

# SUSTAINABLEBRECK

## 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

[sustainablebreck.com](https://sustainablebreck.com)



TOWN OF  
BRECKENRIDGE

SUSTAINABLEBRECK 



# 2021

## Annual Report

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the SustainableBreck Plan, adopted in 2011 with input from the citizen's SustainableBreck Task Force. We are proud at how far we have come.

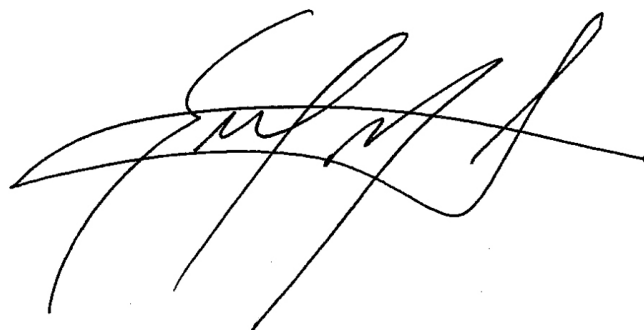
We are just now emerging from an unprecedented year having navigated a global pandemic. The community-wide shut down hit Breckenridge on March 13, 2020. COVID-19 shed light on new opportunities for sustainability, such as teleworking and reduced commercial energy use, but it also highlighted where we can improve our community's resiliency.

The Town Council took a hard look at the Town's budget, conserving resources for the unknown year(s) ahead. In doing so, we also allocated \$1.2M in business assistance grants and \$1.1M in rent relief for working families. Our partners at the Breckenridge Tourism Office pivoted to provide visitors and businesses a one-stop shop for COVID-19 and travel information. We also created "Walkable Main" to physically distance and provide additional retail and restaurant space for businesses.

Together, these efforts helped provide a sense of security and safety for travelers still willing to visit our town. We saw a summer economic rebound which carried through to a prolonged autumn season. The new "zoom economy" and short term rentals drove a real estate market to the highest ever. All of this comes with lessons learned, changes, and challenges to our community in the years ahead.

This report is a snapshot of progress towards our sustainability initiatives. This year, it's also in the context of the COVID-19 global pandemic. We welcome your input on the health and future of our community. You can submit comments on our website [www.sustainablebreck.com](http://www.sustainablebreck.com).

Eric Mamula, Mayor





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**Compra como un local.**

Empaca tu bolsa reutilizable o compra una de las nuestras. Eliminarás las tarifas al finalizar la compra. Y ayudará a mantener Breckendridge verde y limpio.

**BRECKSOSTENIBLE**  
Obtenga más información en [Sustainablebreck.com](http://Sustainablebreck.com)

**BYO BAG**

Staff updated the BYO Bag campaign marketing to include information in Spanish.



# Acknowledgements

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The creation of this report, the policy direction, and the implementation of action items identified by the SustainableBreck Plan requires the assistance, dedication, and commitment of the Town Council, various Town departments, numerous staff, and neighboring jurisdictions.

Thank you for helping keep Breckenridge green and clean.

**Breckenridge Town Council**  
**Community Development**  
**Public Works**  
**Recreation & Open Space**  
**Breckenridge Tourism Office**  
**Summit County Government**  
**US Forest Service**  
**CSU Extension**  
**Xcel Energy**  
**High Country Conservation Center**  
**Summit Climate Action Collaborative**



Breckenridge received recognition from Green Destinations as a global Top 100 Sustainable Destination in 2020 for the Town's COVID-19 tourism response.



# Monitoring Progress

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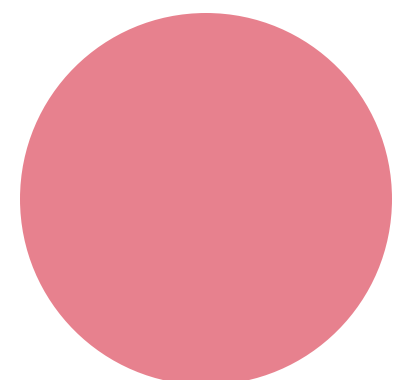
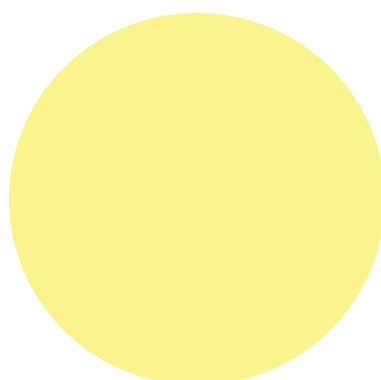
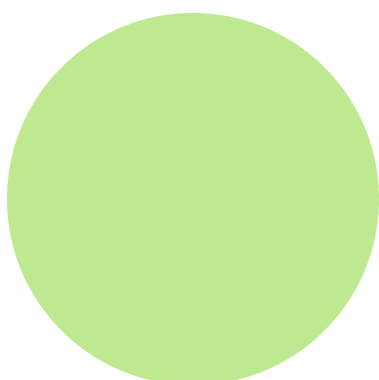
The monitoring program is designed to provide decision makers and community members a snapshot of progress made towards broad goals identified in each of the 10 sustainability categories.

Each sustainability category contains indicators with targets (milestones) for the year 2030 unless otherwise noted. Indicators are the measuring tools used to better understand the current progress toward achieving our goals.

1. Resource Conservation
2. Local Economy
3. Transportation
4. Water
5. Recreation & Open Space
6. Forest Health
7. Housing
8. Land Use
9. Child Care
10. Wildlife

## MEASURING SUCCESS

Colored circles are assigned to each indicator that show the current state of achievement towards the 2030 targets. Numbers within those circles are a snapshot of current conditions. The description sections further highlight details related to the indicators.





# Resource Conservation

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## Goals

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The Town will:

1. Strive to significantly decrease overall resource use, specifically consumption of non-renewable energy, fuels, and non-recyclable materials.
2. Take a leadership role in reducing its own energy consumption.
3. Be powered by 100% renewable electricity for municipal facilities by 2025.
4. Explore innovative strategies to significantly reduce waste.







**-2.8%**

2019: 6,318,090 kWh  
2020: 6,173,694 kWh

**63%**

**Renewable Electricity  
for Town facilities**

**-7%**

**Solid Waste Generation**

2019: 59,255 tons  
2020: 55,191 tons

**-31%**

**Disposable Bag Use**

2019: 1,075,945  
2020: 746,686

## Energy Use

**Target: 20% reduction in electricity and natural gas use by 2020**

Town facility electricity consumption decreased in 2020. This can be attributed in large part to COVID-19 shutdowns and occupancy restrictions with decreased commercial energy demand. However, energy use is up 11% over the 2011 baseline.

## Renewable Energy

**Target: 100% RE for municipal facilities by 2025**

**Target: 100% RE community wide by 2035**

The Town, in partnership with HC3, offered Solarize Summit for a second year. This program is a bulk purchase solar PV program designed to allow ease of access for residential rooftop solar. Town rebates were offered in addition to the tax credit and program incentives. The program saw 17 new solar installations, totaling 213 kW of capacity. A new 3.6 mW of capacity will come online in 2021 through an agreement with Pivot Energy.

## Solid Waste

**Target: 20% reduction in solid waste generation by 2020**

**Target: 40% recycling diversion rate by 2020**

Solid waste generation declined for the first time in years with the most significant drops in March through May. January, February and October were the only months that surpassed solid waste generation from 2019. Recycling rates increased slightly over 2019 to 20% even with the shuttering of glass hauler, Clear Intentions, in November. Recycling rates for plastic, aluminum, scrap metal and single stream drove the increase.

## Disposable Bag Use

**Target: Reduce the number of single-use bags consumed**

The Town suspended the disposable bag fee at the beginning of the pandemic but was reinstated by late fall. Public Health Orders continued to limit occupancy for grocers and retailers through 2020. Retailers may not have reported bag use during fee suspension. Marketing and outreach was translated into Spanish and staff renewed advertising in a variety of locations.



# Local Economy

## Goals



The Town will:

1. Focus on efforts to deliver a balanced, year-round economy driven by destination tourism by 2024.
2. Elevate and protect Breckenridge's authentic character and brand.
3. Provide an atmosphere which focuses on economic stability in real estate and commercial trades.







**9.5%**

**2020 Local  
Unemployment**

## Local Unemployment

**Target: No significant increase over previous year**

**Target: Increase in Area Median Income (AMI) annually**

The pandemic had a significant impact on local unemployment, particularly April through July where numbers reached as high as 21%. In August unemployment dipped below 10% for the first time since March and closed out the year hovering about 7.8%.

**+17.6%**

**Value of Real Estate  
Sales**

## Real Estate

**Target: Positive growth in real estate sales**

**Target: Reduction in number of foreclosure properties**

Total real estate sales were \$837,121,106, an increase of 17.6% over 2018. Foreclosures for fee simple properties decreased to 3 compared to 4 in 2019. According to data from Land Title there were 637 residential transactions 2019 and 760 in 2020. The beginning impacts of the zoom economy and working from your mountain home are evident in these numbers.

**-20%**

**2020 Average  
Lodging Occupancy**

## Lodging

**Target: Increase in monthly occupancy over previous year**

Average occupancy declined to 37.7% in 2020 with the most significant changes in March through June. Average daily rates increased .25% with the largest increases in February, October and November.

**-6.7%**

**Taxable Sales in 2020**

## Taxable Sales

**Target: Positive trend in taxable sales over previous year**

Taxable sales decreased to \$614,093,859 over \$658,346,910 in 2019.



# Transportation

## Goals



The Town will:

1. Strive to lessen automobile dependency in favor of alternative modes of travel to reduce consumption of fossil fuels.
2. Increase transit ridership by providing residents and visitors a convenient multi-modal transportation system that provides links to the ski area, base facilities, parking facilities, and throughout the community and region.







**-1%**

**2019 Alternative  
transportation**

## Alternative Modalities

**Target: Increase percent of trips made by walking, biking, carpooling**

**Target: Obtain Bicycle Friendly Community platinum**

According to the most recent American Community Survey, alternative transportation held steady in 2019 over 2018. However, public transit was down slightly while walking and teleworking increased. These numbers do not reflect COVID trends in 2020. Breckenridge is a proud Gold Level Bicycle Friendly Community.

**-7.2%**

**Traffic Count**

2019: 7,618,943  
2020: 7,068,509

## Traffic Volumes

**Target: No net increase of number of vehicles entering town over 10 year average**

Overall, the total number of vehicles counted at Tiger Rd. was 18.9% higher in 2020 than 2010, but the number decreased significantly from the previous year. Breckenridge police department deployed manual traffic control measures for egress 26 times in 2020.

**-49%**

**Breckenridge  
Transit Ridership**

2019: 1,310,282  
2020: 668,409

## Public Transit

**Target: Increase transit ridership to 10% of total trips**

**Target: Increase ridership & per capita ridership above 2009 baseline**

Public transit use as a percent of total commuter trips declined in 2019, the latest year for which we have data, accounting for 11.7% of all trips. Breckenridge is second only to Aspen in public transit ridership. Transit ridership is nearly flat to the 2009 baseline. Ridership started out strong but was dramatically impacted by limited occupancy public health orders and a total suspension of service in March, April and May.



# Water

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## Goals

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The Town will:

1. Maintain high standards of water quality.
3. Increase ability to fully store available water rights to ensure an adequate water supply for future generations.
4. Reduce annual demands by 20% by 2030.
5. Reduce peak demands during the summer associated with outdoor water use.







**100%**

**Water Plant II Project Completion**

## Water Plant II

The Water Plant II construction was completed and started treating water in the fall of 2020. Xcel Energy did a new construction audit on the system's buildings and concluded the energy savings from motors, drives, pumps, and lighting met efficiency standards. WTPII will provide additional "wet" water to the distribution system and will treat up to 4.5 million gallons of drinking water per day.

**-7%**

**Annual Demand**

**2019: 817 MGD  
2020: 759.6 MGD**

## Annual Demand

**Target: 20% reduction in annual demand over 2007 baseline**

Demand has decreased 7% since 2019, but is still 9.4% over the 2007 baseline year. Several town properties received outdoor water audits through the Slow the Flow program that helped identify improvements to the irrigation system as well as leaks. A decrease in occupancy for lodging may have contributed to the additional water savings.

**-9.9%**

**Peak Summer Demand**

**2019: 3.55 MGD  
2020: 3.2 MGD**

## Peak Summer Demand

**Target: Reduce peak day summer demand**

Much of the summer demand comes from outdoor irrigation. An outdoor water audit program called Slow the Flow helps homeowners and HOAs analyze irrigation systems, dial in efficient irrigation schedules, and makes recommendations for improvements. The Water Department fixed two sub-surface breaks in late 2019 and five surface main breaks in 2020 that have improved demand.

**-8.4%**

**Peak Winter Demand**

**2019: 2.948 MGD  
2020: 2.7 MGD**

## Peak Winter Demand

**Target: Reduce peak day winter demand**

The water utility joined Water Smart, a user friendly dashboard and analytics program that makes understanding water use easy for customers. There are 916 accounts registered which is 18.3% of accounts eligible.



# Recreation & Open Space

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## Goals

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The Town will:

1. Maintain existing inventory of open space properties and trails.
2. Acquire additional open space property that complements existing properties.
3. Increase trail connectivity.
4. Provide new recreational opportunities.
5. Renovate existing and develop new parks and facilities.







**+35**

**Acres of Open Space  
Acquired in 2020**

## Acres of Open Space

**Target: Increase in open space acreage in the Upper Blue Basin**

0.5% sales tax dedicated to open space acquisition. Over 20 years, 4,983 acres have been acquired through purchases, trades, land dedications, and joint purchases with Summit County Government. The latest land acquisitions have been Fuller Placer trailhead, Smuggler claims and 188 Lee Lane.

**1.4K**

**Square Feet of New  
Parks**

## Park Acreage

**Target: Exceed 10.1 acres of park land per 1,000 residents**

Over 50 acres are maintained for town parks. The new River Park adjacent to the Blue 52 neighborhood was completed with additional parking, bike park, slack line and lawn amenities. The Town also created free Nordic skiing trails on the McCain property and maintains the new Runway Sledding Hill on Airport Rd. The Town has 11.4 acres of parks per person exceeding the target of 10.1 acres.

**1.14**

**Miles of new trail  
built in 2020**

## Trail Miles

**Target: Positive yearly growth of miles of trails maintained**

In 2020, the Open Space and Trails program constructed and maintained new trails including the Barney Ford uphill, Middle Flume reroute, Little Corporal, Ski Hill Stairs, Bekkedal, and Mineral Hill. A total of 63.14 miles of trails are maintained by the Town.



# Forest Health

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## Goals

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The Town will:

1. Aggressively undertake forest health initiatives to protect residents and visitors from large scale wildfire.
2. Protect the Town's watershed and associated water supply infrastructure.
3. Conduct large scale replanting efforts in areas with extensive tree removal.







310

Number of  
Breckenridge Homes  
in 2020

46

Acres of Land Treated  
by the Town

154

Acres of Land Treated  
by USFS in 2020

## Chipping Program

**Target: Positive yearly growth in total volume of material collected**

**Target: Positive yearly growth in number of households participating**

In 2020, the number of Breckenridge homes that participated in the Chipping Program increased by 33. The Chipping Program stopped tracking the number of piles and biomass collected by jurisdiction in 2020. 6,790 cubic yards of biomass was collected county-wide in 2020.

## Town Forest Management

**Target: Positive yearly growth of total acres treated**

The Town, County and The Nature Conservancy partnered to launch a new forest health project at Barney Ford open space to protect from high-severity wildfires and increase tree diversity with Aspens in forest habitats. Since Aspens are less flammable and have a higher moisture content than conifers, they may act to reduce fire severity. Aspens will also increase insect and plant biodiversity and create valuable habitat for elk, moose, and deer.

## USFS Forest Management

**Target: Positive yearly growth of total acres treated**

The Forest Service continued its Good Neighbor Agreement to assist with restoration, forest health, and hazardous fuels reduction. In 2020, projects totaling 154 acres were completed on Miner's Creek, Peak 7, Wellington, and Swan. There are 734 acres under contract for 2020 and will be completed in 2021.



# Housing

## Goals



The Town will:

1. Ensure the availability of affordable priced housing for its permanent residents.
2. Protect market-rate units serving as workforce housing.
3. Create deed restricted for sale units priced for workforce families.
4. Create deed restricted rental housing for workforce locals.







0

**Rental Units  
Added**

## Housing Need - Rentals

**Target: 1,400 units needed by 2023 to fill housing need based on 2020 housing needs assessment (up to 120% AMI)**

151 rental units have been built since 2016 and the Town will break ground on 80 rental units on the McCain property in 2021. This project will not only provide rentals for 30-60% AMI, but also be a net zero energy community.

+18

**Deed Restrictions in  
Housing Helps Program**

## Housing Need - For Sale

**Target: 100 units needed by 2023 to fill housing need based on 2020 housing needs assessment**

The Housing program has shifted to focus on buy-downs and implementation of the Housing Helps program which provides financial assistance to homeowners in exchange for deed restrictions to support the local workforce. Housing Helps added 18 new deed restrictions in 2020.

0

**New Units  
Occupied**

## Private Sector Development

The private sector did not add any deed restricted housing in 2020. The Town is now looking to provide more workforce housing through new policies and programs that require and incentivize the private sector to develop housing for the workforce.



# Land Use

## Goals

The Town will:

1. Protect back-country lands and historic resources.
2. Maintain service commercial uses.
3. Not exceed the Upper Blue Basin's build-out numbers.







**+40**

**TDR Backcountry  
Acres Protected in  
2019**

**+1**

**New Historic  
Landmarks in 2020**

**+226**

**New Residential  
Units in Upper Blue**

**+6**

**New Service  
Commercial Units**

## Backcountry Protection

**Target: Protection from development of 90-100% of private property in the backcountry**

Since 2000, the Upper Blue Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program has protected 1,967 acres of sensitive backcountry resources. Eighty-six percent of backcountry lands have been protected.

## Historic Resources

**Target: No loss of historic structures, either through demolition or neglect**

The Town proudly boasts one of Colorado's largest National Historic Districts, with over 200 contributing structures. Since 2003, 36 historic structures and properties have been locally landmarked (the Town's highest level of historic protection) in connection with redevelopment and preservation efforts. The latest is Father Dyer Church.

## Town Build Out

**Target: Not to exceed targets established in Joint Upper Blue Master Plan**

The combined total of residential units located in the Upper Blue Basin (Breckenridge, unincorporated Summit County, and Blue River) is 12,452, below the target cap of 14,255 units. The latest Upper Blue data is from 2019.

## Service Commercial

**Target: No net loss of existing service commercial property**

Service commercial in the Upper Blue basin increased from 86 to 92 from 2018 to 2020 for an additional 13,855 square feet. Service commercial is important maintain economic diversity and service opportunities for Breckenridge residents. This survey is conducted every two years.



# Child Care



## Goals

The Town will:

1. Ensure quality care is accessible and affordable for Breckenridge families and workforce.
2. Create quality child care programs that retain qualified and motivated teachers.
3. Secure long term funding, reduce costs, and achieve sustainable budgets at participating centers.







250

Children on Center  
Wait Lists

4

Average Years of  
Teacher Retention

\$7.6M

Tuition Assistance  
Since 2008

4

Child Care Centers in  
Breckenridge

## Center Occupancy

**Target: 90-100% of daily slots filled and minimal waitlists**

The majority of children on the wait list are infants and toddlers. There are currently 200 slots available in the Upper Blue on a daily basis. Schools are currently at capacity as allowed under public health orders and CDPHE guidance.

## Financial Sustainability

**Target: Increase staff retention**

**Target: Operational expenses covered by adequate revenue**

Teacher retention has generally increased with Invest in Teachers and other efforts to professionalize the workforce. However, there are 9 vacancies across centers due to COVID impacts. Program guidelines require schools increase tuition to keep up with inflation. The Invest in Teacher Program has supported teachers with over \$1.8M to help increase average wages.

## Child Care Attainability

**Target: Ensure sufficient funds are available to fund scholarship for families who are cost burdened**

During the 2019-2020 tuition cycle, 107 children received assistance. The tuition assistance program consistently helps about 50% of the children enrolled, but was down in 2020 due to occupancy restrictions from public health orders. Children are continuously added to the program as they are able to get care.

## Quality Programming

**Target: Centers meet quality standards by the State of Colorado**

Our four partner schools have Colorado Shines Ratings and all schools have quality improvement plans in place.



# Wildlife



## Goals

The Town will:

1. Will preserve large, bio-diverse open spaces that serve as vital wildlife habitat through land purchases.
2. Implement the Cucumber Gulch Management Plan.

**\*All indicators below are from Cucumber Gulch Preserve monitoring.**







## Bird Diversity

Diversity takes into account the number of species and the relative abundance of each species. There were no statistical differences to avian diversity in 2020 compared to 2019 across all habitats. However, long term monitoring does show significant decline in species diversity when comparing the periods 2013-2019 to 2006-2012 when diversity was the highest.

## Beaver Activity

Beaver are a keystone species of the preserve. They are ecosystem engineers that maintain ecosystem dynamics and diverse habitat upon which other species depend. In 2020, the number of active lodges increased to 3 and 3 individual beavers with kits were sighted throughout the observation period. After the population crash in the early 2000's the number of resident beaver colonies has been relatively consistent.

## Boreal Toads

Boreal toads, once abundant in Colorado, have only been sighted in the Preserve every couple of years. Once common at altitudes between 7,000 and 12,000 feet in the southern Rocky Mountains, populations have declined significantly. In 2020, there were no Boreal Toads, eggs or tadpoles observed.

## Moose Activity

While the moose activity has been increasing in number and activity, the police department had 134 wildlife related called in 2020, down from 170 in 2019. The Breckenridge Tourism Office, the Town, and Colorado Parks and Wildlife work to educate residents and visitors about proper behavior near moose and other wildlife.





Learn More:  
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