

SMART GROWTH IN ACTION

Redeveloping Stapleton Sustainable Development Plan

DENVER, COLORADO

When Denver's Stapleton International Airport closed in 1995, the city saw an opportunity to use the land to create a great new neighborhood. Over six years, starting before the airport even closed, citizens, the business community, and the city and county worked on a development plan that committed to environmental and economic sustainability and social equity. The plan would generate economic development, enhance existing neighborhoods and businesses, protect environmental quality and open space, and offer high-quality, attractive homes to people with a range of incomes. The plan also encourages education, from preschool to "lifelong learning" for adults, and balanced transportation options, including walking, bicycling, public transportation, and driving. In 1999, the city selected Forest City Stapleton, Inc. as the master developer, and construction began in 2001.

One of the nation's largest infill projects, Stapleton covers 4,700 acres and is just 15 minutes from downtown Denver. At build-out, which will take 15 to 20 years, the community expects to have 30,000 residents and 35,000 workers, 10 million square feet of commercial space, 2 million square feet of retail centers, and more than 1,100 new acres of parks, trails, and wildlife habitat. By early 2006, 7,000 people were living at Stapleton, and three schools were already open (for more information on schools at Stapleton, see the case study *Redeveloping Stapleton Schools*).

Stapleton's housing choices include single-family homes, apartments, townhouses, live/work units, and homes reserved for lower-income residents and for senior citizens. The homes and apartments feature diverse designs, but all are required to meet the minimum environmental quality level established by the Built Green Colorado program. Starting in 2006, all homes built in Stapleton will meet U.S. EPA Energy Star standards.

Many of Stapleton's homes and offices will be within a ten-minute walk of one of the four planned town centers. Each town center will have a small park and a main street of two- to four-story buildings with shops and restaurants on the ground floor and offices and apartments above. The public spaces also feature public art and events like farmers' markets and outdoor movies and concerts.

The neighborhood's streets were designed to be pedestrian-friendly, and the greenways and parks throughout the site also encourage people to walk and bicycle. Stapleton is on several bus routes, and a rail line that will connect the neighborhood directly to downtown Denver and the Denver International Airport is planned to be running by the end of 2014, just about the time that Stapleton will be completed.



SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES STAPLETON'S SUSTAINABLE PLAN

#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	★

QUICK FACTS

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Location: Denver, Colorado
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