



**RE: Gina Lucrezi | Chaffee County Commissioner Candidate
Questionnaire Responses**

1. In a few sentences, please briefly share why you're motivated to run for public office, and why you believe you're qualified to serve in this context. (your response will be printed on the in-person Forum Program).

- I'm running for commissioner to ensure a sustainable future for generations to come. Chaffee County is my home, it is a place I love and cherish, and it's a place I'm dedicated and committed to caring for.

I've been a steward for this community since I've arrived. I'm a BV trustee, former Mayor Pro Tem, a trustee liaison to the airport advisory board, member of the Region 15 opioid settlement committee, member of the BLM Rocky Mountain Resource Advisory Council, and VP of Search and Rescue North. I also own a community focused organization called Trail Sisters.

Through all these roles and daily life, I've learned quite a bit about this county, the community, our needs, desires, and our opportunities. They have prepared me to be a county commissioner that the people of Chaffee deserve.

I have the experience, the knowledge, the motivation, and the hard work ethic to fight for our community now and for the future.

2. I support changing codes and processes towards increased use of Administrative decisions by public sector staff, while focusing public input on changes to the code itself.

- Somewhat Agree



3. Development approval times are:

- Prohibitively slow, thereby discouraging development.

4. As you are likely aware, the Chaffee County 2020 Comp Plan stated, "keep the country country and the towns towns". What does this statement mean to you and how would you use this guiding principle in setting land use policy?

- I believe the main reasons most people live in Chaffee County include: the rural viewshed, recreational opportunities and open space appeal. We are afforded these opportunities because of the heritage, tradition, and hard work from ranchers and farmers. Their efforts and desires to maintain irrigated and working lands are a huge driver of the countryside preservation. Some have been willing to put their land and water rights in a conservation easement that provides forever protections. One of my platform priorities is for the protection and preservation of natural resources, which includes our working lands. I'm keen to create and support policies that provide firm protections and support for our working land owners and operators. I believe development should be located in or near municipalities where infrastructure is already in place or is accessible. We should be building in areas that favor walkability and that can support business functionality. We need to be smart and responsible with the land use policy, building in resource friendly common-sense areas, and protecting our heritage lands and natural resources.

5. The County government is sufficiently connected to, and communicative with, local school districts and higher ed institutions.

- Somewhat Agree

6. How can County government encourage/support/facilitate increasing work-based learning programs for local youth?

- The BOCC should continue investing in Chaffee's youth,

education, and work-based learning opportunities. CMC is a great example of collaborative efforts in education and workforce placement within the county. The BOCC should encourage and support internship opportunities with local business for high school students and higher ed students, provide a variety of support (including financial) to makerspace and vocational training and educational opportunities. The BOCC can advocate to state and federal officials for more support (policy/financial) for rural educational and work-based learning programs.

7. I have read the latest strategic plan of the Chaffee County Early Childhood Council.

- Yes

8. County government should take tangible action to support the creation and maintenance of childcare slots.

- Somewhat Agree

9. What should the County government do starting in 2025 to support childcare?

- The county isn't in the business of owning and running childcare facilities, but it can certainly support a variety of organizations, programs, and services who can provide childcare needs. For example, providing financial assistance for facilities and programs, such as the BV School District's Early Learning Program - The Grove. For 2025 The Grove is asking the county for \$500k to help with capital costs for a new facility. They are additionally requesting a total of \$500k for maintenance/operations, provided over a 10 year period. The county should foster and support more programs like the Emerging Early Childhood Educators Program, which is a collaborative effort between CCECC and CMC that provides educational certifications, credits, and early childhood educator



job placement in Chaffee County. Lastly, the BOCC needs to lean on state and federal representatives for more financial support, grants, and policies that aid rural communities, addressing our specific needs and obstacles.

10. Passing a County ordinance requiring the installation of broadband infrastructure as a part of all new development is a must.

- Somewhat Agree

11. Internet infrastructure should be treated as equally important to other utilities (water, sewer, gas, electricity) in infrastructure projects.

- Strongly Agree

12. What is the local government's role in increasing broadband availability and reliability for the community?

- Available and reliable broadband county-wide is a no brainer in terms of need and county goals. It will strengthen entrepreneurship, business development, and simply improve quality of life (telehealth, access to information, etc.). Extending reach and connectivity by laying infrastructure should be front of mind whenever there are open ditch or road easement projects. Continuing to pursue and apply for Colorado Broadband Office (CBO) Broadband, Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) grants with support from Southern CO Economic Development District (SCEDD) is a must. Those grants are necessary to help fund "middle mile" and the "last mile projects" which can be the most costly. The next round of applications are due in late October, with awards being announced in 2025. I believe broadband infrastructure should be required in new neighborhood development, but not mandatory for new development of a single home that is set back miles from county road access (for example). There are increasing opportunities for satellite broadband that can fulfill the need for unique hard to

reach homes.

13. Chaffee County has enough water to meet municipal, housing, and commercial development growth.

- Somewhat Agree

14. In the face of inadequate current water supply Town should...

- This question asks direction via a town municipality, thus it would be a decision for the town board. My suggestion would depend on the details of the situation and could include a combination of the multiple choice provided answers.

15. What is the most important next step for the County Government in regards to water or wastewater?

- Preserving and protecting our natural resources is key, and water is at the top of the list. County government needs to focus on keeping water rights in Chaffee County. This work requires collaboration and benefit to all parties/stakeholders. Conservation easements are great protections for heritage, county character, and water/land use, but they need to ensure that landowners rights and needs are addressed and compensated for. The county is in process of conducting a groundwater research study (3 year process) that will provide results and insight on the region's aquifer, including the speed/time of water recharge (or lack thereof) in various areas across the valley.

16. Producing housing that is accessible to our local workforce requires public subsidy in amounts that directly affect affordability levels.

- Somewhat Agree

17. Density is directly linked to affordability (i.e. increased density lowers the cost of each housing unit).

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- Somewhat Agree

18. Encouraging more housing development, including market rate housing, is helpful to overall housing affordability and thus to the community.

- Somewhat Disagree

19. Housing policy is a County government responsibility.

- Strongly Agree

20. What specific policy would you change or advocate for that would have a tangible impact on workforce housing if elected?

- I would advocate for the Colorado Association of Ski Towns (CAST) 2024 legislative position statement on local vacancy tax. In short, the proposed legislation (if passed) would allow the county to ask voters to tax homes that sit empty the majority of the year. Tax revenue would help fund workforce housing, and it would also incentivize those homeowners to rent to full-time residents.

21. New rules & regulations to advance environmental sustainability should be considered in the context of their impact on the health of local employers.

- Somewhat Agree

22. Environmental sustainability is inextricably linked with innovation and technology.

- Somewhat Agree

23. The single most important action the County government can take in 2024 to advance environmental sustainability is...

- Adopt by resolution the finalized sustainability plan that originated from focus group input in 2023. Once adopted, work

towards efforts, practices, and programs outlined within the plan.

24. Closing question: What question have we not asked that you'd like to share (and answer?)

- Why is a strong economy important to the future of Chaffee County?

Economic prosperity and stability is one of my platform priorities. I understand the value and importance a strong economy and business community contributes to the county. It produces jobs and provides services and products to residents and visitors. It creates vibrancy and boosts opportunities for social interaction and enhanced quality of life. The revenue generated by a strong economy benefits the community with reinvestments in projects, programs, and other opportunities for general community well-being. Chaffee County needs a stable year-round economy and one that fosters a diversified portfolio of businesses. Tourism is an important economic driver, but we need to expand and explore additional ways of growing our economic vitality. Encouraging new (and existing) business development that will operate 12 months of the year (vs. seasonally) will aid in workforce retainment and talent. Chaffee County has a bright future ahead and we need to ensure our forward progress includes balance, responsibility, and opportunity.

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