



Building Healthy Places: West Edwards, Colorado Community Design & Resilience

Contents

5

Executive Summary

6

Introduction: The Panel's Assignment

7

West Edwards Context

11

Findings: Assets, Opportunities
& Challenges in West Edwards

12

Planning & Urban Design Recommendations

14

Mobility Recommendations

16

Affordable Housing Recommendations

18

Community Health Recommendations

21

Resilience Recommendations

25

Financial Recommendations

27

Conclusion & Key Takeaways

28

List of Stakeholders

29

Panelist Biographies

ABOUT THE URBAN LAND INSTITUTE

THE URBAN LAND INSTITUTE is a global, member-driven organization comprising more than 45,000 real estate and urban development professionals dedicated to advancing the Institute's mission of providing leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide.

ULI's interdisciplinary membership represents all aspects of the industry, including developers, property owners, investors, architects, urban planners, public officials, real estate brokers, appraisers, attorneys, engineers, financiers, and academics. Established in 1936, the Institute has a presence in the Americas, Europe, and Asia Pacific region, with members in 81 countries.

ULI's extraordinary impact on land use decision-making is based on its members' sharing expertise on a variety of factors affecting the built environment, including urbanization, demographic and population changes, new economic drivers, technology advancements, and environmental concerns. Peer-to-peer learning is achieved through the knowledge shared by members at thousands of convenings each year that reinforce ULI's position as a global authority on land use and real estate.

Drawing on the work of its members, the Institute recognizes and shares best practices in urban design and development for the benefit of communities around the globe. More information is available at uli.org. Follow ULI on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram.

ULI COLORADO

With over 1,400 members throughout Colorado, ULI Colorado is one of the largest and most active ULI District Councils worldwide. We bring together leaders from across the fields of real estate and land use policy to exchange best practices and serve community needs. We share knowledge through education, applied research, publishing, electronic media, events and programs.

BUILDING HEALTHY PLACES WORKSHOPS

Since 1947, the Urban Land Institute has harnessed the technical expertise of its members to help communities solve difficult land use, development, and redevelopment challenges. During Building Healthy Places Workshops, ULI members volunteer to provide expert, multidisciplinary, unbiased advice to local governments, public agencies, and nonprofit organizations facing complex land use and community health issues in Colorado. Drawing from our seasoned professional membership base, ULI Colorado offers objective, achievable findings and recommendations to create opportunities for enhancing community health and wellness through the built environment.

The sponsoring organization is responsible for gathering the background information necessary to understand the project and presenting it to the panel. TAP members typically spend two days developing an understanding of the problem, coming up with recommendations, and presenting those findings and recommendations to the sponsoring organization.



Cover Image: Panelists walking along Highway 6 in West Edwards.

Interior Front Cover: Mobile home in West Edwards.

ULI Panel, Staff, Volunteers & Sponsors

ULI Panel Members:

Kimball Crangle

Colorado Market
President,
Gorman & Company

Sarah Hong

Building Performance
Engineer,
Group 14 Engineering

Will Kerns

Principal Consultant,
Open Plan Consultants

Eric Kornacki

President & CEO,
THRIVE Partners and
Co-Founder of Re:Vision

David Starnes

Principal and Owner,
CIVISTRUCT

Stacey Weaks

Principal,
Norris Design

ULI Colorado Advisory Services Committee Co-Chairs:

Al Colussy

Principal Member,
Alan Colussy Architecture, LLC

LaDonna Baertlein

Director of Business Development,
Dig Studio

Andrew Knudtsen

Managing Principal,
Economic & Planning Systems

Anna Jones

Public Manager,
CliftonLarsonAllen LLP

ULI Project Staff & Report Author:

Marianne Eppig

Director,
ULI Colorado

Thank You to the Sponsors of this
Building Healthy Places Workshop!



The Colorado
Health Foundation™



EAGLE COUNTY

Executive Summary

Located along the Eagle River and I-70, unincorporated West Edwards is the most densely populated area in Eagle County. The neighborhoods of West Edwards are home to a large portion of the Eagle River Valley's local workforce. On November 14-15, 2019, ULI Colorado convened a Building Healthy Places Workshop to provide guidance regarding land use planning and policy, mobility, community health, and resilience in West Edwards. For this two-day workshop, ULI Colorado assembled six land use experts (see panelist bios on page 29) who volunteered to offer objective, third-party advice. The panel reviewed a detailed advance packet of prior studies, toured West Edwards, and interviewed local stakeholders, including county staff, elected officials, property and business owners, residents, and organizational leaders (for a list of stakeholders interviewed, see page 28). This report includes the panel's findings and recommendations.

Key Takeaways

The panel encouraged Eagle County to continue to take proactive steps to plan for community health, affordable housing, connectivity, and resilience in West Edwards with the following recommendations:

- Connect the community with multi-modal options
- Communicate across cultural barriers
- Create a community hub
- Add to the mix of affordable and workforce housing
- Leverage and create funding sources to implement priority projects
- Pilot informal programming and activities for diverse groups and ages
- Prepare for natural hazards with the community
- Support community health through access to clean water, healthy food, and opportunities for exercise

Introduction: The Panel's Assignment

On November 14-15, 2019, ULI Colorado convened a Building Healthy Places Workshop to provide guidance regarding land use planning and policy, mobility, community health, and resilience in West Edwards. For this two-day workshop, ULI Colorado assembled six land use experts (see panelist bios on page 29) who volunteered to offer objective, third-party advice. The panel reviewed a detailed advance packet of prior studies, toured West Edwards, and interviewed local stakeholders, including county staff, elected officials, property and business owners, residents, and organizational leaders (for a list of stakeholders interviewed, see page 28).

Eagle County gave the panelists the following problem statement and questions to address during the workshop:

Problem Statement

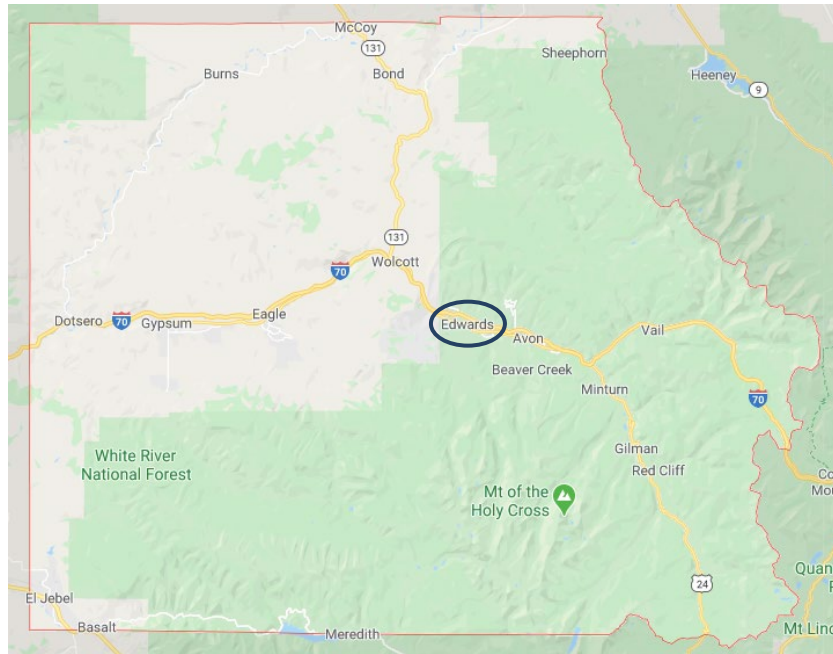
West Edwards' piecemeal approach to zoning and community planning through the use of PUDs creates fragmentation between where residents of West Edwards live, work, and play. West Edwards is home to a large portion of Eagle County's full-time residents, and has considerable need for transit service, infrastructure improvements, economic development, and health equity. Eagle County envisions a West Edwards community that is resilient to economic and environmental stresses, incorporates the basic needs of access to healthy and affordable foods, affordable and accessible active transportation, and recreational opportunities.

Eagle County sought the panel's insight and recommendations in answer to the following questions:

1. Aside from changing Eagle County's land use regulations or adopting a West Edwards Master Plan, what other policy levers are available to influence decisions on future development in West Edwards in line with healthy community and equity values?
2. How can we improve the efficiencies of Eagle County transportation services to better meet the needs of West Edwards' residents? How can the non-motorized trail network, both paved and soft surface, be improved to better connect residents of West Edwards?
3. How can we attract the development of resources in line with prioritized community needs (e.g., food access, recreation spaces for children of all ages, affordable housing, etc.)?
4. Due to the population density, age of structures, geography, and location, the West Edwards community is ill-prepared for emergencies. How can we plan and develop for resilience, reduce code violations, and ensure the safety of West Edwards residents?

This report includes findings and recommendations related to each of these questions.

West Edwards Context



Map of Eagle County, with Edwards circled, courtesy Google Maps.

About Eagle County

Eagle County, Colorado is located in the heart of the Rocky Mountains, surrounded by the White River National Forest. Eighty-four percent of Eagle County is public land. The county is home to the internationally renowned ski resorts of Vail and Beaver Creek and, as a result, tourism, second-home ownership, and construction are the county's main economic drivers. Eagle County has characteristics common to both rural and winter resort communities, including a large service industry workforce and significant Spanish-speaking population, a high cost of living, and extreme weather conditions (for more information, see the [2017 Eagle County Community Health Improvement Plan](#) by Eagle County Public Health and Environment).

Land available for development in Eagle County is limited. Of the sixteen percent of the county in private ownership, approximately eighty percent is encumbered by steep slopes, floodplains, or other development constraints. As a result, only three to four percent of the total land area in the county is truly suitable for development, and much of this land is already developed. Due to the lack of available land, coupled with a growing workforce and housing pressures, strategic and thoughtful long-term planning is integral to the social, economic, and environmental health and resilience of the Eagle County community. Eagle County's Community Development Department is in the early stages of community engagement that will inform the development of a new county-wide comprehensive plan. The intent is for this plan to help shape a complete rewrite of the county's land use regulations.

About West Edwards

Positioned along the Eagle River and Interstate 70 (I-70) corridor, the unincorporated Edwards community is home to forty-five percent of Eagle County's year-round households and holds a relatively significant area of land still available for development. However, the piecemeal approach to zoning and community planning through the use of Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) throughout unincorporated areas of Eagle County creates fragmentation between where residents live, work, and play.



Map of West Edwards, with the panel’s study area outlined in yellow, courtesy Google Maps.

The neighborhoods and villages on the western periphery of Edwards are known as West Edwards. Spanning from the Edwards Access Road roundabouts off Interstate 70 in the east to Squaw Creek Road in the west, Highway 6 bisects the West Edwards Corridor, with the northern portion bordering the Eagle River and the southern portion skirting steep hillsides.

The West Edwards corridor contains five separate neighborhoods, including Lake Creek Village, Brett Ranch, Fox Hollow, 6 West, Stillwater, and Eagle River Village Mobile Home Community, with new developments in proposal and planning stages. These neighborhoods are home to a significant portion of the Eagle River Valley’s local workforce, with an estimated ten percent of the county’s year-round population residing in this square mile. While housing is a significant portion of West Edwards’ land use, the community remains disconnected from the rest of Eagle County and lacks basic resources like affordable grocery stores, safe bike and pedestrian infrastructure, and recreational opportunities.

Social Context in West Edwards

West Edwards is physically, socially, and linguistically isolated from the rest of Eagle County. The Colorado Health Foundation estimates that 31.6 percent of Eagle County residents are Latinx, with significant residential segregation between whites and non-whites. The Foundation further estimates that 30.2 percent of Eagle County residents subsist below 200 percent poverty, 22.3 percent are food insecure, and the average Eagle County resident spends 46.5 percent of their household income on mortgage or rent costs, exceeding Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recommendations. The self-sufficiency standard, a calculation of how much income a family must earn to meet basic needs, for one adult and one preschooler is 374 percent of the Federal Poverty Level in Eagle County—much higher than the Colorado average of 251 percent.

“A lot of people who live here work in Beaver Creek or Vail.”

- Elyse Howard, Habitat for Humanity

West Edwards hosts the housing developments of Brett Ranch, 6 West, Lake Creek Village, Fox Hollow, Stillwater, and Eagle River Village Mobile Home Park. Demand for housing combined with limited available land has made West Edwards a prime location for further development. West Edwards is expected to see increased growth as Fox Hollow, Stillwater, and 6 West developments add 228 units to the area with additional proposed developments in the application process. This is expected to exacerbate traffic and safety challenges experienced in West Edwards.

Eagle River Village, a mobile home community built in the 1970s, is divided by Highway 6 in West Edwards. The majority of Eagle River Village residents own their mobile home, but they do not own the land their home sits on, and they pay as much as \$1,300 a month for their lot lease. Park residents also contribute an estimated \$15,000 in property taxes annually (for more information, see the [2017 Eagle River Village Survey](#) by the InteGreat! Coalition).

Eagle River Village Mobile Home Park contains 381 units with an estimated 763 children living in the park. This is roughly seven percent of the total population of children under the age of sixteen in Eagle County. Thirty-six percent of residents have lived more than ten years in their home, and seven percent have spent at least two decades in the community. Eagle River Village residents support Eagle Valley's economy and their children attend Eagle County Schools. When surveyed by the InteGreat! Coalition in 2017, residents of Eagle River Village identified the following issues in their neighborhood: lack of sufficiently potable water, poor street conditions, high rent, lack of streetlights, car speeds, children safety, only one community entrance/exit, lack of park maintenance, lack of available parking, wild animals, trash, police, and park management.



Eagle River Village Mobile Home Community is split by Highway 6 in West Edwards.



Highway 6 divides West Edwards.

Built Environment Barriers to Improving Public Health

West Edwards has numerous built environment barriers that make walking and biking feel unsafe and hinder access to outdoor spaces, parks, trails, and community centers. There are limited community spaces in which residents can build community and grow social capital. Over the last forty years, Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) have resulted in fragmentation between the commercial center and surrounding neighborhoods. West Edwards is connected to the surrounding community by Highway 6 and an Eagle County maintained multi-modal paved path, the Eagle Valley Trail. Highway 6 is a two-lane state highway with a speed limit of 45 mph through the communities of Eagle River Village, Fox Hollow, and 6 West. Highway 6 lacks traffic calming features to slow traffic in areas with high pedestrian use, and residents rely on a single crosswalk to cross the highway on foot. Eagle County, in partnership with CDOT and Edwards Metro District, is investigating multi-modal and operational improvements for this corridor and plans to complete a study that includes infrastructure recommendations by 2022.

The Eagle Valley Trail stretches the length of Eagle County from East Vail to Dotsero—but has a significant gap between West Edwards and west of Wolcott. In West Edwards, the Eagle Valley Trail ends at the Highway 6 and Hillcrest Drive intersection, the turnoff for Lake Creek Village. Residents of West Edwards can be seen using the path to travel to work, walk their dogs, or taking their children out on bikes. The Eagle Valley Trail is the single non-motorized trail connection between West Edwards and the larger Edwards community.

The residents of Eagle River Village experience poorly lit and poorly maintained roads with a single entrance/exit for the community. Residents expressed concern for the lack of sidewalks, poor snow removal, and ineffective handling of waste that attracts wildlife. New play structures were recently installed in Eagle River Village, funded by Great Outdoors Colorado, and organized by the Eagle Valley Outdoor Movement, a coalition of nonprofit organizations in the valley. In 2016, some improvements that were installed (e.g., soccer goals) through a County funded “Neighborhood Partnership Program” were so highly utilized that they broke and had to be removed after only one season due to a lack of long-term maintenance funding. This speaks to the high demand for play equipment in the area.

Findings

During the workshop, the panelists toured the study area, spoke with local stakeholders, and reviewed materials from Eagle County about West Edwards. Before diving into recommendations, the panelists came up with these findings.

Assets & Opportunities

Panelists agreed that West Edwards, Edwards, and Eagle County have many assets that the local community can leverage to enhance health and wellbeing for residents. Some of the specific assets and opportunities serving the area include:

- 1% sales tax revenue for transportation & safety
- The Edwards Metro District mill levy is low (1.691), so it has room to grow
- [The Colorado Mobile Home Park Act](#), passed by the state legislature in 2019 to provide additional protections for mobile home park residents
- Existing and planned affordable housing in West Edwards
- ECO Transit's Transportation & Mobility Study
- Eagle County's comprehensive planning effort and land use regulation update
- Transportation improvements for the Edwards roundabout and plans for the Hillcrest Drive intersection
- The Edwards Metro District
- The Eagle County Housing & Development Authority
- Eagle Valley Community Foundation and its bi-weekly food bank
- Mobile Intercultural Resource Alliance (MIRA)
- Early Head Start offices and program space at the Lake Creek Village Clubhouse
- Local schools and early childhood education
- Free and reduced lunch program
- Local restaurants, like Pepitos
- Community spaces at Edwards Interfaith Chapel, the Eagle River Village mobile home park club house, the Community Clubhouse at Lake Creek Village Apartments, the Mountain Recreation Edwards Field House, and the Eagle River Preserve cabin
- Eagle River Preserve
- Beard Creek and Eagle Valley Trails

Challenges

Eagle County is wise to proactively pursue solutions to West Edwards' land use, housing, mobility, health, and resilience challenges to get ahead of incoming development proposals. The panelists identified the following challenges specific to West Edwards:

- Eagle River Village mobile home park has access & evacuation issues, overcrowding, and concerns about retaliation, displacement, water quality, and infrastructure
- Insufficient supply of affordable housing to meet the high demand
- Lack of safe pedestrian access to open space and the Beard Creek Trail system for West Edwards residents
- Physical and social disconnect between West Edwards and Edwards
- Need for affordable, accessible groceries
- Insufficient bike and pedestrian connectivity, especially with inconsistent sidewalks, paths, and highway crossings
- Traffic and uncontrolled intersections (like the intersection at Hillcrest Drive and Highway 6)
- Highway 6 and I-70 divide the community
- Frequent bus stops and long headways make transit inefficient and add to traffic issues

- Continue adding affordable workforce housing along the Highway 6 corridor.
- Consider an overlay district for West Edwards that allows for types of land uses to have a streamlined entitlements process, such as:
 - Affordable housing
 - Workforce housing
 - Multi-family housing
 - Community services and conveniences
 - Parks and open space
 - Transit-oriented facilities
- Preserve the Eagle River natural corridor and consider key north/south open space corridor connections.
- Update the Edwards Area Community Plan after the county’s Comprehensive Plan update effort.

“After the Comp Plan, we will focus on sub-area plans and a transportation overlay.”

- Morgan Beryl, Community Development Director, Eagle County

“The Great Outdoors Colorado grant was used to replace the old playground. People like the soccer field but are bothered by the playground. There are only two swings and they are too high for young children.”

- Fatima Basera, Mobile Intercultural Resource Alliance

“Traffic lights aren’t in the right place. They’re not convenient for people who live here. Also, we need better pedestrian crosswalks.”

- Anonymous Resident

Community Destinations

- Identify a community hub (the village core for West Edwards) and build on this space. See page 23 for more community hub recommendations.
- Integrate a community center, indoor sport courts, multi-use fields and play area at the hub.
- Host events and programming and activate the hub for the community.
- Focus on multi-generational recreational spaces with convenient access.
- Develop a park master plan for the Edwards Metro District property at Cattail Way.
- Develop a regional trail connection from Lake Creek Village and Brett Ranch to central Edwards.
- Encourage and support reinvestment in recreational amenities in and around Eagle River Village.
- Consider organizing a community garden initiative.
- Invest in green infrastructure and trees for shade and quality of life in the area.

“We used a GoCo grant for Eagle County trail beautification to Lake Creek Road. Eagle Valley trail is less than inviting next to the state highway. There’s a lack of connectivity across Highway 6 and Eagle River, so the community is separated and isolated. We need bridges and sidewalks.”

- Jared Barnes, Planning Manager, Eagle County

Improve Connectivity

- Improve connectivity and safety along Highway 6 by adding pedestrian crossings and traffic calming measures.
- Invest in improving the efficiency of the transit system.
- Complete multi-use paths, trails, and sidewalks to connect the community.
- Develop a down-cast lighting strategy to enhance pedestrian routes.
- Add multi-lingual wayfinding signage.
- Ensure secondary access into the Eagle River Village.
- Add pedestrian improvements along Hillcrest Drive to reconnect the community across Highway 6, the Eagle River, and I-70, and provide access for West Edwards residents to the Beard Creek Trail system and open space.

Details for how to implement these connectivity goals are in the following section on Mobility Recommendations.

Mobility Recommendations

Short Term

- Enhance pedestrian crossings along Highway 6 with pedestrian-activated signals. Add shark teeth yield markings before the crosswalks. Pedestrian crossings and intersections provide opportunities for public art and multi-lingual wayfinding signage.
- Invest in improving the efficiency of the transit system. Bring together key stakeholders (such as Eagle County, ECO Transit, Eagle County School District, and private schools) to create a busing plan for more efficient and convenient transit in the area. Include staggered school start times, bus pull-offs, and bus stop improvements. Eventually school buses may pull into the mobile home park if dual access is provided.
- Complete multi-use paths, trails, and sidewalks to connect the community. For example, complete the multi-use trail in front of Century Link. Use crusher fines (small particles of crushed rock) with a native mix of rocks for multi-use trail surfaces.
- Ensure secondary access for each mobile home park, which is required by fire code. Dedicate land for the access easement and the secondary access can be planned and implemented by CDOT.
- Support a resident organizer for the mobile home park who can help implement a carpool program for temporary and seasonal workers, so they do not need to keep purchasing and abandoning cars.

Long Term

- Implement Highway 6 improvements to enhance multi-modal mobility. Add down-cast lighting for pedestrian safety.
- Add pedestrian improvements along Hillcrest Drive to reconnect the community across Highway 6, the Eagle River, and I-70, and provide access for West Edwards residents to the Beard Creek Trail system and open space. Eventually, pedestrian bridges could be added to reconnect the community across these divides and separate pedestrians from cars.
- Build an in-town loose surface mountain bike trail network and connect it to existing loose surface trails around town. There is also potential for a loose surface pedestrian and wildlife I-70 underpass.

“School bus stops don’t make sense currently. Bus service is inefficient – it takes 55 min to get to Vail, which is 17 miles away. There are too many stops. Highway 6 was built so that school buses could stop and wouldn’t have to put out stop arms and stop traffic. But school buses have their stop signs out, stopping traffic the entire way. We could stagger school start times since three are in the same area and all open at 8am.”

- Bob Boselli, O’Bos Enterprises, LLC

“There’s one school bus stop by Eagle River Village, so kids have to walk along the highway to get to the bus stop.”

- Fatima Basera, Mobile Intercultural Resource Alliance

“Crossing the street is dangerous. There are many accidents.”

- Anonymous Resident

“Traffic is chaotic. The mobile home park is split by the highway and there’s no pedestrian crossing. Also, there’s only one way in and out of park.”

- Melina Valsecia, Mobile Intercultural Resource Alliance



The Eagle River Village Mobile Home Park.

Affordable Housing Recommendations

Ensuring Affordable Housing with Deed Restriction

- Establish a permanent funding source to subsidize deed-restricted affordable housing development, which will preserve the housing's affordability over time. Deed restriction can be applied to both for-sale and rental properties. Passing a county-wide sales or property tax could provide the funding needed to preserve and create deed-restricted housing. Other potential funding sources include foundations, the Edwards Metro District, and large employers.
- Purchase land along Highway 6 to facilitate the development of future deed-restricted housing and community-serving facilities. Density along the Highway 6 corridor allows for transit-oriented development and a greater supply of affordable housing, especially because land is expensive.
- Create an overlay district along the Highway 6 corridor in West Edwards to expedite entitlements for the development of deed-restricted affordable housing and community-serving facilities such as early childhood education, recreation centers, parks, and grocery stores.

More Affordable Housing Strategies

- Ensure public health and safety standards are being met at the Eagle River Village Mobile Home Park, which provides affordable housing in West Edwards. Concerns include secondary access for ingress and egress to meet fire codes, water quality (see below), fire safety, overcrowding, lack of green infrastructure, road quality, and quality of life.

“Developable land should go towards attainable housing. This is a great location for it and there’s a huge community need. The PUD process hurts this goal because of the expensive and time-intensive entitlements process.”

- Rick Pylman, Pylman & Associates

“We want to create affordable and workforce housing, while putting pressure on existing housing stock that’s sitting vacant.”

- Morgan Beryl, Community Development Director, Eagle County

“The housing department is hamstrung in terms of bringing really affordable units to this area because we don’t have a permanent funding source.”

- Tori Franks, Real Estate & Development Manager, Eagle County Housing Department

- Encourage development of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) for additional affordable and workforce housing.
- Tax or fine second home vacancy. Vancouver's Vacancy Tax went into effect in 2017 and adds a 1% charge on homes that are not the primary residence of the owner. It applies to homes that are unoccupied six or more months a year.

For Sale Housing Gap by Region and Income – 2020

Owner Units by AMI Where Owners Want to Live	Max Affordable Price	Up Valley 26%	Mid Valley 39%	Down Valley 35%	Total 100%
<60%	\$253,000	48	72	66	186
60.1% to 100%	\$316,000	122	180	164	466
100.1 to 140%	\$443,000	173	256	234	663
140.1 to 200%	\$632,000	135	200	183	518
Over 200%	>\$632,000	90	134	122	346
Gap - # for sale units		480	510	230	1,220

Rental Gap by Region and Income - 2020

Rental Units by AMI Where Renters want to live	Max Affordable Rent	Up Valley 42%	Mid Valley 40%	Down Valley 18%	Total 100%
<60%	\$1,200	212	202	91	505
60.1% to 100%	\$2,020	228	217	98	543
100.1 to 140%	\$2,820	143	136	62	341
140.1 to 200%	\$4,030	95	91	41	227
Over 200%	>\$4030	73	69	31	174
Gap - # of rental units		580	560	90	1,230
Total Gap		1,060	1,070	320	2,450

*Totals are rounded to the nearest 10.

Key	
Gap - Market does not provide	100
Blend - Market partially provides	100
Market provides	100

Housing gap in 2020 for the Eagle River Valley. West Edwards is in "Mid Valley." Charts from page 27 of "[Eagle River Valley Housing Needs and Solutions 2018](#)" by Rees Consulting, Inc. / Williford, LLC.

"I've invested in the mobile home park because my family started it. I have no plans to sell, although I'm a businessman. I've been purchasing mobile homes, fixing them up, and converting them to rentals. Moving to the rental model allows us to maintain properties."

- Marko Vukovich, Ascentia (Owner of Eagle River Village Mobile Home Community)

"People think they don't qualify for affordable housing. There's fear around applying due to legal status, how to prove their income, and seasonal work. They're also afraid to apply for Medicaid, and free and reduced school lunches."

- Melina Valsecia, Mobile Intercultural Resource Alliance

"We're thinking about how to encourage and regulate ADUs."

- Kris Valdez, Senior Planner, Eagle County



The Edwards Interfaith Chapel's playground.

Community Health Recommendations

Access to Clean Drinking Water

Access to healthy drinking water has been an issue of concern for over a decade in the Eagle River Valley Mobile Home Community. The mobile home park currently gets its water from a well, and residents complain about the look, smell, and taste of the water although it meets minimum health standards.

The panel's research found that the Colorado Revised Statutes ([§ 32-1-1006](#)) give water and sanitation districts the authority to compel property owners within their boundaries to connect to the district's water and sewer systems if the water and sewer lines are within four hundred feet of the owner's property. There is no exception for mobile homes.

Alternatives include raising Eagle County's Secondary Drinking Water Regulations for water quality and providing technical assistance to the property owner, since he does not want to give up his property's water rights to purchase district water. Also, the mobile home park's pipes aren't currently compatible with the Eagle River Water and Sanitation District's system, so its infrastructure would need to be updated. The park has water shut-offs because it doesn't have shut-off valves to control the water supply, which should be installed. The park could also install a water filtration system to remove secondary contaminants.

Conventional treatments for improving water quality to remove a variety of secondary contaminants include:

- **Coagulation and filtration** remove metals like iron, manganese, and zinc.
- **Aeration** removes odors, iron, and manganese.
- **Granular activated carbon** removes most of the contaminants that cause odors, color, and foaming.

Overall, installing water shut-off valves and a water filtration system would be relatively inexpensive solutions that the mobile home park owner could install that would alleviate community concerns about water quality and prevent regulatory action and potential loss of water rights.

“The mobile home park is on a well. The community is concerned about water quality and we’re working with state health department. While the water meets national primary drinking water regulations, it has aesthetic issues like high sodium and mineral content, it smells and doesn’t look great.”

- Becky Larson, Deputy Director of Public Health, Eagle County

“On Monday the water came out brown and then was shut off. We don’t use the water. I don’t even give it to my dog. I refuse.”

- Anonymous Resident

Access to Affordable, Healthy Food

The Eagle Valley Community Foundation estimates that over 22 percent of Eagle County residents are food insecure. Meanwhile, the closest grocery store to West Edwards is the Village Market in Edwards, which has expensive offerings. West Edwards residents have stated that they travel to City Market in Avon for more affordable groceries.

The Mobile Intercultural Resource Alliance (MIRA) has been working hard to increase access to healthy, affordable food in West Edwards. MIRA has a mobile resource bus that brings free resources and services, including a community market with fresh produce, to communities in Eagle County.

The panelists made the following recommendations to improve access to affordable, healthy food in West Edwards:

- Work to find a permanent home for a community market in West Edwards. Ensure that healthy food and fresh produce remain a substantial portion of the offerings.
- Work with the owner of Tienda De Pepito in West Edwards to expand selection of healthy food offerings, such as fresh produce. Less emphasis can be placed on unhealthy snacks by placing these items below eye level and putting healthy options in visible, high traffic areas. Work with the owner to ensure SNAP and WIC recipients can use their benefits at the store.
- Explore the possibility of adding other food- and health-related programming to the area, such as cooking and nutrition classes. Programming like this could utilize under-used commercial kitchen spaces, like church and club house kitchens, to support the growth and development of food-related businesses (e.g., catering, food trucks, prepared foods, etc).

Community Cohesion

[Research](#) has shown that social connection improves physical health and mental and emotional wellbeing. To connect West Edwards socially, culturally, and physically, the panelists made the following recommendations:

- Increase the number of community gathering spaces in West Edwards, such as easily accessible parks, plazas, a community center.
- Hire resident community organizers who live in the mobile home park to engage neighbors on issues affecting the community, helping to give voice to residents.
- Increase community programming focused on health issues, education support, programming for youth, GED and ESL support, workforce training, and leadership development.
- Support more community events in Edwards that are inclusive of the diversity of the community and help foster more personal relationships.
- Create a community hub, either through new construction or by utilizing an existing space that is inclusive and inviting for all community members. Allow the community to select and host the hub programming.

“Hunger is a big social determinant of health. Last year, 46% of school children here received free or reduced lunch. MIRA’s community market gets 1,000 customers every week. 50% of what they distribute is fresh produce. We want to bring food to the communities that need it. We also hope to begin focusing on mental health as well.”

- Susie Davis, Eagle Valley Community Foundation

“The community market is free but has a limited supply of food. For groceries, people go to City Market in Avon and can get discounts with their savings card.”

- Melina Valsecia, Mobile Intercultural Resource Alliance

“We need more programming for kids and adults. The closest recreation center is 3-4 miles away. There’s a field house, but it lacks programming. In our area, it’s dangerous for kids to walk around all the traffic. We need support groups that don’t charge a fee and that don’t have language barriers.”

- Anonymous Resident

Safe Bike, Pedestrian & Recreational Infrastructure

The ability to exercise in West Edwards is likely related to the accessibility of bike and pedestrian trails, sidewalks, and infrastructure. The panelists made the following recommendations related to adding safe pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in West Edwards:

- Add sidewalks and down-cast lighting along Highway 6 for people to walk safely.
- Increase park and play space, especially for children living in mobile home parks.
- Look at the potential for additional recreational facilities, such as basketball courts, a skate park, an indoor soccer field, etc.
- Install pedestrian improvements to allow residents to safely cross Highway 6, the Eagle River, and I-70. These improvements could be added to Hillcrest Drive, for example, or with pedestrian bridges.

Health Outreach

With a large immigrant and seasonal worker residential community in West Edwards, outreach can be difficult, especially if people are concerned about their legal status. The panelists provided the following recommendations regarding community outreach and education around health:

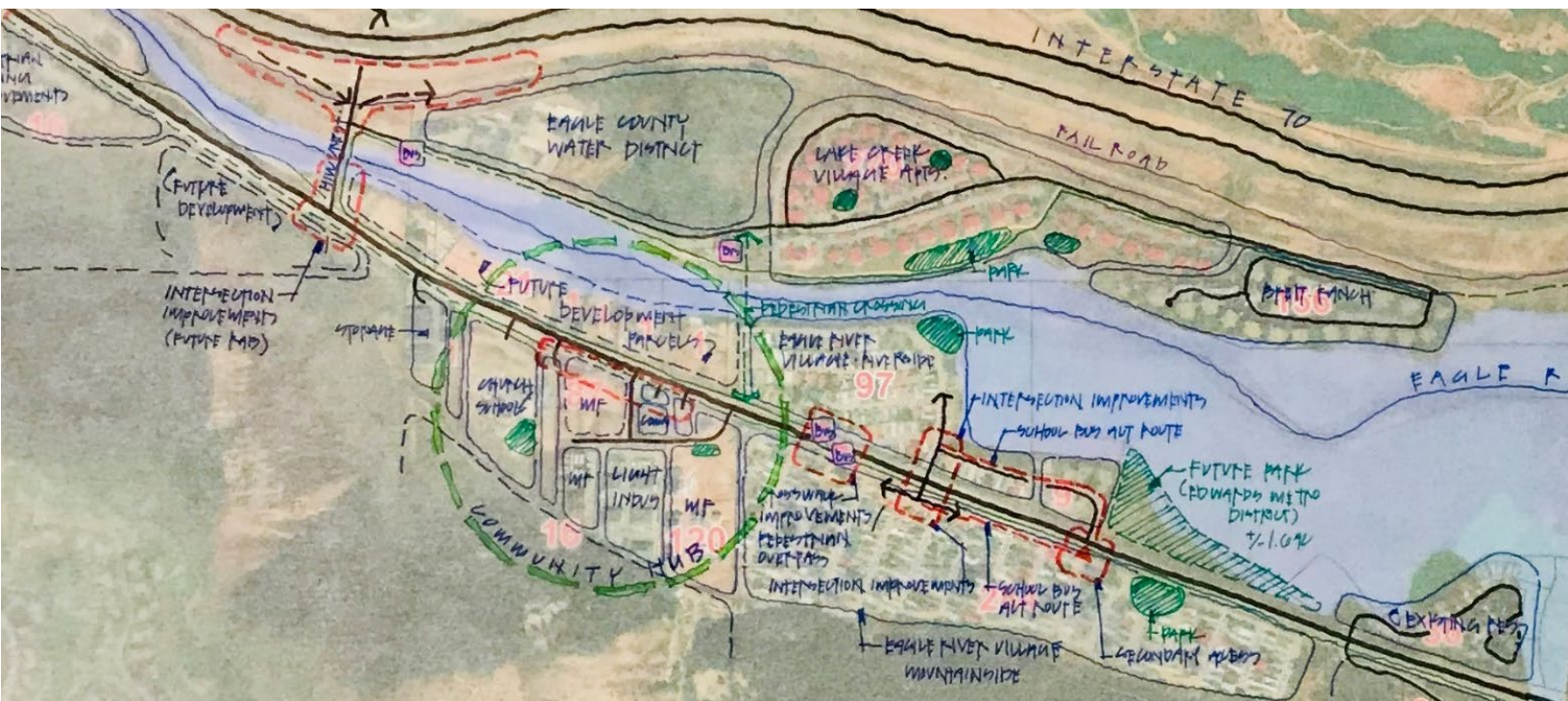
- Support MIRA’s programming and outreach with additional resources.
- Expand outreach to vulnerable populations using home visits from trusted community health Promotoras and Navigators.
- Increase educational outreach and dental services for vulnerable populations, especially children.
- Ensure that the existing West Edwards early childhood education (ECE) facility has a long-term physical location in West Edwards.

“MIRA’s advocacy and outreach is best opportunity for reaching the community.”

- Phil Qualman, Superintendent, Eagle County Schools

“Our district board is concerned about mental health and social connection. We have three major service hubs, and we need to convert them from recreation centers to community centers. They’ve been constructed for youth and need to address a larger age range and more diverse needs, such as healthy aging and support groups. We don’t currently have funding to make improvements, but we’d like to put forward a ballot issue around property tax to fund desired improvements.”

- Janet Bartnik, Mountain Recreation Metro District



Resilience Recommendations

Natural Hazard Risks in West Edwards

West Edwards and its residents are vulnerable to the increasing frequency and intensity of natural disasters.



Drought

25-50% increase in water withdrawal over next 50 years



Flooding

Flash flooding expected to triple over the next 100 years in Rocky Mountain range



Extreme Heat

Ave temperature expected to rise 2-5 degrees F in next 50 years



Severe Winter Storms

Severe storms can cause power outages and closures of streets, schools, and businesses

Hailstorms

More than \$5 billion in damage in CO in past decade

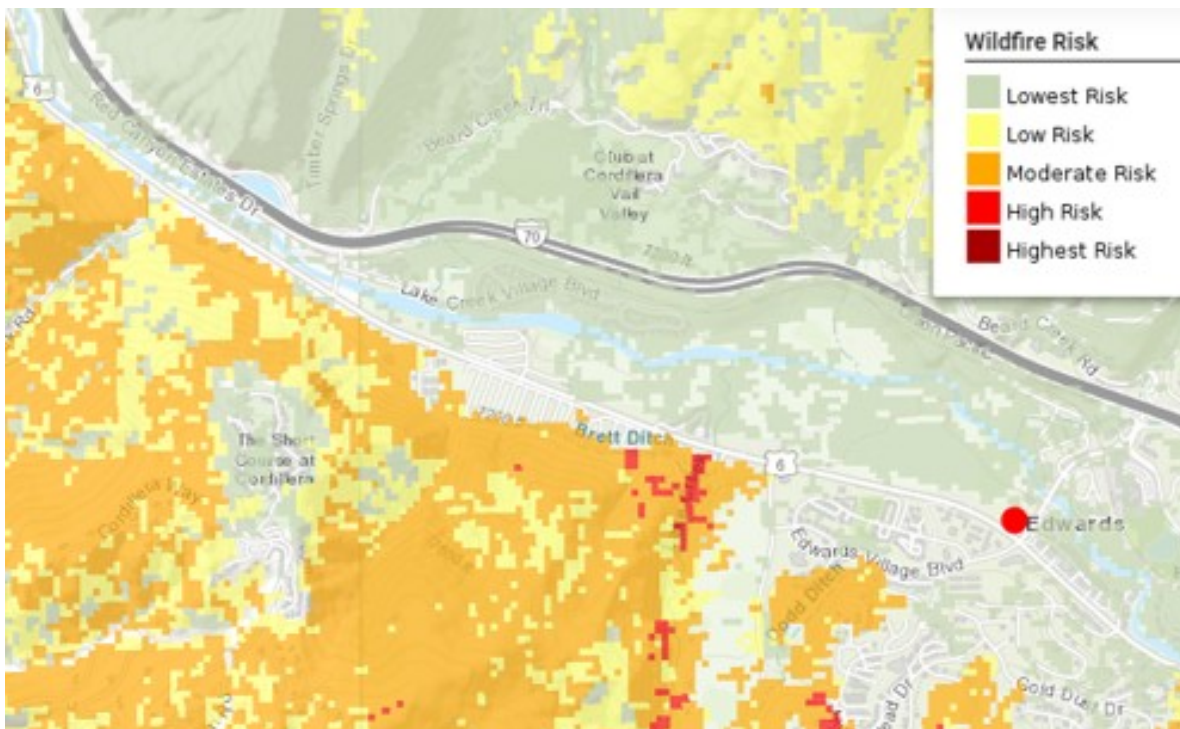


Wildfire

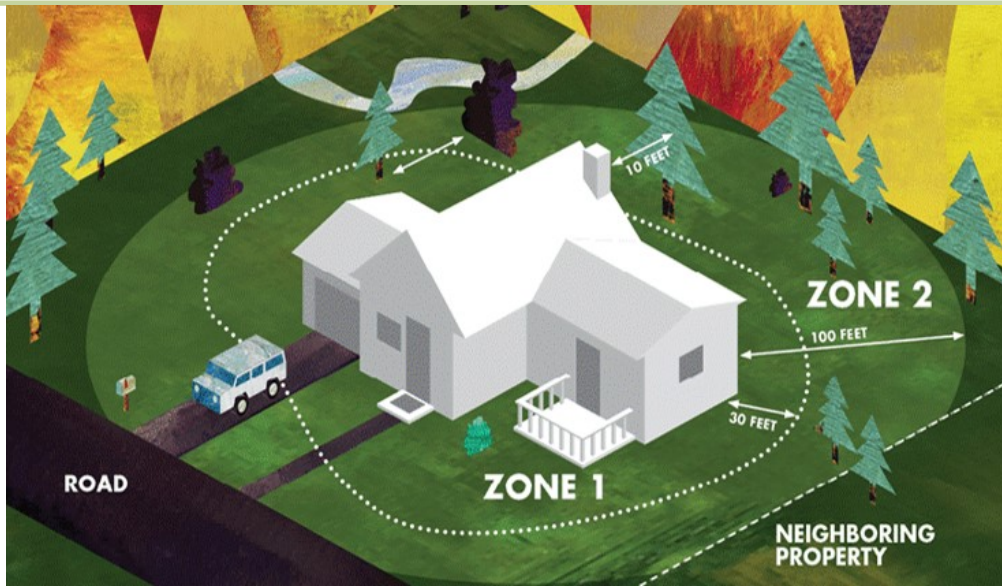
Fire frequency and intensity increases with rising greenhouse gas emissions



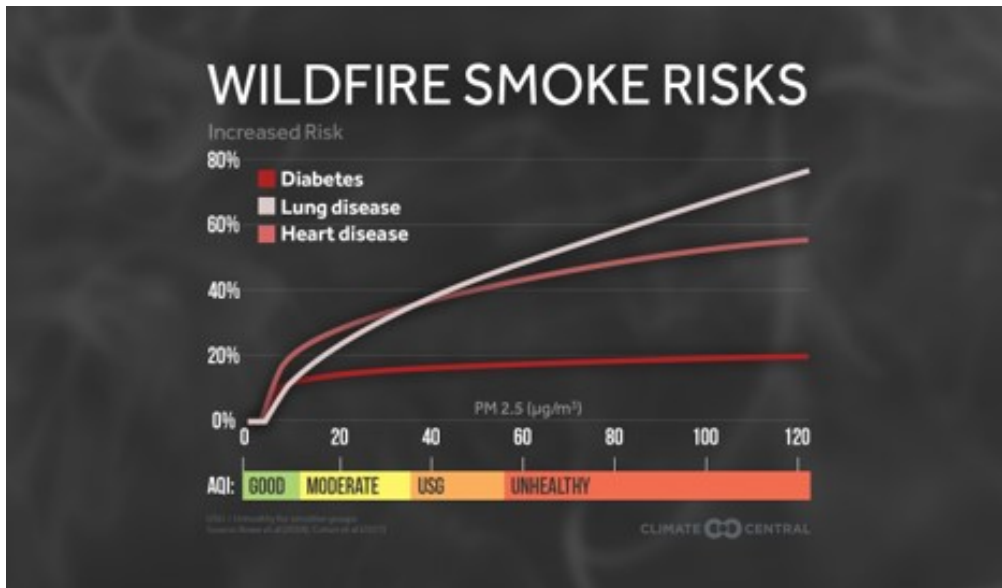
Wildfire, wildfire smoke, and flash floods are extreme hazards for which West Edwards should be prepared. The intensity and frequency of wildfires have increased by 400 percent since the 1970. Wildfires burn twice as many acres as wildfires from 50 years ago, and that number is expected to double in the next 50 years ([source](#)).



Map of wildfire risk in West Edwards from the Colorado Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal, available online at www.ColoradoWildfireRisk.com.



Homes with 30 feet of defensible space (free of combustible materials and vegetation) and non-combustible roofs have a 85% survival rate in the event of a wildfire compared to those that do not. Image of defensible space from www.readyforwildfire.org.

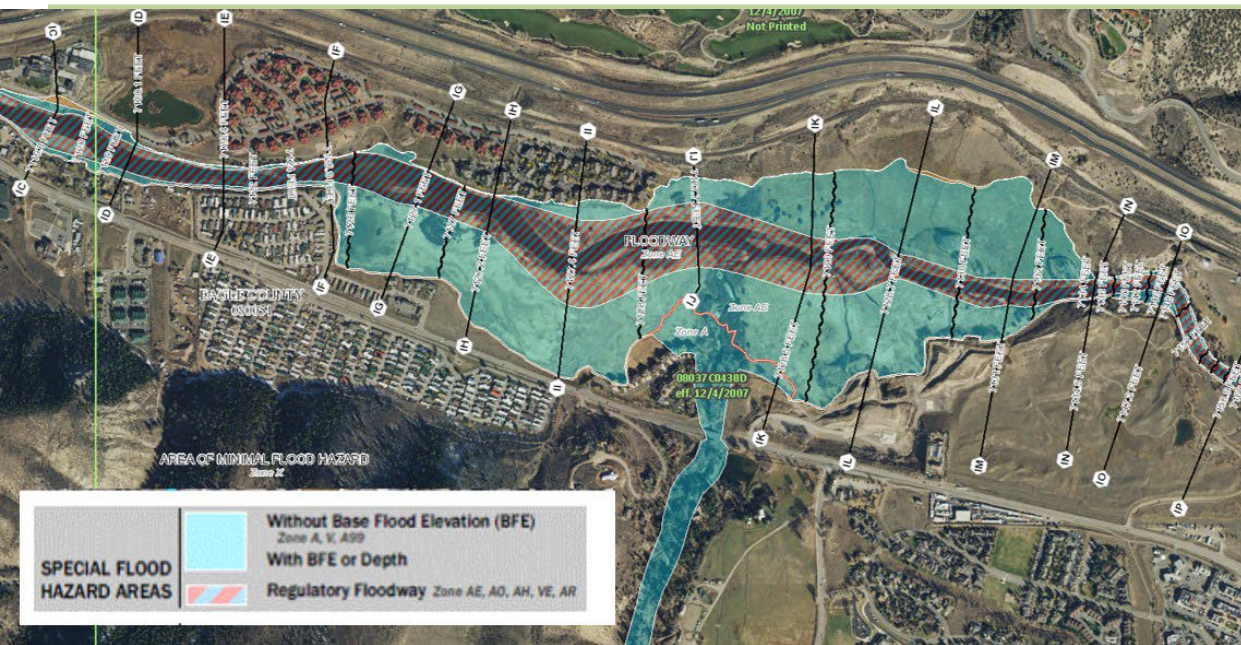


“We’ve seen enormous spikes in episodes where wildfires contribute to pollution. It doesn’t have to be a continuous problem every day to be unhealthy. It can be that a spike happens for a few days of difficult breathing that shorten lives.” - American Lung Association. Graph of wildfire risks courtesy Climate Central.

All of Edwards is in the Wildfire Urban Interface, and most of it is designated as a moderate wildfire risk zone. There is already an [Eagle County Community Wildfire Protection Plan](#) in place. It includes mitigation strategies such as creating defensible space (30 feet around structures free of combustible materials and vegetation), fuel (ground cover and vegetation) mitigation, and prescribed fires.

However, a large portion of the mobile homes consist of flammable material. In the event of a fire or a wildfire ember reaching the homes, there is a high risk that the fire will spread throughout the entire neighborhood, leaving residents stranded and without homes.

Another significant impact of wildfires is not just the direct fire damage, but also the contaminants put into the air by a nearby fire that can make it difficult to breathe. It is a highly likely scenario that there will be a wildfire within 100 miles of Edwards that carries smoke through the community.



17%
of homes hit by the 2013
floods were outside of
the mapped floodplain

Floodplain and regulatory floodway map of West Edwards courtesy FEMA.

There is a flood overlay district for Eagle County that has mitigation strategies in place, such as elevating buildings and using floodproof building materials, but the flood maps are based on historic data and do not account for future climate risks. Should floods exceed the boundaries marked by FEMA maps, Eagle River Valley Mobile Home Community and Lake Creek Village will likely be the first to feel the impacts. To mitigate flood risks, Eagle County could increase the base flood elevation and/or expand the floodplain boundary to account for the anticipated increase in flooding. After floods, homes should not be rebuilt in areas that flooded, or at least they should be elevated on stilts.

According to the panelists, priorities for protecting residents in West Edwards include:

- Fresh air that doesn't impede lung function
- Space temperatures within safe parameters
- Access to potable water
- Ability to evacuate to safety

To meet these needs, they provided the following recommendations for West Edwards.

A Community Center that Serves as an Emergency Shelter

A community center that is accessible to the public would be beneficial for multiple reasons. In addition to serving as a village hub, it creates a space of respite for residents in the event of an emergency or extreme weather event. The community center does not have to be a new building; it could be an existing building or an expansion to an existing building like the mobile home community club house or a local church.



The panel suggested that the Edwards Interfaith Chapel, where the TAP was hosted, could potentially be a great community center for West Edwards.

Ideally, the community center would be designed to withstand most hazards. It would have backup power supply and water storage so residents have access to potable water during water shut-offs. Proper ventilation and a filter system that maintains indoor air quality when it is smoky outside is also important. Insulated walls with a tight building envelope that allows the building to passively maintain a comfortable temperature with minimal input from mechanical systems will prove useful during extreme temperature. Bilingual staff would also help support the community during times when coordination and clear communication are necessary.

Prioritize Access

Access in and out of sites is critical for evacuations and for emergency vehicles to be able to get close enough to assist. The panel recommended prioritizing the creation of secondary access into and out of the Eagle River Village Mobile Home Community (see page 14 for more information). They also recommended developing a plan for emergency evacuation and emergency service access.

Resident Education & Engagement

The panel recommended increasing resident education and engagement in multiple languages around emergency preparedness. Eagle County's [Emergency Management department website](#) has valuable information, although it is only in English. Partnering with local community members and/or MIRA could allow for additional engagement with diverse residents across language barriers.

For West Edwards, panelists recommended prioritizing outreach and education around:

- An emergency evacuation plan.
- Inform residents of steps to take to during smoke days to protect indoor air quality.
- Help install smoke and carbon monoxide alarms in each home.
- Monitor and share air quality reports. There are several air quality monitoring programs that put out an air pollution index, including [Colorado Smoke Outlook](#).

Funding Sources for Home Improvement and Pre-Disaster Mitigation

Retrofitting every home in the community might be challenging. There are funding sources like the [Colorado Affordable Residential Energy](#) (CARE) program and the national [Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program](#). CARE helps low-income Coloradans living and working in high-priced mountain areas improve the energy efficiency of their homes through air sealing, furnace replacement, refrigerator replacement, and insulation. Through the program, homes can also get an energy audit, LED lightbulbs, low-flow shower heads, and a programmable thermostat. They have worked on mobile homes in the past. The Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program is a federal program and Eagle County could apply for funding to support pre-disaster mitigation programs.

“We’ve had a couple fires at the mobile home park and firefighters have issues driving through. Gas lines are connected between mobile homes, which is a danger for everyone during a fire. There’s also insufficient water. The last fire was caused by an electrical issue.”

- Anonymous Resident



This Eagle River Water Facts flier and email with infographics by Ascentia is a great example of resident outreach and education.

Financial Recommendations

The panel provided the following financial strategies for implementing recommendations in this report.

Edwards Metro District

The panel recommended that the Edwards Metro District take a more active role in funding key improvements desired by West Edwards community. Specifically, they recommended:

- Prioritize project funding based on West Edwards community needs.
- Increase diversity of Metro District board representation to ensure all interests are taken into consideration.
- Consider use of bond funding for more expensive improvements, such as pedestrian improvements and crossings.
- Utilize a portion of the general fund balance from the mill levy to fund high priority improvements, such as those listed below.
- Secure funding for multi-lingual wayfinding signage and public art at crosswalks from the Metro District budget and/or grants.

Proposed Projects
US 6 pedestrian bridge
Pedestrian crosswalk connecting bike path to Eagle River Preserve
Bike sharing station connecting West Edwards with adjacent communities
West Highway 6 roadway improvements (e.g. left turn improvements out of Hillcrest)
Pedestrian / trail upgrades and connections (e.g. lighting, filling in the gaps, extension of sidewalk to Squaw Creek Road)
Interpretative/bilingual signage within Eagle River Preserve
Development of community park / center (long-term) at Edwards Metropolitan District site (adjacent to Cattail Way)

West Edwards projects under Edwards Metro District consideration.

Transportation Project Funding

- Secure funding between Eagle County, CDOT, and the Edwards Metro District to finalize the design and construction of Highway 6 improvements, especially between Arrow Grass and Hillcrest Drive.
- Ensure projects are prioritized and funded through the county adopted budget and Capital Improvement Program (see chart of prioritized projects below). The panel recommended prioritization of Highway 6 improvements to improve traffic flow and safety for residents.

“The Edwards Metro District is funded by a 1% sales tax, which gives us around \$1 million per year for transportation and safety projects. We’ve been planning another onramp onto I-70 since everyone needs to come to middle of town to get out currently. We own the land that floods along highway. We also want to put in a pedestrian bridge over Highway 6 at Bull Run Road.”

- Megan Hayes, Edwards Metro District

“We’re starting to look at projects that weren’t funded by the GoCo grant, but that were vetted by the community. These include pedestrian crossings, bike sharing, road improvements, pond improvements, and pedestrian trails and maintenance. Also, we have one of the lowest mill levies in Eagle County.”

- Beth Reilly, President, Edwards Metro District

“We want to add sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, and lighting to West Edwards, but there’s no timeline because we don’t have the funding. We also need a safe and efficient way to move buses. All the stops lead to traffic and frustration.”

- Ben Gerdes, Acting Community Development Director, Eagle County Engineering

Location	Proposed Improvements	Current Design %
Hillcrest	3-legged roundabout	100%
Fox Hollow	Intersection or 4-legged roundabout	30%
Arrowgrass	Pedestrian crossing	30%

Transportation improvements under Eagle County review and their stage of design.

- Coordinate match funding between Eagle County, Eagle County School District, ECO Transit, and CDOT for bus improvements (e.g., bus pull-offs, Aspen Grove stop) to increase safety and improve traffic flow along the Highway 6 corridor in West Edwards.
- Utilize the county partnership with CDOT for the long-term funding of a full-movement interchange at I-70 and Hillcrest Drive.

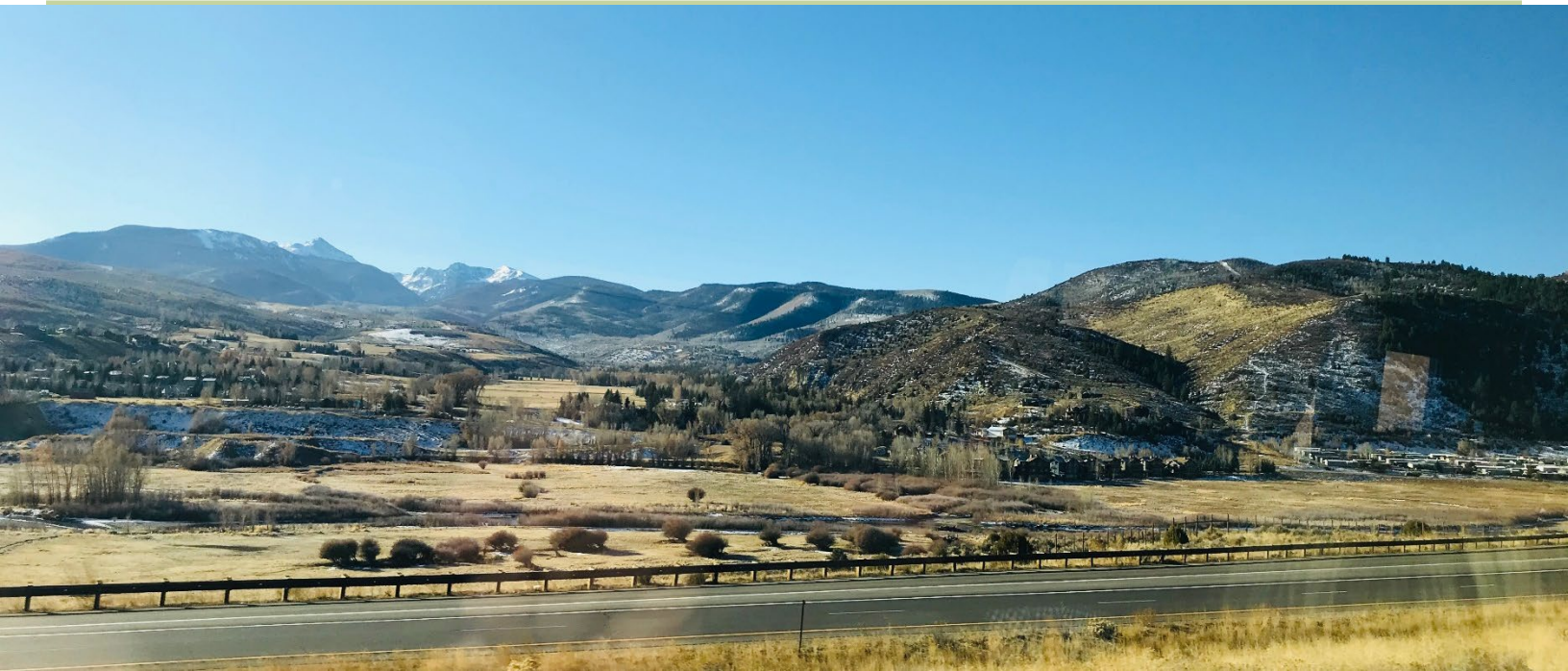
Partner with Developers

Consider incentives for development partners to implement West Edwards community priorities, such as:

- Fast-track processing of permit applications for projects that meet community goals.
- Waiver or reduction of permit and impact fees for projects that address community needs.

“We struggle with funding, but we have a partnership with CDOT. There are also opportunities for grants, like Safe Routes to School and funding from the Colorado Health Foundation. Right now we’re prioritizing projects for Safe Routes to School.”

- Karen Berdoulay, Project Manager, Colorado Department of Transportation



The view from West Edwards, Colorado.

Conclusion

West Edwards is at a tipping point. With more pressure to develop in Eagle County, West Edwards could easily see gentrification and displacement if action is not taken to preserve affordability. For the population that currently lives in West Edwards, the panel encouraged Eagle County to take proactive steps to plan for community health, affordable housing, connectivity, and resilience.

Key Takeaways

- Connect the community with multi-modal options
- Communicate across cultural barriers
- Create a community hub
- Add to the mix of affordable and workforce housing
- Leverage and create funding sources to implement priority projects
- Pilot informal programming and activities for diverse groups and ages
- Prepare for natural hazards with the community
- Support community health through access to clean water, healthy food, and opportunities for exercise

Overall, this is the ideal time to protect and enhance West Edwards for the people who live and work there.

Stakeholders Who Participated in the Workshop

Eagle County Staff:

- Faviola Alderete, Community Health Strategist, Eagle County
- Colton Berck, Associate Planner, Eagle County
- Morgan Beryl, Community Development Director, Eagle County
- Tori Franks, Real Estate & Development Manager, Eagle County Housing Department
- Becky Larson, Deputy Director of Public Health, Eagle County
- Adam Palmer, Sustainable Communities Director, Eagle County
- Emma Sloan, Health Policy Planner, Eagle County Public Health and Environment
- Kris Valdez, Senior Planner, Eagle County
- Kim Bell Williams, Executive Director, Eagle County Housing & Development Authority

Eagle County Transportation and Engineering and Colorado Department of Transportation:

- Tanya Allen, Director, Eagle County ECO Transit
- Jared Barnes, Planning Manager, Eagle County ECO Transit
- Karen Berdoulay, Project Manager, Colorado Department of Transportation
- Rickie Davies, Senior Staff Engineer, Eagle County Engineering
- Ben Gerdes, Acting Community Development Director, Eagle County Engineering

Eagle County Schools:

- Bradley Carriveau, Director of Transportation, Eagle County Schools
- Phil Qualman, Superintendent, Eagle County Schools

West Edwards Community Organizations:

- Janet Bartnik, Mountain Recreation
- Fatima Basera, Mobile Intercultural Resource Alliance
- Susie Davis, Eagle Valley Community Foundation
- Elyse Howard, Habitat for Humanity
- Lillie Hughes, Family Learning Center
- Melina Valsecia, Mobile Intercultural Resource Alliance
- Caitlin Weis, Habitat for Humanity
- Whitney Young, Family Learning Center

West Edwards Special Districts:

- Jason Cowles, Eagle River Water and Sanitation District
- Megan Hayes, Edwards Metro District
- Ken Marchetti, Edwards Metro District
- Beth Reilly, Edwards Metro District President

West Edwards Landowners:

- Mark Sifers (land behind mobile home park)
- Marko Vukovich, Ascentia (Eagle River Village Mobile Home Community)

West Edwards Property Managers:

- Maria Cisneros, Eagle River Village Mobile Home Community
- Jessica Macoy, Eagle River Village Mobile Home Community
- Dan Murray, Lake Creek Village

West Edwards Businesses:

- Bob Boselli, O'Bos Enterprises, LLC
- Chris Lloyd, Tienda de Pepito's

West Edwards Land Consultants:

- Tom Braun, Braun Associates
- Matt Larson, MRL Investments
- Dominic Mauriello, Mauriello Planning Group
- Rick Pylman, Pylman & Associates

West Edwards Residents:

- Anonymous

Panelist Biographies



Panel Chair Kimball Crangle, Colorado Market President, Gorman & Company

Ms. Crangle was formerly Senior Developer for Denver Housing Authority, the largest Public Housing Authority in Colorado and the Rocky Mountain Region. While at the Denver Housing Authority, she directed the redevelopment of a 17.5-acre distressed Public Housing site into a nationally acclaimed mixed-income, mixed-use, transit-oriented community. Focusing on the delivery of energy-responsible buildings that also improved the health of residents, Kimball leveraged over \$100 million in funding to accomplish six phases of development at the site. Ms. Crangle also served in previous roles in the affordable housing sector as: the Director of Development for the Adams County Colorado Housing Authority; the Executive Director of the Colorado Community Land Trust; and as Senior Analyst at Paramount Financial Group. Kimball's career has focused on understanding all elements of affordable housing development from policy through financing, construction, and implementation. Kimball holds a Master of Urban Planning from the University of Colorado – Denver as well as a Bachelor of Science in Economics from the University of Kansas. She is also credentialed as a Certified Commercial Investment Manager.



Sarah Hong, Building Performance Engineer, Group 14 Engineering

Sarah is a building performance engineer and resilient design consultant for Group14 Engineering. As a LEED Green Associate, NGBS Green Verifier, Energy Star Rater and HERS Rater, she has worked with housing authorities and affordable housing developers all over the Denver area, touching over 5,000 units. Experience includes energy auditing, energy efficiency retrofits, and resilient design planning for multifamily buildings. Previously, she served as a Buildings Intern for Rocky Mountain Institute. She has a master's in architectural engineering from University of Colorado Boulder.



Will Kerns, Principal Consultant, Open Plan Consultants

Will Kerns, AICP worked at the Jefferson County, Colorado Division of Transportation and Engineering as a Transportation Planner for over 11 years before founding Open Plan. Will is a visionary planner and spent time in his previous position crafting groundbreaking plans such as the Jefferson County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, Conifer Walkability Plan, Countywide Transportation Plan, and South Golden Road Corridor Study. Will also helped to shape the RTD West Corridor EIS, US-36 EIS, I-70 PEIS, and many more. Will specializes in Bicycle/Pedestrian Planning and Advocacy but also has experience in Transportation Engineering, Parking Studies, Context Sensitive Solutions, Safety Studies, NEPA, Transit Planning, High Speed Rail Planning, Roadway, Highway, Intersection and Interchange planning. Will attended the University of Northern Colorado where he studied Applied Geography and Earth Science.



Eric Kornacki, President & CEO, THRIVE Partners and Co-Founder of Re:Vision

Driven by the belief that building a sustainable world begins by creating viable models that are place-based and empower people to own the solutions within their community, Eric Kornacki co-founded Re:Vision in 2007. Under his leadership, Re:Vision has grown to a staff of more than 25 people with an annual operating budget of more than \$2 million. Re:Vision’s work to build a community-owned food system that increases access and affordability to healthy food while creating economic opportunity in one of Denver’s most vulnerable neighborhoods has created the largest community-led urban agriculture program in the country, with more than 400 families now growing their own food.



David Starnes, Principal and Founder, CIVISTRUCT Strategy and Development

CIVISTRUCT Strategy + Development is a real estate development advisory firm specializing in partnering with both the public and private development sectors to help them execute their development objectives and goals. David has 20+ years’ experience in the real estate development field, ranging from managing development projects to undertaking economic and market analyses and structuring public-private developments as a real estate development consultant, senior level local government official, and real estate developer. Prior to launching CIVISTRUCT, David directed project entitlements and public-private finance for Foundry Builders, a Boulder, Colorado-based real estate development company focused on urban infill development. Previously, he served as Executive Director of the Longmont Urban Renewal Authority and Redevelopment Manager for the City of Longmont. David was also Vice President for a national economics and real estate development advisory firm. David has a Master’s in City Planning from the Georgia Institute of Technology and a B.A. from the University of Delaware.



Stacey Weaks, Principal, Norris Design

Stacey is a Principal and managing partner of the Tucson and Phoenix offices for Norris Design. Norris Design is a strategic partner in planning, landscape architecture and project promotion creating value and great experiences for their clients. Stacey has a diverse background in land use vision planning, community planning, mixed-use master planning and urban design. Stacey is experienced in the coordination of project teams and working with local jurisdictions, creating balanced planning solutions that work for all stakeholders. Previously, he was a landscape architect with Meisner + Associates / Land Vision. He has a Bachelor of Science in landscape architecture from Colorado State University.



Urban Land Colorado
Institute