These uses include a family pool and fitness center, commercial services, a plaza with a pop-jet fountain, a new golf clubhouse, a winter garden, an improved pavilion park and clubhouse, and an attractive dog park.
The panel’s concept development plan.
The panel recommends enhancing the streams that feed the pond at Pavilion Park to enhance wildlife habitat. In addition, the community center would create strong pedestrian connections from the open space areas to the school site.

School Site

The Battle Mountain High School site would be redeveloped to accommodate the proposed K–8 school facility and to use the existing site more efficiently. The school building itself would be renovated, including removal of the middle section, which currently does not comply with ADA.

The site would be redesigned to create a strong entry experience from a new roundabout connecting to Eagle Road, and the parking lot would be relocated to the rear of the building. The site will also include a new playground and has space for future building expansion, if necessary.

Eagle River Area

One of the most exciting and challenging opportunities identified by the panel is to reclaim additional frontage along the Eagle River north of I-70. This development will require a new vehicular/pedestrian underpass connecting the area to the rest of Eagle-Vail. The entrance would be marked by an arrival court, with views to the Eagle River.

The panel proposes redevelopment of the vacant lots, storage facilities, and underused commercial buildings as medium- to high-density mixed-use development with commercial space and workforce housing fronting the river. New pedestrian improvements would be constructed to enhance the river experience.

Housing Sites

The panel recommends freeing some portions of the ECSD and EVMD land for developing a mix of housing types. The proposed locations and densities of new housing sites are illustrated in the accompanying drawing.

Recommendations

The panel recommends a comprehensive redevelopment strategy for Eagle-Vail that provides for the community’s environmental, social, and economic sustainability. Specific priorities include the following:
- **Take advantage of Eagle-Vail’s ecological context.** Eagle-Vail should evaluate redevelopment opportunities based on the likely benefits or negative effects they will have on ecosystems.

- **Implement sustainable golf course landscaping.** The golf course’s key amenity is its natural and physical location. Eagle-Vail should investigate low-impact management techniques, including improving the course’s roughs with native vegetation that creates wildlife habitat. Implementing the Audubon principles will enhance the environment and may provide a unique selling point for the course.

- **Explore new mass transit and alternative transportation programs.** Gas prices are rising, and the threat of global warming is more serious than ever before. Eagle-Vail could reduce its dependency on single-occupancy vehicles if it provided viable alternatives.

- **Begin with redevelopment of the community center.** The community center will be the community’s most important feature in stimulating Housing sites.
additional redevelopment activities. It will fill a currently unmet community need and create additional value for future development.

- **Focus redevelopment activities on key sites.** With the proper leadership, several large tracts of land could come into play, creating new opportunities to enhance Eagle-Vail. The community should focus its redevelopment efforts in these areas, which are located in the eastern section of Eagle-Vail.
Implementation

Before any other recommendations contained in this report can be advanced, the division of authority between the Eagle-Vail Metropolitan District and the Eagle-Vail Property Owners Association must be resolved. This is perhaps the panel’s single most important finding.

The panel recommends that the EVPOA and the EVMD enter into an agreement (“Eagle-Vail Leadership Agreement,” or EVLA) that creates the Eagle-Vail Leadership Board along with a united purpose, integrated goals, and a joint operating budget. In the long term, the existence of a legal mechanism to unite the two entities into one body is worth exploring; however, the specifics of how that might be achieved are beyond the scope of this report.

The EVLA should protect the two entities’ existing sources of revenues, taxation authority, and capital for shared purposes. From the EVPOA’s existing authority, the EVLA needs to protect the right to make assessments and establish a real estate transfer fee of 2 percent. Establishing the real estate transfer fee will require a vote in accordance with the EVPOA’s governing documents. From the EVMD’s existing authority, the EVLA should protect (a) taxing power in general, (b) power to buy and sell real estate, (c) borrowing power, (d) recreation fees, (e) water tap fees, (f) water rights, and (g) tax increment finance. The EVLA may be able to use tax increment financing for the development proposed by the panel.

Finding New Value in a Mature Planned Development

The panel found that some stakeholders are locked into a mindset—consciously or not—that “the end is near” for Eagle-Vail because only a few lots of the original plan are left for sale. As this report indicates, however, Eagle-Vail is simply embarking on a new phase of opportunity, one that builds on its history and the interests of its stakeholders and also responds to changing conditions in the Vail Valley and progressive approaches to development.

The panel firmly believes that the combined income of the EVMD and the EVPOA can increase significantly. It will be made possible by improving the management of operations and by realizing additional development opportunities in the community. Improving management of the recreational assets will likely yield additional user fees and may encourage property owners to see additional value in increasing property taxes or assessment fees.

The EVMD’s mill levy rate, 14.835 mills, is very affordable in relation to other comparable communities. For example, the EVMD would receive only about $900 in property taxes annually from a property with an assessed value of $750,000, given that the assessment rate for residential property is 7.96 percent of its full cash value in Colorado. The mill levy rate can be raised significantly while still remaining competitive.

In addition, before this visit, the panel had never found another community where the EVPOA’s assessment rate was as low as in Eagle-Vail ($100 per unit annually). The assessment rate can be raised, provided that the EVLB can demonstrate additional value to residents and property owners. The community may wish to implement a 2 percent real estate transfer tax using the EVPOA’s existing authority, which the panel estimates would yield approximately $2 million annually.

Finally, additional development in Eagle-Vail will expand the community’s tax base and would generate additional recreation and water tap fees.

A New Budget and New Centralized Management

With the “merger” and with new financial resources, the EVLB must establish a new, expanded budget to reflect the leadership structure’s priorities.
instituted garden walks, “home of the month” programs, and monetary or other incentives. This “carrot” approach should be emphasized at least as much as the “stick” of enforcement.

- **Energize communications.** The panel recommends better communication efforts—with residents, landlords, and local businesses. Confusion seems to exist about many basic aspects of life in Eagle-Vail, from payment of assessments to rental policies. A regular newsletter for the property owners and residents would be helpful in strengthening a sense of community as well as for reinforcing desired standards of behavior. Centralizing community management will result in better communication with community members, which will be a major benefit of the EVLA. Communications would be further enhanced if the joint leadership and staff shared a single office space. Communications of all kinds are enhanced when a community takes the time to articulate an identity that is reflected in all of its communications.

- **Emphasize marketing and public relations.** The executive director or a highly trained marketing professional must pay attention to maintaining relationships with hotels and resorts that have golf capacity needs. The community identity should be reinforced through external communications as well.

- **Institute community activities for all ages, from children to the aging.** An activities programmer could add much to Eagle-Vail’s sense of community and quality of life for residents of all ages. Community activities could include a “tax work-off program” for seniors to create opportunities for them to participate in organizing and running community programs, while reducing their tax burden.

- **Manage Eagle-Vail’s relationship with senior stakeholders.** As a priority, the executive director should meet regularly with the senior stakeholders (particularly the county and the ECSD) to better understand how their interests and goals and those of the EVLB intersect. Relationships should be nurtured over time rather than only when some action is being sought.
To offset the summer use of the golf course by nongolfers, the panel suggests that the community purchase a groomer with tiller and track-setting attachment and that cross-country and skate trails be groomed on the Eagle-Vail golf course. Trails should be groomed daily, with a separate track dedicated to skiers with dogs. Dogs should be prohibited on the remainder of the course. Eagle-Vail residents should not pay a fee for this amenity. Funding should come from homeowner dues and EVMD property tax revenues.

Improve Golf Operations

The original community concept, plan, and positioning relied on the golf course for recreation as well as value creation and enhancement. The panel found that, despite some growing competitive pressures and declining economics, the highest and best use of the 18-hole golf course continues to be as a golf course and not as parks or open space, as some have suggested. Currently, however, a conflict exists between the operation, maintenance, and management of the golf course and the use of the course by homeowners as playgrounds, walking or jogging paths, and dog exercise areas, which is further exacerbated by the chronic problem of pet defecation on the course.

Virtually no other golf courses in the country have allowed such widespread “recreational” use of the golf course for non-golf-related activities. In part, this situation has been caused by a disconnection between the EVPOA and the EVMD, which just reinforces the need to merge these bodies so an acceptable balance can be found between the competing and conflicting uses of the golf course.

The panel recommends significantly curtailing recreational use of the golf course by homeowners and nongolfers during the summer operating season. Otherwise, these conflicting uses should be managed much more strongly to prevent safety, management, and maintenance problems. This new policy should start with a series of educational communications targeted at homeowners and explaining the need for and importance of a consistently managed program of reducing or eliminating nongolf use of the golf course. It should be followed by enhanced enforcement of the governing documents, rules, and regulations already in place.

For the golf course to succeed and prosper, which is necessary so that property values continue to be enhanced, the quality of the golf experience needs to be elevated. This will require both capital expenditures, and enhanced management and marketing.

Strengthen Code Enforcement and Reinvestment

The protection of homeowners’ investments and quality of life has become a dilemma in many communities, especially mature ones, where the governing documents, rules, and regulations as well as management have become dated and often have been eroded or enforced inconsistently. This dilemma is often exacerbated in communities where the ownership and management entities are separate, such as in Eagle-Vail.

Committing to a consistent and high-quality standard of care of homes, buildings, and landscaping will enhance the community’s property values and quality of life. The community’s covenants and restrictions provide adequate clarity on the standards of care and maintenance (such as painting, staining, repairs, and mowing) and the ability to enforce those standards.

Under united leadership, the EVLB will be able to reshape the community rules and regulations and to create a more consistent enforcement strategy. Consistency will mitigate a sentiment that the panel heard often: “I don’t like the rules, but I follow them—but it ticks me off that someone else is getting away with not following them.”

The newly empowered and consolidated EVLB should communicate its intentions to enforce covenants strictly and to require all homeowners to comply with those already articulated standards. Provide residents and homeowners plenty of notice and thus time to bring their homes and yards up to the stated standards. To start, the EVLB could pick three rules to enforce under a zero-tolerance policy and stay with those until near-total compliance is reached. When this goal is achieved, the EVLB could begin to enforce one or more additional rules. The EVLB will
likely find greater success using this strategy than by trying to enforce all of the rules at once, given the community’s history of limited enforcement.

Inevitably, some homeowners will grouse and argue, but at the end of the day, the community’s values and sense of pride will be enhanced. Stay the course, and maintain high and consistent standards.

The panel also suggests that the new board explore a policy allowing the floor/area ratio on homes and duplexes to be increased in exchange for certain levels of renovation and remodeling. Such improvements should be beyond maintaining properties to community standards.

The community perhaps should also consider supporting and involving itself in the county’s master-planning efforts for the commercial properties north of the highway, which could be an attractive and close-in neighborhood commercial center for Eagle-Vail. Perhaps some upzoning there could motivate some of the older and unattractive businesses to renovate and improve their properties.

Build Multijurisdictional Partnerships

The panel noted several signs of increasing multijurisdictional and public/private partnerships. This development is very positive, especially in a county with a population of approximately 50,000 people that remains seasonal and subject to less-predictable cash flows. When governmental entities are uncoordinated, use of resources that could be shared is less efficient—whether school buildings or sports facilities.

After the relationship between the EVPOA and the EMVA is solidified, they can begin to work more closely and effectively with public entities that have mandates or interests in the area. These “senior stakeholders” include Eagle County, Eagle County School District, and the Colorado State Land Board. These relationships will have positive outcomes, especially with regard to the development recommendations described in this report.

One example of immediate relevance is an opportunity to work more closely with the county, which is beginning to create a subarea plan for Eagle-Vail. If Eagle-Vail’s leadership adopts the recommendations outlined in this report, it should work closely with the county to ensure that they are reflected in the subarea plan—especially those that provide both community and countywide benefits. Working closely with the ECSD and the Colorado State Land Board is also essential if Eagle-Vail’s leadership decides to pursue the panel’s recommendations.

Eagle-Vail may also wish to strengthen its relationships with resorts or other recreation districts. For example, the Vail Recreation District may be interested in supplementing its offerings with Eagle-Vail’s facilities and vice versa. This exchange may result in improved efficiency and could foster a willingness to cooperate that would yield other future partnerships. As another example, Vail Associates could provide capital contributions to Eagle-Vail in exchange for participation in a shared housing initiative.

Become Your Own Master Developer

The proposed redevelopment in this report is located fully within Eagle-Vail’s original community boundaries and must maintain and enhance the quality of life for existing residents and property owners. The EVLB should serve as its own master developer in accomplishing these redevelopment objectives, provided that the EVLB retains the appropriate professional counsel to guide the process.

The basic process for the EVLB to become a master developer and implement a master development plan includes the following steps:

- Create the Eagle-Vail Leadership Board.
- Create a commission (similar to the Eagle-Vail Development Committee) to oversee the execution of the recommendations relating to development. It should be a recommending body to the EVLB, which retains final decision-making authority.
- Hire a development adviser/project manager (one with significant, relevant experience) to report to the commission and guide the process.
- Issue a request for proposals (RFP) for a team to create a master development plan, and then select a team from the respondents. This plan should approach the level of detail that one would find in a master development plan prepared by a private sector master developer for
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Eagle-Vail to set, prioritize, and implement community objectives.

- **Limit nongolf use of the golf course facilities.** Operation and use of the golf course must be held to industrywide standards and best practices. Allowing dog walkers, Frisbee play, and other recreational pursuits on a golf course is highly unorthodox, especially when golf is in play. Eagle-Vail needs to put the needs of golf players on the course first, especially if it hopes to attract outside play and break even or generate surplus revenues from golf course operations.

- **Strengthen code enforcement.** The community’s governing documents already set community standards and authorize code enforcement action. Eagle-Vail must begin to consistently enforce these standards and impose punitive actions when needed.

- **Build multijurisdictional partnerships.** Centralizing leadership, governance, and management of Eagle-Vail will enable it to forge multijurisdictional partnerships with unity of vision and purpose.

- **Become your own master developer.** Eagle-Vail should play a key leadership role in planning and implementing a master development plan to advance the proposals described in this report. Eagle-Vail should hire a firm with relevant expertise to manage its redevelopment activities.

**Recommendations**

The panel recommends that the Eagle-Vail community consider undertaking the following actions that are necessary to implement the plan described in this report:

- **Merge Eagle-Vail’s leadership and governance functions.** The EVPOA and the EVMD should combine their functions and powers. This is perhaps the panel’s most important recommendation, because it will allow the community to move forward with a unified vision, resources, and voice.

- **Expand community revenues** by enhancing services and facilitating new development. The EVLB could increase user fees, property tax revenues, or other assessments if it demonstrates additional value to property owners and residents. In addition, welcoming new development into the community will expand the user fee and tax base available to make community enhancements.

- **Centralize the community’s budget and management.** A new centralized budgetary and administrative structure will better equip Eagle-Vail to set, prioritize, and implement community objectives.
Eagle-Vail already possesses all of the attributes of a great community: its natural setting is astonishing, it has a genuine family atmosphere, it offers unparalleled recreational amenities, it has dedicated leadership, and it is located in a world-class resort area. Great communities are constantly evolving and changing, and today, Eagle-Vail just faces a new set of challenges related to this process. The panel found that, with just a few refinements, decline is not inevitable. In fact, Eagle-Vail could become a truly stellar community.

The community is primed to take advantage of important redevelopment opportunities. If Eagle-Vail pursues these redevelopment opportunities, it would be able to improve its recreational and community facilities, provide new housing that is affordable for the workforce and for seniors, educate its children at a high-quality K–8 facility, improve the golf course, and strengthen the community's finances.

Although not everybody in the community will agree with all of the panel's recommendations, the panel believes that a basis for action exists that is in the shared interest of every Eagle-Vail resident and property owner in enhancing their community. The panel was grateful to be invited into the community and to take on the challenge of providing guidance for its revitalization. Now, the panel's challenge to the community is to build consensus around a common vision and guiding principles for Eagle-Vail's future and empower its leadership to strategically and decisively take the actions necessary to realize it.
John McIlwain

Panel Chair
Washington, D.C.

As the Senior Resident Fellow for Housing, McIlwain's responsibilities include leading the Urban Land Institute’s research efforts to seek and promote affordable housing solutions in the United States and other nations, including development and housing patterns designed to create sustainable future environments for urban areas.

Before joining the ULI staff, McIlwain founded and served as senior managing director of the American Communities Fund for Fannie Mae in Washington, D.C. A Fannie Mae–founded venture fund, the American Communities Fund is dedicated to investing in hard-to-finance affordable housing. In this capacity, McIlwain was responsible for structuring, underwriting, and closing equity investments in more than $700 million of residential and neighborhood retail developments in lower-income communities around the country. He also structured, negotiated, and closed more than $100 million in historic tax credit and inner-city equity investments funds with Lend Lease, AEW Capital Management, and the Community Development Trust. Before taking that position, he was president and chief executive officer of the Fannie Mae Foundation.

Prior to joining Fannie Mae, McIlwain was the managing partner of the Washington law offices of Powell, Goldstein, Frazer and Murphy, where he represented a broad range of clients in the single-family and multifamily housing areas. McIlwain also served as executive assistant to the Assistant Secretary for Housing/Federal Housing Commissioner at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. He began his career in housing as assistant director for finance and administration and deputy director of the Maine State Housing Authority.

McIlwain is the chairman of the Center for Housing Policy and a past president of the National Housing Conference, an umbrella organization in Washington for low-income and affordable housing issues. He is also a past president of the National Housing and Rehabilitation Association. He currently serves on the board of directors of the Community Preservation and Development Corporation and on the advisory boards of the Capmark Community Development Fund and Housing Policy Debate. He was a member of the Mayor’s Comprehensive Housing Strategy Task Force for the District of Columbia and the Affordable Housing Task Force for Montgomery County, Maryland.

McIlwain received a law degree from New York University where he was on the editorial board of the NYU Law Review and was a John Norton Pomeroy Scholar. He received a BA, cum laude, from Princeton University.

Lorne Bassel

Montreal, Quebec, Canada

With close to three decades of real estate development experience in both urban and resort locations throughout the world, Bassel takes his knowledge and passion for creating village-centered master-planned communities to create his most recent venture—Crave Real Estate. Crave Real Estate is a testimony to Bassel’s devotion and experience in creating places that are designed to connect people in social settings and provide them with what they want, based on the careful understanding of their behavior. This balanced mix of reason and magic has led to the success of his worldwide projects by giving people access to what they desire.

Crave Real Estate is a real estate development and consulting group focused on the creation of mixed-use properties. The company is committed to working on projects with reputable partners and working through the projects with strategic alliances in the
industry. Crave is part of the Lubert Adler family, which is a Philadelphia-based private equity firm that specializes in real estate ventures. Crave’s mission is to create places that make people happy through creative real estate ventures.

Before founding Crave, Bassel was the executive vice president of Intrawest Corporation and one of the world’s leading experts in village resort creation. He joined Intrawest Corporation in 1993 and led the then-bankrupt Tremblant ski resort to become North America’s top-rated resort in the northeast for ten years running. He is also one of the founders of the Intrawest Placemaking Division, the development arm of the billion-dollar public company.

During his tenure, Bassel was responsible for the creation of more than 20 Intrawest resorts throughout North America and Europe; he led Intrawest’s Village People commercial teams, hotel branding division, human resources, and more recently innovation and growth. He is a man with a rich history in the resort field and a vested interest in understanding and predicting its future. Bassel also served as a board member of the Intrawest Resort Executive Committee, Spa and Wellness committee, and leadership and training division.

Prior to Intrawest, Bassel held the position of development director for First Quebec Corporation, where he developed numerous commercial, office, and industrial projects in urban centers. He was the driving force behind the reinvention of McGill College Avenue in Montreal during his eight years with First Quebec.

Graduating from the University of Western Ontario, Bassel has both an undergraduate degree in business administration and an MBA from what is now the Richard Ivey School of Business. He serves as a board member on numerous charitable organizations and dedicates his free time to improving health care and education in Montreal. Bassel is also a dedicated member of the Urban Land Institute and Young Presidents organization.

**Greg Cory**

*San Francisco, California*

Cory has accumulated over 30 years’ experience in analyzing the demand for and effect of hotels, resorts, and recreation-oriented facilities within the United States, Europe, the Caribbean, Mexico, Central America, and Southeast Asia, and he has made this field the primary focus of his professional expertise. An avid skier, Cory has conducted over 70 separate ski development analyses, during the course of which he has visited and studied more than 130 separate international and U.S. ski areas.

He has examined the development history of, and been involved with the planning and development for, over 350 resort and tourism-oriented projects around the world. He previously served as the head of Resort Real Estate Practice for Economics Research Associates (ERA), is the current chairman of the Recreation Development Council (Blue) of the Urban Land Institute, and is the corporate representative to the National Ski Areas Association. He is a frequent speaker on the subject of land use economics and is coauthor of the book *Golf Course Development in Residential Communities*, published by ULI in 2001.

Over the years, Cory has been involved in numerous issues facing mountain resort communities as they develop and mature. He has assessed basic market demand for expansion of facilities at Vail, Aspen, Keystone, Squaw Valley, and Sun Peaks. He has performed operational audits and valuations for the Yellowstone Club, Stowe, Stratton, Telluride, and Northstar. He has examined issues related to commercial space requirements and zoning issues for Breckenridge, Telluride, and Mammoth. Finally, he has wrestled with the classic issues of real estate development opportunities and the need to maintain a balance of transient accommodations throughout the life of the development at Sun Peaks, Mountain Creek, Valle Nevado (Chile), Kicking Horse, and others.

Cory received a bachelor of economics from the University of California and a master in city and regional planning through a combined program with the University of Oregon and the University of California, Berkeley. Starting his career with the preparation of the state of Oregon’s Coastal Zone Management Plan, he migrated to the private sector where he joined ERA in 1978. A privately held company until 2007, ERA is now the Global Economics brand for AECOM internationally.
Peter Forsch  
Scottsdale, Arizona

Forsch has over 30 years’ experience in the real estate development business, specializing in resort and resort residential development. Currently, Forsch heads up his own consulting and management firm specializing in resort and resort residential developments in Arizona, Utah, Mexico, and Belize. He also is an owner/partner in a brokerage business specializing in commercial brokerage in Arizona, Texas, and New Mexico.

Starting his career in Aspen, Colorado, Forsch worked in and learned the ski area operations business. While with the Aspen Skiing Company (ASC), the owner/operator of Aspen Mountain, Aspen Highlands, Buttermilk, and Snowmass, he began his foray into real estate by managing the acquisition, development, and management of the company’s employee housing program.

Obtaining his real estate sales and brokers licenses, he worked with a small company in the development and sales of small ranch parcels in the Aspen area. Eventually, Forsch headed up the real estate division for ASC, where he managed and oversaw the development of all company property in Aspen as well as in Breckenridge (which ASC then owned). He also managed the entire mountain planning department for ASC, managed the ASC sales and marketing departments, and chaired the Organizing Committee for the World Cup Ski Races. In the mid-1980s, Forsch conceptualized, acquired, planned, and headed up the development of the Little Nell Hotel.

After Aspen, Forsch went to Coeur d’Alene, Idaho, where he managed the development of a new ski area—Silver Mountain Ski and Summer Resort. He oversaw the resort’s strategic and development plan, organizational structure and staffing, finance, construction, sales and marketing as well as the ongoing operations. Staying in the Coeur d’Alene area, Forsch oversaw and managed a diversified real estate development and management company, McCormack Properties, which had a number of residential, resort, and commercial developments and properties in the northwestern United States.

In 1998, Forsch went to Jackson Hole, Wyoming, where he was responsible for all the real estate planning and development for Jackson Hole Mountain Resort in Teton Village. There, he managed the conceptualization, programming, product selection and mix, development, construction, sales and marketing, and property management of condominiums, townhomes, fractional ownership projects, and numerous commercial and restaurant developments. He also put together the development plan and program, entitlements, design, financial projections, and debt and equity structure and partners for the Four Seasons Hotel—125 rooms, 40 fractional units, 17 whole ownership units, and a golf course.

In 2002, Forsch became president of The Club at Spanish Peaks, a 3,500-acre, 850-unit private ski and golf community in Big Sky, Montana. He was responsible for all the planning, design, entitlements, development, construction, sales and marketing, and operations. The project gained numerous critical awards and set records for sales in its first years. Additionally, Forsch was chief operating officer for a 500-acre resort residential development (Lone Moose Meadows) in the Big Sky area.

Steve Ormiston  
Highlands Ranch, Colorado

Ormiston is vice president of planning for Shea Homes. For the past 30 years, he has been engaged in the planning and development of Highlands Ranch, and more recently, he has participated in Reunion, which is being developed by Shea Homes in Commerce City.

Before joining Shea Homes, Ormiston worked with Mission Viejo Company on Highlands Ranch, and in the mid-1970s, he worked briefly at the Environmental Management Agency of Orange County, California. A graduate of California State Polytechnic University, Ormiston has an undergraduate degree in urban planning and a master of urban planning. He has over 33 years of professional community planning experience.

Ormiston serves on several boards and committees responsible for leadership in civic affairs, transportation, public education, open space, and homebuilding industry issues. His memberships include the FasTracks Citizens Advisory Committee, Colorado Association of Homebuilders Board of Directors, and Douglas

In 2001, Ormiston received the Denver Regional Council of Governments Local Government Innovations Award for Public Private Partnerships for the School District 27J Capital Facilities Fee Foundation.

R. Terry Schnadelbach

Gainesville, Florida

For over 30 years, Schnadelbach has been an internationally known landscape architect, educator, ecologist, historian, and author. He began his career in architecture, continued in landscape architecture, and has gained a reputation as an urban designer, landscape architect, ecologist, historian, and preservationist of the natural as well as the built landscape.

As a practitioner, Schnadelbach has executed major landscape architectural commissions throughout the United States, Europe, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East. He has consulted to governments, institutions, and private industry.

His professional work has received numerous awards, including from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the American Institute of Architects. In New York City, he won the Philip Winslow Award for Landscape Design of Public Spaces, the Parks Council Award, and the City Club of New York's Bard Award for Civic Design. He has won international competitions and received the honored French Ruban d'Or in 1995 for his Pont d'Elon in Brest, France. In the United States, his work includes projects in the hospitality sector in Tucson, Arizona, and Brainard, Minnesota; residential development at Killington Ski Resort, Vermont; and environmental planning for the Ken Carlyle Ranch in Colorado.

As a landscape architectural historian, Schnadelbach has worked on the restoration of Frederick Law Olmsted's Buffalo park system and Cadwalader Park in Trenton, New Jersey. He has restored Phipps Garden Apartments, Sunnysole, New York—a 20th-century landscape of Clarence Stein, Henry Wright, and Marjorie S. Cautley. Schnadelbach has written on Frederick Law Olmsted, Ian McHarg, and Edward G. Lawson. He is the author of the book Ferruccio Vitale, Landscape Architect of the Country Place Era (2001). Internationally, Schnadelbach is the landscape historian of the Angkor civilization at Siem Reap, Cambodia, for the work being done by the World Monuments Fund.

Schnadelbach is a graduate in architecture from Louisiana State University and in landscape architecture from the Harvard Graduate School of Design. In 1964 and 1965, he won the American Academy in Rome's coveted Rome Prize in Landscape Architecture. He has twice returned to the American Academy in Rome as an artist/scholar-in-residence.

He has taught landscape architecture, urban design, ecology, and real estate development at the University of Pennsylvania, Harvard Graduate School of Design, and Columbia University. At Rhode Island School of Design, he held the Lowthrup Chair of Landscape Architectural History. Currently, he is professor of landscape architecture, University of Florida, Gainesville, and program coordinator for landscape architecture at the University’s Paris Research Center, France.

Schnadelbach has been a member of the Urban Land Institute since 1984 and was a member of the International Council from 1986 to 1996. He has served as a ULI Advisory Services panelist on nine missions.

Belinda Sward

La Jolla, California

Sward has recently joined Cecilian Worldwide to introduce a dynamic boutique division of the company that will offer the next generation of genuine and deep (verbal and visual) conversations with consumers for real estate. These methods bring insights and ideas to provide investors, and development and marketing teams an original approach to problem solving.

Her specific expertise includes forward-thinking consumer and market interpretation and practical application of insights. These insights have been successful in guiding direction for growth and project-level acquisitions, planning, community vision and experience creation, product design, marketing, and execution, resulting in higher company and project internal rates of return.
For four years, Sward was responsible for leading the strategy and consumer and market interpretation functions for Newland Communities as senior vice president and chief strategy officer. She led the transformation of Newland Communities—the largest master-planned community developer in North America with over $2 billion in assets (including 67 communities)—from a product-focused company to a consumer-focused company, resulting in the highest profits to ownership in the history of the company.

Before Newland, she served as managing director and co-led southeast operations for the national real estate consulting firm Robert Charles Lesser & Co. (RCLCO), having worked as a consultant with the firm for more than 15 years. At RCLCO, she guided numerous developers and homebuilders throughout North America in creating expansion strategies into new markets and products, including mergers and acquisitions, market selection, competitive strategies, product development, and practical application in community planning.

Sward has been a member of the Urban Land Institute since 1989 and a full member since 1997. On a national level, she serves as incoming assistant chair of the Silver Flight of the Community Development Council. She serves as the social chair of the San Diego District Council of ULI and is on the Executive Committee. Earlier, she served on the Executive Committee of the Atlanta District Council for ULI for more than six years. For more than 15 years, she has participated in ULI advisory panels for numerous projects throughout the United States.

She has given speeches on such topics as smart growth, sustainable development, community development trends, and consumer insights and trends. Sward holds an MBA from Emory University.

Deanna Weber
Irvine, California

Weber has served over the last 15 years as a leading planner, urban designer, and landscape architect on a wide variety of complex projects involving sustainable mixed-use/revitalization sites, resort and recreation planning/design projects, planning and implementation of large master-planned communities, and community participation programs. She graduated with a master of landscape architecture in urban design from Harvard University’s Graduate School of Design in 1993 and has a bachelor of landscape architecture from Pennsylvania State University.

A leader in implementation of sustainable design principles on a number of high-profile projects, Weber is a U.S. Green Building Council LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Accredited Professional/consultant and member of the Urban Land Institute’s Sustainable Development Council. Significant sustainable projects completed include Canyon Forest Village within the Grand Canyon’s watershed (LEED Pilot project/National ASLA Planning Award); the Aspen Skiing Company’s Sundeck (one of the first 12 LEED-certified buildings in the county); High Desert (the most successful green oriented master-planned community in Albuquerque); Northstar at Tahoe’s LEED Village; the Flathead County, Montana, Master Plan (National ASLA Planning Award); and El Rancho San Bento, involving whole-systems integrated modeling to determine what a net-zero carbon community involves and costs.

Weber has lectured and taught sustainable design practices at the Urban Land Institute; California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo; Pennsylvania State University; Design Workshop’s Corporate University; Hospitality Design Conference; and EcoBuild America, among others. Weber’s sustainable-oriented project work has been published in the Wall Street Journal, Landscape Architecture, Urban Land, Planning, and the Harvard Architecture Review.

Ruth Wuorenma
Chicago, Illinois

Wuorenma has focused her career on helping public, private, for-profit, and nonprofit groups work together to achieve mutual goals. Her experience as both a land use lawyer and a developer spans national and international commercial real estate, market-rate and affordable housing, and various civic roles.

In 2003, Wuorenma created the Neighborhood Capital Institute (NCI), an Illinois not-for-profit research and policy corporation, that offers planning and real estate development strategies to foster capital
investment, economic vitality, and an enhanced quality of life in communities of all sizes, from neighborhoods to counties. Although the institute provides a broad range of development advisory services, one of its highest principles is to foster connections between stakeholders, the development community, and planning professionals of excellence to create community-driven and economically viable comprehensive redevelopment plans. NCI’s recent and current projects include those in various Chicago neighborhoods, in the broader metro area, in other Midwestern states, and in California.

Before founding NCI, Wuorenma was development adviser/project manager to the city of Waukegan, Illinois, as it launched a redevelopment master plan and financial strategy for its 1,400-acre lakefront and 400-acre downtown. One of the Midwest’s largest planning projects, the redevelopment plan encompasses more than 4,000 new residences, an intermodal regional commuter rail and bus station, a restored eco-park and moorlands system, and improvements to the expansive marina. The plan won unanimous City Council and Citizens’ Council support and went on to win several awards of national significance, including the Charter Award from the Congress for the New Urbanism and the Burnham Award of the Metropolitan Planning Council. Also significant, the plan is one that can be financed, even with its large scale and significant environmental contamination, because investment values have been market based and developer tested.

Prior to her work in Waukegan, Wuorenma was a managing director for Mesirow Financial Real Estate, where she oversaw the firm’s work on a variety of mixed-use, high-density, often transit-oriented urban developments, including market-rate and public housing transformation projects. Earlier, with Joseph Freed Homes, she developed an array of market-rate residential products, both new construction and loft conversions. Under NCI’s predecessor, Neighborhood Capital Company, she partnered with Freed in a nonsubsidized affordable condominium conversion, which won Bank of America’s first Enterprise Award to a for-profit entity.

Wuorenma began her career as a land use and zoning attorney at one of the country’s largest real estate law firms (Rudnick & Wolfe, now DLA Piper), orchestrating entitlement processes. From Rudnick & Wolfe, she went to work for Marriott Corporation, becoming one of Marriott’s top-producing developers (at a time when Marriott was one of the four largest developers in the United States), serving in the Midwest, the West (excluding California), and Europe. During a yearlong sabbatical from commercial real estate, she served in the reform cabinet of a community college, which team removed the college from governance probation within six months.

Wuorenma’s professional affiliations are with organizations addressing urban issues, infrastructure, and finance. She is a frequent participant in ULI Advisory Services panels, both nationally and in Chicago, and often speaks on those topics as well as on high-impact, informed community engagement. Her civic and personal commitments often relate to education, the arts, and social service. She is also a proud partner in “Happy Turtle Farms,” two farm sites in Michigan focusing on small farm and wildlife habitat preservation.

Wuorenma graduated with honors from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and earned her JD from its College of Law, after having started her legal education at New York University as a Root-Tilden Scholar.