

After recapping 2023 accomplishments, Eagle County officials say focus is on 'investing in each other' in 2024

Commissioner Kathy Chandler-Henry is honored as she closes out her last year in office

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Scott Miller [FOLLOW](#)
smiller@vaildaily.com



Eagle County Manager Jeff Shroll, with his back to the camera, talks about the county's 2023 accomplishments during Tuesday's State of the County presentation. *Stephanie Weinberger/Courtesy photo*

The Eagle County Board of Commissioners on Tuesday took about an hour to discuss the organization's 2023 accomplishments. There was a lot to talk about.

The annual State of the County presentation featured all three commissioners, along with County Manager Jeff Shroll, who detailed the work done last year. "Accelerate" was 2023's theme for the organization. "Investing in each other" is this year's theme.

Four facts

Here's a look at some of Eagle County's 2023 accomplishments:

- \$22 million: Spending on housing projects in Eagle and Edwards
- Transported and placed 14,000 tons of gravel and asphalt millings on county gravel roads
- The Eagle County Sheriff's Office averaged 753 calls per week
- Animal Field Services handled 1,442 cases

Commissioner Matt Scherr noted that when local government provides housing, child care or health services, that helps keep people working.

“We’re spending tax money to improve the quality of life” in the county, Scherr said.

Part of improving the quality of life in the county includes helping create a resilient economy, Scherr added.

Commissioner Jeanne McQueeney talked about the county’s internal work on “diversity, equity and inclusion.” The idea is to “make ours an organization that’s inclusive” of all kinds of people.

But, McQueeney added, “Housing remains our most vexing issue,” in discussing the county’s initiatives. Those include partnering with Habitat for Humanity, Eagle County School District and the town of Eagle on a [16-unit project on Third Street](#), the purchase for resale of 43 units at Eagle’s [Haymeadow project](#) and financing a new, [32-unit apartment building](#) on the Colorado Mountain College campus at Edwards.

Housing, along with reasonably priced child care and public health is part of the well-being of the community. All three comprise what McQueeney said she considers the commissioners’ “solemn duty.”

Community well-being also includes making services more accessible for the county’s Spanish-speaking residents. There’s new auto-translation software that can translate press releases and other communications. Spanish translation is also available on the county’s phone and audio-visual systems.

Commissioner Kathy Chandler-Henry noted that the county services have been growing. County code enforcement calls – mostly for animal issues – increased by 50% from 2022.

Chandler-Henry noted that the county’s median home value increased by 48% over 2021, and Eagle County Assessor Mark Chapin’s office handled the most appeals it had seen in 14 years. With all that work, Chapin’s office has successfully passed its state audits.

The county’s public health office was also busy, providing vaccinations to 98% of the kids entering kindergarten in 2023. And, Chandler-Henry noted, the office of Eagle County Clerk and Recorder Regina O’Brien is preparing this year for three elections – primary elections in March and June, as well as the November general election. In addition, O’Brien’s office handled more than 114,000 motor vehicle transactions – which seems a lot for a county of 55,000 people, Chandler-Henry noted.

This is Chandler-Henry’s last year in office, a position she’s held since 2013. Shroll took the opportunity to sneak into Chandler-Henry’s office and took an [award for distinguished service](#) she’d received in November from Colorado Counties, Inc. Shroll then again presented his boss with the award at Tuesday’s event.

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Scherr wrapped up by saying that Chandler-Henry, along with Vail’s [Rod Slifer](#), have both helped build the county.

“What they’ve done has made possible everything we have here,” Scherr said. But, he added, “we’re all people like that... we’re here, and we choose to be here... we’re dedicated to investing in each other.”