

# WEST MOUNTAIN REGIONAL HOUSING COALITION

---

## MEMO

**From:** West Mountain Regional Housing Coalition (WMRHC)  
**To:** Garfield County Board of County Commissioners  
**Re:** Mobile Home Park Preservation Effort  
**Date:** June 25, 2025

---

### REQUEST OF COMMISSION:

WMRHC, on behalf of a coalition of local governments, requests the BOCC consider support, ideally financial participation, in the purchase and preservation of affordability of property that houses the Aspen Basalt and Mountain Valley mobile home parks, with the intention of each of these properties becoming Resident Owned Communities (ROCs).

### SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND:

In March, two mobile home parks, **Aspen Basalt** (near Basalt, in unincorporated Eagle County) and **Mountain Valley** (near Carbondale Hwy 133 and Hwy 82 intersection, in unincorporated Garfield County), were listed for sale for a combined \$42 million by the current owner, Brian L. Fitterer's Investment Property Group. In April, a buyer offered to purchase both parks - \$26.5 million for Aspen Basalt and \$15.5 million for Mountain Valley. Per Colorado law, the residents were notified of the sale and offer, and have 120 days from that date to present a competing offer to purchase the parks themselves and the seller must negotiate this offer in good faith. The deadline for this offer is August 7<sup>th</sup>.

The residents of both parks are working with a nonprofit that specializes in this process in Colorado, Thistle ROC, to purchase the park and become Resident Owned Communities (ROCs). Thistle, a nonprofit focused on affordable housing, became a ROC Certified Technical Assistance Provider in 2017 and has helped preserve, to date, eleven mobile home parks in Colorado. Thistle has been the leader in building a funding model and working with partners on a resident purchase of these parks.

Thistle ROC is the Colorado affiliate of ROC USA, a national nonprofit that helps residents purchase their communities and lends the money to do so. The model includes:

- Immediate legal and organizational support to create resident ownership structures.
- Long-term (10+ year) engagement post purchase to help ensure successful self-governance.
- Access to below-market-rate loans from ROC USA Capital, a CDFI.

Thistle ROC ensures parks remain permanently affordable and resident-led.

# WEST MOUNTAIN REGIONAL HOUSING COALITION

## DISCUSSION:

Nearly 500 people, including over 150 children, live in these communities. Most residents (90%) are Hispanic, earn below 80% of the area median income, and many have lived in these parks for over a decade. These two MHPs house essential workers and community members—from construction and service industry employees to school staff and retirees—who otherwise cannot afford to live near their jobs due to the extremely high cost of traditional housing in our valley. If displaced, the impacts will ripple across local schools, businesses, traffic patterns, and community cohesion.

While Thistle ROC, working with ROC USA Capital, is willing and able to lend the money needed for the residents' purchase, a significant subsidy is necessary to keep lot rents at rates that are affordable to the current residents. For instance, with a \$20 million subsidy, the lot rents at Aspen Basalt MHP would go from an average of \$1,322 to \$1,500 per month. The lot rents at Mountain Valley MHP would go from an average of \$1,125 to \$1,300 per month. With less subsidy, the lot rents would need to increase to repay a larger loan.

West Mountain Regional Housing Coalition's Executive Director, April Long, was asked by the area's local governments to help coordinate and facilitate local government understanding, options, and participation in assisting the residents with this purchase. She has been working with the area's local governments, nonprofits, and private sector companies to raise those funds.

These parks are some of the last remaining affordable housing options that are close to schools and transit and within commuting distance of job hubs like Aspen, Snowmass, and Glenwood Springs. Recognizing that preservation is much more economical and efficient than building new, and that this project has one of the greatest returns on investment in terms of affordable housing - \$20 million subsidy is equivalent to \$144,000 per unit across the two sites - the following local governments have submitted letters of intent to support this effort:

- Pitkin County - \$3,000,000
- Eagle County - \$2,500,000
- City of Aspen - \$3,000,000
- Town of Snowmass Village - \$1,000,000
- Town of Carbondale - \$1,000,000
- Town of Basalt - \$500,000
- City of Glenwood Springs - \$100,000

Additionally, and in an exemplary example of public private partnership, Atlantic Aviation has pledged \$1 million and Aspen One (Aspen Skiing Company) has pledged \$500,000.

# WEST MOUNTAIN REGIONAL HOUSING COALITION

---

If Garfield County would like to financially participate in this purchase, WMRHC, on behalf of a Coalition of local governments, asks that the BOCC establish a dollar figure that may be included in the letter of intent to support included in the packet and return signed letter to April Long, WMRHC and Tim Townsend, Thistle ROC.

If Garfield County chooses to not participate financially in this effort, WMRHC, on behalf of a Coalition of local governments, asks that BOCC identify other ways to support this community need and regional effort to preserve some of the last remaining housing options that are affordable to low-income earners and the workers and their families that have lived here for decades.