

SMART GROWTH IN ACTION

Wellington Neighborhood BRECKENRIDGE, COLORADO

The Wellington Neighborhood provides affordable and market-rate housing on a site that was once dredge-mined. The project recycles land, houses working families, and provides free transit to the nearby downtown. It helps the region avoid "mountain sprawl" by creating an attractive, compact neighborhood, a design that has fostered a strong sense of community in a short time.

Local workers in the historic resort town of Breckenridge were being squeezed out of the area by median costs of \$725,000 for a single-family home. Many workers could afford a home only on the other side of Hoosier Pass, a 45-minute commute over treacherous mountain roads. Meanwhile, an 85-acre site on the town's outskirts sat unused, amid hundreds of acres spoiled by mining.

Breckenridge reclaimed 22 acres of this brownfield site to develop the Wellington Neighborhood, a compact community built in a traditional style with attractive and affordable homes and 20 acres of open space and community parks. A group composed of citizens, property owners, the Colorado Department of Public Health, and U.S. EPA worked for several years with the Keystone Center, a nonprofit environmental mediation group, to prioritize clean-up actions and funding. Then, Breckenridge officials and residents worked together over four years to plan and design the neighborhood.

The Breckenridge Planning Department encouraged Wellington's traditional neighborhood design through flexible zoning that set houses closer to the street, with narrower roads and smaller lots. The project was funded in part with more than \$1 million of public-sector incentives. Covenants keep homes affordable for future generations. Eighty percent of the 122 homes are reserved for purchase by people who work in Summit County, at about one-third (or less) the cost of the median purchase price in Breckenridge. New homeowners include the town manager, government employees, shop owners, teachers, and police officers.

Using smart growth principles, Wellington has built more homes for working families, cleaned a contaminated site, and created a compact, walkable neighborhood with safe, easy access to trails and open space. Wellington's location near downtown Breckenridge places homes near jobs, reducing commute times and related emissions. Wellington has been so successful that the developer plans a second phase with 128 more homes.

Winner, 2002 National Award for Smart Growth Achievement, Built Projects category (<http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/breckenridge.htm>)

"You've got to find ways to keep the police officers, the teachers, the managers in the community....These people are both the economic engine and the soul of the town. There's nothing else like the Wellington Neighborhood in the county and not much else like it in the whole country."

— Sam Mamula, Mayor of Breckenridge

QUICK FACTS

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Location: Breckenridge, Colorado
Website: www.poplarhouse.com/
Implemented: Phase I completed in 2005



SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES WELLINGTON NEIGHBORHOOD

#1	Includes Mixed Land Uses	✓
#2	Exhibits Compact Building Design	★
#3	Provides Range of Housing Types	✓
#4	Promotes Walkable Neighborhoods	★
#5	Exhibits a Distinct Sense of Place	★
#6	Preserves Open Space	★
#7	Utilizes Existing Development	
#8	Provides Transportation Choices	✓
#9	Practices Fair Decision-making	✓
#10	Promotes Stakeholder Participation	★