

# BOOM AND BUST: PRESERVING COLORADO'S SKI TOWNS

by

ANNE BROWNING WILSON

(Under the Direction of Mark Reinberger)

## ABSTRACT

An examination of the preservation efforts implemented in historic Colorado ski towns, which are successful and accordingly could be used for development of preservation guidelines to be implemented in other similar communities. Three case studies, the historic mining towns of Aspen, Breckenridge, and Telluride, Colorado, have been selected and a brief history of their mining and skiing past, an assessment of their preservation practices and analysis of such practices is presented. By examining the practices these towns have put in place, one can look at their effectiveness and thus form general guidelines that could prove beneficial to towns of similar background.

INDEX WORDS: Colorado; Historic Preservation; Aspen; Breckenridge; Telluride; Mining; Skiing

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ANNE BROWNING WILSON

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by

ANNE BROWNING WILSON

Major Professor: Mark Reinberger

Committee: James Reap  
Jack Crowley  
Robert Jaeger

Electronic Version Approved:

Maureen Grasso  
Dean of the Graduate School  
The University of Georgia  
May 2012

## DEDICATION

To my parents, who took me skiing and imparted a love of the West at an early age. Thank you.

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## CHAPTER 1

### **Introduction**

The mountains of Colorado have always held an aura of adventure and optimism making them a location of great appeal. In contrast to this spirit of hope, there arose many challenges and hardships for those early settlers working to establish a life among the mountains. First inhabited by the various nomadic tribes of the Ute Native Americans, the land proved to be a fertile hunting ground. The discovery of gold and other precious minerals made the anticipation of prosperity an instant draw to the mountains of Colorado. For decades, the small mountain towns of Colorado faced the boom and bust cycles precipitated by the successes and failures of the mining ventures in the area. As many of the mining efforts began to dry up or consolidate at the beginning of the twentieth century, the once viable towns turned to a new form of industry, skiing. For various reasons, many of Colorado's historic mining towns adopted the resort model popular in Europe and reestablished their towns as vacation destinations.

Many of Colorado's most popular skiing destinations are located in historic mining towns. The governing bodies of these towns have realized that they have more to offer visitors than just steep slopes and fluffy powder. By preserving the historic resources of their towns, they are providing an experience that goes beyond a sport vacation. Towns can provide an all seasons attraction, not only through skiing, but through scenery and history in general. By embracing this form of heritage tourism, the

towns have experienced an increase in visitors. This has bolstered their profits as well as showcased their historic resources to a new and interested group that otherwise might not have been exposed to them.

Each town, with unique historic resources, has approached preservation in creative and diverse ways. Of the preservation efforts implemented in historic Colorado ski towns, which have been successful and thus could be used in other similar mountain communities? This is a noteworthy query because little research has been done comparing the preservation efforts of various historic Colorado ski towns. While there have been studies done on specific aspects of preservation at solitary locations, this thesis attempts to compare a variety of historic ski towns, revealing the preservation successes and providing a comprehensive view of local historic preservation efforts. Through analysis of several successful historic preservation approaches, recommendations can be compiled and implemented in towns of similar composition and siting. This is important because it provides a starting point for historic ski towns to develop an historic preservation plan, encompassing in a single document the many aspects necessary to execute the plan. This thesis will examine the various formations of preservation organizations, the groups organizational structures, the survey of resources, preservation legislation, interpretation methods, related environmental efforts, and the impact of resort development, extracting the successful preservation efforts that may be used to form further guidelines and create recommendations. Each case study city has been researched in these specific fields and provides insight into the general successes and challenges faced.

Because the dynamics of these towns have changed over the years, it is important to consider a diverse group of towns, facing general as well as site specific preservation issues. By examining the practices these towns have put in place, one can look at their effectiveness and form general guidelines that could prove beneficial to towns of similar background. Therefore the historic mining towns of Aspen, Breckenridge, and Telluride will be examined to determine current preservation practices and the effectiveness of said efforts.

While many towns in Colorado meet the criteria for examination, the selected three exhibit characteristics that exemplify historic preservation efforts in a general and a more site specific manner. The three cities also share a similar development history, but are unique in their areas of significance. All three sites were inhabited by the Ute Native Americans and used as hunting grounds. Each was settled due to its location and mining resources. However, the towns' response to the boom and bust cycles, as well as their later development, led each site to unique solutions for maintaining its existence. In the end, each site has become the home of a massive ski resort but arriving there has been a different journey for each location.

The town of Aspen has the unique history of being the training ground for the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division during World War II. It also has a large collection of mid-century modern development. Aspen's period of significance ranges from 1879 to 1961, beginning with the mining boom and establishing itself as a cultural hub in America at its culmination. Aspen provides a perspective of dealing with a varied range of significant structures. Not only are the mining properties important to the town story, but the modern structures are important as well. In studying how the town handles, or in some



cases mishandles, its more modern resources, we see how the town provides an example to other towns contemplating the preservation of their more recent histories.

The town of Breckenridge was selected due to its diverse mining history. Over an 85 year period, Breckenridge mined a variety of minerals, including gold, silver, zinc, and lead, with an array of methods, including panning, vertical shafts, and dredge boats. This mining history along with the rough frontier life and technological advances that accompanied it, give the town of Breckenridge a unique mining history with a period of significance ranging from 1859 to 1942. Unlike the other case studies examined, Breckenridge did not slowly morph from mining town to ski village. A disjointed transition and development influenced the desire to preserve its history.

While Telluride has a very complex mining history that contributes to its significance, a social revolution gives it much of its present character. These social attitudes were the impetus for it to become one of the earliest National Register designations in the country, capturing periods of significance from 1880 to the 1970's. Telluride is the battlefield between the old mining mindset and the skiing revolution accompanied by the shift in the national attitude taking place. Citizens from both schools of thought fought hard to preserve what they valued in the town. Today's town culture, as well as its historic fabric, is a reflection of efforts woven together from both points of view.

The first section of this thesis examines the history of the selected towns, including their role in the mining industry and ski resort development. The second section examines the specific historic preservation efforts in place in each town. Following this is an exploration of the effectiveness of such efforts, focusing on the

successes and challenges faced through implementation. Finally based on the effectively implemented preservation tools used in the case study towns, a plan compiling these methods is presented for use by similarly equipped locations.

In researching the history of these towns a variety of research methods were used. The history comes mostly from extensive reading and research through texts, books, journals, exhibits, and interpretations found both locally and on site. Due to the great distance of the case study cities, the websites of the local historical societies were often used as well as conversations with the operators of such organizations. Visits have been made to each city used as a case study. Many of the works cited and documented throughout the thesis are taken from internet sources. This method was used to ensure the most up to date information. A number of maps, drawings, signage, and charts were used to draw conclusions about past and present development situations.

The third and fourth chapters of this thesis deal with local and state historic preservation organizations. In most cases the organizations have been contacted directly. Much of the information collected by direct contact was also available on the organizations' websites. For many of the organizations that I visited personally, I was directed to quote or take information from the website, as it was often the official position or information of said organizations. However, information gathered from personal interviews with historians and preservation staff has been included as well. A combination of documented and oral history and information was used to assess and analyze each town's preservation practices.

## CHAPTER 2

### History

#### Colorado

The mountains of Colorado have always presented a mystique for travelers and adventurers alike. The landscape of Colorado was formed over millions of years and is the product of numerous geological events. Tectonic activity, volcanoes, and glaciers brought the mineral resources closer to the earth's surface and created the mountain ranges of Colorado.

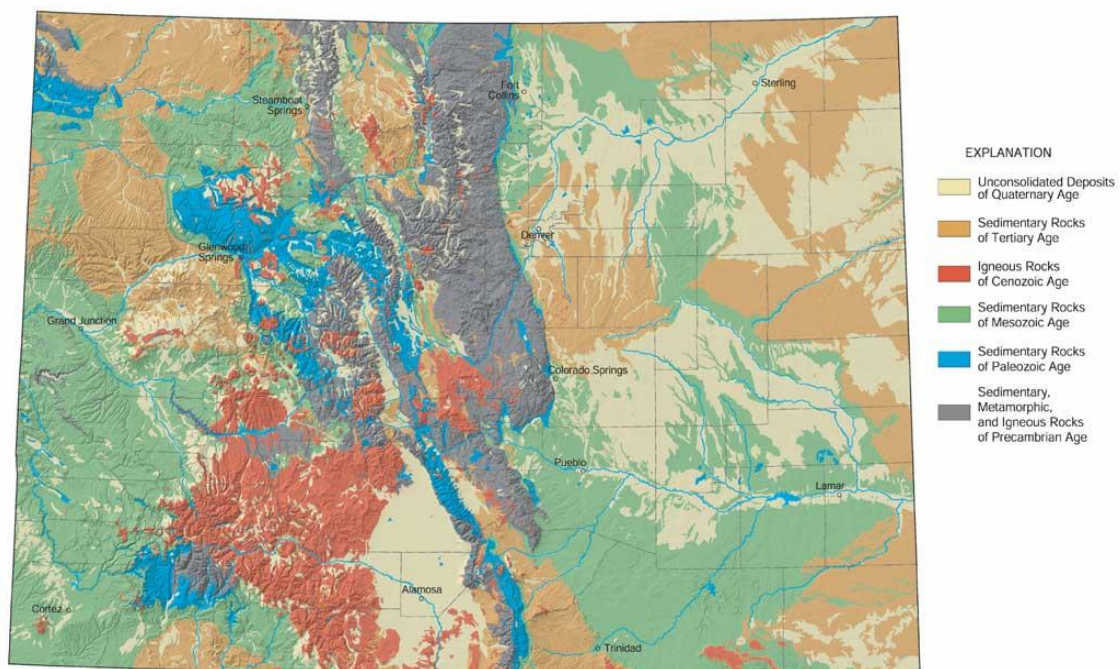


Figure 2.1 – Generalized Geologic Map of Colorado  
 Colorado Geological Survey. “Generalized Geologic Map of Colorado, 2004,”  
 Department of Natural Resources. <http://geosurvey.state.co.us/Default.aspx?tabid=122>  
 (accessed April 5, 2011).

## Location of the Colorado Mineral Belt

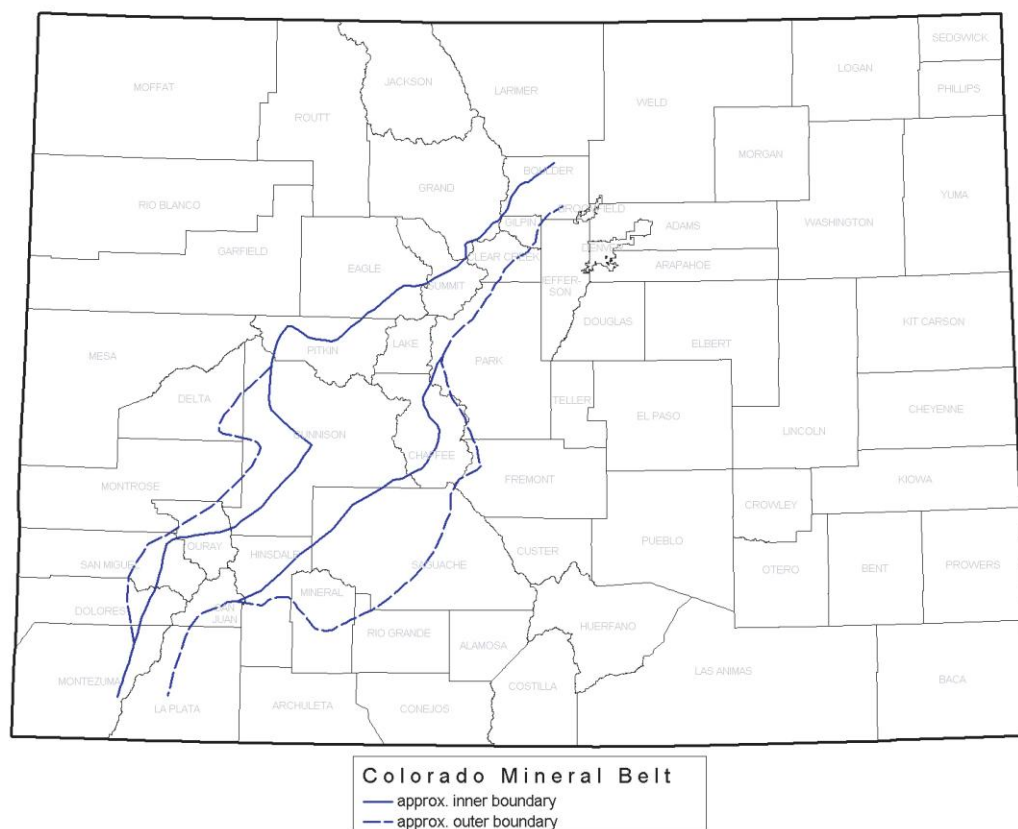


Figure 2.2 – Map of the Colorado Mineral Belt  
 U.S. Geological Survey. “The Colorado Mineral Belt Revisited- An Analysis of New Data, 2002,” Anna Burack Wilson, P.K. Sims. U.S. Department of the Interior.  
[http://fairburn-mining.com/CMB\\_Revisited.pdf](http://fairburn-mining.com/CMB_Revisited.pdf) (accessed April 5, 2011).

Colorado was literally put on the map because of its rich mineral resources. By 1859 the Pike’s Peak gold rush was in full swing, opening Colorado to fortune seekers.<sup>1</sup> Mining opened the floodgates of development, bringing people, railroads, technology and prosperity. The state of Colorado provided great opportunity to those willing to risk their current lifestyle for wealth. Many faced the challenges of hostile natives, harsh weather, treacherous terrain, disease, and extreme poverty. Some became abundantly wealthy,

<sup>1</sup> Dorset, Phyllis Flanders, *The New Eldorado: The Story of Colorado’s Gold and Silver Rushes*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1970).

while others perished into oblivion without a trace. The early mining years truly were the wild west. Most mining towns developed in phases starting with the settlement phase, characterized by small populations, tents, and makeshift layouts. Following that was the camp phase, where sawmills, more permanent structures and government agencies were established; and finally the town phase with a planned and more developed layout and architecture.<sup>2</sup> As the camps developed and grew, cities formed and the area became more hospitable, welcoming women, children and diverse ethnic groups. The mining towns of Colorado were filled with excitement about the expectation of wealth. These towns were on the brink of many technical developments, including electricity, public water, and trans-mountain railroads. The towns embraced entertainment in the form of new opera houses as well as drinking establishments and brothels. Life in these small Colorado mining towns was one of extremes. Just as quickly as the booms had brought people to town, the busts sent them packing, leaving many camps as ghost towns.

The repeal of the Sherman Silver Act in 1893 caused the silver market to crash, leaving the once wealthy penniless. Many of the once prosperous mining towns became ghost towns. It took the dwindling populations many years to discover that they had another valuable resource that could be exploited, mountains and snow.

Skiing was utilized during the mining years as a way to traverse the mountains efficiently during the winter. After the mines closed, the locals still used skiing as a method of transportation and later sport. It was not until World War II when the mountains of Colorado became used as a training ground for the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division, that people realized the potential skiing had as a new profitable industry. Following the

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<sup>2</sup> C. Eric Stoehr, *Bonanza Victorian: Architecture and Society in Colorado Mining Towns* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1975), 10.

war, many abandoned mining areas turned to skiing and embraced the new sport culture sweeping the country.

From the early years of ski clubs and celebrity resorts, skiing has developed into a massive industry. The once small and unique mountain areas have been absorbed by large resort corporations. In some areas this resort dominance has caused a backlash and has fueled the desire of the towns to remain quirky and independent, embracing their historic past. The combination of history, a desire for profit, sport, cultural identity and escapism has shaped the modern ski towns.

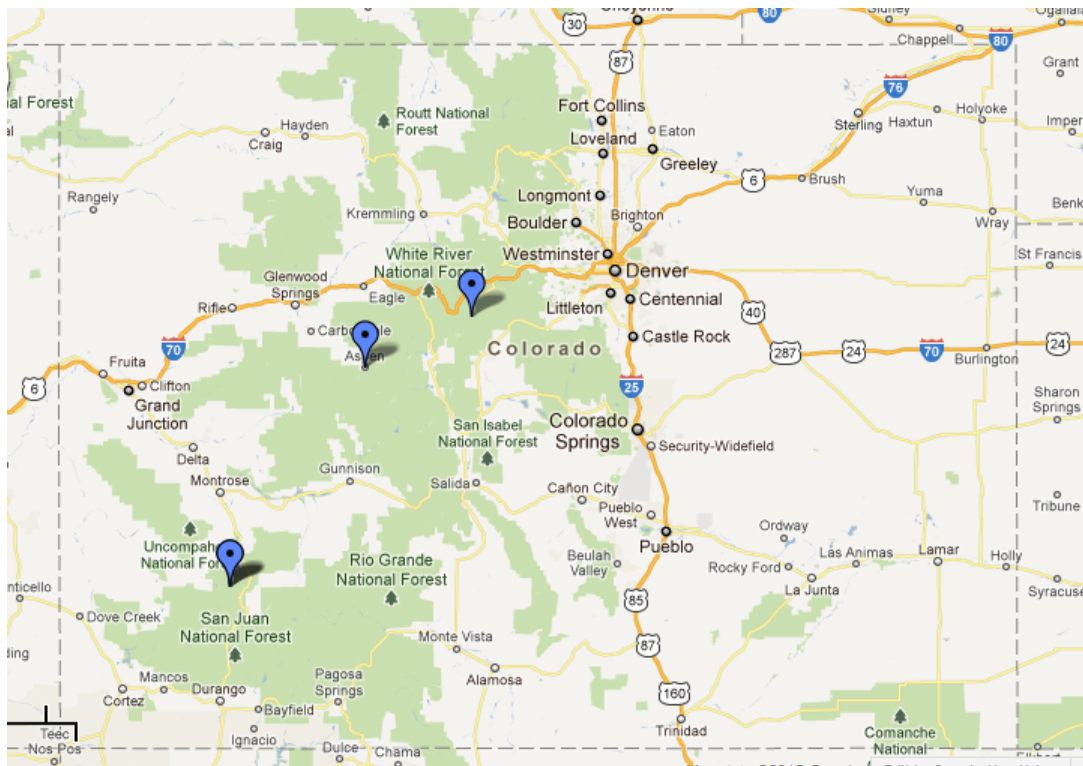


Figure 2.3 – Map of the Colorado, Pinpointing Aspen, Breckenridge, and Telluride Google Maps (accessed March 10, 2012).

### Aspen

The town of Aspen provides a complex look at historic preservation issues.

While the town was settled as a mining town, it has achieved more contemporary fame

through its skiing history and gentrified development. Located in Pitkin County, Colorado, Aspen is relatively isolated.

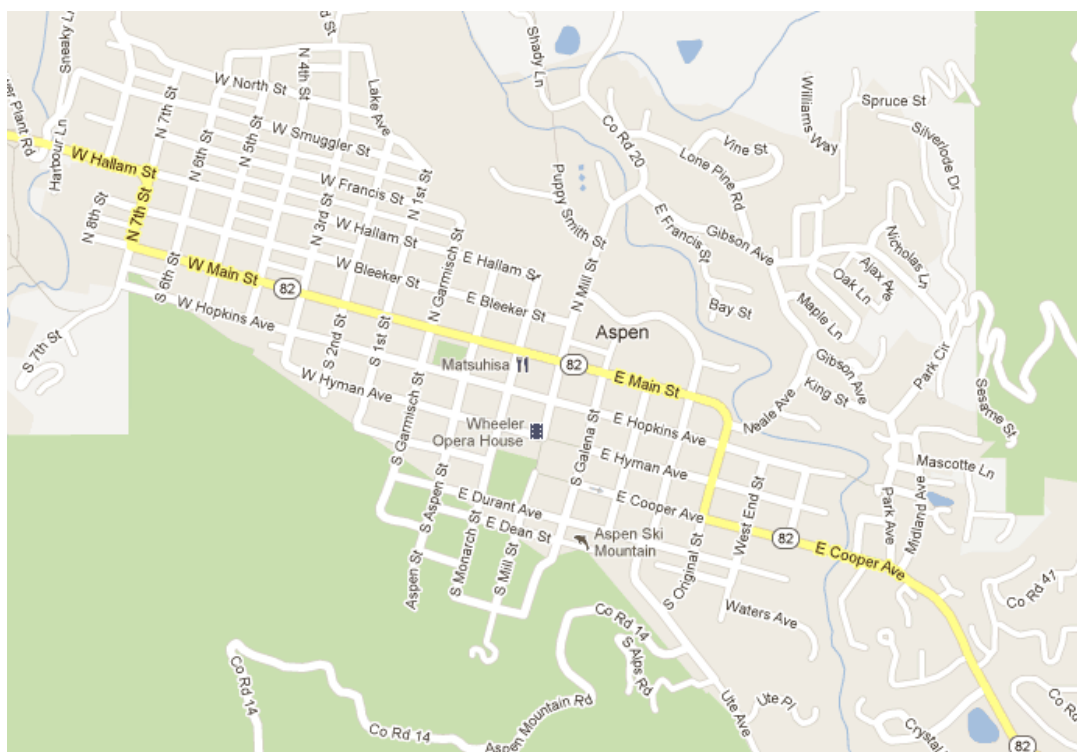


Figure 2.4 – Map of Aspen, CO  
Google Maps (accessed March 10, 2012).

Eight hundred years before mining came to the Aspen area, the Roaring Fork Valley was home to the Ute Native Americans who used the fertile hunting ground as their summer camp.<sup>3</sup> In 1873, with the grudging permission of the Ute people, Frederick V. Hayden, under the direction of the United States government, completed a geographic and geological survey of the area. During this expedition he named many of the area's features and recognized similarities in the landscape to other large mineral claims. This caused a great influx of prospectors when his reports were published in 1879. The land in the Aspen area was acquired from the Ute tribe by treaty in 1878 after the great silver

<sup>3</sup>Malcolm J. Rohrbough, *Aspen: The History of a Silver-Mining Town, 1879-1893* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

boom in nearby Leadville, Colorado.<sup>4</sup> In 1879 silver was found in the area of Aspen. The silver strike led to a quick expansion of the mining camp later called Ute City. In 1880 Clark Wheeler surveyed the town and changed the name to Aspen, forming his own town company and starting the first newspaper the *Aspen Times*.<sup>5</sup> The town of Aspen continued to grow and over the next fourteen years produced one sixth of the nation's silver.

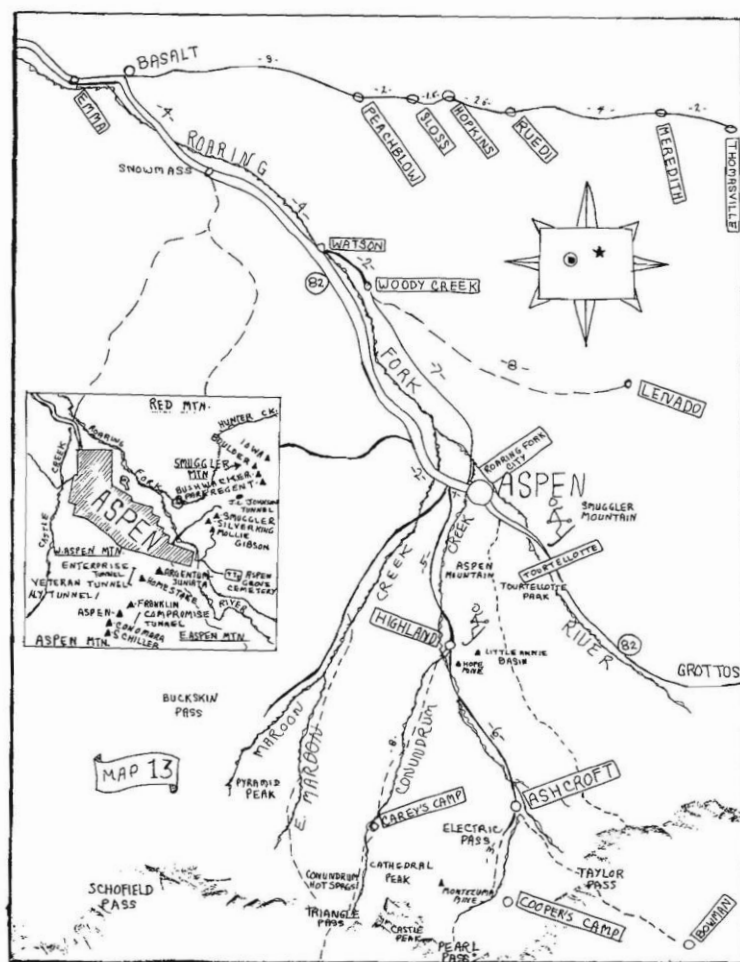


Figure 2.5 – Map of Aspen and Surrounding Mines  
Perry Eberhart, *Guide to Colorado Ghost Towns and Mining Camps*, (Athens, Swallow Press, 1969), 236.

<sup>4</sup> Malcolm J. Rohrbough, *Aspen: The History of a Silver-Mining Town, 1879-1893* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 3-4.

<sup>5</sup> Aspen Historical Society, "Aspen History: The Mining Boom 1879 - 1893," The Aspen Historical Society 2008, <http://www.aspenhistorysociety.com/utes.html> (accessed March 29, 2011).



The Aspen mines became some of the most profitable in the country and produced enough raw materials to support two railroad lines. At the end of 1892 Aspen was the largest silver camp in the world.<sup>6</sup> While the men worked hard in the mines, Aspen also provided a chance to play hard. In addition to bars and shows, for the price of \$2, Aspenites could catch the train to Glenwood Springs and bathe in the spring fed natatorium. This became a favorite pastime, as it could be done in winter and afforded the chance to show off one's latest bathing costume.<sup>7</sup> Aspen attracted many wealthy people including Jerome Wheeler, managing partner of Macy's department store, who impacted the development of the town by building a hotel and opera house.<sup>8</sup>

In 1893 the Sherman Silver Act, which required the Secretary of the Treasury to purchase 4,500,000 ounces of silver each month, was repealed, and Aspen began a long slow decline.<sup>9</sup> While the town continued to operate the mine, many prominent men and businesses were forced to declare bankruptcy. From 1893 to 1936 the town of Aspen was quiet. Even though there was little work being done, technological advances still came. In those years the telephone and telegraph wires reached the town through Independence Pass, connecting it to the outside world for the first time. Independence Pass Highway was completed in 1924. With these small advancements came many failures too. The Rio Grande railroad endured numerous accidents and was forced to dismantle the line to Aspen.

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<sup>6</sup> Phyllis Flanders Dorset, *The New Eldorado: The Story of Colorado's Gold and Silver Rushes*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1970), 287-290.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Perry Eberhart, *Guide to Colorado Ghost Towns and Mining Camps*, (Athens, Swallow Press, 1969), 238.

<sup>9</sup>"Sherman Silver Purchase Act." *Encyclopedia Britannica. Encyclopedia Britannica Online*. Encyclopedia Britannica, 2011. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/540130/Sherman-Silver-Purchase-Act>. (accessed April 5, 2011).



Figure 2.6 – Rio Grande Railroad Accident  
Aspen Historical Society, 2008, “The Quiet Years, 1893-1936, Railroad Accident, Info Nugget,” [http://www.aspenhistorysociety.com/nugget\\_quietyears9](http://www.aspenhistorysociety.com/nugget_quietyears9) (accessed April 5, 2011).

A collapse of the mine followed by a flu epidemic caused the town to shut down in 1918, and shortly after the Aspen Smelting Company suspended operations. In 1929 the town, like the rest of the country, suffered greatly from the stock market collapse. It was not until 1936 that the first glimmer of hope was seen for the town’s recovery.

A group of entrepreneurial thinkers saw the untapped value of another natural resource and began making plans for a ski resort. Ted Ryan, a Yale graduate, and Billy Fiske, a 1932 Olympic athlete, both avid winter sportsmen, teamed with a dream to build a ski resort that would rival the resorts of Europe. Through their search for the right location they met Thomas Flynn, an Aspen native with mining claims for sale. The partners then brought in Swiss avalanche and mountaineering expert Andre Roch to survey and design the ski area. There were only four American ski resorts when the team began to develop Aspen. The Highlands-Bavarian Lodge opened in 1936 and hoped to compete with the flourishing Sun Valley Resort in Idaho.



Figure 2.7 – Highlands-Bavarian Ski Lodge 1936  
Aspen Historical Society, 2008, “The Quiet Years, 1893-1936, The Highland-Bavarian Lodge, Info Nugget,” [http://www.aspenhistorysociety.com/nugget\\_quietyears14](http://www.aspenhistorysociety.com/nugget_quietyears14) (accessed April 5, 2011).

The first tow “boat” was installed later that year and used a Model A Ford engine and two Midnight Mine hoists to pull a six seat platform up the mountain. It was later replaced by a two boat tow with eight seats which was run by the Roaring Fork Winter Sports Club, now Aspen Ski club, and operated until 1946.<sup>10</sup>



Figure 2.8 – Aspen Tow Boat, 1936  
Aspen Historical Society, 2008, “The Quiet Years, 1893-1936, Aspen’s First Tow, Info Nugget,” [http://www.aspenhistorysociety.com/nugget\\_quietyears15](http://www.aspenhistorysociety.com/nugget_quietyears15) (accessed April 5, 2011).

<sup>10</sup> Kathleen Krieger Daily, *Aspen: The Quiet Years*, (Aspen, CO: Red Ink, 1994).

The resort was about to get their first chairlift when all steel orders were canceled due to World War II. While Andre Roch started the Aspen Ski Club in 1937 and continued to develop the mountain and encourage racing, it was not until after the war that Aspen began to make an impact on the sport of skiing. Prior to the war, the Army 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division, stationed near Leadville, visited Aspen for training. After the war many of those veterans returned to the Aspen area to help develop the resort.



Figure 2.9 – 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division  
Denver Public Library: Western History and Genealogy, 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division  
Collection, 1943-1944.

As Aspen began to make a name for itself, many influential people visited and built homes there. Walter Paepcke, president of the Container Corporation of America, and his wife moved to Aspen with the thought of making it a cultural destination. “He helped turn Aspen into a health, sports, and cultural center that featured, among other things, a summer music festival.”<sup>11</sup> The Paepckes met Friedl Pfeifer, an Austrian ski racer who later ran the Aspen Ski School, and together began work on the construction of the first chairlift. Fritz Benedict, a pupil of Frank Lloyd Wright, also moved to Aspen in 1945 after his release from the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division and began his architectural career. He served on the first Planning and Zoning Commission and volunteered for multiple

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<sup>11</sup> Richard N Ellis, Duane A. Smith, *Colorado: A History in Photographs*, (Niwot: the University of Colorado Press, 1991), 170.

community leadership roles. Due to the passion and benevolence of many early Aspen residents, the town not only became an international skiing destination but a cultural center as well. Over the next two decades Aspen embraced cultural development. The town hosted the Goethe Bicentennial celebration, an event to celebrate writer Johann Wolfgang van Goethe, where Albert Schweitzer gave a speech during his only visit to the United States. The celebration was held in a tent designed by world renowned Finnish architect Eero Saarinen.



Figure 2.10 – Goethe Bicentennial Tent, Eero Saarinen, 1949  
Aspen Historical Society, 2008, “Body, Mind and Spirit 1949-1960, Eero Saarinen’s Tent, Info Nugget,” [http://www.aspenhistorysociety.com/nugget\\_aspenrebounds15](http://www.aspenhistorysociety.com/nugget_aspenrebounds15) (accessed April 5, 2011).

These events gave rise to other successful summer institutions including the Aspen Music Festival & School, the Aspen Institute, and the International Design Conference. In 1950 Aspen played host to the first international ski competition in the United States, the FIS World Alpine Championship.



Figure 2.11 – FIS World Championships, 1950  
 Aspen Historical Society, 2008, “Body, Mind and Spirit 1949-1960, F.I.S. World Championship, Info Nugget,”  
[http://www.aspenhistorysociety.com/nugget\\_aspenrebounds18](http://www.aspenhistorysociety.com/nugget_aspenrebounds18) (accessed April 5, 2011).

Less than ten years later the resort was so popular, and the desire for varied terrain so great that Pfeifer expanded and opened Buttermilk Mountain for beginner cruising runs. At the same time Whipple Van Ness Jones took a 30 year lease on 4,200 acres of nearby National Forest land and opened Aspen Highlands. It was at this point that Aspen really began to make a name for itself as a resort destination in the international ski community.

In 1958 D.R.C. Brown, an investor in the first chairlift and son of an Aspen miner, became president of the Aspen Ski Corporation. When asked if he invested because he saw the potential of recreational skiing after World War II, Brown answered simply. "I was just tired of walking up the hill to ski."<sup>12</sup> Throughout the 1960's and 1970's he transformed the resort into a premier skiing destination. Brown took over the position of president because he was the only board member who was a full time resident.

<sup>12</sup> Aspen Historical Society, 2008, “Body, Mind, and Spirit 1949-1960, DRC Brown – More Than A Company Man, Info Nugget,” [http://www.aspenhistorysociety.com/nugget\\_aspenrebounds22.html](http://www.aspenhistorysociety.com/nugget_aspenrebounds22.html) (accessed April 5, 2011).

A WWII Navy veteran, he knew the benefit of hard work and used his considerable experience and work ethic to advance the resort. He skied at the resort every day to understand the daily experience of his patrons. Brown served as president for 22 years. When he started there were 25 employees. By his retirement over 1,200 employees worked for the resort. With the development of Buttermilk Mountain from scratch, and a partnership with Aspen Highlands, the company more than quadrupled its volume, from 259,000 skier visits during winter 1964-65 to 1.23 million in 1978-79.<sup>13</sup> Brown did face troubles during his control of the company. Young activists led a town fight about the cost of lift tickets, the ski patrol implemented a strike over unionization, and Whip Jones, owner of Aspen Highlands, brought a lawsuit over the combination and then division of the Aspen mountain properties. However, the Ski Corporation continued to grow and obtained other assets and properties.

In 1977 the entire resort was sold to Twentieth Century –Fox after the success of “Star Wars.” In 1981 it was sold again to Denver oil man Marvin Davis, who then stripped it down and sold off the parts to private individuals and other companies. Davis “milked the company,” according to Brown. He sold off assets like Breckenridge and the interest in Blackcomb. He sold old hotels that the Ski Corporation had acquired for employee housing, which Brown had felt were vital to the resort.<sup>14</sup> Even after his retirement Brown worked diligently to develop the charm and character of the town. He steered the Ski Corporation away from investing in hotels, restaurants, and retail

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<sup>13</sup> Aspen Historical Society, 2008, “Body, Mind, and Spirit 1949-1960, DRC Brown – More Than A Company Man, Info Nugget,” [http://www.aspenhistorysociety.com/nugget\\_aspenrebounds22.html](http://www.aspenhistorysociety.com/nugget_aspenrebounds22.html) (accessed April 12, 2011).

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

ventures, removing the competition and thus encouraging eclectic independent establishments.



Figure 2.12 – D.R.C. Brown  
Aspen Historical Society, 2008, “Body, Mind and Spirit 1949-1960, DRC Brown – More Than a Company Man, Info Nugget,”  
[http://www.aspenhistorysociety.com/nugget\\_aspenrebounds22](http://www.aspenhistorysociety.com/nugget_aspenrebounds22) (accessed April 12, 2011).

Not only the resort, but the town too, faced great changes and development in the 1960’s and 70’s. The early 60’s brought modern architecture to the town, forever changing the aesthetic landscape. While this architecture used the contemporary building technique of the day, today the buildings are seen as some of Aspens most valued structural resources.



Figure 2.13 – Der Berghof – First Condominiums  
Aspen Historical Society, 2008, Modern Aspen 1961- Present, Der Berghof, Info Nugget,  
[http://www.aspenhistorysociety.com/nugget\\_modern2.html](http://www.aspenhistorysociety.com/nugget_modern2.html) (accessed April 12, 2011)



In 1967 Snowmass Ski Area opened and introduced the first snow making equipment to the mountain. The area's village and buildings were designed by Fritz Benedict. Development continued both on and off the mountain. Many buildings were designed as part of the modernism ideal of architecture. Apartments, condominiums, houses, and downtown shops all exhibited the novel forms of modern architecture. The Aspen Art Museum, housed in the old hydroelectric plant dating to 1885, is an early example of historic preservation. The use of these contemporary designs, attached with the success of the resort development and growing cultural and retail scene, attracted celebrities to the blossoming town. With such expansion and growth came gentrification of the town. "A 1977 feature story in *Sports Illustrated* described [the] former mining town as the 'Land of Peter Pan.' Overexploitation of skiing and tourism caused Aspen to lose much of its charm."<sup>15</sup> The development that was taking place was happening quickly, with little regard for future consequence.



Figure 2.14- Snowmass Snowmakers  
Aspen Historical Society, 2008, Modern Aspen 1961- Present, Snowmaking, Info Nugget, [http://www.aspenhistorysociety.com/nugget\\_modern7.html](http://www.aspenhistorysociety.com/nugget_modern7.html) (accessed April 12, 2011)

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<sup>15</sup> Richard N Ellis, Duane A. Smith, *Colorado: A History in Photographs*, (Niwot: the University of Colorado Press, 1991), 217.



Figure 2.15 – Fritz Benedict's Waterfall House  
 Aspen's 20<sup>th</sup> Century Architecture: Modernism, Town of Aspen,  
<http://www.aspenpitkin.com/Portals/0/docs/City/Comdev/HPC/modernismcontextpaperSMALLER.pdf> (accessed April 12, 2011)

The resort mountain, Aspen Highlands, was donated in 1993 to Harvard and then sold to Texas-based developer Gerald Hines. He then began work on a new base area and upgrades for the resort. Later that year all four mountains came under ownership of the Aspen Skiing Company, making it the first time that all four mountains were under single ownership. Immediately plans for improving the aging lifts and base villages were implemented securing Aspen's place as one of the top ski resorts in the world.

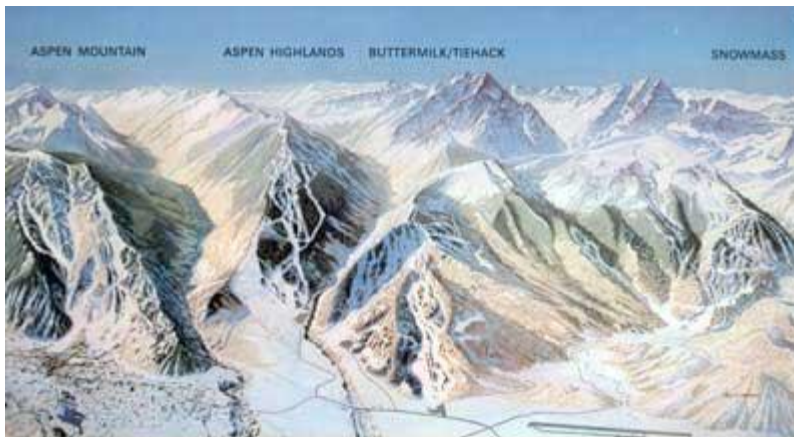


Figure 2.16- Four Ski Area Mountain  
 Aspen Historical Society, 2008, Modern Aspen 1961- Present, Four Ski Area Mountain,  
 Info Nugget, [http://www.aspenhistorysociety.com/nugget\\_modern15.html](http://www.aspenhistorysociety.com/nugget_modern15.html) (accessed April 12, 2011)

Over the last two decades Aspen has embraced its identity as a resort destination rivaling European resorts. The town has become a respite for the exceptionally wealthy and has continued to grow and expand, constantly updating to keep up with competing resorts. In spite of this new identity, the people of Aspen feel a need to develop responsibly. The town government has established many planning and preservation initiatives in order to control growth and maintain the special character of the city. The resort has also undertaken its new additions with conservation and the environment in mind. The new lift added at Snowmass in 1997 was built in an ecologically sound fashion to protect local animals and their habitat and is the first lift to be operated solely by clean, renewable wind power.<sup>16</sup> Like similar towns, Aspen faces the issues of how to handle the new growth and balance the beauty with the history of the small town. Some buildings have been lost and as the resorts founding generation is aging, some of the cultural heritage is being lost. It is up to the next generation of mountain lovers, both locals and visitors, to recognize the great resources Aspen has to offer and to preserve them for future generations to appreciate.

### Breckenridge

Located on the 10 Mile Range, Breckenridge, the seat of Summit County, boasts of having the largest historic district in the State of Colorado. The town was settled on the Blue River by the Ute Native Americans who inhabited the area. It was originally called Nah-oon-kara, meaning “where the river of blue rises.” Gold was discovered in the summer of 1859, and a mining camp was quickly erected.

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<sup>16</sup> Aspen Historical Society, 2008, Modern Aspen 1961- Present, <http://www.aspenhistorysociety.com/modernaspen2.html#> (accessed April 12, 2011)

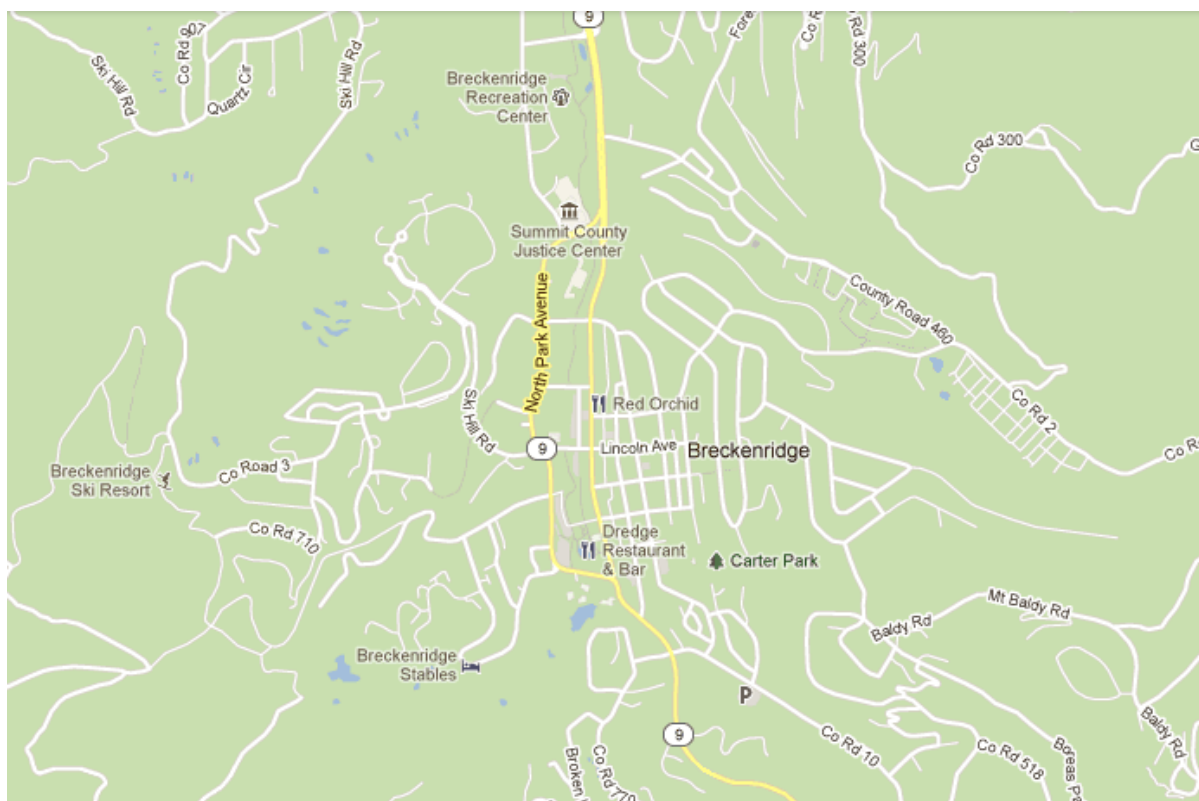


Figure 2.17 – Map of Breckenridge, CO  
Google Maps (accessed March 10, 2012).

The discovery of gold in the mountain ranges and riverbeds of the area encouraged prospectors to flock to the area. Fearing an attack from the nearby Native Americans, the miners took breaks from prospecting to build a log blockhouse for protection. The fort was named Mary B, after Mary Bigelow, the first woman in camp.<sup>17</sup> As the fort was never attacked, prospectors felt it was a safe place to erect a more permanent settlement. The town was platted and ten log houses were erected almost immediately. The miners decided to name the town after the United States Vice President to President James Buchanan, John C. Breckinridge. Naming newly developed towns after prominent political figures was the common fashion in the hopes

<sup>17</sup> Phyllis Flanders Dorset, *The New Eldorado: The Story of Colorado's Gold and Silver Rushes*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1970), 105-109.

that they might provide patronage and support for the town. The name turned out to be tainted after the Vice President sided with the Southern cause. Pro-Union miners hastily changed the spelling to Breckenridge.<sup>18</sup> The town continued to grow, prosper, and lay claim to a variety of characters.

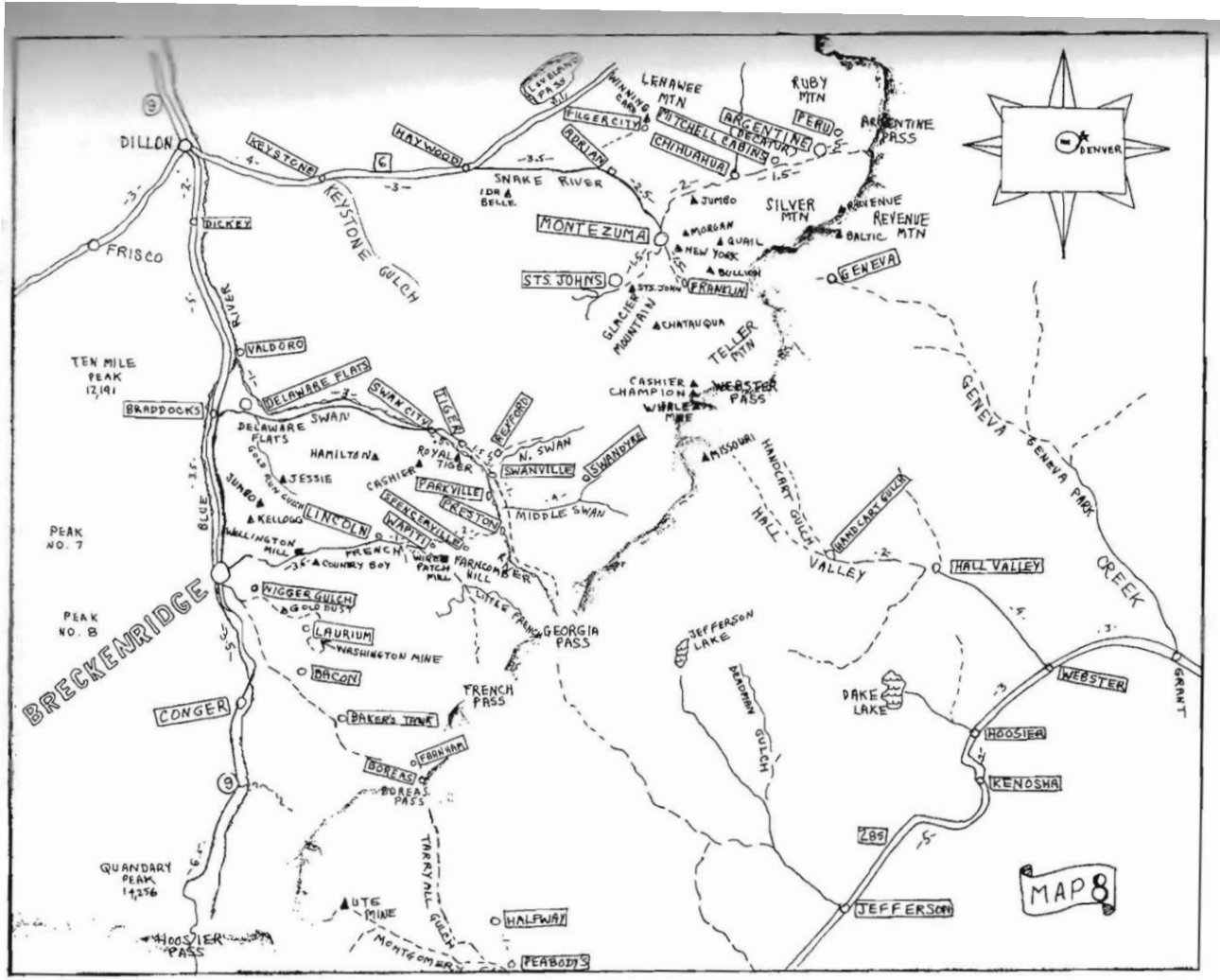


Figure 2.18 – Map of Breckenridge and Surrounding Mines  
Perry Eberhart, *Guide to Colorado Ghost Towns and Mining Camps*, (Athens, Swallow Press, 1969), 143.

<sup>18</sup> Phyllis Flanders Dorset, *The New Eldorado: The Story of Colorado's Gold and Silver Rushes*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1970), 105-109.

Like any boom town, Breckenridge faced a series of ups and downs. It had three major booms, and in the surrounding area many camps were constructed only to be quickly abandoned. When miners needed a break, had a great windfall with money to spend, or were down on their luck, they turned to the town saloon. The Gold Pan Saloon was established under a different name in 1859 on the site of a tent saloon and is still in business today as the oldest continuously operating bar west of the Mississippi River.<sup>19</sup>



Figure 2.19 – Gold Pan Saloon  
 The Gold Pan Saloon: History, Intuit Small Business,  
<http://www.thegoldpansaloon.com/biography.html> (accessed April 14, 2011).

In 1862 Breckenridge faced the challenge of maintaining its status in Summit County. Another nearby mining camp called Parkville set out to establish a mint and become the county seat. The people of Breckenridge led by Mrs. Silverthorne, the wife of a prominent judge, stole the county records and established Breckenridge as the

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<sup>19</sup> Maureen Nicholls, *Gold Pan Mining Company and Shops: Breckenridge, Colorado*, (Breckenridge, CO: Quandary Press, 1994).

undisputed county seat.<sup>20</sup> People like this made a lasting impact on the town. Unlike the miners who came to profit from the land, “they did not expect to strike it rich. They wanted to earn a decent living, and they were the ones who established homes.”<sup>21</sup> The first Methodist church was established in town by Father John L. Dyer, known as the “itinerant snowshoe preacher.”<sup>22</sup> He used 12 foot skis to travel from camp to camp, preaching and delivering mail. Because of his determination, as well as his introduction of novel skiing methods to the region, he earned a spot in the Colorado Skiing Hall of Fame.<sup>23</sup>

In 1869 “Captain” Sam Adams used Breckenridge to seek another form of wealth. He set out to collect money from the town to finance his journey down the Blue River looking for a route to California. Claiming the government would reimburse them, he convinced the town to finance the building of four boats, supplies, and a crew. He set off to great fanfare and even had a dog as mascot for the voyage. The miners proved to be poor sailors and the expedition ended in failure. Adams only came back to Breckenridge to tell of his troubles and promise to petition the government for financial support based on his crew’s bravery. He did follow through, but was denied the funding he sought.<sup>24</sup> It was not until the railroad came to the town in 1882 that Breckenridge received its next big advancement.

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<sup>20</sup> Phyllis Flanders Dorset, *The New Eldorado: The Story of Colorado’s Gold and Silver Rushes*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1970), 105-109.

<sup>21</sup> Sandra Dallas, *Gaslights and Gingerbread: Colorado’s Historic Homes*, (Athens, Swallow Press Books, 1984). 72-74.

<sup>22</sup> Breckenridge Ski Resort: Town, History or Breckenridge, <http://www.breckenridge.com/town/breckenridge-facts/breckenridge-history.aspx#1850to1900#Top> (accessed April 14, 2011).

<sup>23</sup> Colorado Ski & Snowboard Museum, Hall of Fame, Father John Lewis Dyer, [http://www.skimuseum.net/halloffame/hall\\_of\\_fame\\_details.php?HallOfFameID=4](http://www.skimuseum.net/halloffame/hall_of_fame_details.php?HallOfFameID=4) (accessed April 14, 2011)

<sup>24</sup> Phyllis Flanders Dorset, *The New Eldorado: The Story of Colorado’s Gold and Silver Rushes*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1970), 105-109.

Breckenridge had faced a decline in gold mining, and thus the population sank to 51 in the early 1870's. However, other mineral discoveries such as silver and lead brought a new boom to the town. The community organized and incorporated a town government in 1880. An ambitious grid was laid out for the 320-acre town site, providing a wide, main street for freight wagons to turn around, and a site that soon became the center of social and athletic activities.<sup>25</sup> Following the boom, the South Park and Pacific Railroad Company laid narrow gauge tracks across Boreas Pass leading to Breckenridge. This allowed minerals to be carted out and supplies to be carted in by rail.<sup>26</sup> It also led to the development of the rotary snow plow, a new technology for clearing snow from the rails.



Figure 2.20 – Rotary Snowplow  
Summit Historical Society: Denver, Leadville & Gunnison Railway, Rotary Snowplow Park, <http://www.summithistorical.org/RailwayRotary.html> (accessed April 14, 2011)

While gold was still being mined in Breckenridge, the task of mining was becoming more difficult. With the coming of the railroad, the shallow deposits had been

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<sup>25</sup> Gilliland, Mary Ellen, *Breckenridge: 150 Years of Golden History*, (Silverthorne, CO, Alpenrose Press, 2009).

<sup>26</sup> Breckenridge Ski Resort: Town, History or Breckenridge, <http://www.breckenridge.com/town/breckenridge-facts/breckenridge-history.aspx#1850to1900#Top> (accessed April 14, 2011).



heavily plundered. In 1898 Ben Stanley Revett devised a plan to efficiently get more gold out of the river bed. He dammed the river and the first dredge boat went to work. Buckets scooped up sediment and fed it through a filter sorting the gold and leaving mounds of gravel in its wake. Over the next 40 years the dredges operated along the river ways near Breckenridge pulling \$35 million dollars worth of gold from rivers that were once thought depleted.<sup>27</sup>



Figure 2.21 – Dredge Boat, North Breckenridge Mining Dredges, Park County Archives, [http://www.parkcoarchives.org/photos/photos4/photos\\_mining\\_dredges.html](http://www.parkcoarchives.org/photos/photos4/photos_mining_dredges.html) (accessed April 14, 2011)

The dredge mining came to an abrupt halt in 1942 when the all metal was melted down for the war effort. The lasting effects of the boats can still be seen at the base of Peak 9 near downtown Breckenridge, where a replica boat has been opened as a restaurant. The vertical shaft mines continued operations, as their bounty of high grade lead and zinc was used for constructing ships and other equipment during World War

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<sup>27</sup> Phyllis Flanders Dorset, *The New Eldorado: The Story of Colorado's Gold and Silver Rushes*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1970), 105-109.

II.<sup>28</sup> Tomboy Mine, one of the largest in the region, closed in 1945 due to flooding. Recent preservation efforts have led to its reopening as a historical venue and tourist site.<sup>29</sup>



Figure 2.22 – Country Boy Mine  
 Doug Tomlinson, Country Boy Mine Company: History,  
<http://www.countryboymine.com/history.html>, (accessed April 14, 2011).

The mining community of Breckenridge began to fear ghost town status when the population dipped to 393 people in the early 1960's.<sup>30</sup> However, a group of entrepreneurs had other plans for the town. In 1958, with the exuberance of the original gold miners, a group of geologists discovered something far more valuable than the gold they originally set out to find — the Ten Mile Range and the promise of a true four-season mountain community, Breckenridge. Hearing of this discovery, Ralph Rounds,

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<sup>28</sup>Gilliland, Mary Ellen, *Breckenridge: 150 Years of Golden History*, (Silverthorne, CO, Alpenrose Press, 2009).

<sup>29</sup> Doug Tomlinson, Country Boy Mine Company: History, <http://www.countryboymine.com/history.html>, (accessed April 14, 2011).

<sup>30</sup> Breckenridge Ski Resort: Town, History or Breckenridge, <http://www.breckenridge.com/town/breckenridge-facts/breckenridge-history.aspx#1850to1900#Top> (accessed April 14, 2011).

President of Rounds and Porter Lumber Company located in Wichita, Kansas, was so intrigued by their findings that he immediately set off to Breckenridge, staked his claim, and within a two-year period became the largest private landowner in Summit County, Colorado.<sup>31</sup>

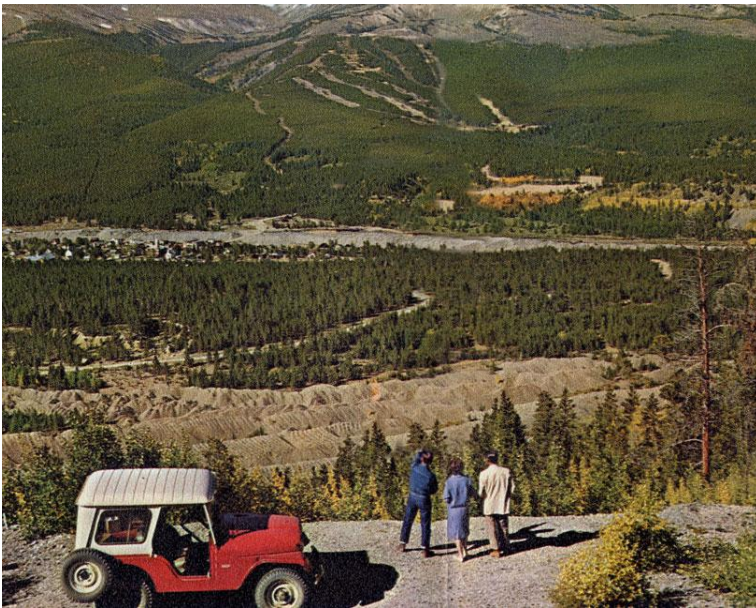


Figure 2.23 – Surveying the Land  
Breckenridge Lands, Breckenridge Discovered,  
<http://www.breckenridgelands.com/since-1958.php>, (accessed April 14, 2011).

In December of 1961 the “Breckenridge Ski Area officially opened with one Heron double chairlift and a short T-bar. Almost 17,000 skier visits were recorded that first season, despite the fact that Interstate 70 was still not complete to Summit County.”<sup>32</sup> Trygve Berge, a national ski champion from Norway, served as

<sup>31</sup> Breckenridge Lands, Breckenridge Discovered, <http://www.breckenridgelands.com/since-1958.php>, (accessed April 14, 2011).

<sup>32</sup> Breckenridge Ski Resort: Town, History or Breckenridge, <http://www.breckenridge.com/town/breckenridge-facts/breckenridge-history.aspx#1850to1900#Top> (accessed April 14, 2011).

Breckenridge's first ski instructor and directed the ski school for the resort's first eleven years.<sup>33</sup>



Figure 2.24 – Advertisement for Breckenridge featuring ski school director Trygve Berge Breckenridge Lands, Breckenridge Discovered, <http://www.breckenridgelands.com/since-1958.php>, (accessed April 14, 2011).

The Breckenridge Ski Resort continued to grow and develop. It opened Peak 9 with two chairlifts and twelve chairs in 1971. The drive from Denver, originally taking several hours, was reduced to an hour and a half after the Eisenhower Tunnel, on Interstate 70, was completed in 1973. As a result of the relatively easy access from the Denver metro area, the high country's recreational activities became increasingly popular.<sup>34</sup> Later “Breckenridge lamented its too-rapid growth, which brought shoddy

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Breckenridge Heritage, History Overview, <http://www.breckheritage.com/pages/history-overview>, (accessed April 15, 2011).

construction, greedy promoters, and out-of-state hucksters to its attractive ski slopes.<sup>35</sup> Not realizing the future impact, the town continued to develop too quickly. Ten years later, Peak 9 had the world's first high speed quad chairlift installed, keeping the resort competitive with neighboring resorts. Unlike other national ski resorts, Breckenridge recognized the potential profits that could be made from snowboarders, and became the first Colorado resort to allow snowboarding in 1984. A year later the resort opened a third interconnected mountain, Peak 10, and held the first Snowboarding World Cup. In 1993 Peak 7 opened to hikers to connect four mountains in one continuous resort.



Figure 2.25 – Four Peaks of Breckenridge  
Breckenridge Mountain Resort Maps, <http://www.breckenridge.com/mountain/resort-maps.aspx>, (accessed April 15, 2011).

Following the example of other Colorado resorts, Breckenridge Ski Resort merged with Keystone Resort, Vail and Beaver Creek to form Vail Resorts, the largest mountain resort company in North America at the time. Over the next two years \$32 million dollars was put into the revitalization of the resort leading to it being the most popular ski resort in the 1999 season with 1,392,242 visitors.<sup>36</sup> The resort has continued

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<sup>35</sup> Richard N Ellis, Duane A. Smith, *Colorado: A History in Photographs*, (Niwot: the University of Colorado Press, 1991), 217.

<sup>36</sup> Breckenridge Ski Resort: Town, History or Breckenridge, <http://www.breckenridge.com/town/breckenridge-facts/breckenridge-history.aspx#1850to1900#Top> (accessed April 15, 2011).

to grow and develop, consistently ranking at the top of the most visited resorts in North America. They currently hold claim to the highest chairlift in North America and have recently opened the Breck Connect gondola, linking all of the mountain bases.

### Telluride

“To-Hell-You-Ride!” Many claim that these were the last words shouted to loved ones on their way to the box canyon town of Telluride, Colorado in pursuit of fortune. Others claim that Telluride gets its name from tellurium, a mineral found in abundance throughout the mountains.<sup>37</sup> Either way, the words provoke strong images of early Telluride. Originally named Columbia, the town was forced to change its name in 1887 due to post office confusion with Columbia, California.<sup>38</sup> Since that day, Telluride has been making a name for itself.

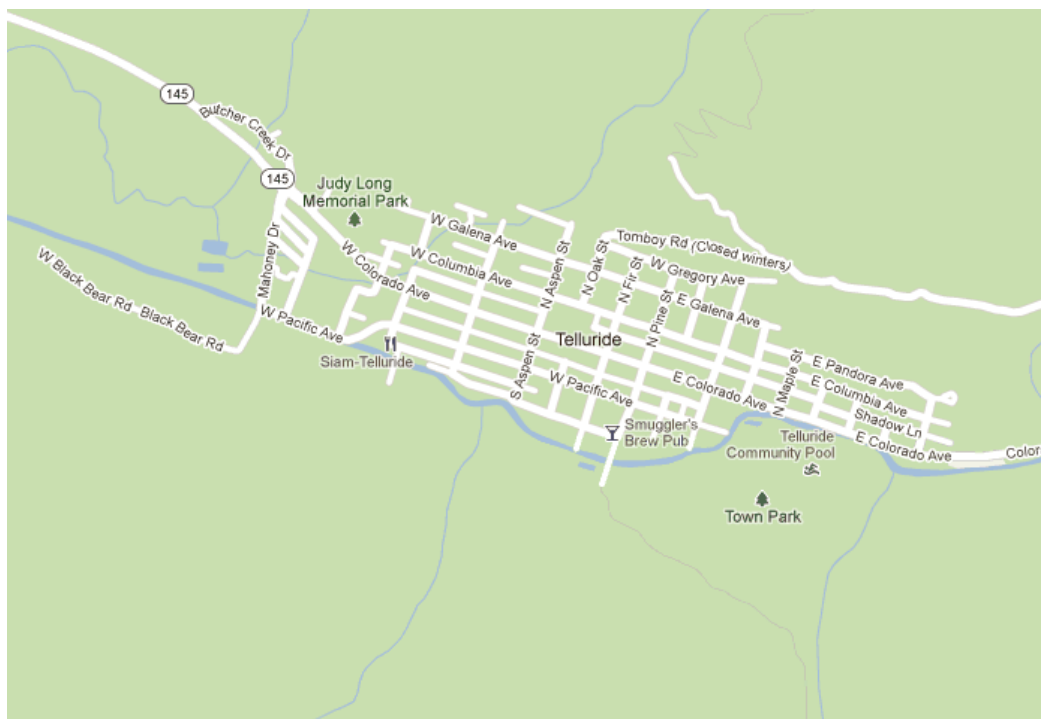


Figure 2.26 – Map of Telluride, CO  
Google Maps (accessed March 10, 2012).

<sup>37</sup> Telluride Ski Resort, “About Telluride, History of Telluride and the Ski Resort,” RTP, <http://tellurideski resort.com/TellSki/info/about-telluride.aspx> (accessed March, 5 2011).

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

Located in the Southwest corner of Colorado in San Miguel County, Telluride is situated in a box canyon. The U-shaped canyon was carved by glacial activity creating high mountain peaks and a flat valley floor.<sup>39</sup> Today Telluride is one of the few areas in Colorado still home to glacial movement. Four small ice and snow bodies can be found in the San Miguel Mountains and have changed little since early their documentation.<sup>40</sup>

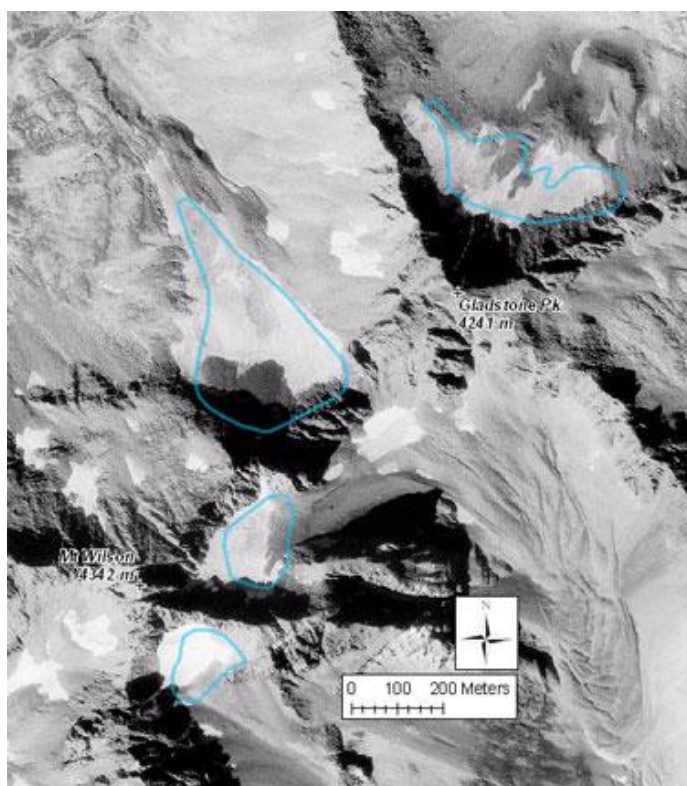


Figure 2.27 – Ice Fields in the San Miguel Mountains  
 Matt Hoffman, “Glaciers of the American West: Glaciers of Colorado, San Miguel Mountains,” Portland State University, 2009

The area was first inhabited by the Nuchu, meaning “the people.” These Native American people were a nomadic tribe of Utes who hunted in the Telluride area. They

<sup>39</sup> Kathy Rohrer, *The Early Years* (The Telluride Historical Museum, 2010).

<sup>40</sup> Matt Hoffman, “Glaciers of the American West: Glaciers of Colorado, San Miguel Mountains,” Portland State University, 2009, Academic and Research Computing, [http://glaciers.research.pdx.edu/Glaciers-COLORADO#San\\_Miguel\\_Mountains](http://glaciers.research.pdx.edu/Glaciers-COLORADO#San_Miguel_Mountains) (accessed April 5, 2011).

were the first indigenous people to use horses, introduced by the Spanish as they traveled through the area on the way to California in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>41</sup> In 1776 the Spanish Priest Francis Francisco Atanasio Dominguez passed the Telluride location looking for a route from Santa Fe to the Spanish Missions on the California coast.<sup>42</sup> With him, de Escalante made the first map of the area and named many of the sites along the way. This became know as the Dominguez-Escalante expedition and Don Bernardo de Meiray Pachecoa became the cartographer of this expedition producing one of the first maps of the area.<sup>43</sup>

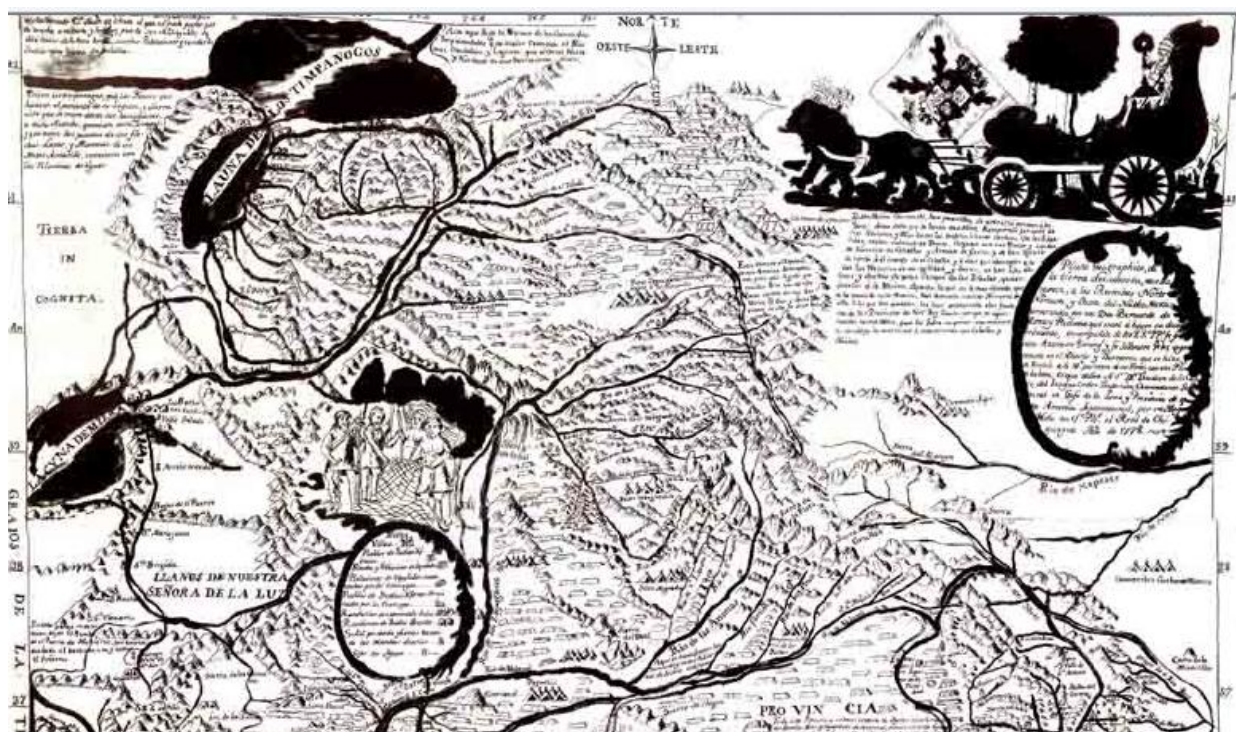


Figure 2.28 – 1778 Don Bernardo de Meiray Pachecoa Map of Dominguez-Escalante Expedition, copyright – Fort Lewis College Center of Southwest Studies, Southwest Maps Inventory, C-001.

<sup>41</sup> Kathy Rohrer, *The Early Years* (The Telluride Historical Museum, 2010).

<sup>42</sup> Southwest Maps Inventory, *Dominguez-Escalante Expedition map*, Don Bernardo de Meiray Pachecoa, Center for Southwest Studies, Fort Lewis College.

<http://swcenter.fortlewis.edu/images/C001/C001200303006.htm>, (accessed March 5, 2011).

<sup>43</sup> Kathy Rohrer, *The Early Years* (The Telluride Historical Museum, 2010).



Until the United States government sent surveyors to the region in the 1830's through 1840's, the only white settlers to make their home in the mountains were trappers, collecting beaver pelts to make top hats.<sup>44</sup> When mineral deposits were discovered in the San Juan Mountains, the Bureau of Indian Affairs misled the Nuchu people into giving up their land by treaty in 1873. The Nuchu were moved to three designated reservations.<sup>45</sup> This led to the beginnings of one of Colorado's most profitable and long lasting mining operations.

In the beginning of the mining days, Telluride was just another mining town, but due to the incredible wealth of minerals as well as the growing infrastructure of the town, Telluride became the prominent settlement in the area. In 1878 the town of Columbia was officially located, platted, and incorporated by a unanimous decision of all 28 voters.<sup>46</sup> When the town of Columbia (Telluride) was platted, the town board sold lots for \$3.50 to induce people to move to town and build homes.<sup>47</sup> Due to its isolation and the extreme elevation of the mines, moving the mined ore was challenging and expensive. It was first done with mule trains and later a toll road was carved into the mountain allowing for wagon trains, but the journey was still treacherous. It was not until 1890 when Otto Mears, a German immigrant, brought his narrow gauge railroad to Telluride, that the town saw an expansive boom.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> *Uncompahgre Telephone Directory*, (Grand Junction, CO, 2010), Area Histories 4.

<sup>45</sup> Kathy Rohrer, *The Early Years* (The Telluride Historical Museum, 2010).

<sup>46</sup> Kathy Rohrer, *The Mining Years: A Time Line* (The Telluride Historical Museum, 2010).

<sup>47</sup> C. Eric Stoehr, *Bonanza Victorian: Architecture and Society in Colorado Mining Towns* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1975), 15.

<sup>48</sup> Perry Eberhart, *Guide to Colorado Ghost Towns and Mining Camps*, (Athens, Swallow Press, 1969), 320-324.



Figure 2.29 – Mule Trains, Telluride  
Elizabeth Barbour, *Images of America: Telluride*, (Chicago, Arcadia Publishing, 2006),  
34.

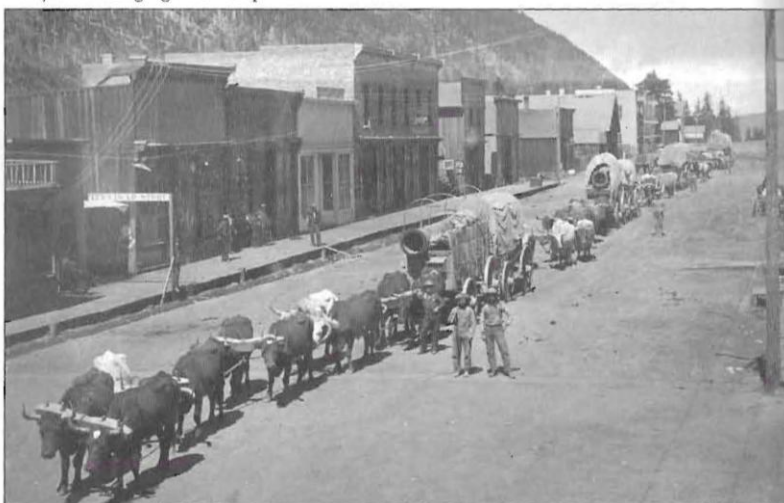


Figure 2.30 – Mule Trains, Telluride  
Elizabeth Barbour, *Images of America: Telluride*, (Chicago, Arcadia Publishing, 2006),  
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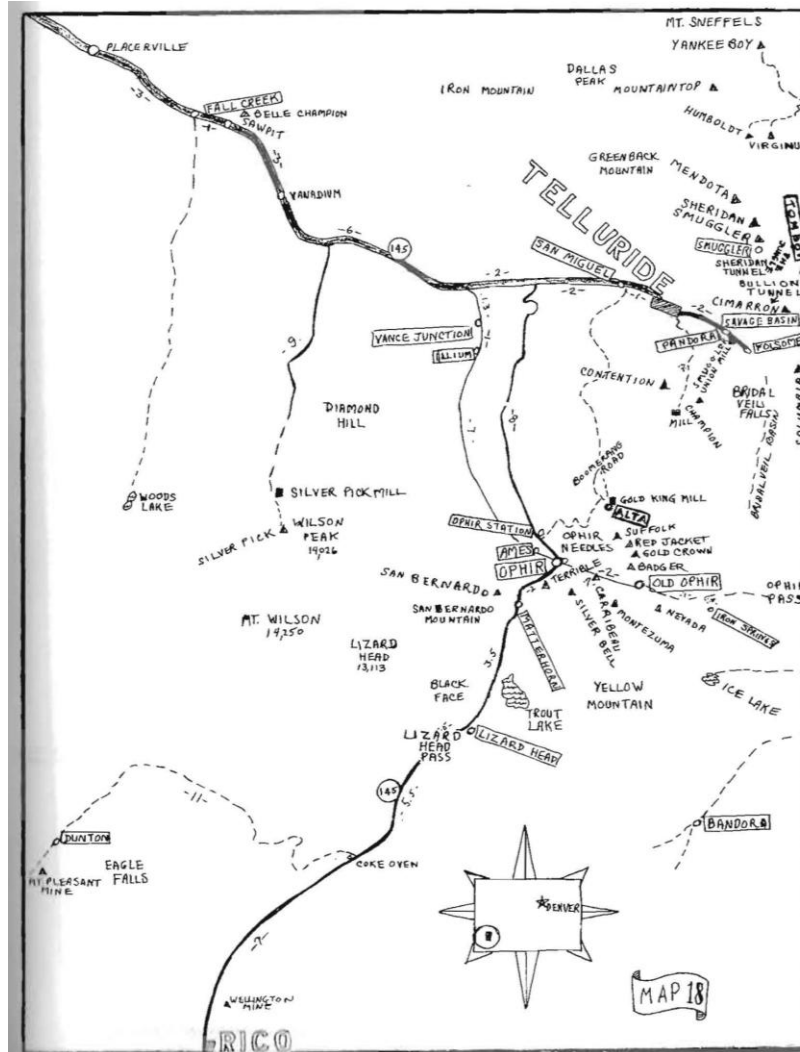


Figure 2.31 – Map of Telluride and Surrounding Mines  
 Perry Eberhart, *Guide to Colorado Ghost Towns and Mining Camps*, (Athens, Swallow Press, 1969), 319.

Telluride was initially the site of extensive silver mining, but after the repeal of the Sherman Silver Act in 1893, the silver market crashed leaving Telluride in a slump like the majority of Colorado's silver mines. However, the bust did not last for long because gold was discovered in the area. The discovery helped establish the large well known mines, such as, Smuggler, Tom Boy, and the Sheridan. Nearly 5,000 people inhabited Telluride at the height of the gold rush, and more millionaires per capita lived

in Telluride than in New York City at the turn of the century.<sup>49</sup> This great wealth led to further development of the town, the formation of a miners union and, the attraction of infamous outlaws, including Butch Cassidy.

Telluride faced many problems at the turn of the century. Due to the town's extreme wealth, many of the mining claims were held by international investors. This brought an influx of foreign residents to the town, each bringing their own cultural traditions and making Telluride a unique melting pot of cultures. Some of the mines had been sold to Chinese mining companies, bringing a significant number of immigrant workers. These men were willing to work at lower wages and incited the wrath of the union miners. Like other Colorado mining towns, Telluride faced brutal labor wars. Violence was common during the labor strikes, as the miners of the Western Federation of Miners, Union Local 63, were trying to gain \$3 a day and 8 hour shifts. The strike in 1903 was so bad that the Colorado National Guard was encamped in the town until the unions were broken.



Figure 2.32 – Colorado National Guard on strike duty, 1903-1904  
Richard N Ellis, Duane A. Smith, *Colorado: A History in Photographs*, (Niwot: the University of Colorado Press, 1991), 69.

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<sup>49</sup> Telluride Ski Resort, “About Telluride, History of Telluride and the Ski Resort,” RTP, <http://tellurideski resort.com/TellSki/info/about-telluride.aspx> (accessed March, 5 2011).

In addition to the violence, the physical conditions of the town also brought many challenges, and hardships. The winter weather was harsh, and many snow slides and accidents caused numerous deaths. To escape the brutal reality of life, the men of the mining camp turned to the town for entertainment. Once they had been paid their wages, the miners came down the mountain and visited saloons and gambling halls such as the Pick and Gad, the Silver Bell, and The Gold Belt. Another popular form of entertainment was prostitution. Located on Pacific Avenue, a block from Main Street was the red light district. Called sporting house row, or more popularly popcorn alley, a row of twenty-six cribs housed 175 sporting girls and their rather notorious madams. In the early days prostitution was legal, and the town collected taxes from the profits to improve infrastructure. Despite its rough reputation “Telluride [was] as quiet, peaceful, orderly, self-contained a community as can be found in the U.S. It’s probably the only mining camp in the Rocky Mountain region that has never had a lynching.”<sup>50</sup>

For the respectable family folk of Telluride, entertainment could be found in the form of social halls. These clubs provided a place for the married population to gather and read, play piano, and cards.<sup>51</sup> Many were segregated by gender and provided a diversion during the snowy winter months. Affiliation with a club provided a social outlet as well as a political forum.<sup>52</sup> Evidence of club affiliation can be seen in the city cemetery, where many grave markers are ornamented with club insignias. Many of the clubs, including the Masons and the Elks, are still active in Telluride today.

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<sup>50</sup> The Telluride Journal, 1899.

<sup>51</sup> Elizabeth Barbour, *Images of America: Telluride*, (Chicago, Arcadia Publishing, 2006), 33.

<sup>52</sup> Town of Telluride, Local History Series, Social Lodges, 1983.



Figure 2.33 – Roulette Pays, Telluride  
 Elizabeth Barbour, *Images of America: Telluride*, (Chicago, Arcadia Publishing, 2006), 87.



Figure 2.34 – Telluride Baseball Team, Telluride  
 Elizabeth Barbour, *Images of America: Telluride*, (Chicago, Arcadia Publishing, 2006), 81.

Changes throughout the mining years affected the growing town. In spite of the difficulties, Telluride was fortunate to be the site of many novel and brilliant technological advances. With the help of Westinghouse, L.L. Nunn, a local lawyer and mine operator, introduced A.C. electric power, based on Nikola Tesla's designs, to the town through 8 miles of transmission lines. This was the first long transmission line of its kind in the world.<sup>53</sup> The power plant located just miles away in Ames, Colorado, helped to light the mines, the town, and to move ore carts efficiently by overhead cables, facilitating another mining boom in Telluride. In 1891, Telluride was the first city in the world to be electrically lit by this method. The power plant continued to advance, using

<sup>53</sup> Wilson Rockwell, *Uncompahgre Country*, (Denver: Sage Books, 1956), 246 -302.

the water from Bridal Veil Falls, a large waterfall at the end of the canyon, to power it hydroelectrically, ending the need for expensive wood and coal to be hauled up the mountains. This led to future development of mining transport systems, including trams and gondolas.

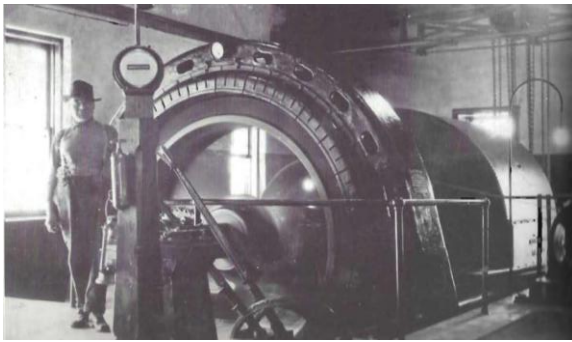


Figure 2.35 – Ames Power Plant, Telluride  
Elizabeth Barbour, *Images of America: Telluride*, (Chicago, Arcadia Publishing, 2006), 94.

The addition of electric lights helped to further develop the town. Telluride's street grid was well planned, as it was originally laid out in a stratified manner separating the refined residential development from the gaming areas and immigrant settlements. For every miner, there were five support businesses. The railroad enabled building materials to reach Telluride easily, so in the early 1900's citizens were receiving goods by mail order catalog. Ninety percent of Telluride's historic structures were built between 1890 and 1910.<sup>54</sup> The residential properties reflected the people's diverse background and economic means as well as the architectural styles of the day. Most houses were simple rectangular or L-shaped plans with horizontal wooden siding, porches, and wood shingled, steeply pitched, roofs and double hung windows. More affluent homes were made of brick and featured bay windows. Almost all homes had decorative features reflecting the style popular during the Victorian era of their

<sup>54</sup> Kathy Rohrer, *Telluride: Architecture* (The Telluride Historical Museum, 2010).

construction. The palate, contrary to expectation, was subdued with white lead paint predominating. Colored paints were costly and reserved for highlighting trim and accents.

Telluride has always been home to interesting personalities, and over the years many famous people have made their mark on its history. In 1902 William Jennings Bryan came to town and spoke in front of the Sheridan hotel referencing his “Cross of Gold” speech. Due to the extreme wealth of the town, Telluride experienced several financial debacles. Butch Cassidy selected Telluride as the site of his first robbery and absconded with \$24,580, never to be recovered.<sup>55</sup> It was one of the first robberies to use relay horses for the get way. The sheriff at the time was also somewhat of an outlaw. Jim Clarke had ridden with Quantrell’s raiders during the Civil War, and following the war he robbed banks with Jesse James before settling in Telluride to try his luck at mining. After witnessing shoot outs and lawlessness, he walked over to the Mayor’s office and asked to be appointed deputy marshal.<sup>56</sup> In 1929 Telluride found a hero in the “honest” swindler Charles Waggoner. Leading up to the depression Waggoner, the bank president, knew the financial market was about to collapse and he wanted to protect the hard working miners’ money. From Denver, he sent fraudulent telegrams to five banks in New York requesting they deposit \$100,000 in the Denver branch. He used this stolen money to pay the debt that the Telluride bank owed, leaving the money from the miners’ deposits intact. After an international search, he was apprehended and admitted to the fraud, stating “I would rather see the New York banks lose money than the people of Telluride, most of whom had worked all their lives for the savings which were deposited

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<sup>55</sup> Telluride Ski Resort, “About Telluride, History of Telluride and the Ski Resort,” RTP, <http://tellurideski resort.com/TellSki/info/about-telluride.aspx> (accessed March, 5 2011).

<sup>56</sup> Wilson Rockwell, *Uncompahgre Country*, (Denver: Sage Books, 1956), 246 -302.



in my bank.” He went to prison in Georgia and after release on parole, found work with a former resident of Telluride, whom he had once helped financially.<sup>57</sup>

After the depression, activity in Telluride began to slow. The major bust came in 1953 when a majority of the nearby mines closed. There was a shift and consolidation of mine ownership. The Idarado mine continued to process a limited amount of ore, in order to avoid environmental remediation. The town’s population dwindled to the hundreds. In an attempt to save the town, some of the locals turned to their favorite pastime, skiing. Skiing was not a new concept in the area. The Swedish and Finnish immigrants, who had come to the area to work in the mines, introduced the sport as a method of transportation. Many of the local miners and their children picked up skiing as a hobby, and rudimentary tow ropes had been erected on the mountain as early as 1937. Local parents operated the first ski club until the land was sold in 1969, and the cost to insure it was prohibitive, so the tow rope was dismantled.

In 1968 a California business man named Joseph Zoline purchased a mountain side sheep farm, sight unseen, with the intention of forming a new ski resort. A group of Texans had attempted to start a resort ten years earlier and had failed. This new proposal led to a division among the town. Some of the local miners, including Senior Mahoney, were strong proponents of the resort, thinking it would bring in money and help revive the town. Others were set in their ways and very protective of the small town and way of life that had been established. They feared interlopers and resisted change. Their fears were well founded.

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<sup>57</sup> Wilson Rockwell, *Uncompahgre Country*, (Denver: Sage Books, 1956), 246 -302.



Figure 2.36 – Joe Zoline at Ribbon Cutting for Resort Opening, 1972, Telluride Elizabeth Barbour, *Images of America: Telluride*, (Chicago, Arcadia Publishing, 2006), 125.

Throughout the 1970's Telluride faced a social upheaval that has a lasting effect today. In 1972 Joe Zoline's resort opened with five chair lifts and a day lodge. These towns in the mountains became gathering places for people who wanted to drop out of an "insufferable" reality.<sup>58</sup> In the early 1970's the town was listed on the Ghost Town Society of Denver's list and was described as empty and silent until a new younger generation arrived. As the "hippies" moved into town, a social divide was forming, miners versus skiers, hippies versus trust-funders, and Everett Morrow, the stern chief of police, versus the citizens of Telluride. A town that consisted of mostly conservative miners was quickly becoming over run with hippies who thought Telluride provided an escape from the more conventional world they had known. Because many of the houses

<sup>58</sup>Levek, Amy & Rolley, Dean, *The YX Factor: Telluride Colorado in the 1970's*, DVD, Tom Hayden, (Telluride, CO: Tell Me a Story Media Production, Wilkinson Public Library, 2004).

in town had thin walls, little running water, and no heat, most of the newcomers “hung out” in the bars, which never seemed to close. Because there were few women in town, the men took out advertisements inviting women to move to Telluride. Rapidly the town became host to more dogs than people, a large Jewish community, a variety of drugs, a new radio station, and numerous music and film festivals.

Heady with the concepts of social change, a young group of citizens, calling themselves “the slate”, made a political movement to take over the city council. The slate was successful and took control of 5 of the 7 seats. Their first order of business was to fire Everett Morrow, whom they thought ran the town like a wild west sheriff. He never returned to Telluride. The late 1970’s brought many changes and the reality of the hippie lifestyle began to impact the town. Women had indeed come to Telluride and by the late 70’s owned 75% of businesses in town. There was an increase in suicides, mostly drug related. When harder drugs, like cocaine, were introduced by real estate investors, the town became involved in a drug war which changed the dynamic of the town. On May 20, 1971 The New York Times reported on drug use in Colorado. This article focused national attention to the lawless frontier style of living. A new sheriff was elected who waged a war on drugs in an effort to clean up Telluride.<sup>59</sup>

The ski resort continued to slowly grow. The construction of the Telluride airport furthered development and opened the area to the celebrity crowd. In 1978 Colorado natives Ron Allred and Jim Wells purchased the ski area from Zoline and the Simonius-Vischer Corporation. They continued to develop the resort and started Mountain Village, a town-like development on the mountain. Today there is division between the people of

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<sup>59</sup> Levek, Amy & Rolley, Dean, *The YX Factor: Telluride Colorado in the 1970’s*, DVD, Tom Hayden, (Telluride, CO: Tell Me a Story Media Production, Wilkinson Public Library, 2004).

Mountain Village and the Town of Telluride. The gap between the “haves and have not’s” is exceptionally vast. In 2001 the resort was sold to a Japanese resort developer, and in 2004 it was sold again to Chuck and Chad Horning, a father-son team. They are the majority owners of TelSki today. They claim their goal is to further the development of the resort with economic, cultural, and environmental sustainability at the forefront.<sup>60</sup>



Figure 2.37 – Wide Load, Early Historic Preservation, 1960’s, Telluride Elizabeth Barbour, *Images of America: Telluride*, (Chicago, Arcadia Publishing, 2006), 126.

Even with the current substantial resort growth and wealth, the movements made during the 1970’s laid a foundation for much of the work done in town today. Many non-profits operating in the town today, stem from the tradition of engagement and involvement. There is also strong land ethic in place, which aids in limiting the development of Telluride. The town of Telluride has a population of about 2,200 people. Telluride is home to 100 non-profit organizations, a volunteer radio station with over 200 DJs, a library with 25,000 patrons a year, over 400 acres of public parks, and a river that snakes through town. The town government, with the help of local citizens, has enacted a conservation easement on the valley floor, stringent air quality regulations, and a home

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<sup>60</sup> Telluride Ski Resort, “About Telluride, History of Telluride and the Ski Resort,” RTP, <http://tellurideski resort.com/TellSki/info/about-telluride.aspx> (accessed March, 5 2011).

rule charter, a document vesting the citizens with every political power for self government permitted under the constitution of Colorado, to protect democracy and participation. The town even sports a free box which takes cast offs and provides items for the taking for those in need. Telluride hosts numerous concerts, festivals, lectures and film festivals and currently supports over a million visitors each year, 400,000 of which are skiers.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Levek, Amy & Rolley, Dean, *The YX Factor: Telluride Colorado in the 1970's*, DVD, Tom Hayden, (Telluride, CO: Tell Me a Story Media Production, Wilkinson Public Library, 2004).

## CHAPTER 3

### **Assessment of Preservation Practices**

While preservation efforts at the State and Federal level both impact and aid historic preservation in these small Colorado mining towns, it is the local efforts that differentiate these towns. Local initiatives provide a unique departure point from conventional methods, allowing one to study the creative and site specific methods in use. These practices form the basis of the preservation movements in the area and provide an example from which to base future preservation plans. In order to assess each plan, one must have an understanding of the unique character and history of the historic areas. With this understanding of the considerable history, a period of significance can be assigned for the historic resources and preservation plans can be designed and enacted.

In order to assess the preservation practices of each case study, the local preservation organizations will first be addressed. This will include their mission, organizational structure, and the historic resources covered by their charter or through their individual goals and scope. Following will be an examination of the interpretation of local historic resources. Subsequently the local legislation will be discussed as it pertains to the historic preservation of the cities. Related issues, such as land conservation, green initiatives and tourism will be examined as necessary, and as they pertain to the overall preservation practices of each town. Finally, the role of the ski resort will be discussed, as pertaining to their initiatives in preservation, conservation and

their involvement in the community. Examining the towns' preservation practices at this structural level should provide the reader with a clear understanding of the practices in place and their distinctive implications for each specific site. Finally, the chapter will conclude a brief examination of state and federal preservation initiatives that impact historic preservation in the individual towns.

### Aspen

The city of Aspen provides an interesting case study, as the town is currently embroiled in a debate over the introduction of new policy to allow 30 year old buildings protection under their preservation plan. This plan, Aspen Modern, has sparked an outcry from citizens and is bringing national attention to the area. The information that follows is based on current conditions as this thesis was written.

Even though Aspen was slow to recognize the value of preserving their historic resources, there are many historic properties that contribute to the character and historic integrity of the town. The City of Aspen first took steps to preserve historic properties when the Main Street Historic District and the Commercial Core Historic District were established in the early 1970's. In addition, a handful of historic structures were designated as landmarks through the 1970's, but a more comprehensive approach was taken in the 1980's and 1990's when more than 200 historic properties were landmarked.<sup>62</sup> Examples of these resources range from Victorian commercial and residential structures, mid-century modern architecture, ski chalets, cemeteries, mines and modest worker housing. Many of these historic resources are juxtaposed with new construction and development, therefore the City of Aspen has enacted design guidelines

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<sup>62</sup> State of Aspen Report, Historic Preservation, (Aspen: Community Vision for the Aspen Area, 2008).

to ensure a balance of individual property owner rights and preservation of historic sites.

The following images provide an example of the types of resources that Aspen is working to preserve.



Figure 3.1 –Aspen Elks Building  
State of the Aspen Area, Historic Preservation 2008, Aspen, CO



Figure 3.2 –Ellie Brickham Building  
State of the Aspen Area, Historic Preservation 2008, Aspen, CO





Figure 3.3 –Skiers Chalet  
State of the Aspen Area, Historic Preservation 2008, Aspen, CO



Figure 3.4 –Conner Cabins, Miner Housing  
State of the Aspen Area, Historic Preservation 2008, Aspen, CO



Figure 3.5 –New Construction and Historic Structures  
State of the Aspen Area, Historic Preservation 2008, Aspen, CO

### City of Aspen, Historically Designated Properties

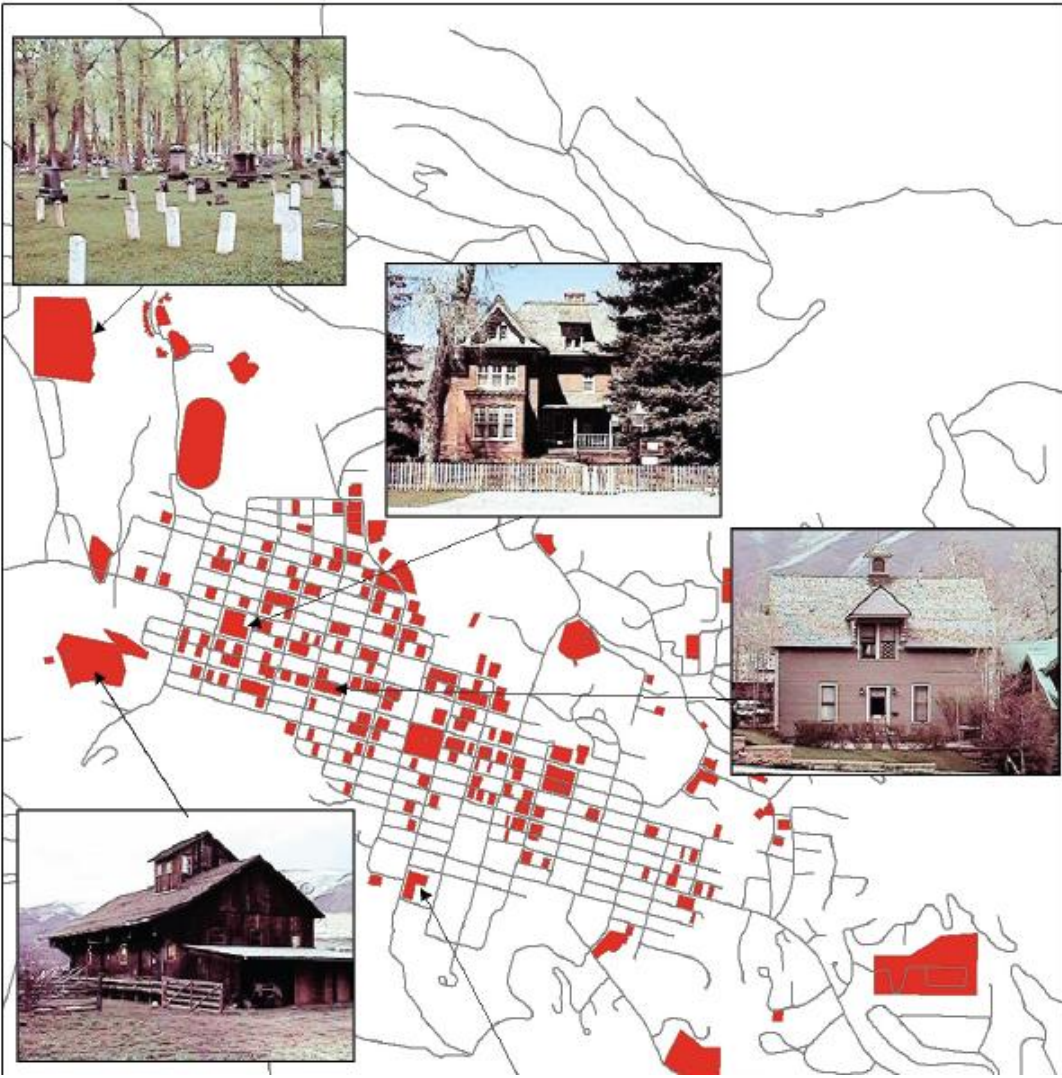


Figure 3.6 –Aspen Historically Designated Properties Map - 2008  
State of the Aspen Area, Historic Preservation 2008, Aspen, CO

While there are many organizations that are concerned with historic preservation in Aspen, there are three that make it part of their primary organizational focus rather than a peripheral consideration. The first is the city of Aspen. The Aspen Community Development Department is a branch of the local government and acts as the preservation commission for the town. The office of Community Development includes the Planning

and Zoning and Building Departments. Planning and Zoning handles current planning, long range planning, special projects, and Land Use Code enforcement. The Building Department reviews construction plans and performs construction inspections to assure compliance with building code and other official City of Aspen Ordinances.<sup>63</sup> This includes the Historic Preservation Program.

The city of Aspen has designated a separate office to handle the historic preservation issues of Aspen. The thirty-six year old Historic Preservation Program office consists of two full time staff members, an historic preservation officer and a senior planner. This office is responsible for maintaining the Historic Inventory (the city's listing of historic properties and resources) and the City of Aspen's Historic Preservation Design Guidelines, based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. Additionally they are the contact for contractors, builders, and homeowners. The mission statement and values of this organization fall under the broader statements of the City and County government and include goals on housing, environment, and community, among others. These goals do not make specific reference to historic preservation but rather encompass a broad view of these issues.

In addition to the Historic Preservation Program, there is a Historic Preservation Commission. "The Historic Preservation Commission consists of a seven member volunteer commission of city residents that are appointed by City Council, each to a four year term. The Commission is comprised of both professional and lay members whom have an interest or training in fields closely related to historic preservation. The Commission makes recommendations to City Council on the historic designation of

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<sup>63</sup> The City of Aspen and Pitkin County, 2002-2008, Community Development, <http://www.aspenpitkin.com/Departments/Community-Development/> (accessed August 20, 2011).

districts and individual properties, as well as reviews and approves certain applications associated with a designated property.”<sup>64</sup> Under the direction and with the advice of the historic preservation office, the commission meets twice a month to discuss and vote on making recommendations to the City Council. Any development involving properties designated on the Aspen Inventory of Historic Landmark Sites and Structures, as an individual building or located in a historic district, unless determined exempt (such as interior remodeling, choice of paint color, and some minor maintenance work) requires the approval of a Development Order and either a Certificate of No Negative Effect or a Certificate of Appropriateness before a building permit or any other work authorization will be issued by the City.<sup>65</sup>

The city of Aspen’s Historic Preservation Program covers the majority of preservation issues in Aspen. This program, along with the Commission, holds the preservation power in the city of Aspen. The ordinances and guidelines for historic preservation in Aspen are part of the design guidelines used to issue certificates of appropriateness and building permits. The guidelines cover the streetscape, building materials, windows, doors, porches, roofs, secondary structures, foundations, and additions. They also address design of landmarked lots, the core commercial district, the historic main street district, and general guidelines. There are two major periods of significance as can be viewed in the historic inventory.

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<sup>64</sup> The City of Aspen and Pitkin County, 2002-2008, Community Development, <http://www.aspenpitkin.com/Departments/Clerk/Boards-and-Commissions/Historic-Preservation/> (accessed August 20, 2011).

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

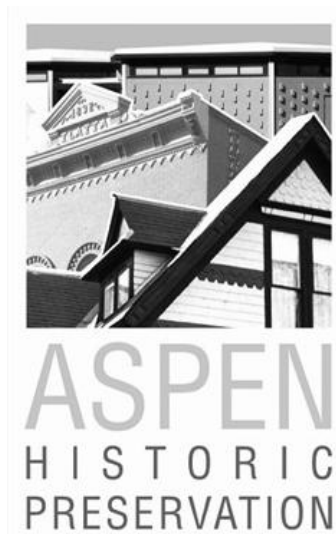


Figure 3.7 – Aspen Historic Preservation Poster, 2011  
 The City of Aspen and Pitkin County, 2002-2008, Community Development,  
<http://www.aspenpitkin.com/Departments/Clerk/Boards-and-Commissions/Historic-Preservation/> (accessed August 20, 2011).

The first period is represented by Victorian era structures. These are the sites associated with early settlement and mining. The second significant period is post World War II development, which is significant due to its role in the development of the ski area as well as its distinct modern style of architecture. The Aspen Modern program, conducted by the Preservation Task Force, is a relatively new initiative that is gaining popularity. However, the Historic Preservation Task Force is “undergoing potentially significant changes,” claiming that “decades of economic boom and busts have brought significant changes and periods of redevelopment to Aspen. This opportunity for constant revitalization of our town must be directed in ways that continually enrich Aspen rather than challenge its heritage.”<sup>66</sup> Even though the changes to the Task Force are unknown, the Historic Preservation Office (through its city designated powers) acts as the principal historic preservation authority in Aspen.

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<sup>66</sup> Aspen Community Vision, 2011, Historic Preservation, [http://www.aspencommunityvision.com/page\\_11](http://www.aspencommunityvision.com/page_11) (accessed August 20, 2011).

The Aspen Historical Society is another organization that lends support to the preservation efforts of Aspen, both by aiding the city's Historic Preservation Program and by providing information about the history of Aspen. The Aspen Historical Society enriches the community through preserving and communicating Aspen's remarkable history.<sup>67</sup> In addition to maintaining Aspen's historic archives, the organization also runs four historic sites, the Wheeler/Stallard Museum, the Holden/Marolt Mining and Ranching Museum, the Independence Ghost Town, and the Ashcroft Ghost Town, all located in Aspen Valley. The Aspen Historical Society was founded and established in 1963 as a 501(3) (c) charitable organization by trustees whom include, western novelist Luke Short and Bauhaus artist Herbert Bayer. It is dedicated to serving the public through history education inspired by the real objects, authentic voices, and actual sites of the community's heritage.<sup>68</sup> The Aspen Historical Society is often the face of historic Aspen. To visitors it is seen as the history-keeping entity for the town.

The third organization that plays a role in the historic preservation of Aspen is Community Vision for the Aspen Area. This organization was formed by a group of citizens promoting a community effort to create a development plan for Aspen. "Every eight years or so, the City of Aspen and Pitkin County collaborate on a character-based community plan for the Aspen Area that helps guide decision-making by the Aspen City Council and Pitkin County Commissioners. In 2008, the City and County began work on an update to the community plan, and the creation of a 10-year community vision for the

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<sup>67</sup> Aspen Historical Society, 2008, About the Society, <http://www.aspenhistorysociety.com/home.html#> (accessed August 20, 2011).

<sup>68</sup> Aspen Historical Society, 2008, Join the Society, <http://www.heritageaspen.org/join.html> (accessed August 20, 2011).

future.”<sup>69</sup> This organization speaks to the strength of the community as well as the community’s commitment to Aspen’s future. Historic preservation is one of the organization’s primary considerations when dealing with issues of development.

The Community Vision for the Aspen Area is comprised of a group of local residents, employees, and visitors. Their goal is to bring “Direct Democracy” to the process of planning. Thus they hold large and small group meetings on a regular basis allowing free exchange of information. In addition to group meetings, the organization conducts surveys, has created the Aspen Economy White Paper to analyze the unique economic situation of the resort community, invites speakers, and participates in planning and zoning reviews. The organization has a broad spectrum of interests, focusing not only on the historic areas of significance but on the entire urban growth boundary of the Aspen/Pitkin County area.

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<sup>69</sup> Aspen Community Vision, 2011, About the Project, [http://www.aspencommunityvision.com/page\\_19](http://www.aspencommunityvision.com/page_19) (accessed August 20, 2011).

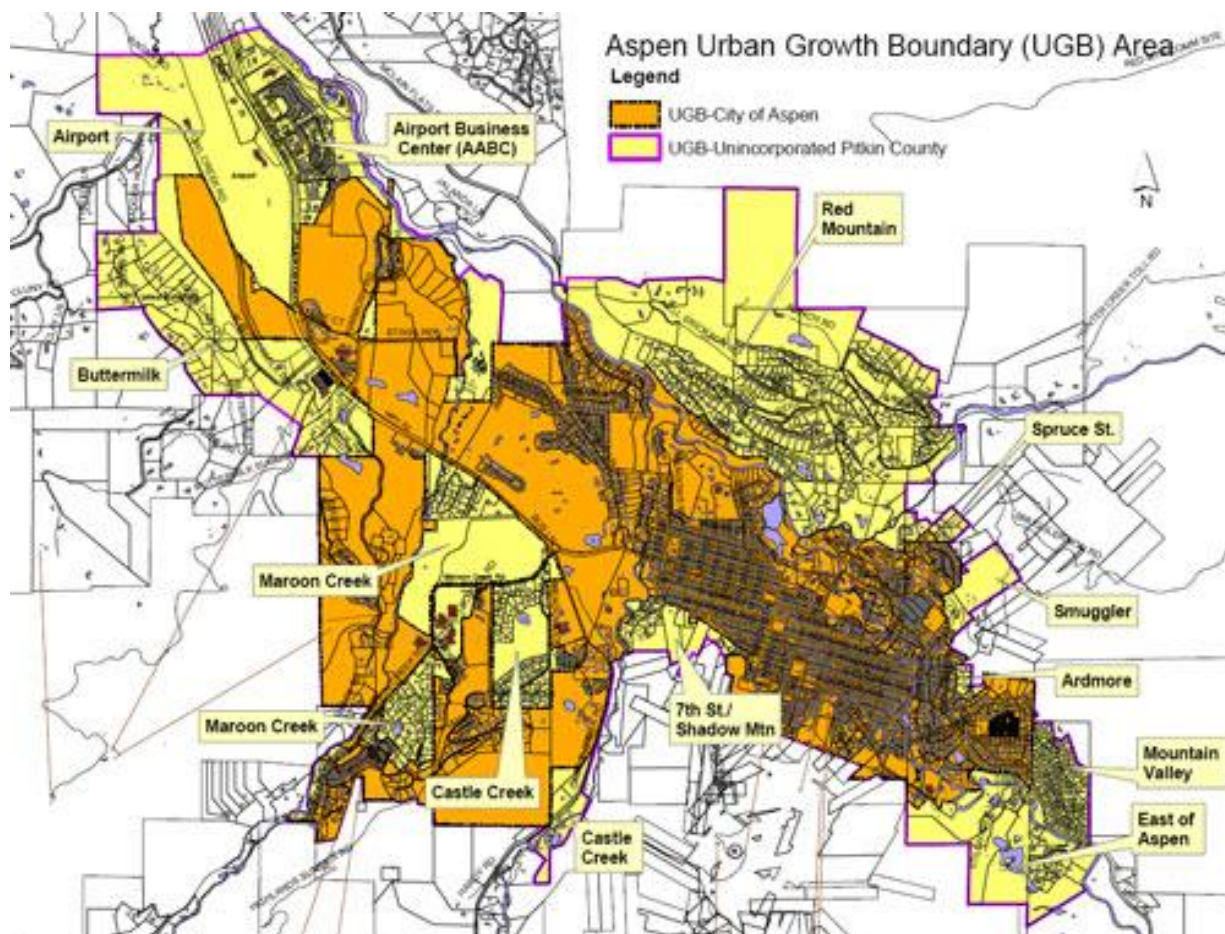


Figure 3.8 – Aspen Urban Growth Boundary Area, 2011  
 Community Vision for the Aspen Area, 2011, About the Project,  
[http://www.aspencommunityvision.com/page\\_19](http://www.aspencommunityvision.com/page_19) (accessed August 20, 2011).

The influence of this organization on the historic preservation of Aspen can be seen in its State of Aspen 2008 report. The report shows that the community values preservation and is willing to take steps toward maintaining historic resources. The report also shows the collaborative effort of all three preservation organizations and tangible evidence that the preservation efforts in place in Aspen are working, by assessing preservation progress and highlighting the efforts of the community.

Local legislation is another preservation practice that has helped to protect historic resources in the Aspen area. In 2005, the county passed a significant revision to



the Land Use Code providing for the protection of the important historic properties that exist in the urban growth boundary area.<sup>70</sup> The local community continues to demonstrate its support for preservation, often with its votes. In July 2007, City Council approved an emergency ordinance that required all buildings over 30 years old to be reviewed for historic integrity before receiving a building permit or demolition permit.<sup>71</sup> Since the delay was enacted, the Aspen Modern Program was created to aid in the preservation of those structures. Because Aspen has gained a reputation for developing too quickly and not valuing its resources, preservationists are working to make up lost time. Actions had to be taken quickly, in an attempt to save some of the modern architecture. As many of their historic mining buildings are no longer standing, preservationists have had to embrace the next set of significant structures and recognize their value before they meet an end similar to that of the Victorian era structures.

In studying historic preservation practices it is important to observe not only the organizational and legal tools in place, but to look at the interpretation of the resources. Without proper interpretation these resources may be preserved, but the historic significance may be lost. By providing a method to share the resource with the public, preservationists allow accessibility, gain a teaching opportunity, and allow a chance for fund raising and promotion.

The city of Aspen has numerous historic resources that have been interpreted in various ways. The Aspen Historical Society plays a major role in the interpretation of the historic resources. They not only own and interpret four individual properties, they constantly work to enhance their interpretive methods. Partnering with the Roaring Fork

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<sup>70</sup> State of Aspen Report, Historic Preservation, (Aspen: Community Vision for the Aspen Area, 2008), 5.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

Conservancy, they offer classes certified by the National Association of Interpreters. These classes are meant to strengthen bonds between local organizations as well as provide locals with a better understanding of interpretation and enhance the organization's own methods. In addition to live interpretation, signage and general information has been disseminated throughout the town, in hopes of reaching visitors and spreading awareness of the preservation efforts.

With focus and energy currently being placed on conservation and the green movement, it is important to give some study to these related issues and their relationship with preservation. By examining these broader issues and their effects on towns like Aspen, one is able to more clearly understand the overall mindset and atmosphere of the town. As historic preservation does not exist in a vacuum, these related issues often influence and effect preservation efforts. Aspen has a strong network of environmentally conscious citizens. Through community efforts, a number of organizations and initiatives have been created to protect the resources valued in the area.

The Aspen Valley Land Trust was created in 1967 and “has helped private landowners preserve over 32,000 acres of working family ranches, scenic view sheds, riparian and wildlife habitat, and recreational areas in the Roaring Fork and upper Colorado River watersheds.”<sup>72</sup> Being an accredited land trust and the oldest in the state, this organization has had a significant impact on the preservation of the natural environment, cultural landscape, and the land surrounding Aspen. Initiatives from the trust have helped preservation efforts by restricting development in these scenic areas and by preserving historic ranches and other properties. By creating conservation easements,

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<sup>72</sup> Aspen Valley Land Trust, 2011, About AVLT, <http://www.avlt.org/sitepages/pid13.php> (accessed August 21, 2011).

landowners are given tax incentives and are often involved in an ongoing preservation plan for the property.

Another organization dealing with similar issues is the Roaring Fork Conservancy, a watershed conservation organization in the Roaring Fork Valley that brings people together to protect the rivers.<sup>73</sup> While this organization does not deal directly with historic resources, it sponsors town events dedicated to similar issues and creates a forum of like minded people who generally share a sympathy for the cause of preservation.

In addition to the organizations in the area dedicated to the preservation of the environment, the city of Aspen has created its own “Green” initiatives for the residents. Added to the initiatives common in many towns, such as recycling and air and water quality monitoring, Aspen has programs that go beyond those common ones to more location sensitive programs. The City of Aspen Canary Initiative is one such program. The Canary Initiative uses policy, research, education and community engagement to help Aspen address the challenge of climate change.<sup>74</sup> By purchasing Canary Tags, residents are able to demonstrate their investment in the local carbon reduction project. “The City of Aspen’s Climate Action Plan calls for Aspen to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 30 percent by 2020 and 80 percent by 2050, below 2004 levels.”<sup>75</sup> Because many ski resort towns use a variety of methods, including geothermal, to heat spaces and melt snow, this program is helping to counteract some of the negative effects of that process.

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<sup>73</sup> Roaring Fork Conservancy, 2002-2011, About US, <http://www.roaringfork.org/sitepages/pid16.php> (accessed August 21, 2011).

<sup>74</sup> The City of Aspen and Pitkin County, 2002-2008, Canary Initiative, <http://www.aspenpitkin.com/Living-in-the-Valley/Green-Initiatives/Canary-Initiative/> (accessed August 21, 2011).

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

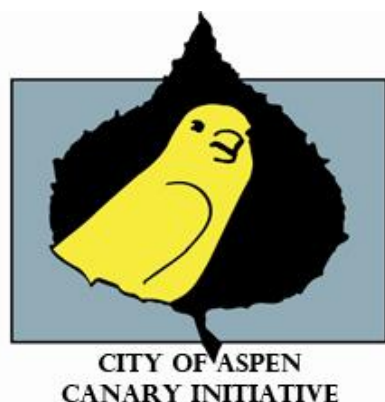


Figure 3.9 – Canary Initiative Tag, 2011  
 The City of Aspen and Pitkin County, 2002-2008, Canary Initiative,  
<http://www.aspenpitkin.com/Living-in-the-Valley/Green-Initiatives/Canary-Initiative/>  
 (accessed August 21, 2011).

The city of Aspen has also put forth Aspen ZGreen, a three-part certification and outreach program designed to reduce the environmental impacts of Aspen's citizens, visitors, businesses, and events.<sup>76</sup> This plan is part of the “Greening Aspen” campaign, which also encompasses clean air and water, building energy use, sustainability, renewable energy, clean air transportation, and other green initiatives. While this is a separate branch from the city’s historic preservation program, both efforts fall under the same leadership and comprehensive city goals and values. These campaigns speak to the ideals of the governing powers of Aspen as well as its citizens.



Figure 3.10 – Aspen ZGreen Logo, 2011  
 The City of Aspen and Pitkin County, 2002-2008, Aspen ZGreen,  
<http://www.aspenpitkin.com/Living-in-the-Valley/Green-Initiatives/Aspen-ZGreen/>  
 (accessed August 21, 2011).

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<sup>76</sup> The City of Aspen and Pitkin County, 2002-2008, Aspen ZGreen, <http://www.aspenpitkin.com/Living-in-the-Valley/Green-Initiatives/Aspen-ZGreen/> (accessed August 21, 2011).

Finally, the impact of the ski resort on Aspen's historic preservation practices (as well as the town as a whole) should be considered. Due to the fact that the actual resort has little physical contact with historic properties, there is very little historic preservation work done by Aspen Snowmass Resort. However, due to its proximity to these resources and its impact on the environment, the resort does pursue a number of environmental initiatives in order to be a responsible, participatory member of the Aspen society.

Aspen Snowmass has instituted a number of practices to become one of the most environmentally responsible ski resort destinations in the world. While some consider this a "limousine liberal" attitude, due to the town's elitist nature, the programs have had a positive effect. Aspen Snowmass has the only green building policy in the ski industry, and now has 4 LEED certified buildings. Its employees are conscious of their impact and have started multiple foundations for local environmental causes. The Environment Foundation was created by resort employees, each donating a dollar a week to its efforts. Its sister organization, the Aspen Community Foundation as well as the Aspen Skiing Company Family Fund each match those contributions, having donated almost 1.8 million dollars to date. Aspen is International Organization for Standardizations (ISO) 14001 certified, the first of only two ski resorts in the country to achieve this recognition. ISO 14001 certification is the most widely known and respected environmental stamp of approval, which demonstrates responsible management of a company's environmental impacts.<sup>77</sup> Additionally they purchase renewable wind power credits and use biodiesel fuel to run their mountain equipment. In order to bring awareness to global climate change and the effect it is having, Aspen created the Save Snow Campaign in 2006

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<sup>77</sup> Aspen Skiing Company, 2008, Environmental Commitment Overview, <http://www.aspensnowmass.com/environment/default.cfm>, (accessed August 21, 2011).

showing the impact that is being made on snow and petitioning for an environmental commitment from other large resorts.



Figure 3.11 – Aspen Skiing Company Save Snow Poster, 2006  
 Aspen Skiing Company, 2008, Environmental Program Highlights Overview,  
<http://www.aspensnowmass.com/environment/highlights/default.cfm>, (accessed August 21, 2011).

Additionally the resort has a sustainability plan and green policy management plan. They are a member of the Aspen ZGreen program, practicing exemplary environmental stewardship. Due to the success that Aspen Skiing Company has demonstrated in transitioning their mountain operations to green practices, they have formed a consulting practice called Aspen Sustainability Associates, to assist and consult with other resort destinations attempting to make the same environmental transitions.

While the green incentives set forth by the Aspen Skiing Company are impressive, the impact of tourism must not be discounted or minimized. Due to the massive number of people traveling in the area, consideration should be made for how to handle such traffic. While tourists are the driving economic factor, they can be detrimental to sensitive preservation efforts. Balance is a key consideration when planning for this inevitability.

By examining the guiding principles set forth by Aspen Skiing Company and their president and CEO Mike Kaplan, one can understand what sets Aspen resort apart from

the others. “We strive to preserve and enhance the delicate balance between “resort” and “community” that makes Aspen/Snowmass unique. The combination of a values-based company and the quality of mountain sports, community, history, culture and environment found in Aspen/Snowmass gives us a unique market niche. Our widespread dedication to sustainability in the broadest sense of the word is what we are all about.”<sup>78</sup>

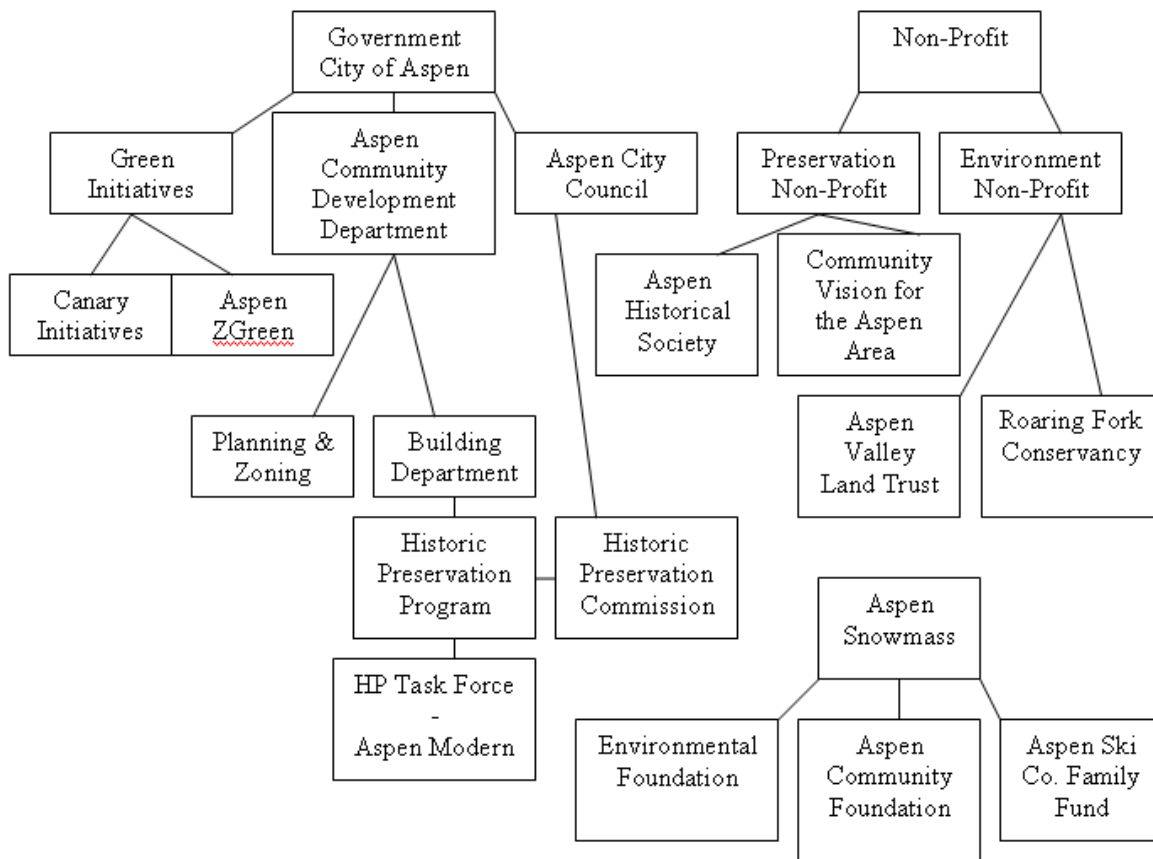


Figure 3.12 – Aspen Organizations Flow Chart

By considering the local preservation organizations, local legislation, interpretation of historic resources, related environmental factors and the impact and relationship of the ski resort, one begins to gain a clear picture of Aspen’s view of historic preservation, sustainability, and way of living.

<sup>78</sup> Mike Kaplan, Aspen Skiing Company President/CEO, Guiding Principles, 2008.

## Breckenridge

The town of Breckenridge has truly embraced its resort status, using its historic resources to promote the tourism industry, rather than preserving for preservation's sake. While the town does have strong preservation aspirations, some question if it is for preservation or recreation. Either way, the effect has led to the preservation, maintenance, and operation of several historic sites, a well preserved core historic district, and a general public awareness about the current preservation efforts.

Even though Breckenridge did not wholly embrace historic preservation until recent years, its relatively isolated location and dwindling population kept several of its historic resources from destruction; many historic resources dating back to the town's mining era. The diversity of historic resources still located there help to reveal a more comprehensive history of the area. The mining history of Breckenridge is preserved through mines and their mining equipment, mining housing, and the rough log structures of early town. Later technological advances can be seen in the rotary snow plow locomotives and the mining dredge boats of the twentieth century. Additionally, historic ranch dwellings and downtown Victorian buildings add to the list of historic resources that contribute to Breckenridge's historic integrity.

Breckenridge has restored the home of Barney Ford, Colorado's most notable black pioneer, as a museum. Just across Washington Street, the Fuqua Livery Stable has been ingeniously redone. It retains its old wacky angles and ramshackle plank exterior fronting a new steel frame and up-to-date heating, plumbing and double-pane glass windows. The Livery Stable, now converted into artists' studios, stylistically reflects its



1880s origins as a home for mules. Breckenridge also has preserved the log cabin of Edwin Carter. This naturalist began collecting and preserving specimens of high country wildlife in 1868. His creatures became the core zoological collection of the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Breckenridge kept the cabin and the open field around it, one of the town's most developable sites, as open space and a natural history house museum.<sup>79</sup> These sites, as well as numerous others contribute to the character and the historic district of town. The following images provide examples of a few types of Breckenridge's historic resources.

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<sup>79</sup> Tom Noel, "Noel: The Salvation of Ski Towns," *The Denver Post*, January 28, 2011.



Figure 3.13 – Washington Gold Mine  
Breckenridge Heritage Alliance



Figure 3.14 – Log Building  
Breckenridge Heritage Alliance, 2011



Figure 3.15 – Engine Nine  
Breckenridge Heritage Alliance, 2011



Figure 3.16 – Replica Dredge Boat  
Breckenridge, 2011



Figure 3.17 – Edwin Carter House  
Breckenridge Heritage Alliance, 2011



Figure 3.18 – Barney Ford (the Black Baron of CO) House  
Breckenridge Heritage Alliance, 2011

## SPECIAL AREAS MAP

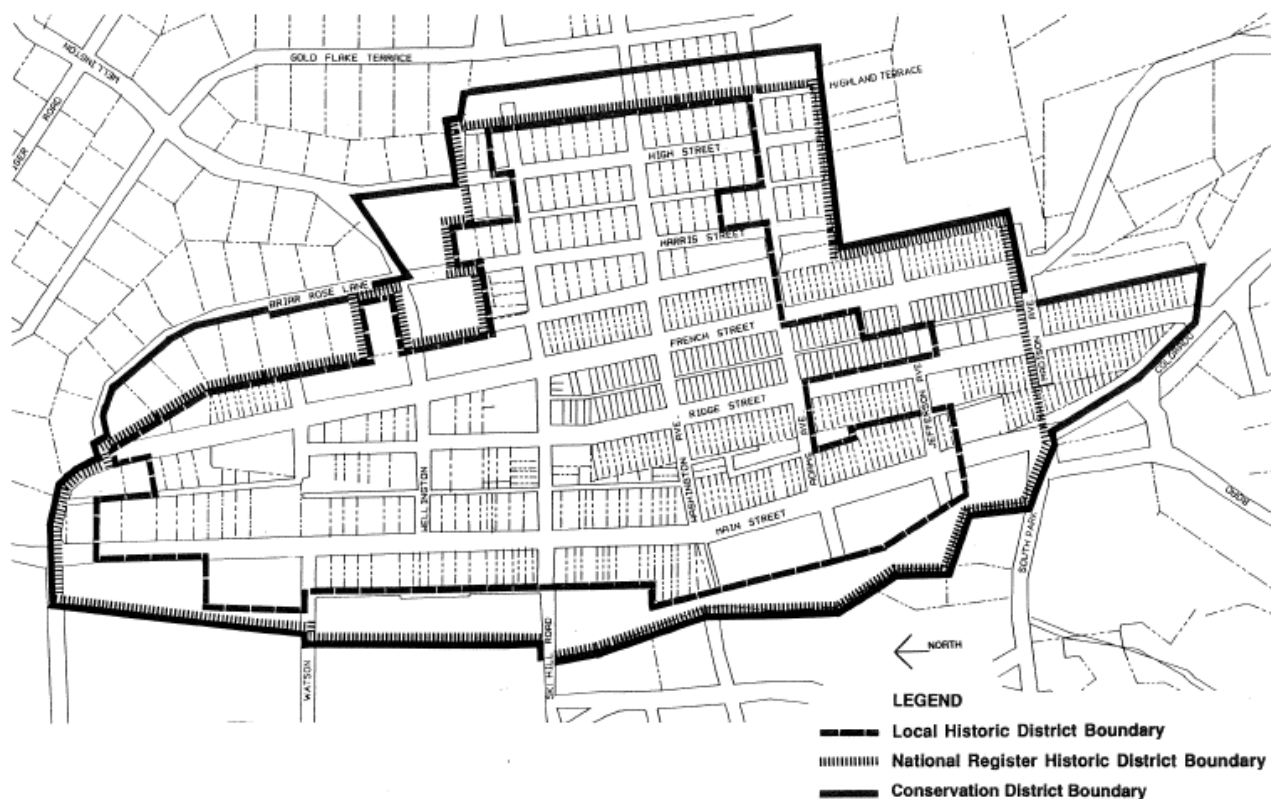


Figure 3.19 – Breckenridge Historic Districts Map  
Town of Breckenridge, 2011

Historic preservation has become an important issue for the town of Breckenridge. The city serves as the influential leader for preservation actions in the town. The city maintains the design guidelines for historic structures through the Community Development branch of the city, which serves as their local planning department. Through the implementation of land use guidelines and districting as well as the creation of historic standards and character areas, the town has created its preservation ordinance. “To preserve the town's character, the town has established a design review process that is an integral part of development review.”<sup>80</sup> Thus any building facing rehabilitation or new construction that is located in any of the seven

<sup>80</sup> Town of Breckenridge, 2011, Historic Standards and Character Areas, <http://www.townofbreckenridge.com/index.aspx?page=498>, (accessed September 4, 2011).

historic character areas of Breckenridge is forced to comply with the design standards and review process in order to obtain a building permit. The standards were adopted in 1992 in the Handbook of Design Standards and later updated in 1998. The 80 page guide book is available to everyone wishing to build, outlining through photographs, illustrations, and text, the character standards of the town.

In addition to the guidelines for the seven core historical character areas of the town, Breckenridge is in the process of developing guidelines for its transition areas. Transition Character Areas are areas within the Conservation District that lie outside the Historic District and serve as buffers from the impacts of development in newer areas of the community (see map on page 69). The purpose of the Transition Standards handbook is to establish design standards for review of development applications for properties within the Transition Character Areas. These standards will include building scale, height, materials, and general site design.<sup>81</sup> This process is currently being reviewed by the staff of the Community Development department. A meeting was held in August 2011 to discuss adoption of these standards. A joint community and town council meeting is planned to discuss this aspect of the design standards for the Historic District, and to formally adopt it as part of the requirements to obtain a building permit.

The town of Breckenridge has acted with sensitivity to the historic districts of the town. Through proper maintenance of guidelines, architectural reviews, and partnerships with other preservation organizations such as the National Trust and locally the

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<sup>81</sup> Town of Breckenridge, 2011, Transition Standards, <http://www.townofbreckenridge.com/index.aspx?page=1174>, (accessed September 4, 2011).

Breckenridge Heritage Alliance, the town has had vast success in preserving its historic character.

The chief preservation organization in Breckenridge is the Breckenridge Heritage Alliance. This organization conducts a variety of preservation activities including the running and maintenance of historic sites, conducting historic walking tours for fund raising, and recording and archiving Breckenridge's history. Their motto is "moving forward, while looking back."<sup>82</sup> In 2006 the town of Breckenridge hired a group of heritage tourism consultants to make recommendations about the town's tourism programs. One high priority recommendation was the development of a local nonprofit to run heritage tourism programs for the town. From this, the Breckenridge Heritage Alliance was formed in 2006.<sup>83</sup>

This organization is member supported and is composed of a staff of five and a board of directors with nine members. The main objective of the organization is to raise money to commit toward historic preservation projects. They conduct a series of walking tours covering a diverse range of Breckenridge's history, including a town tour, saloon and distillery tour, a gold route tour, a mine tour, and a snowshoe tour among others. The profit made from these tours, led by paid docents and "Friends of Breck Heritage" (a group of local volunteers), is used to maintain and run the organization's ten properties as well as procure others in eminent destruction danger. The properties they own cover various significant historic periods in Breckenridge's history. The organization maintains

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<sup>82</sup> Breckenridge Heritage Alliance, 2011, Home, <http://www.breckheritage.com/>, (accessed September 4, 2011).

<sup>83</sup> The Town of Breckenridge, *Breckenridge Comprehensive Plan*, Breckenridge Colorado, Historic Preservation, Chapter XI Historic Character, p140. Breckenridge, 2011.

multiple house museums and historic boarding houses, depicting Victorian lifestyles, both wealthy and poor. The Breckenridge Heritage Alliance also owns mines (depicting the mining life), the snowplow park (documenting the technological advances of the time), the summit ski museum (depicting the revolution of the ski industry in the area), and a cemetery. They do offer use of these facilities to the public and collect permit and use fees to raise money. This diversity allows them to interpret a large portion of Breckenridge history and has become a draw for both summer and winter tourists visiting the town.

In addition to being the visible face of historic preservation through their properties and tours, the Breckenridge Heritage Alliance also maintains the historic archives of the town. They provide access to general history and the town's timeline of historic events. Through a variety of methods and interpretation, the Breckenridge Heritage Alliance champions preservation.

Because there are so many historic resources in the town of Breckenridge, the interpretive methods are diverse. The most well known preservation initiatives are the historic walking tours. These tours cover much of the historic area of town and highlight a number of historic structures in use. One such structure, an old dredge boat has been reclaimed and turned into a restaurant. Many of the sites are interpreted by a display of historic photographs and historic newspaper texts along tour routes. Additionally, interpretive signage has been strategically placed throughout the town, informing visitors of historic events, structures, or persons associated with the town. Most public locations (such as the bus station) have large graphic maps and historic photos of the town adding



to the overall awareness of the town's past. In general the town is sensitive to the need for preserving its important history.

Due to public demand, Breckenridge has legal codes in place protecting historic properties. With the help of Colorado's state enabling legislation, there is a Town Code of Breckenridge and a Home Rule Charter in place to protect the town's interest. Historic preservation is covered in the code under land use and development stating "the town council may, by ordinance, designate a landmark, landmark site, historic district or a cultural landscape district."<sup>84</sup> The code then describes the powers of the city council and rules, like design guidelines, governing such designations.

Additionally, historic preservation is mentioned in the town's comprehensive plan. While this is not a legislative document, it does provide acknowledgement and funding consideration for future preservation work. The comprehensive plan states that "many of Breckenridge's earliest historic structures survived the boom and bust cycles. Neither economic nor demographic conditions warranted significant reinvestment or redevelopment during the mining era. Until the advent of the recreation and tourism boom in the 1960s, many of the earliest structures sat relatively undisturbed and unchanged. A strong preservation ethic developed in the community during the 1980s as it became apparent that many of the historic structures could be threatened by the town's growing popularity."<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> The Town of Breckenridge, *Breckenridge Town Code and Home Rule Charter*, by Sterling Codifiers, Inc. Breckenridge Colorado Town Code 9-11-3Land use and Development-Historic Preservation, Breckenridge, 2011.

<sup>85</sup> The Town of Breckenridge, *Breckenridge Comprehensive Plan*, Breckenridge Colorado, Historic Preservation, Chapter XI Historic Character, p136. Breckenridge, 2011.

The plan continues to outline all of the preservation initiatives in place. Another legal protection for historic properties is the local landmark designation program, established in 2001. While codes and design guidelines are required for all building permits, the local landmark program allows specific buildings to have a historic designation distinction. By 2008, 23 properties were listed under its protection.

External factors often affect preservation efforts. By examining related issues and how other groups deal with similar problems, new solutions can be developed to achieve a similar goal. After analyzing the governmental framework as well as local organizations, it is evident that Breckenridge has two objectives for their historic preservation goals. The first is to maintain the visual character of the historic core of the town; the second is to promote heritage tourism. This second objective is a related concern of preservation: heritage tourism has been a driving force in the area over the last decade. Additionally the area has seen an increase in conservation efforts both with land and wildlife. The Cucumber Gulch wetlands have been a topic of debate in the preservation versus recreation battle. The town has a local citizen group called the Breckenridge Open Space Advisory Commission that advises on “the tough question of how to balance preservation of valuable Cucumber Gulch wetlands with increased recreational demand in the town.”<sup>86</sup> This type of organization shows the strength of the community and its commitment to the surrounding environment, be it natural or built.

An additional fiscally conservative preservation approach is the use of historic buildings as a sustainable way to develop. Breckenridge developers are realizing both the low environmental impact as well as the financial savings of using existing buildings.

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<sup>86</sup> Summit County Citizens Voice. *Breckenridge: Preservation or Recreation?*, Bob Berwyn, April 19, 2010. Breckenridge.



Figure 3.20 – “Preserved historic structures line main street Breckenridge giving the town much of its charm.” 2011

Trilogy Builds, *Old Buildings More Sustainable?*, Michael Rath, June 17, 2011.  
<http://blog.trilogybuilds.com/green-building/old-buildings-more-sustainable/> (accessed September 4, 2011.)

According to Donovan Rypkema “This whole idea that reusing existing resources — especially historic buildings — is the ultimate in recycling is beginning to get some traction,”<sup>87</sup> and developers in Colorado are starting to take notice. Through movements like conservation, sustainability and the green movement, preservation is gaining notice and attempting to profit from the increased public awareness. This idea can be seen taking hold in Breckenridge with the increasing number of developers choosing to restore historic structures.

Many factors shape historic preservation efforts in Breckenridge, but one of the largest is the resort development. Breckenridge Ski Resort is owned by Vail Resorts and they have instituted a number of practices to aid community initiatives. The resort claims to have a commitment to the environment, possibly because they are aware that value of “place” creates income. They have created a separate organization to fulfill that

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<sup>87</sup> Trilogy Builds, *Old Buildings More Sustainable?*, Michael Rath, June 17, 2011.  
<http://blog.trilogybuilds.com/green-building/old-buildings-more-sustainable/> (accessed September 4, 2011.)

commitment, called Vail Resorts Echo. Through this organization, whose motto is “commitment that resonates,” Vail Resorts is practicing environmental stewardship, charitable giving, and employees in action. These three programs were created “to nurture and enliven social responsibility in our company and to connect stakeholders in a new way to the diverse and growing elements that make up our efforts.”<sup>88</sup> Examples of the programs and causes that these initiatives promote include a ten percent energy reduction throughout Vail properties, the Hayman Forest Restoration Project to rebuild damaged forests, and fuel conservation and recycling programs. Breckenridge, additionally, has implemented a carpool incentive parking lot for skiers, and a composting program for all resort food scraps. Similar to Aspen’s Save Snow program, Breckenridge also has instituted a Keep Winter Cool campaign to bring awareness to global warming and its environmental effects.

A closely related issue is new construction. Many of the new buildings are being built with LEED standards in mind. Even though the focus is on the built environment, often the objectives are counter to preservation work. The effect is evident when historic buildings are replaced with “environmentally sustainable” ones. To maintain clear focus on preservation issues, it is important to maintain communication between the resort and the town. This relationship ensures that “green” building is not in conflict with preservation issues and that positive environmental changes are embraced on both fronts. Through these numerous resort implemented groups, Vail properties and the Breckenridge resort are making an impact on environmental change in the area.

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<sup>88</sup> Vail Resorts Echo, 2011, Home, <http://www.vailresortsecho.com/index.aspx>, (accessed September 4, 2011).

The environmental initiatives are a significant step in bringing responsibility to resort development. In some ways, these coincide with the town's preservation plans and draw socially conscious people to the area, providing a larger support base for local preservation programs. However, even with these green initiatives, there is little consideration by the resorts for historic preservation. Considerations to preservation issues are often given by individual developers to comply with town legislation for historic areas. The relationship between the resort and historic preservation bodies is often ambiguous and usually develops as a result of plans for development.

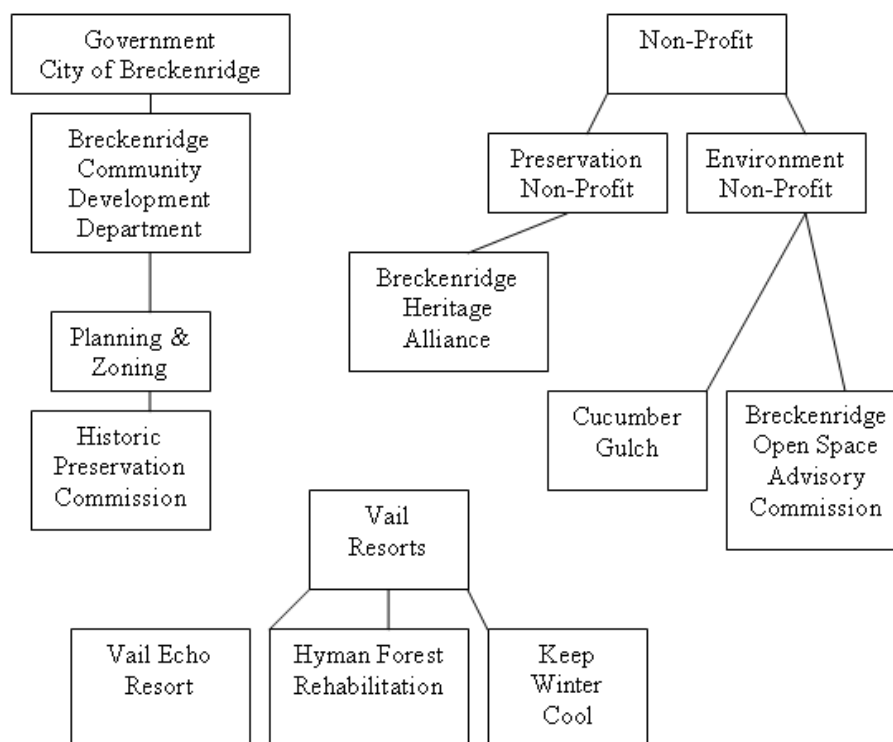


Figure 3.21 – Breckenridge Organizations Flow Chart

By considering the local preservation organizations, understanding the local legislation, the town's interpretation of historic resources, related environmental factors, and the impact and relationship of the ski resort, Breckenridge's outlook on historic

preservation is evident. The town is utilizing historic preservation to facilitate heritage tourism as well as promote the historic character of the town.

### Telluride

The city of Telluride, Colorado is perhaps one of the most vocal towns in the country in terms of the town's social and political agenda. Part of the town's reputation is its involvement in controversial issues. Historic preservation is one such issue that has not escaped scrutiny. A town of significant historic importance, Telluride has implemented a number of preservation practices and instituted organizations to protect its historic resources and the environment.

Telluride has been vigilant in recording and providing protections for its historic resources. Due to the continued discovery and production of minerals, Telluride has always existed as a mining town. When precious metals were discovered, an early settlement was erected but most of the structures were temporary. Because of the rapid accrue ment of wealth, structures quickly became more permanent and well-designed. Today those early historic structures can be found in the downtown core of Telluride. Structures range from the old stone jail and bank, to the mining era opera house, whore houses, miners union and courthouse to the more modern mining structures. Victorian residential buildings and the historic town cemetery are also counted among Telluride's historic resources.



Figure 3.22 – Old Telluride Jail  
Telluride, 2011

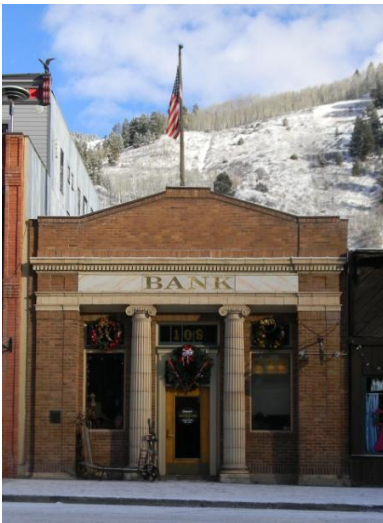


Figure 3.23 – Telluride Bank  
Telluride, 2011



Figure 3.24 – New Sheridan Opera House  
Telluride, 2011



Figure 3.25 – Popcorn Alley, Whore House  
Telluride, 2011



Figure 3.26 – San Miguel County Courthouse  
Telluride, 2011





Figure 3.27 – Miners Union  
Telluride, 2011



Figure 3.28 – Idarado Mine  
Telluride, 2011

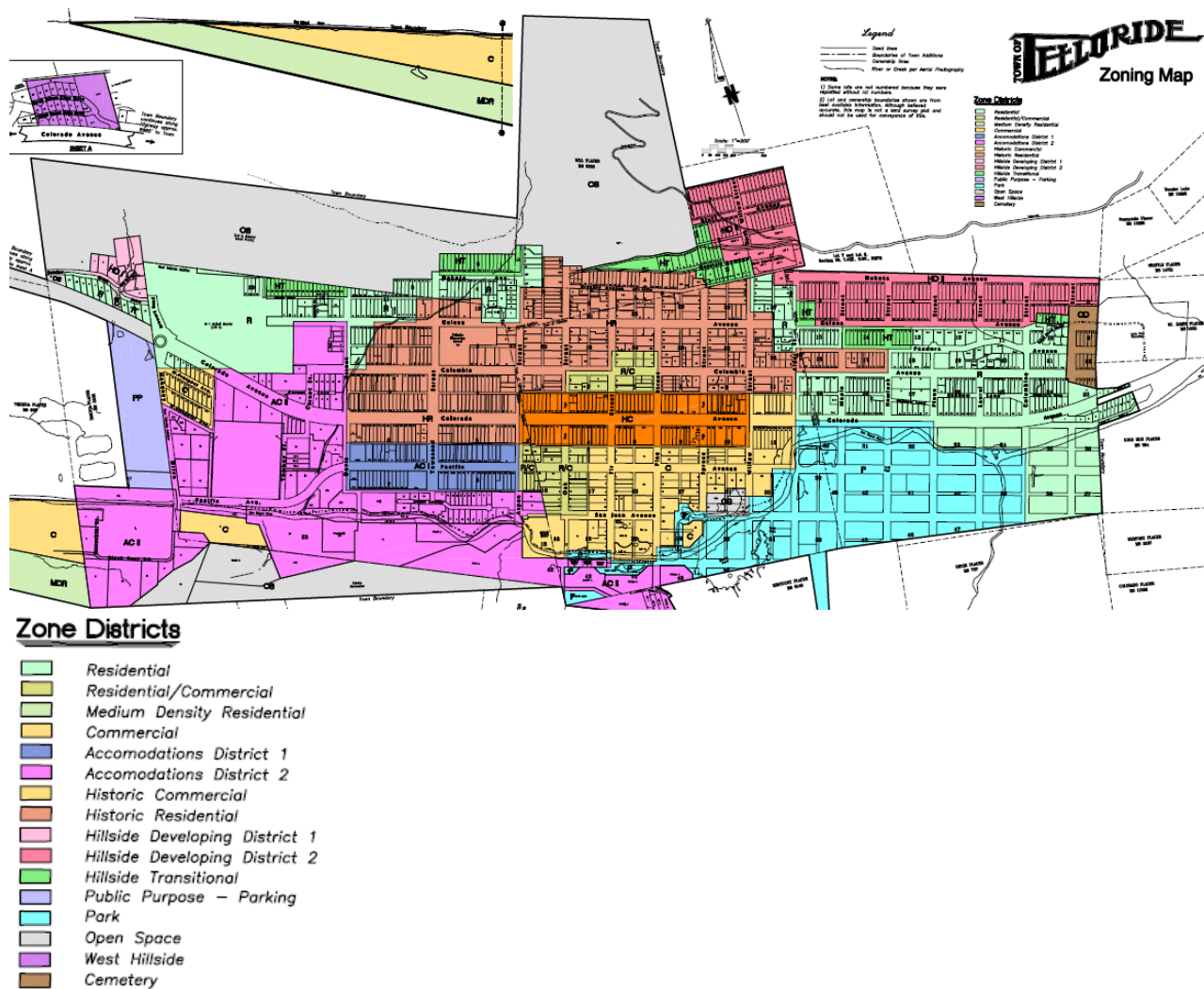


Figure 3.29 – Telluride Zoning Map, 2008  
Town of Telluride, 2011, Planning Division

Like the two previous case studies, Telluride has an official city-run organization responsible for most of its historic preservation efforts. The Historic and Architectural Review Commission (HARC), a branch of the planning division housed within the planning and building department is tasked as the city’s primary preservation body. The HARC generally meets once each month, with additional special and semi-monthly meetings scheduled as necessary.<sup>89</sup> The commission has implemented the use of two

<sup>89</sup> Town of Telluride, 2011, Planning Division, <http://www.telluride-co.gov/index.aspx?page=112>, (accessed September 5, 2011).

documents, “the *Town of Telluride Land Use Code* and the *Design Guidelines for Building in Telluride* for specific information with regard to development review including new construction, additions, alterations, demolitions, signs, fences, landscaping, and extensions of Certificates of Appropriateness.”<sup>90</sup> This commission is staffed by the city and is the preeminent preservation body in the town.

Not only does the HARC act as the reviewing commission for preservation, they run the HARC Preservation Awards program. This program was instituted to recognize “a commitment to preserving Telluride’s historic resources, enhancing the overall design of the community and protecting the traditional character of the town.”<sup>91</sup> “Awards are presented annually to compatible additions, rehabilitation & restoration, compatible infill and continuing preservation projects that have displayed outstanding commitment to historic preservation and compatible building techniques within the Town of Telluride.”<sup>92</sup> The HARC also maintains the Historic and Architectural Review Survey and the Lone Tree Cemetery Survey.

Telluride has enacted legislation to protect its historic resources. Any person seeking a building permit must submit their plans for review by the HARC. Buildings must also comply with the planning and zoning commission’s guidelines. These organizations use Land Use Code and Design Guidelines as the basis for their decisions. The ordinances for Telluride address the design review process, standards for review and rehabilitation of historic buildings. They also cover standards for each individual treatment area of town, including, historic residential, commercial, Main St., warehouse,

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<sup>90</sup> Town of Telluride, 2011, Planning Division, <http://www.telluride-co.gov/index.aspx?page=112>, (accessed September 5, 2011).

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Town of Telluride: Preservation Awards Program, Program Description and Nomination Form, 2011, p.

accommodations, east and west Telluride, and the transitional hill district. The codes cover design standards, site, mass and scale, views, set backs, architectural details, windows, doors, signage, and landscaping. Any person wishing to make changes to structures or erect new ones must obey all federal and state laws and comply with the local code and legislation. Through the HARC Telluride even has an historic interior easement protecting some of the town's important historic interiors.

In addition to Telluride's HARC, there are a number of organizations dedicated to preserving the early history of the town. The Telluride Historical Museum is one such organization. The museum houses a vast collection of historic artifacts from all of the significant periods of Telluride's history and is conveniently located in the town's first hospital building, turned historic museum.



Figure 3.30 – Merge of historic and modern photograph of Hall's Hospital, now Telluride Historical Museum  
Telluride Historical Museum, 2011, Our Building,  
<http://www.telluridemuseum.org/building.html>, (accessed September 5, 2011).

The museum is a significant resource for the town. It has a very comprehensive exhibit addressing the significant periods of Telluride history, from the Native Americans

to the modern ski industry. The museum works to interpret the history as well by conducting walking tours and special events. These events raise funds for the museum and bring cultural and historical awareness to citizens and visitors. In addition to collection and programming, the museum also houses Telluride's historic archives. They are the keepers of historic newspapers, city documents, and a significant historic photograph collection. This organization acts as a support network to current preservation work by providing valuable historic documents, and information about the town and its historic resources.

The preceding organizations have partnered to enhance the interpretation of the historic resources of Telluride. The town has allotted funding for interpretive signage in the historic core. This includes information about sites and buildings, as well as technological advancements and citizens of the town. Most signs have accompanying photographs or maps. There are historic artifacts such as mine carts, adapted train cars, and old transportation lines throughout the town. The town center is noted by a collection of historic markers and interpretive signage. Many historic structures have plaques affixed with descriptions of historic significance. Numerous buildings also have HARC preservation award plaques.

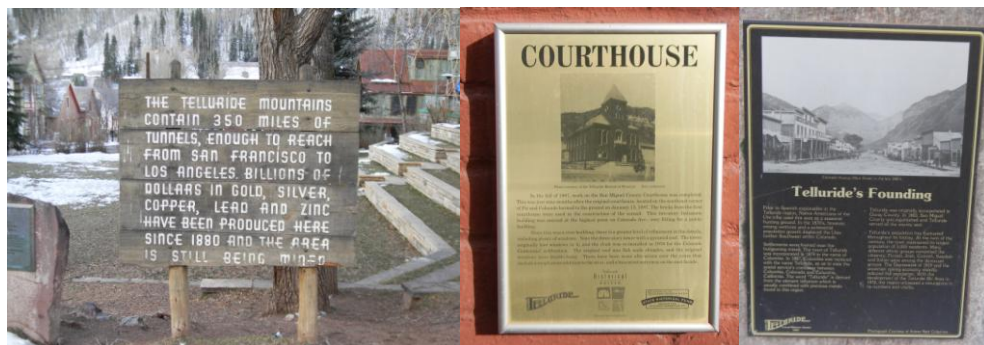


Figure 3.31 – Examples of Telluride Interpretive Signage  
Telluride, Colorado, 2010.

In addition to the HARC and Telluride Historical Museums interpretive signage, other organizations play a role in interpreting Telluride's history. The Idarado Mining Company, the current owner of the Telluride mine, is in the process of creating the Idarado Legacy Trail, a walking trail with interpretive signage that accompanies overlooks and vistas of the property.



Figure 3.32 – Example of Telluride Interpretive Signage, Idarado Legacy Trail Telluride, Colorado, 2010.

Due to the town's activist nature, there are a number of locally formed groups that value preservation along with other social agendas. One organization, the Telluride Institute, conducts programs of its own initiative including The Watershed Education Program, The Bridal Veil Living Classroom, and the Shroom Festival. It also has partnered with The Mountain Partnership, "a voluntary alliance of partners dedicated to improving the lives of mountain people and protecting mountain environments around the world."<sup>93</sup> The Telluride Institute claims that "it complements, supports and

<sup>93</sup> Telluride Institute, 2011, Projects and Partnerships, [http://www.tellurideinstitute.org/page\\_110](http://www.tellurideinstitute.org/page_110), (accessed September 5, 2011).

strengthens on-going initiatives in sustainable mountain development.”<sup>94</sup> Although this group has no hand in historic preservation decisions made in the town, the organization does help to bring awareness to mountain development issues and considers itself “the think- and-do tank of the rocky mountain west.”<sup>95</sup>

There are also several organizations dedicated to the protection of the environments and lands surrounding Telluride. Valley Floor Preservation Partners is another local group that has made an impact in the town of Telluride. “The Partners, a 501c3 charitable organization, is a partnership of the Town of Telluride, Sheep Mountain Alliance, National Trust for Historic Preservation and The Telluride Institute. VFPP was established in March 2006 to support the Valley Floor acquisition and preservation efforts of the Town of Telluride and to launch a final fundraising and education campaign.”<sup>96</sup> The Telluride valley floor is an area of green open space at the entrance of the box canyon which acts as a buffer between the town and the major roadways in close proximity to the town. In August of 2011 the town council unanimously passed the valley floor conservation easement and management plan, “which specifically regulates uses, restoration activities, and the conservation style management approach that will be used for the property within the direction of the Conservation Easement.”<sup>97</sup> This single program spotlights the local citizens’ dedication to conservation and preservation activities. As a town, Telluride raised \$24.5 million to protect the valley floor from new

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<sup>94</sup> Mountain Partnership, 2008, Welcome to the Partnership, <http://www.mountainpartnership.org/default.asp>, (accessed September 5, 2011).

<sup>95</sup> Telluride Institute, 2011, Projects and Partnerships, [http://www.tellurideinstitute.org/page\\_110](http://www.tellurideinstitute.org/page_110), (accessed September 5, 2011).

<sup>96</sup> Valley Floor Preservation Partners, 2009, Home, <http://www.valleyfloor.org/>, (accessed September 5, 2011).

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

construction or further encroachment. Social responsibility is on the consciousness of Telluride's citizens and visitors.



Figure 3.33 – Valley Floor Preservation Partners Logo  
 Valley Floor Preservation Partners, 2009, Home, <http://www.valleyfloor.org/>, (accessed September 5, 2011).

Other organizations are also working to support programs related to preservation in a larger context. The Telluride Foundation is a group that works to conserve the natural environment. The Telluride Foundation's Land Conservation Field of Interest Fund is designed to provide fiscal support to the organizations working to protect, restore and enhance open space, water and wildlife habitat in San Miguel County and in the San Miguel River Watershed.<sup>98</sup> Historic preservation benefits from these environmentally minded organizations. Their work helps to put a stop to further new development and forces buyers to consider existing properties before venturing into the battle of building on protected lands. According to guests that participated in a recent Telluride and Mountain Village Visitor Services survey, over 96% rated the scenic beauty of the region as paramount for the enjoyment of their trip here.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Telluride Foundation, 2010, Land Conservation Fund, <http://www.telluridefoundation.org/index.php?page=land-conservation-fund>, (accessed September 5, 2011).

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.



The Sheep Mountain Alliance is dedicated to the preservation of the natural environment. The Public Access Preservation Association champions access and responsible use of public lands and encourages environmental stewardship. The San Juan Fen Partnership is a local citizen group formed to protect the wetland ecosystems. These and other groups work to raise funds and awareness for the protection of Telluride's sensitive environment. Historic preservation directly benefits from the involvement of a socially active group of citizens and from the byproducts of these groups' efforts.

The resort developments and a look at their role in the preservation of the environment will convey to readers the historic preservation mindset of Telluride. Similar to the other case study resorts, TelSki has implemented several environmental initiatives. What sets them apart is their consideration of the cultural impact of the resort. The resort has worked with the National Park Service to place interpretive signage throughout the ski terrain belonging to the NPS. These signs are designed to educate visitors about the historic nature of the site. Additionally TelSki has made extensive strides in environmental protections through watershed projects, air quality and fuel reductions programs, waste reduction and recycling, water and energy conservation, and community education programs. Telluride is the first resort to have a wind powered gondola.

The resort also highlights its green practices. The New Community Coalition is an organization "formed by a group of progressive organizations within the greater Telluride region that recognized the need for a unified voice and vision for future sustainability."<sup>100</sup> This group, the TNCC, has created a Green Fund, money that will go

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<sup>100</sup> Telluride Colorado, 2011, Green Practices, <http://www.visittelluride.com/discover-telluride/green-practices>, (accessed September 5, 2011).

toward local renewable energy projects. TelSki has also enhanced its recycling program and is supporting local food sources. Additionally they have implemented green building practices and now have a local Green Building Code, which is required for all new mountain construction.

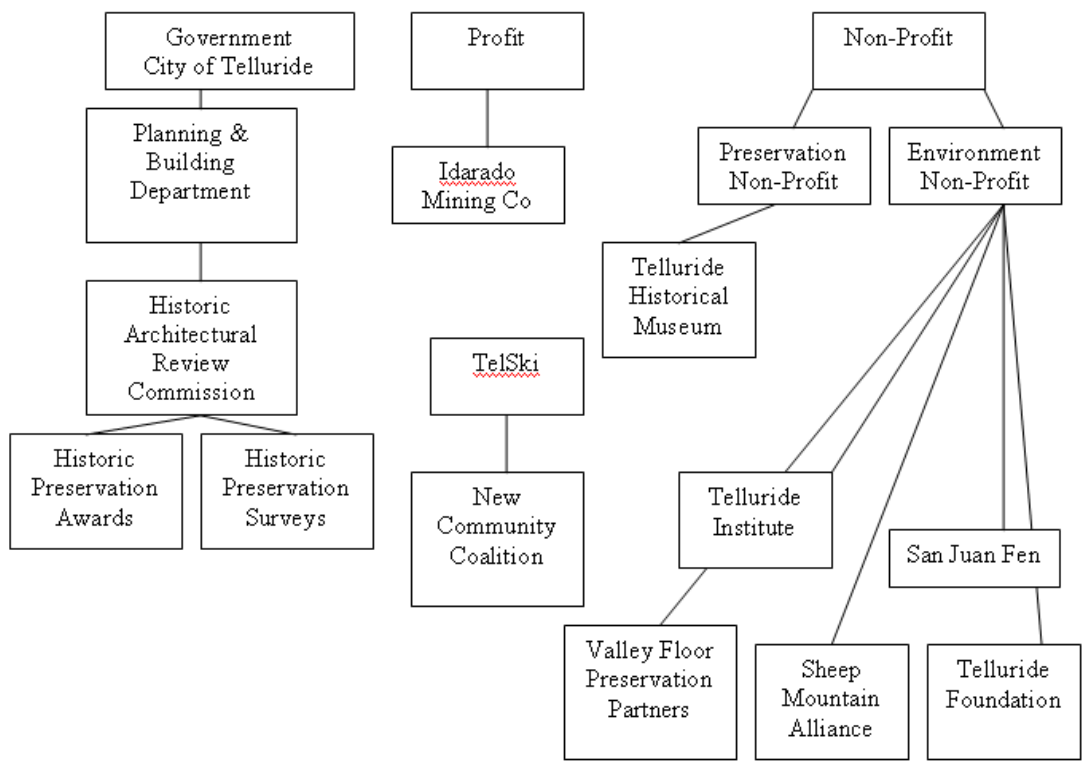


Figure 3.34– Telluride Organizations Flow Chart

Telluride is a town with exceptional environmental awareness and practices. Its citizens are concerned with preserving the past as well as protecting the future. Because of its elite status as a premier resort destination, affluence abounds in the area. The combination of money and the conservation mindset have aided the creation of unparalleled ventures for the environment, both built and natural.

### State and Federal Preservation Practices

While the main focus of this thesis is the analysis of local preservation practices, many of these could not be achieved without aid from state and federal agencies and organizations. The state of Colorado has multiple organizations that work to aid preservation efforts throughout the entire state, but three major organizations have made a significant impact.

History Colorado is the most significant preservation organization in the state. They are home to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and administer Certified Local Government (CLG) privileges, multiple preservation programs, and grant and funding opportunities. This organization runs nine historic sites and museums throughout the state and works to promote history related programming for educators, adults, children, and families. Perhaps their most effective branch is the archeology and preservation department. “The Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation creatively engages Coloradans and their guests in partnerships to discover, preserve, and take pride in our architectural, archaeological, and other historic places by providing statewide leadership and support to our partners in archaeology and historic preservation.”<sup>101</sup> This branch of the organization administers several programs in aid of these causes. They maintain the list of state and national register of historic places and help cities obtain those designations for their historic resources. They run the CLG program helping to bring preservation funding to small historic towns. The State Historic Preservation Office is located in this branch of History Colorado. The state SHPO helps with cultural resource management and reviews and issues all permits and regulations

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<sup>101</sup> History Colorado, 2011, Preservation Programs of History Colorado, <http://www.historycolorado.org/archaeologists/about-preservation-programs-history-colorado>, (accessed September 10, 2011).

regarding historic sites. They also maintain the state historic preservation plan and set goals for its future. Included in this section of the plan are the maintenance of the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties and the list of Colorado communities with local landmarking programs. All of the case study cities are listed as communities and counties with State listed historic properties and locations with landmarking plans. Lastly they run the grant and fundraising programs for state preservation. Some of the financial opportunities include CLG and other state grants, preservation tax incentives, and the management of a revolving fund for the specific purpose of purchasing historic sites under threat and placing them in the hands of preservation sensitive parties. All of these programs are state wide and available to any city wishing to apply. All of the case study cities have received aid from this state organization.

Another state organization working to aid historic preservation is Colorado Preservation, Inc. “The mission of Colorado Preservation, Inc., founded in 1984, is to promote historic preservation in our State by providing information, education, training, expertise and advocacy. We achieve this mission by partnering with historic property owners, non-profit organizations, educators and local governments throughout the Rocky Mountain region.”<sup>102</sup> This nonprofit, volunteer based organization has instituted multiple programs to benefit state historic preservation efforts. These efforts include bringing awareness to endangered places, cultural resource surveys, and volunteer initiatives, such as HistoriCorps, Colorado Youth Summit, and Share in the Care Colorado. Additionally they are in the process of adding an easement program. While this organization is more

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<sup>102</sup> Colorado Preservation, Inc, 2011, Building a Future with Historic Places, <http://coloradopreservation.org/>, (accessed September 10, 2011).

diverse in its preservation work, it makes itself available to any city which may benefit from its programs.

The third organization, The Colorado Historical Foundation, acts closely with History Colorado and handles historic preservation through financial means. “The Colorado Historical Foundation is a private nonprofit organization that was established in 1965 to support history and preservation projects. While much of its effort goes toward pursuing projects of special interest to the Colorado Historical Society, the Foundation regularly assumes supporting roles for other entities charged with the preservation of history.”<sup>103</sup> As a financial aid they have conducted an economic benefit study, maintained the easement program, and helped with the operation of the new revolving fund program instituted by History Colorado. This organization works to provide funding for a variety of preservation projects around Colorado.

Colorado also has colleges and universities that offer classes in historic preservation, both in technical, and advocacy aspects. These promote the idea of preservation through education and provide the state with a strong base of preservation minded professionals that further the preservation cause. Bob Ogle is Dean of Lamar Community College, a technical school located in Lamar, Colorado, offering classes in preservation techniques. Ogle cites a need to recruit a new generation of preservationists that have the technical skills to execute and understand historic preservation and its applications. He is working to bring attention not only to the theory and importance of preservation, but to educate the next group of advocates that will have the necessary skills. In addition to teaching in Colorado he has traveled throughout the United States to

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<sup>103</sup> Colorado Historical Foundation, 2010, Welcome, <http://www.cohf.org/>, (accessed September 10, 2011).

promote the importance of historic preservation and the need for further and diverse education.

The case study towns have also benefitted greatly from national protections. Although Aspen has no National Register of Historic Places Historic District, both Breckenridge and Telluride have designated National Historic Districts. However, many properties in all three towns are individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and Telluride is a National Historic Landmark. Through the Department of the Interior, including the National Park Service, many protections have been used to save historic properties. These are not limited to but include special designations, Section 106 Reviews, and tax incentives.

Each case study town is receiving preservation protections at the Federal, state and local levels. Aspen has 29 individual properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Aspen also has a Certified Local Historic District that falls under the Local Landmark District and is eligible for designation as a National Register District. They have a CLG and a preservation planner maintaining local preservation legislation and actively instituting new preservation initiatives, such as Aspen Modern.

Breckenridge was designated as a National Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980. Breckenridge is an example of a mining boom town that experienced a new era of prosperity as a result of the post World War II boom in the ski industry. The district contains approximately 180 structures and includes excellent examples of the late 19th and early 20th century commercial, residential and religious

architecture associated with Colorado mountain mining communities.<sup>104</sup> Due to these resources Breckenridge has worked to maintain the historic integrity of its central core.

Telluride has the most stringent protections of the three cities considered in this thesis. Telluride was named a National Historic Landmark in 1961 and is a National Historic District that was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1966. It is one of the earliest districts and is considered important not only for its technological advancements and skiing industry developments, but for its early settlement. The town has four national register properties including the district and two state designations. Additionally in 1980, a section was added to local legislation requiring a certificate of appropriateness for Significant Landmark Interiors based on the 1995 addition to the Secretary of Interior Standards for Historically significant Interiors. Telluride currently has four buildings under this protection. Preservation has played an important role in the further development of the city.

All of the cities have been impacted by all three levels of government. The National Park Services, stated “All historic preservation is local, as the saying goes.” Many people would agree that historic preservation begins at the most simple grassroots level.<sup>105</sup> It takes a local passion to protect a local resource; however the power and funding available at the state and federal level have brought the budget to aid small local initiatives. By examining the case study cities, it is evident that through local, State, and Federal government preservation efforts continue to be forged.

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<sup>104</sup> Colorado Historical Society, Colorado Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, SHPO, National and State Registers, <http://oahp.historycolorado.org/programareas/register/1503/cty/st.htm#breck>. (accessed September 12, 2011).

<sup>105</sup> National Park Service, 2011, Historic Preservation Planning for Local Communities, <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/pad/localplan.html>, (accessed September 12, 2011).

## CHAPTER 4

### **Analysis of Preservation Successes and Challenges**

Analysis of the preservation practices of the three cities reveals many successes. However with each success there remain challenges to address; some will be overcome and others have no evident solution. This chapter will discuss both the positive and negative outcomes produced through the pursuit of historic preservation practices of the three cities. Some of the challenges are inherent in the nature of the city and the development path which it has followed. Through information gleaned from both successes and challenges, one can learn and apply the knowledge to future preservation endeavors. The discussion of successes and challenges in this chapter will follow, beginning with analysis of the most successful efforts in each field of the analyzed preservation efforts.

#### Successes:

Perhaps the most important success is the actual protection of historic resources, because the value of “place” is significant to the success of the ski resort. Through preservation initiatives, including the formation of preservation organizations and the introduction of preservation legislation, Colorado’s historic resources have been protected and preserved for future generations. Each town has made efforts to preserve



their resources, though all for very different reasons. These successes can be measured or viewed in a variety of ways.

Part of the reason for the successes in saving the valued historic resources is the unique legislation in Colorado which aids preservation efforts. When one looks back over the evolution of American law relating to local preservation commissions, several distinct periods can now be seen. The first of these, a period of early development, lasted from the enactment of the nation's first historic preservation ordinance in Charleston in 1931 until about 1955, when the Massachusetts legislature enacted two special bills creating and protecting the historic district on Beacon Hill in Boston and on the Island of Nantucket. These two legislative bills set the stage for statewide enabling legislation for local preservation commissions in a growing number of states. Colorado benefits from this statewide enabling legislation, providing the case study cities and other similar towns, the advantage of having town preservation organizations with legal power. The great majority of court decisions have upheld the basic power of communities to use the police power to designate and regulate both historic districts and individual landmarks.<sup>106</sup>

One success to be considered is the establishment of preservation organizations. Each case study town has a variety of government as well as non-profit organizations. Often these groups work together in preserving the town's resources. The governmental legal successes include the adoption and enforcement of town ordinances and codes. All three case study towns use ordinances to guide the historic preservation review process. They assess the structures site, setback, materials, design, scale, and landscape. This has been a successful way to standardize the process for all citizens and make the town aware

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<sup>106</sup> Colorado Historical Society, Colorado Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, SHPO, National and State Registers, Publication #808.

of the process and requirements in order to receive certificates of appropriateness or building permits. The non-profit organizations have also led to success in preservation. While they have little legal effect on the buildings, they often aid in gathering materials and resources, providing histories, and seeking grant money. They are bound by the state and federal legislation put in place to govern their operation. Often they do participate on reviewing committees, but in such cases follow the town's government ordinances. Both government and non-profit organizations aid the preservation efforts in each town even though their legal mechanisms are separate and different. This allows preservation to be sought on through different approaches.

Aspen requires different levels of approval based on the amount of work intended to be done on a historic structure or area. An exempt development may be approved by the Community Development Director if it meets the criteria for an exemption in Section 26.415 of the City of Aspen Land Use Code. A minor development approval would be needed for development on a historic property that could not be exempted according to the criteria for exemptions in the Land Use Code. This would require a public hearing before the Historic Preservation Commission. A significant development approval would be needed for a major alteration, addition, or demolition of an existing historical property. A significant development approval would require a public hearing before the Historical Preservation Commission on the conceptual development plan and then another public hearing before the Historical Preservation Commission on the final development plan.<sup>107</sup> This has been a successful approach for Aspen, helping to create multiple check points during the design phase. The city uses the City of Aspen Historic Preservation Design Guidelines for purposes of review.

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<sup>107</sup> The City of Aspen and Pitkin County, 2002-2008, <http://www.aspenpitkin.com/>.

Breckenridge has implemented a process for reviewing the appropriateness of constructing or changing buildings. The plan requires the use of the town's development regulations and policies in a linear order beginning with the master plan, followed by land use guidelines, development code, handbook of design standards, and finally the character area design standards. The goal of the Historic District program is to protect the historic character through the careful preservation of the historic structures and the sensitive design of new buildings in their context. New construction and changes to existing buildings in the Historic and Conservation District are subject to review under the "Handbook of Design Standards for the Historic and Conservation Districts".<sup>108</sup>

As a statutory town, the authority for Telluride to enact zoning legislation, which controls aspects of design and development, rests in three state enabling acts: The Local Use Government Land Control Enabling Act, C.R.S. Section 29-20-101, et seq., the Areas and Activities of State Interest provisions of C.R.S. 24-65.1-101, et seq., and the Planning and Zoning provisions of C.R.S. 31-23-101, et seq. As a home-rule municipality since 1977, Telluride possesses full authority to regulate historical and architectural matters of local interest. The authority of the community to regulate such construction is a recognized right of governments in the United States, having been upheld at various levels of the courts. Special consideration is given to historic buildings in other regulations that are employed in Telluride, such as the Uniform Code for Building Conservation, which provides greater building code flexibility for historic structures.<sup>109</sup>

Through the enabling legislation and unique town codes and review processes born of it,

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<sup>108</sup> Town of Breckenridge, 2011, Historic Standards and Character Areas, <http://www.townofbreckenridge.com/index.aspx?page=498>.

<sup>109</sup> Town of Telluride, 2011, Planning Division, <http://www.telluride-co.gov/index.aspx?page=112>.

there have been many successes in instituting and enforcing historic preservation and reviewing building permits.

Because there are several significant periods in the development of each town, successful analysis of resource preservation is often difficult. Many would claim that there are few buildings left from the early mining days and thus the resources have been destroyed. Others might argue that those early mining structures were intended to be temporary and thus demolition was inevitable. Some may claim that the later Victorian buildings or early skiing establishments are of the greatest importance. The priority of importance of significant structures may be subjective. I have chosen to examine early Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the earliest buildings and the National Register for Historic Places listings for more modern construction. Both of these documents provide a good record of historic structures, taking a variety of significances into account. Each case study town is depicted in early Sanborn Maps that were updated every few years. These provide a clear view of early development and documentation on historic buildings, allowing a clear comparison to current structures. The National Register list begins several years after the Sanborn Maps and encompasses the significant structures for the town including all periods of significance. By comparing the number of sites with other similar non resort towns, one can view the impact the development as a ski town has had on preserving historic resources.

Telluride has had marked success in preserving its historic resources. Because of its activist minded population, Telluride was one of the first cities in Colorado to recognize its historic resources and take action to preserve them. Much of the early work was done to protect the town initially from modern mining damage and later ski resort

development. Because the town has preserved so many of its early structures, it has a strong base of historic resources leading to success in other aspects of preservation. The early Sanborn Maps show the development pattern of the town that can still be seen in today's historic district. The earliest Sanborn Map from 1886 shows the key street development as well as the Pandora Reduction Mill and two other ore processing plants.

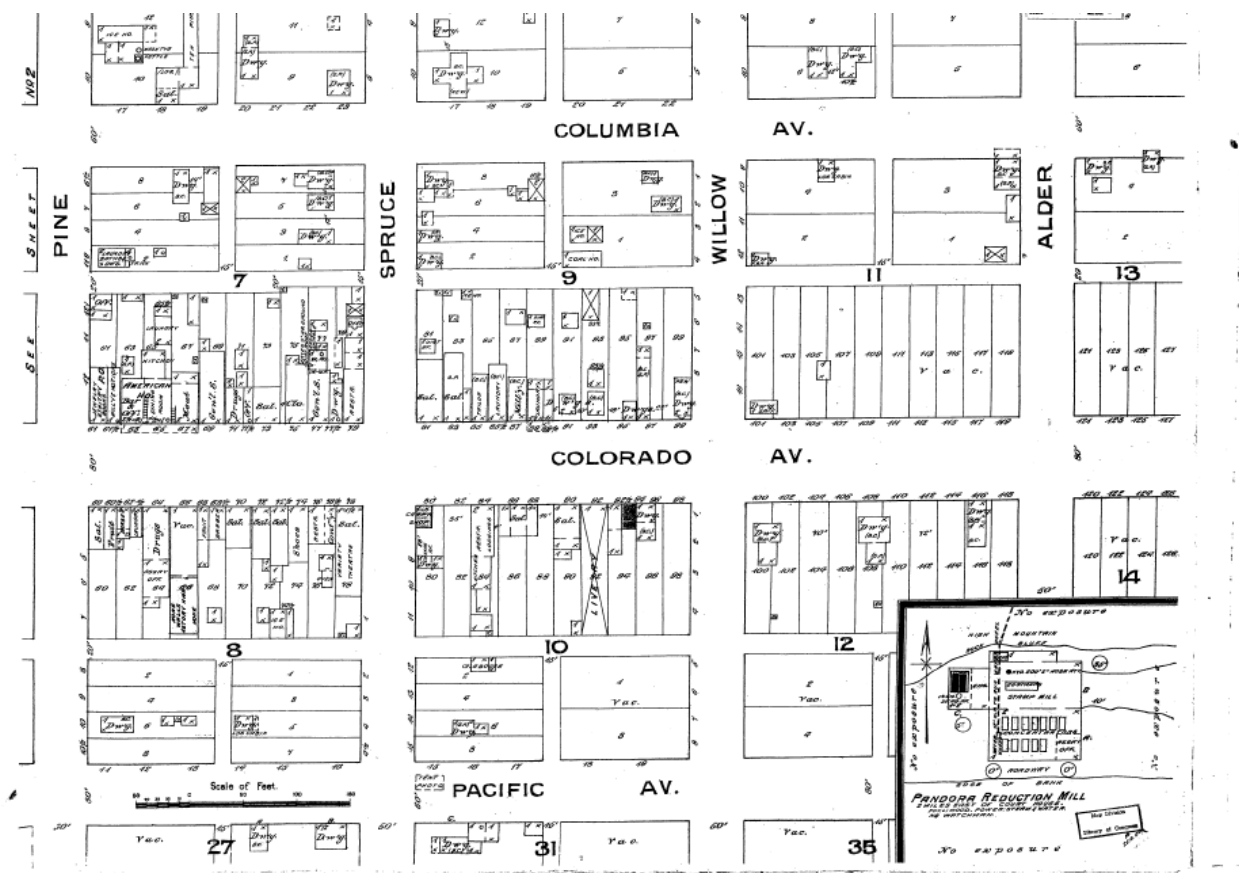


Figure 4.1 –Telluride Sanborn Fire Insurance Map-1886  
Sanborn Map & Publishing Co. Limited, c.1886, New York.

The maps in 1890 depict some town growth and include the Sheridan Mine as well as the surrounding processing plants. The next map is 1893, which shows continued growth, the addition of mines, and the railroad. The final 1899 Sanborn Map shows the town's further growth, documenting many of the important structures that remain today. Among

these is the Sheridan Opera House, which is the center of Telluride's current cultural climate. This 1899 map depicts the town population change from 1,000 in 1886 to 3,000 in 1899. These maps allow examination of growth and construction of structures and identification of buildings which exist as historic structures today.

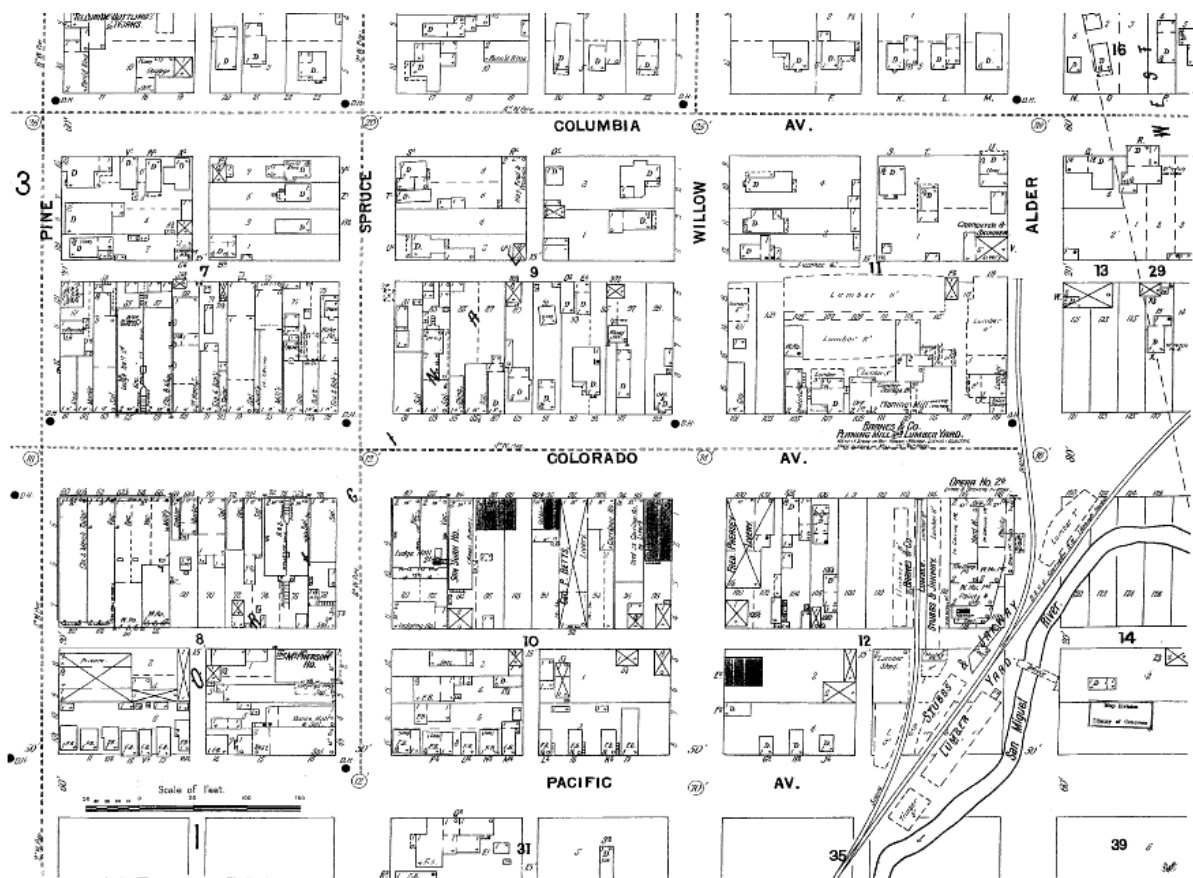


Figure 4.2 –Telluride Sanborn Fire Insurance Map-1899  
Sanborn Map & Publishing Co. Limited, c.1899, New York.

A close look at a map of the historic structures of Telluride shows how very little has changed. The town of Telluride conducted the Telluride Historic and Architectural Survey in 1986 and then again in 1997 using funds from the National Historic Preservation Act, administered by the National Park Service, the Department of the Interior, and the Colorado Historical Society. The maps show the tremendous

preservation efforts of the town, including the preserved historic structures, the interior easements, and the important districts and contributing structures. Also the growth limit map illustrates the boundaries of growth, showing there is not much land available for further development due to National Forests, leases, wilderness, and the resort.



Figure 4.3 –Telluride Growth Limit Map  
Telluride, CO.

When the latest historic Sanborn maps are compared to the more modern Telluride Historical and Architectural Survey, the growth and development of Telluride is evident. The plan and layout are much the same. While there are significantly more structures, many of the historic buildings from the earlier maps have been preserved and are still utilized today. An analysis of the survey reveals that there are around 205 structures contributing to the historic character of the town. While these may include anything from downtown commercial buildings to dependencies and historic sheds, many

of them can be identified on the early insurance maps. Another 104 structures are classified as supporting the historic character. They may not have maintained their historic integrity or may have been composed of a compilation of other historic materials; however they contribute to the over all character of the town. When combined, these nearly 300 structures make up a majority of the historic overlay district, leaving roughly 135 non-contributing structures. Many of the buildings have large, outsize additions. The historic core of Telluride uses the HARC and design guidelines to attempt to limit this practice. Because of this, many of these larger, somewhat incongruous buildings can be found in the newer Mountain Village development. In addition to the contributing structures, the survey recognizes at least 177 local historic landmarks, three of which also maintain the unusual interior easement. Due to strict design guidelines, it is very challenging to build new construction within the historic district. Because of this much of the towns charming, historic character remains intact.



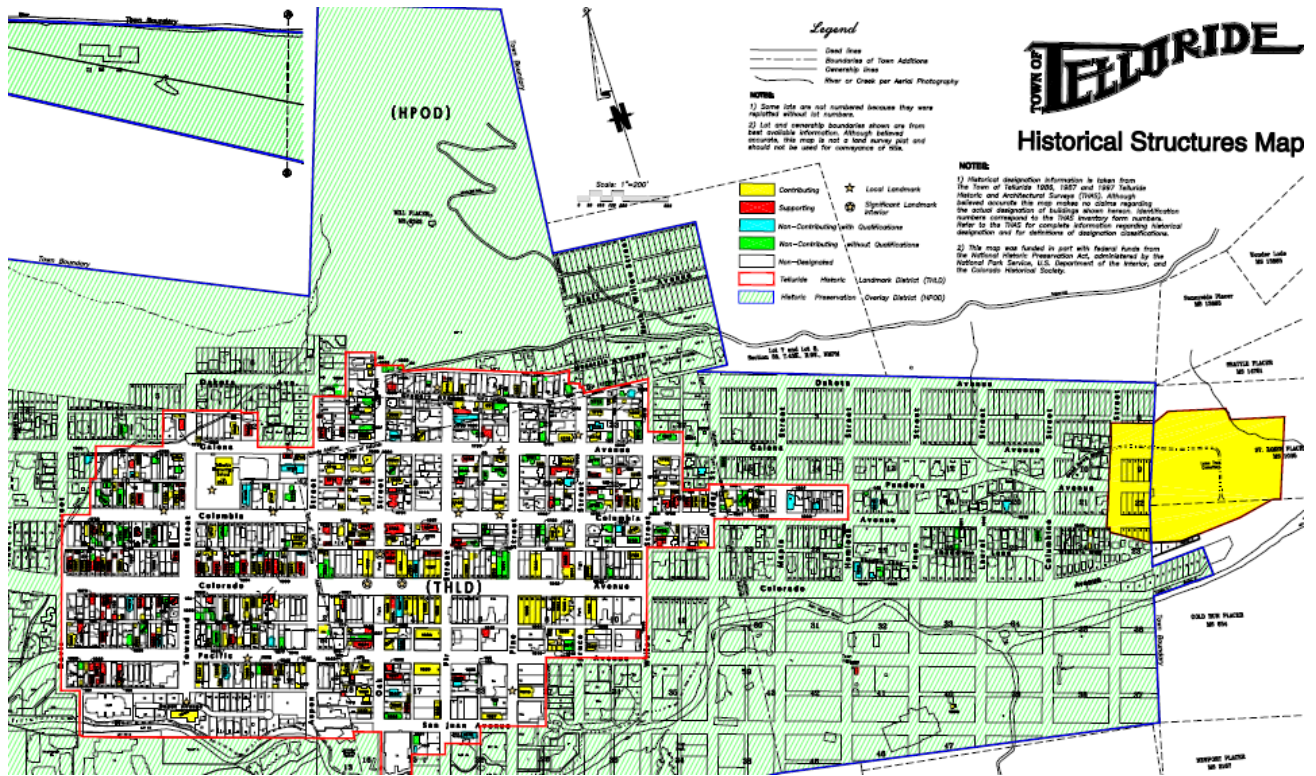


Figure 4.4 –Telluride Historical Structures Map-1997  
 Foley Associates, Inc. c.2008, Telluride, CO.



Figure 4.5 – Enlargement of Telluride Historical Structures Map-1997  
 Foley Associates, Inc. c.2008, Telluride, CO.

Breckenridge has also had significant success in preserving its historic resources.

The Sanborn Maps depict the development of the town. The first map from 1883 shows the main street and the Keystone Bullion Company and lists the population as 2,500. The 1914 maps show the continued development of Main Street and town, as well as the addition of the railroad and other mining industries. This map also shows a steady population decline to only 1,000 people in 1914.

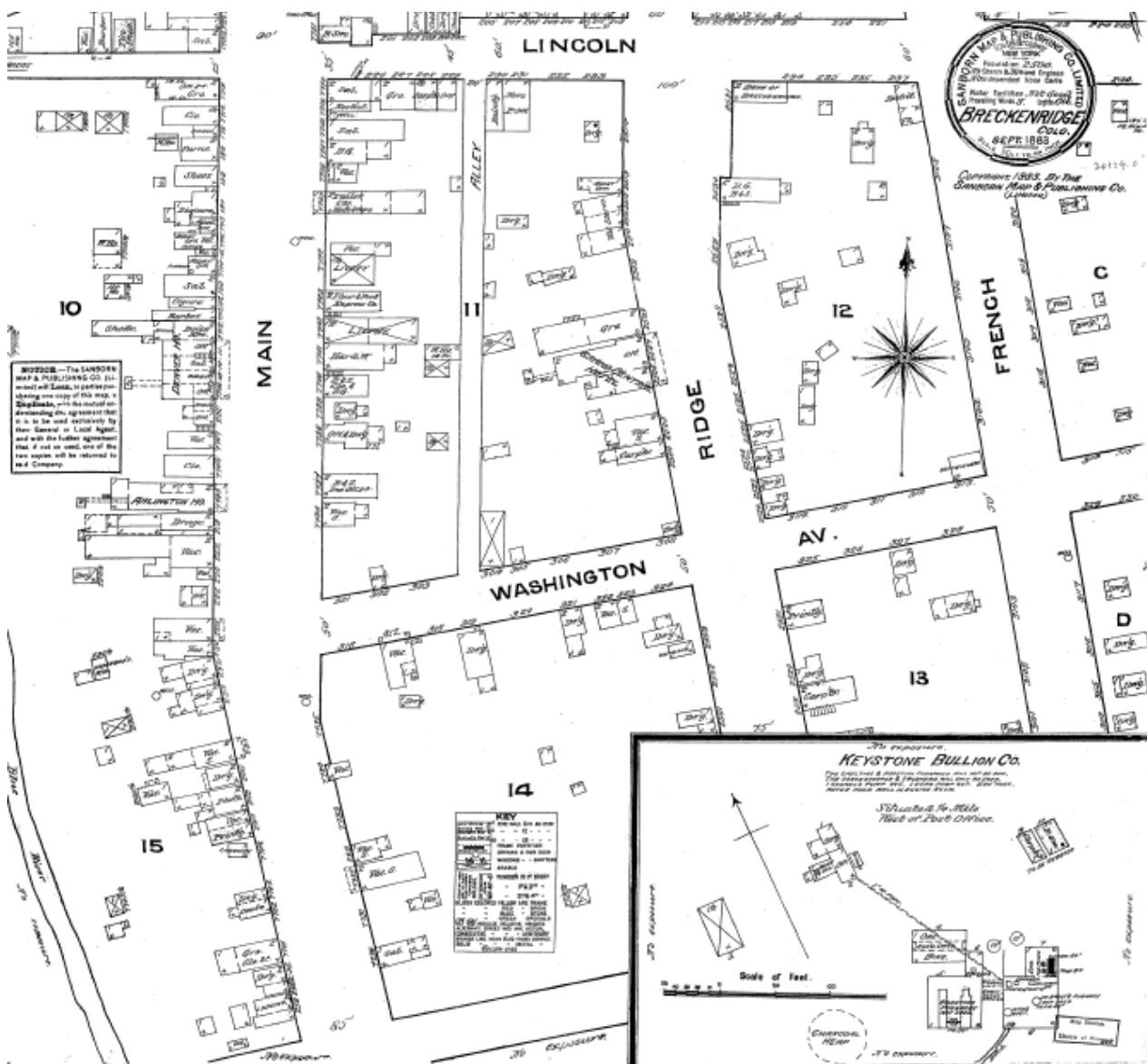


Figure 4.6 –Breckenridge Sanborn Fire Insurance Map-1883  
Sanborn Map & Publishing Co. Limited, c.1883, New York.



Figure 4.7 –Breckenridge Sanborn Fire Insurance Map-1914  
Sanborn Map & Publishing Co. Limited, c.1883, New York.

Unlike Telluride, where the outlying mining areas have continued with production of ore and have seen some influence of preservation, Breckenridge focused only on the preservation of its core historic district, encouraging other types of contemporary development outside of that area. Many early mines and mining structures have been lost, as they were located outside of the central historic area. Most of the town's

preservation effort came with the ski development boom and was instituted as a way to encourage tourism. Also because of the growth limit lines from National Forest land and the resort, there is limited land accessible for new building. Fortunately, although the preservation efforts were made for the purpose of heritage tourism, they ultimately achieved the goal of maintaining Breckenridge's historic resources.

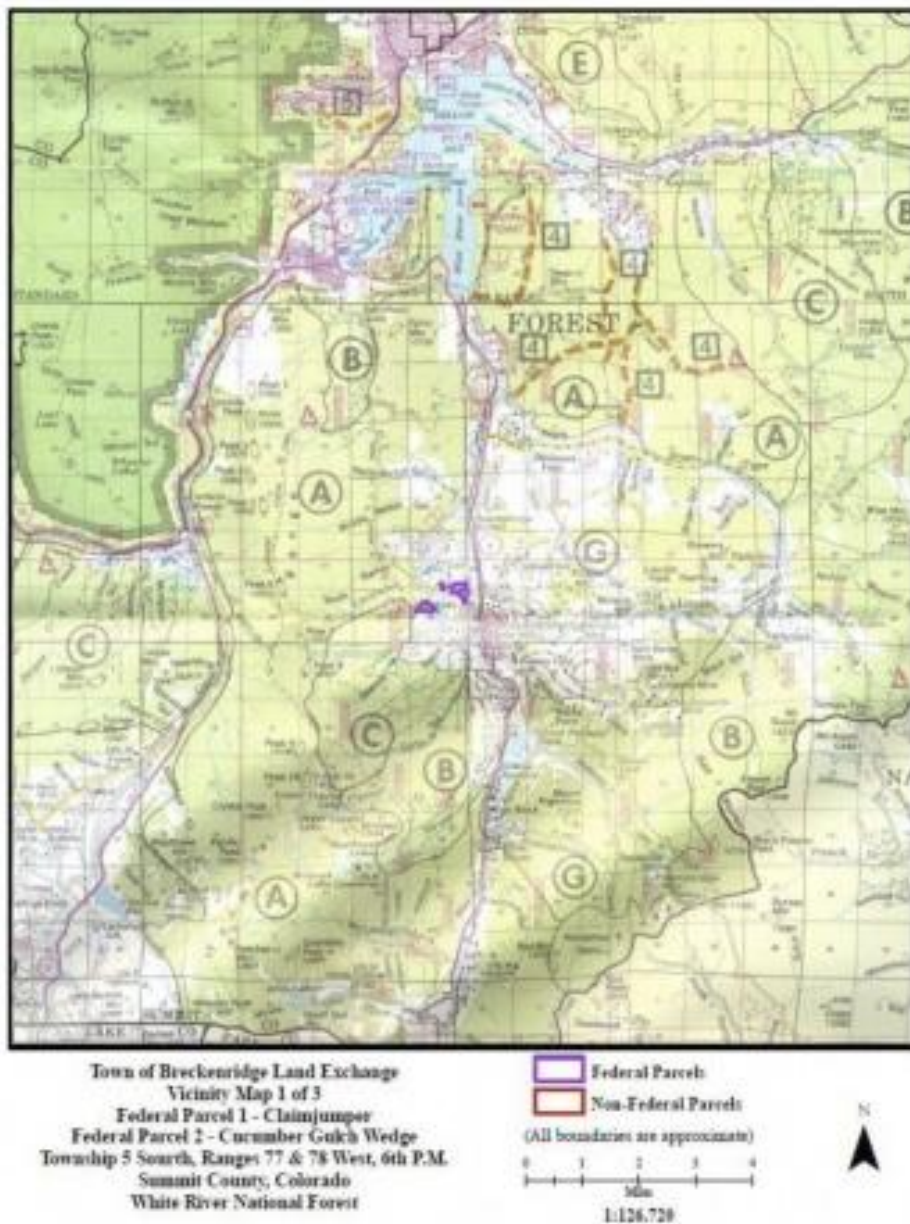


Figure 4.8 –Breckenridge Growth Limit Map  
Breckenridge, CO.

In recent years Breckenridge has taken significant strides to protect its historic resources. In 1980 the National Park Service listed the town as a Historic District on the National Register. In 2000, Breckenridge became a CLG, taking control of its historic preservation initiatives. Currently 23 historic properties are listed as local landmark designations through the town's local preservation program. As part of Breckenridge's preservation plan, in 2006 the town hired a heritage tourism consultant to advise the town on how to better develop a heritage tourism series. An emphasis was placed on celebrating the town's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2009. Through this initiative Breckenridge Heritage Alliance was formed and plans were made for the overall improvement of the town. In addition to making a 20 year comprehensive plan, the town instituted the Neighborhood Preservation Policy, in an attempt to limit the size of single family homes outside of the Historic District. These plans have enlarged the area that is receiving consideration for historic preservation. There is hope that through the expansion of the historic character areas and transition areas, as well as by limiting the number of new construction building permits in the historic core, that Breckenridge will continually add properties to their local historic register and see the benefit of preserving their historic resources.

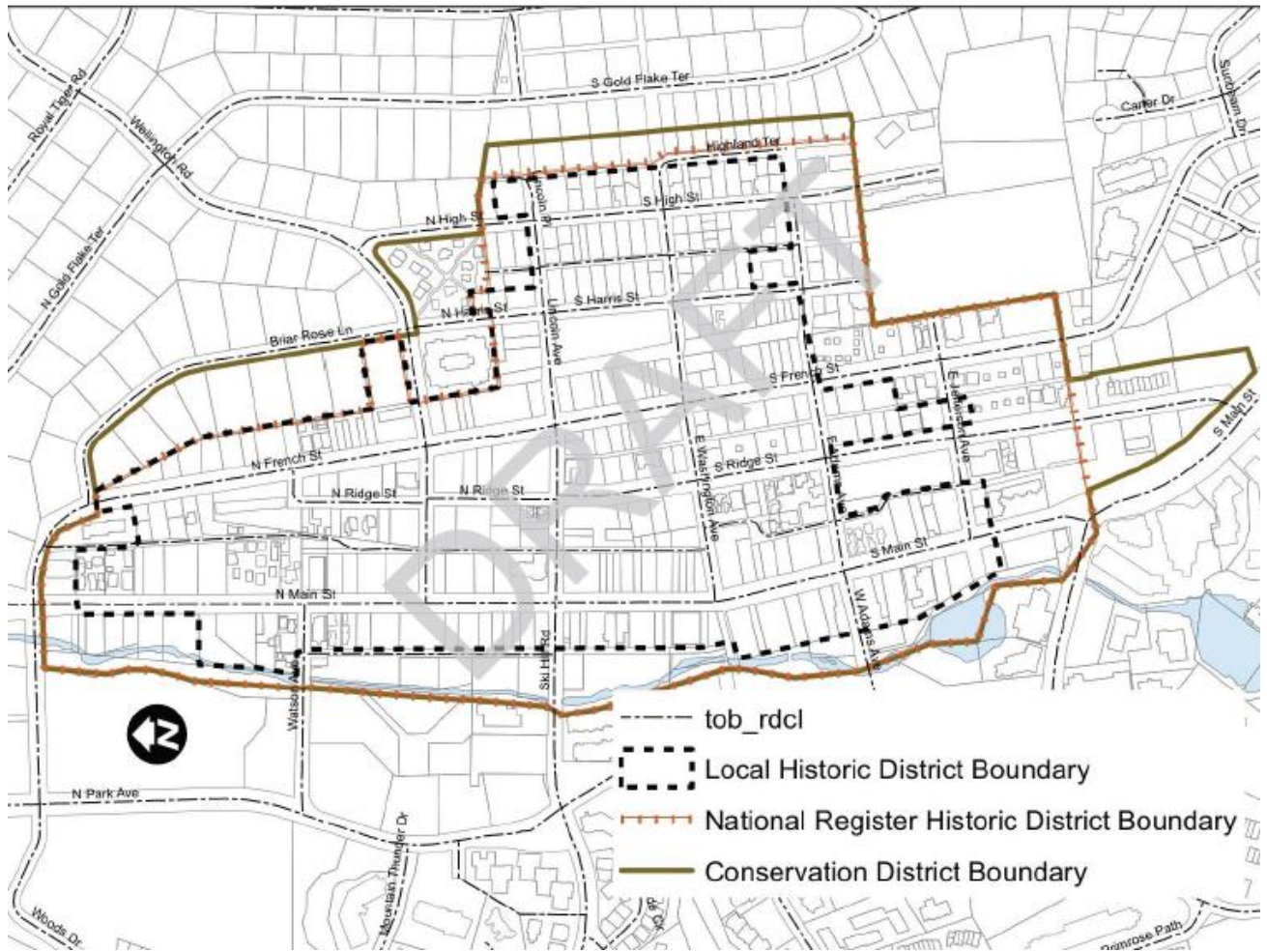


Figure 4.9 –Breckenridge Historic Districts Map – Draft for Approval  
 Handbook of Design Standards for the Transition Character Areas of the Conservation  
 District Breckenridge, Colorado, 2011.

## CHARACTER AREAS MAP

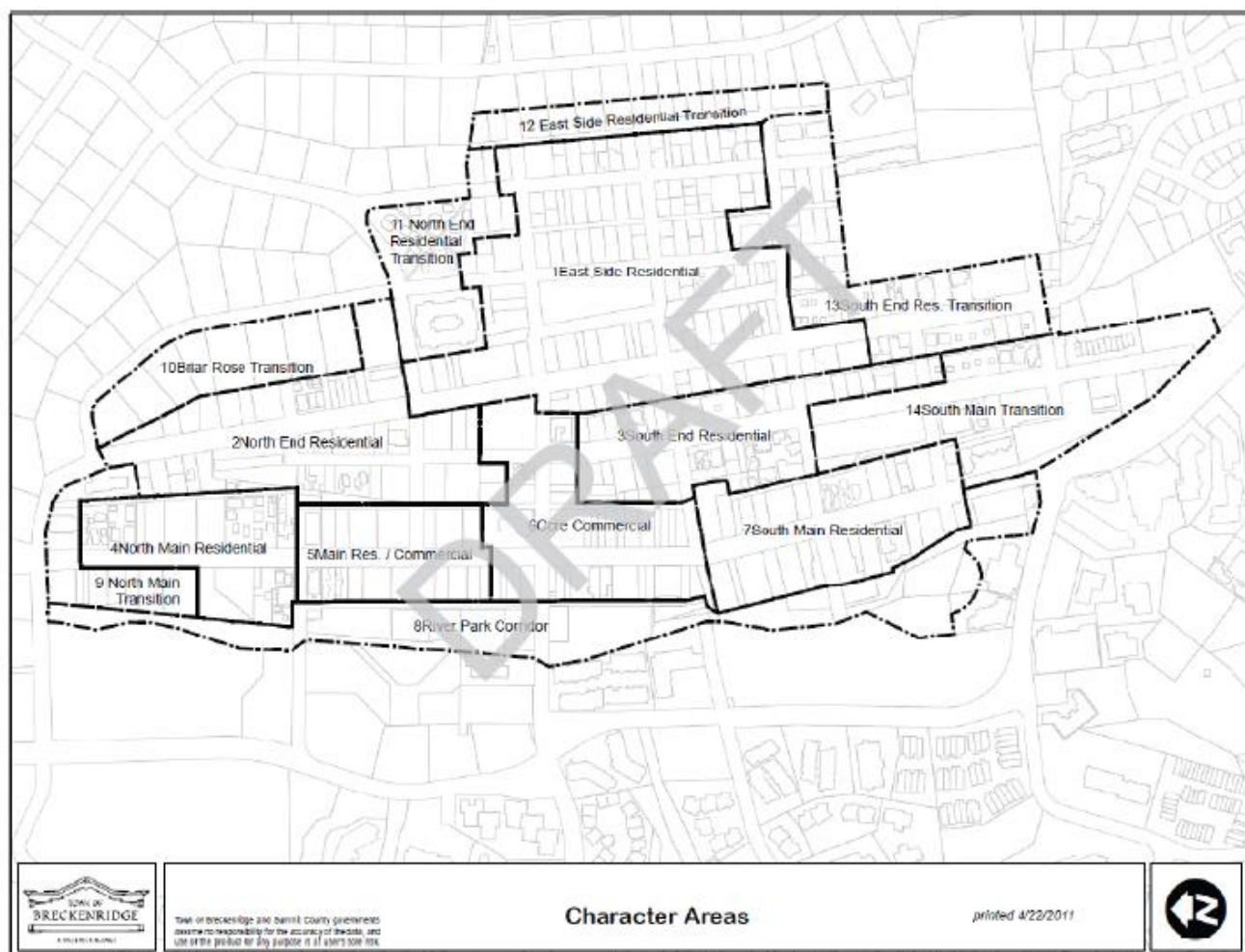


Figure 4.10 –Breckenridge Historic Character Areas Map  
 Handbook of Design Standards for the Transition Character Areas of the Conservation District Breckenridge, Colorado, 2011.

The city of Aspen has faced the most difficult struggle in preserving their historic resources. Aspen has Sanborn Maps dating from 1886 and 1904. In each map the population remains around 5,000 citizens. The 1904 map shows a variety of structures and many outlying mining facilities. However, Aspen’s layout and size is apparent in both maps, depicting it as much larger than Telluride and Breckenridge in terms of its core downtown area.

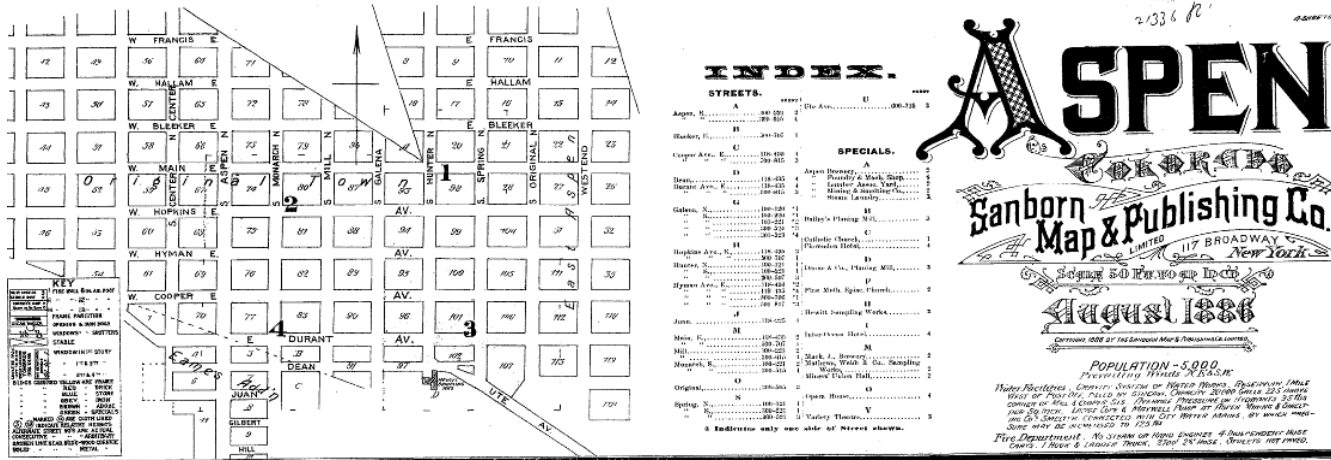


Figure 4.11 –Aspen Sanborn Fire Insurance Map-1886  
 Sanborn Map & Publishing Co. Limited, c.1886, New York

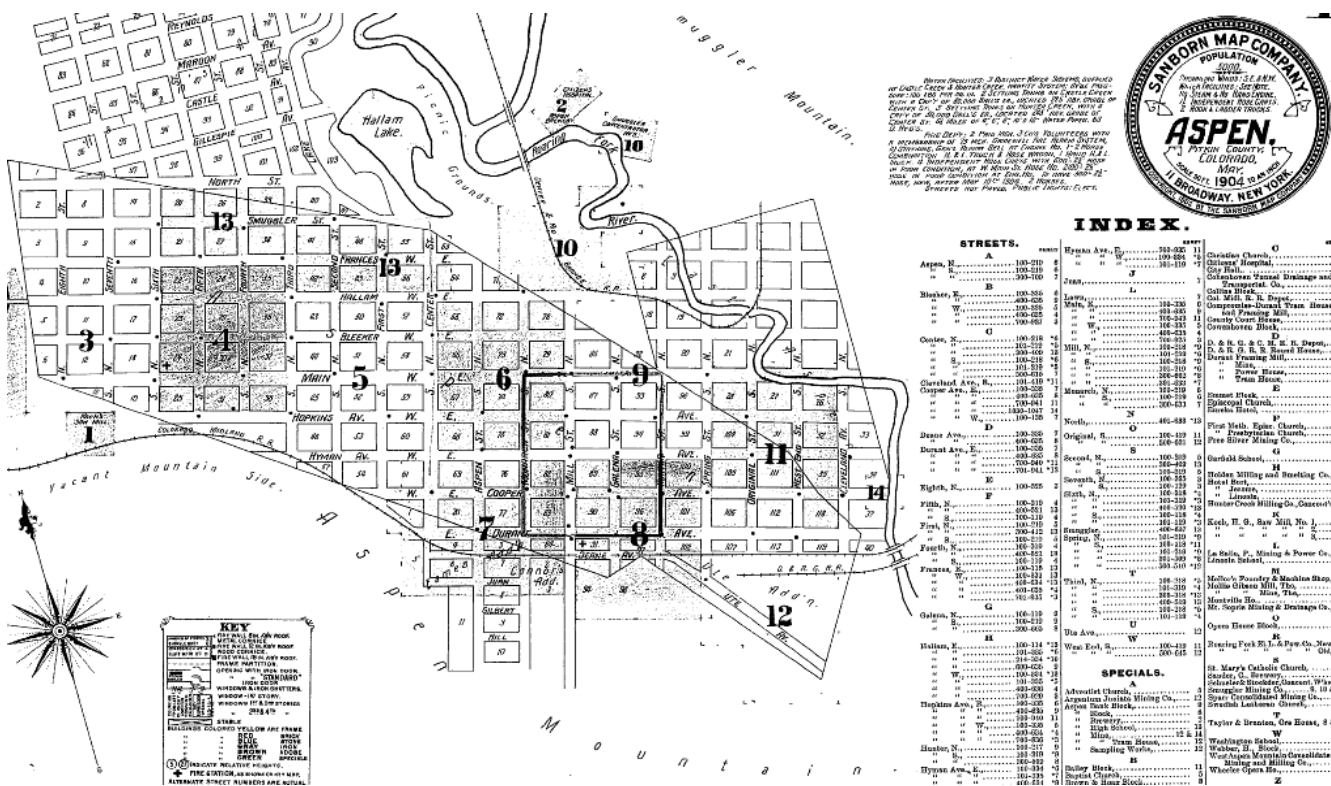


Figure 4.12 –Aspen Sanborn Fire Insurance Map-1904  
 Sanborn Map & Publishing Co. Limited, c.1904, New York

Aspen’s struggle has been in its lack of legislation and its choice not to pursue a

National Register District. With few local guidelines, the town has allowed chaotic

unfettered growth. Aspenites have demolished many antique Queen Anne houses and



miners' cabins to build ever bigger and more modern monsters that look more like hotels than homes. With some of America's most expensive average home prices inspiring speculators and status seekers, Aspen has demolished even the home of Walter and Elizabeth Paepcke, who transformed the town into a cultural Mecca.<sup>110</sup> Many have taken to calling the town a “glitter gulch”. Although Aspen has lost much of its mining history, the town has begun to make strides in preserving their remaining history. The Aspen Modern initiative, a plan to bring awareness to the historic importance of Aspen’s modern architecture, has added a number of mid-century modern buildings to the National Register. The town also maintains several other National Register properties. Aspen is now attempting to preserve its historic resources. Some claim it is “too little too late” and that much of the significant material has been destroyed. Others believe that while it is late, Aspen has shifted its focus, and now has a unique plan for preserving what remains. The city currently has 280 properties that are designated locally.<sup>111</sup>

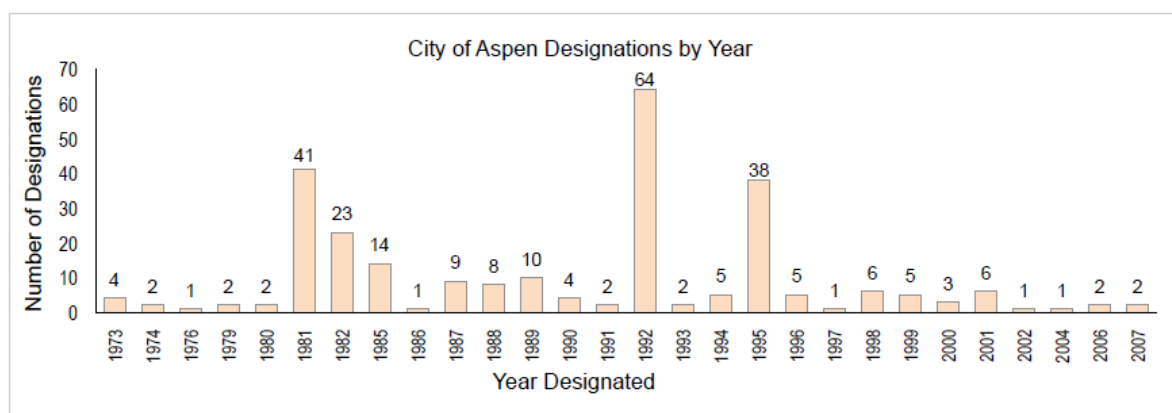


Figure 4.13 – The City of Aspen Historic Designations by Year  
State of Aspen Report, Historic Preservation, (Aspen: Community Vision for the Aspen Area, 2008).

<sup>110</sup> Tom Noel, “Noel: The Salvation of Ski Towns,” *The Denver Post*, January 28, 2011.

<sup>111</sup> State of Aspen Report, Historic Preservation, (Aspen: Community Vision for the Aspen Area, 2008).

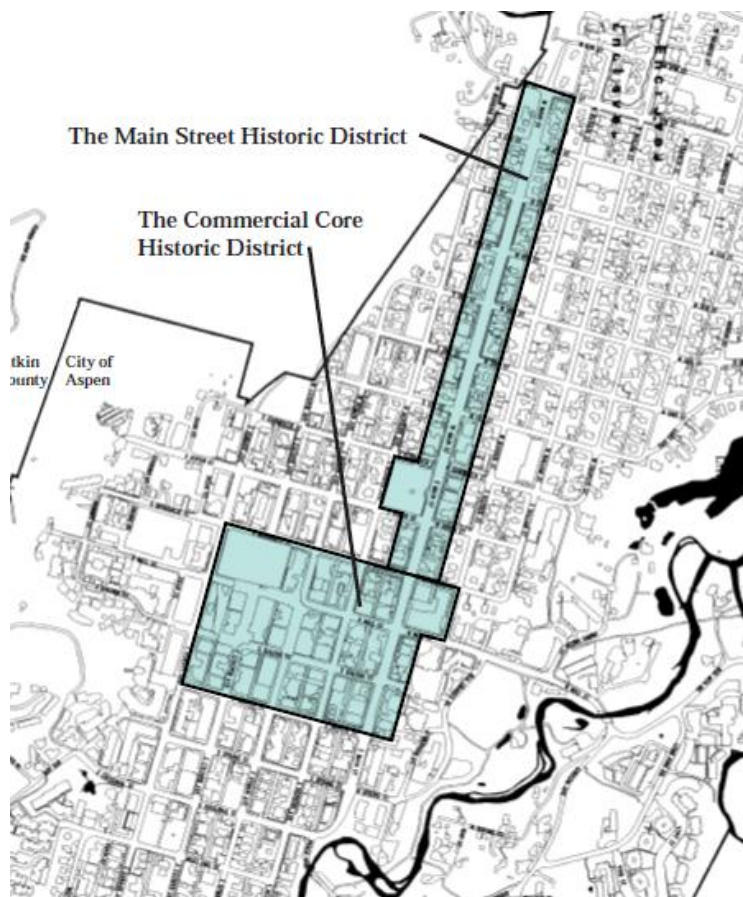


Figure 4.14 – The City of Aspen Historic District  
The City of Aspen and Pitkin County, 2002-2008

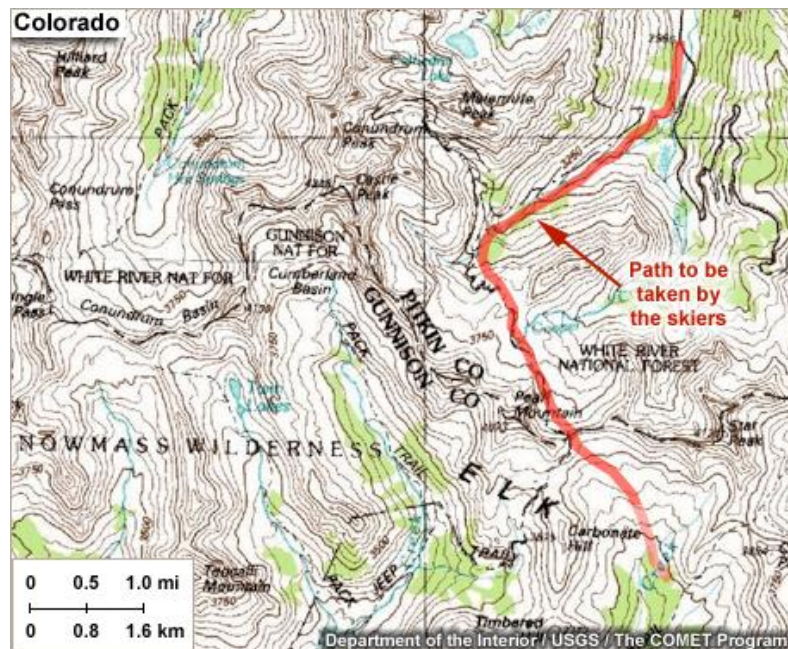


Figure 4.15 – The City of Aspen Limit Growth Lines  
DOI, Colorado

Another success has been the interpretation of preserved resources. Devoid of interpretive methods, attention could not be drawn to these historic resources. Each town has approached interpretation differently, achieving various results. Telluride has employed a variety of interpretation methods, including extensive signage, walking tours and trails, history museums, and local programming. The town has provided extensive interpretive signage. This has created a walking trail through town which is utilized in both winter and summer months. Multiple historic properties are also open for visitors. Unlike Breckenridge with its house museum approach, Telluride uses these historic properties for town businesses. The New Sheraton Opera House currently houses a high end historic hotel, a steak house and uses the opera stage to screen movies. They have also converted the historic town hall and miners union into government buildings. This approach is harmonious with the preservation efforts of the town because the buildings are in use, they bring in profit and tax dollars and they add to the charm and historic character of the town. In addition to the historic buildings, private entities have embraced heritage tourism. The Idarado Mining Company has created a nature walk through the valley floor of the box canyon with interpretive trail signage indicating the historic sites and explaining technological advancements made in the area. Even the ski resort utilized historic mine structures and equipment on the mountain as a way of educating and providing a unique experience to visitors. Telluride's interpretive methods are a good example of creating a varied way to expose a diverse audience to history and the preservation efforts taking place in the town. Breckenridge has opted to use historic guided walking tours, expanding their goal of heritage tourism. They also have erected signage and opened historic sites as museums. At many of the historic properties owned

by the Breckenridge Heritage Alliance, costumed guides provide a live interpretation. This has become popular with families and has been a large draw for tourists in the summer months. By placing artifacts like old mine buckets and a rotary snow plow and train engine in public parks, visitors are also able to explore Breckenridge's history on their own. The dredge boat reconstruction serves as an interesting destination near the town's center and is surrounded by walking trails that must be passed between town and the ski hill. These interpretive methods contrast with Telluride but work effectively for their location. Aspen has fewer interpretation methods but does have historic museums and town signage. Because a significant part of their historic interpretation is the ski development era, much of the original fabric is still available for visitors to experience. One area of interesting interpretation is the Aspen cemetery, as it is open to the public and can be journeyed through much like a park. The interpretive methods are varied and often reflect the overall goal and dedication of the preservation initiatives in each town. While each city has found success with their interpretive methods and is able to convey information effectively, there is always room for re-evaluation and the addition of other techniques.

Heritage tourism has also played an important role in the preservation of each of these towns. Heritage tourism is a derivative of both the resort development as well as the preservation of historic resources. One of the major initiatives of the Colorado Tourism Office is to raise awareness of and appreciation for Colorado's heritage tourism assets.<sup>112</sup> Breckenridge has made heritage tourism a town goal, claiming that it brings in patronage and money. Telluride has experienced heritage tourism as a result of their

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<sup>112</sup> Colorado Tourism, 2011, Heritage Tourism, <http://www.colorado.com/industrypartners/HeritageTourismProgram.aspx>, (accessed September 18, 2011).

preservation efforts. Aspen's historic resources have been recognized through recreational tourism. While most people do not visit Aspen for its cultural aspects, many visitors participate in them once they have arrived. One of the strongest pushes for heritage tourism is not by the skiing industry in winter but the property owners in summer. As a skiing destination the towns face seasonal population increase, but by encouraging heritage tourism the cities are enjoying an increase in their summer visitors.

The introduction of heritage tourism, as well as the appealing nature of the historic downtowns, make the towns a multi season destination. Summer festivals have become an off-season reason to visit. These towns divide the year into ski season and festival season, creating a year round draw. This keeps businesses profitable and employment constant. "As an economic engine, historic preservation leverages private capital, creates local jobs, revitalizes residential and commercial areas, and stimulates a wide range of economic activities."<sup>113</sup>

Aspen has a lively summer population encouraging hiking, concerts, and exclusive shopping in a rather isolated area. Telluride has perhaps been the most successful at heritage tourism and its year round draw, hosting film festivals, summer concerts (including their famous bluegrass festival), political rallies, outdoor games and sporting events, and general community activities. The idea of festivals took root in the 1970's, when the town was "heady with the idea of social change."<sup>114</sup> Today Telluride sees 1 million visitors each year, only 400,000 of which are skiers. Breckenridge is also

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<sup>113</sup> Colorado Tourism, 2011, The Economic Benefits of Historic Preservation in Colorado, [http://www.colorado.com/ai/PilotProjectOverview\\_v4.2.pdf](http://www.colorado.com/ai/PilotProjectOverview_v4.2.pdf) , (accessed September 18, 2011).

<sup>114</sup> Levek, Amy & Rolley, Dean, *The YX Factor: Telluride Colorado in the 1970's*, DVD, Tom Hayden, (Telluride, CO: Tell Me a Story Media Production, Wilkinson Public Library, 2004).

host to a variety of summer events and outdoor activities, including hiking, biking, and white water rafting.

Challenges:

As important as it is to examine and emulate the successes, it is more beneficial to learn from the challenges that these towns faced. By examining possible struggles, preservationists can better prepare. Tough challenges often require creative solutions. When no solution was evident, preservationists had to work within the confines of the situation.

The most significant battle each of these towns has faced is the gentrification of the town. With skiing being an affluent sport, many of the tourists, developers and new investors have been extremely wealthy. This wealth has created a dichotomy in the town population. With the influx of “big money” or great wealth, the real estate markets have boomed. While beneficial for the town in terms of drawing visitors and raising property values, booms have had the effect of pricing out the local citizens, creating a working class near poverty. These local citizens, who are necessary for the running of the town, can no longer afford the cost of living. Many are being forced out to small nearby towns in order to afford rent and goods, which can be found more affordably farther from the resort. Aspen and Telluride have both faced similar gentrification problems, while Breckenridge has faced a different set of challenges with gentrification due to its location closer to larger cities.

Aspen is still struggling to repair the damage, rather unsuccessfully. Aspen has some of the highest real estate values and wealthiest citizens in the county; it is known

for its extreme wealth. Even the high end retail outlets, including Prada, Burberry, and Ralph Lauren, reflect the lifestyles of its part-time citizens. Currently the average listing price for a residential property within the Aspen zip code is a little over four million dollars. When real estate values are this high it is very challenging for minimum-wage workers to find affordable housing or afford goods. Most ski towns are home to many immigrant and international part-time workers. Of the three cities, Aspen has the least diverse demographics. Only about .05 percent of the population is other than white. This number increases for the county when the demographics are looked at outside of the Aspen city limits. Among the roughly 6,000 full-time citizens there is a very low tolerance for the development of low-income housing, and other community programs that would assist struggling families.<sup>115</sup> The impact of gentrification has pushed many lower income families out of Aspen and out of Pitkin County.

Telluride has also faced division in its town. The wealthy have assumed control of Mountain Village, the new skiing and resort section of the town. Wealthy developers and part time citizens have taken control in running this new portion of town, while the historic section has fallen into the local citizen's hands. While the town portion of Telluride has also dealt with the negatives of gentrification, the citizens have been proactive to remedy the situation. Through the adoption of a home rule charter, the citizens are trying to protect the town's democracy for rich and poor. The culture of the 1960's and 1970's led to the engagement and development of 100 non-profit organizations, mostly benefiting local causes, and a land ethic is in place to fight further irresponsible development. The population of Telluride is 2,325 people and 87.3 percent

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<sup>115</sup> The City of Aspen and Pitkin County, 2002-2008, <http://www.aspenpitkin.com/> (accessed March 13, 2012).

of these people are white.<sup>116</sup> While Telluride works to accommodate middle class families better than Aspen, their average home listing was almost three million dollars. Even though there is a massive income gap in the demographics of the population, there is still a mindful effort to encourage programs to assist lower income families. Projects like the free box and other community charities work to alleviate some of the strain of gentrification.

Due to the fact that Breckenridge would probably be a ghost town if it were not for the ski resort, the town is more accepting of the gentrification. Also its proximity to Silverthorne, a larger city located on Interstate 70, and Denver, has alleviated the need for affordable housing and similar necessities in town. Even with this option, the town of Breckenridge implemented the Breckenridge Workforce Housing Program, an initiative that offers various types of affordable housing.<sup>117</sup> Breckenridge's housing market is also relatively more affordable than Aspen and Telluride's. The average listing price is just over eight hundred thousand dollars. Breckenridge has recognized a problem and taken steps to remedy the issue of gentrification in the area. While there are no clear answers to the challenges posed by gentrification, when considering town planning and the use of historic preservation as a tourism draw, gentrification should be considered. Towns proposing a historic preservation component to their comprehensive plan, should expect an increase in property values. This along with other advancements in the town and or resort may precipitate a gentrified environment. When developing an initial plan, towns should consider this and plan for the lower-income working class that will also be required to live locally and be integral to the community.

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<sup>116</sup> Telluride, Colorado Census, 2000, 2010.

<sup>117</sup> Town of Breckenridge, 2011



The real estate market is not the only town aspect affected by gentrification. It has also led to other serious problems including the introduction of a complex drug culture, immigrant communities, a rise in prices for most goods, including groceries, gas, materials, etc., and a division among the population. Over the last few decades, a cultural shift has taken place in many ski towns due to the abundance of or lack of money. Telluride faced a serious drug problem beginning in the late 1960's. Marijuana was very common throughout town, but in the 1980's as real estate developers began to invest in Telluride, they brought cocaine and chose to live in an alternate reality.<sup>118</sup> It took a very strict sheriff and years of work to expel much of the drug culture from town. Today it is still considered a drug "friendly" town, with legalized dispensaries throughout town. These cultures can often have an effect on the types of visitors. Immigrant communities are often another challenge that ski towns face. Many South American countries send young workers for the seasonal jobs that can be found in ski towns. These transient citizens often do not have the investment in the town or the commitment to the town of its full time residents. This apathy can lead to discord between the town's residents. Cost of living also can be a challenge to residing in these ski towns. The economic divide can be seen, even in the simplest things, such as use of the free box.

Another challenge posed to historic preservation in these resort developments is the loss of historic integrity. As discussed earlier, many of the structures were intended to be temporary and thus are no longer standing. The mines are facing neglect and closure due to safety, environmental concerns, and general lack of need. As seen in Aspen, many of the important historic resources have been demolished to make way for

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<sup>118</sup> Levek, Amy & Rolley, Dean, *The YX Factor: Telluride Colorado in the 1970's*, DVD, Tom Hayden, (Telluride, CO: Tell Me a Story Media Production, Wilkinson Public Library, 2004).

the much more profitable and “glamorous” buildings. This loss of integrity is a difficult issue. Due to lack of early public education many important buildings were lost because citizens didn’t recognize their historic value. Each town must choose how they wish to handle the loss of these resources. Some choose not to draw attention to the loss at all, recognizing the blunder of the resource destruction and not wishing to draw attention to it. Aspen works much in this manner. They realized the value of their historic resources too late to save the oldest ones. Rather than point out the loss of these resources they have chosen to focus on the interesting mid-century modern resources that still exist. Other towns proudly make reference to lost sites and attempt to interpret them. Telluride has worked with the ski resort to point out old mining areas and equipment. While much of the historic fabric is lost, the history can still be shared through the remnants. In some cases this portrays a rather “romantic” idea of historic mining towns. The loss of historic integrity should be covered in a town plan and protections enacted to stop further loss.

Another challenge to preservation is traffic management. These towns were never larger than a few thousand people in the early days of historic significance. Today the population and number of people visiting these towns is substantially more, reaching up to one million in a year. This has impacted traffic flow through town, how the volumes of visitors are dealt with, including developments to house them, and increased need for parking. The resorts have also increased the traffic on major roadways, such as I-70, creating challenging travel at times. The city of Aspen has one major street that leads into and out of town. This street has stop lights and is often jammed with traffic during the busy months. Breckenridge and Telluride, both much smaller towns, have better traffic flow but face issues with parking. Due to Breckenridge’s close proximity to

Denver, many day commuters come to ski and must park for the day. These large lots have taken up a significant amount of the historic area of town. Many of these towns only have one way in and out, leading to difficulties in accessing the town. Hiring a planner may help to devise solutions with traffic management. When a comprehensive plan is laid out for a proposed resort development, consideration of traffic flow, and parking should be taken into account.

Additionally, related challenges include environmental impacts. As a result of further development as well as impact from the mines, the environment faces significantly changing conditions. Fears of forest depletion, contaminated water shed, and the removal of wildlife habitat are a concern. The Idarado Mining Company in Telluride still produces a minimal amount of ore each year in order to avoid legally required remediation should the mine cease to function. Breckenridge faces increased traffic from I-70 leading to a decrease in environmental air quality. All of the towns have active environmental groups campaigning for protections as well as city run initiatives to lessen the environmental impact. One of Colorado's greatest draws is its natural beauty. Mining, deforestation, and other industries threaten this important commodity. When planning for an historic area, consideration should be given to these resources and cultural landscapes. Environmental factors often indirectly and directly affect historic structures and their preservation.

While there remain many challenges to these specific mining and ski sites, a preservation attitude has prevailed. Preservation successes have demonstrated that historic preservation is important to the culture of these Colorado ski towns. Most of the resorts have recognized the potential value of historic preservation in terms of increasing

visitors and thereby increasing revenue. Recognizing the benefit, many have become instrumental in the push for further preservation efforts.

## CHAPTER 5

### **Recommendations Based on Historic Preservation Practices**

Analysis of the preservation practices of the three case study cities reveals numerous positive aspects of preservation efforts. By selecting and combining the best used practices, an outline of recommendations can be created for implementation in similar towns. These recommendations may serve as a guideline for other historic ski towns seeking to preserve their mining and skiing heritage. When considering a preservation plan for a similar city, organizers should look not only at the successful efforts made but at the challenges faced when enacting such plans. This will give preservationists an idea of the struggles they may face and how best to approach similar situations.

#### Creating a Preservation Organization

With any preservation action, a concerned group of citizens is essential. If there is not a person to care what happens to the historic resources and structures of any town, they will be destroyed without any consequence. That said, most preservation initiatives have already gained support from a concerned group. In the case of many ski towns there is already an existing organization that might be consulted about preservation actions. However many smaller towns, looking to create a stronger preservation policy, may want

to create or strengthen such an organization. When forming a preservation entity, it is important to consider and include all the parties that will be affected by the enactment of preservation policies. Early inclusion allows consideration of differing perspectives from the onset. Some of the largest issues confronting preservation develop from lack of communication.

Telluride's organizations demonstrate the formation of preservation groups in a politically divided city. This division created challenges and upheaval when it was necessary to have the local government involved in decision making. During the 1970's when the slate petitioned for power of the local government, there was great division among the ideas and desires of Telluride's citizens. The Breckenridge case study shows the formation of preservation organizations out of the hopes for heritage tourism to boost profits. While the development of a group is positive, their initiatives may not have always been solely preservation minded. The Breckenridge Heritage Alliance was formed based on the advice of a heritage tourism consulting group. Drawing from the best components of each city, two organization should be formed, one involving the local government and the other a non-profit history organization. A town could also follow Aspen's example, which operates similarly, by giving design review power to the local Historic Preservation office, housed within the Community Development and code agency, while housing the historical archives and interpretative methods with the local non-profit history organization. The organizational structure of the two organizations should differ.

Based on the success of the case study towns, the local historic preservation office should consist of a small full time staff. This is generally based on the size of the

town, amount of work, and how many people the town can afford to employ. Some have only one, but two to four employees is generally most effective, as seen in Aspen. Most historic towns find the need for an architectural review committee, which will be discussed under legislation; however this board as well as the local government's preservation staff forms a strong basis for a review committee. Also like Aspen's Historic Preservation Program, the organization should consider taking on interns throughout the year to alleviate the work load and allow the development of the skills necessary for college or graduate students in a similar field of study. This is a positive approach allowing the position to become sustainable in terms of interested employees, and fostering preservation awareness in a new generation.

The non-profit history organization, separate from the town government preservation entity, usually consists of a small full time staff to run the facility, a museum, research room, or archives. Most similar organizations have a board of directors, who are usually elected and serve a multi-year term. The board, as seen in all three case studies history organizations, should be composed of people with a connection and standing in the community, knowledge of preservation or a similar field, and a desire to create change and preserve and promote history. According to Tyler, having a board allows varied input from people with different skills and also provides turnover of the managing body.<sup>119</sup>

Many preservation projects will be collaborative efforts but having different entities allows separation of architectural reviews and government business from interpretation, managing archives and fundraising. Both factions work jointly for

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<sup>119</sup> Norman Tyler, Ted J. Ligibel, *Historic Preservation: An Introduction to its History, Principles and Practice*, (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2009).

historic register nominations and the betterment of the town and protection of historic resources.

Once these organizations are formed, it is important to determine and document their goals and missions. If a preservation organization is part of the government, these documents may be part of a larger town or comprehensive plan, much like Telluride has in place with the Historic and Architectural Review Commission. Non-profit organizations may be required by federal regulations to document their mission in a specific way to receive financial incentives. In either case it is important to have a clear outline of the mission, vision, goals, and values. The document should also include the function of the organization and operational procedures. It may include guidelines, history, definitions, or important information about the town. This document should also act as a record of prior preservation processes. Depending on the document format it may also include information about architectural reviews, local, state or federal register properties or nominations, regulations and penalties, as well as procedures. This information should be made available to the public. The town should have a document providing information regarding their preservation plan and most information and necessary forms that can be found on the town's website as in each case study. The town might consider publishing its design guidelines with an emphasis on historic buildings, such as the one done by the Town of Telluride. They might also print their historic building guidelines as well as information on many of their new architecture initiatives and the historic preservation taskforce, like those available in Aspen, or similar to the Town of Breckenridge, list their historic standards and character areas on a local register posted on their town government website. The town's website should provide a complete



view of the documents used to conduct the town's preservation business and most are located within the town's larger comprehensive plan. When all parties participate at the onset of preservation action, there is generally better goal planning and understanding between all involved parties.

### Survey of Resources

Once a preservation body has been formed it is then important to conduct a survey of the town's resources. This may be done by either the government preservation organization or the non-profit one; a joint effort may be beneficial to both parties. Following an example from Breckenridge, the town may choose to fund the survey but allow the non-profit to maintain and update or in the case of Aspen the town government may want to maintain the list because of its effect on other city issues, such as zoning. Not only does a physical survey of the historic properties need to be conducted, but a survey of town resources and abilities should be included. The survey should define the period of significance, consider the historic documents available and what research may need to be done, take stock of the structures (including their condition and ownership), and determine the financial allotment available for preservation work. This can often be a complex and demanding task and may take more time and resources than initially expected. Surveys are a good starting place and give a good base line for identifying goals.

The survey is also a good place to document the preservation goals for the town and create a priority list starting with the most important or endangered properties and

resources. As this survey takes place, changes may need to be made to the preservation document of the town, based on a reassessment of needs, priorities, or goals. Many cities, following Breckenridge's example, may find that this is also a good time to hire a consulting agency. A consulting agency can help with the structure of the organization, its documentation, its research and the physical survey. At this point, the historic significance and context should be analyzed. Early identification of historic significance will aid in the development of interpretive methods.

The city may also seek to execute a survey with funding from Federal and State grants, much like Telluride. It may also be a good idea to use a general map to delineate their historic character areas like the Town of Breckenridge has done. The town should maintain and document their historic resources. Some lists are much more inclusive than others. Towns conducting a survey should do so in as detailed a manner as possible accompanied with photographs. Documentation of every step is critical and can aid future preservationists in their work. As seen in all of the case studies, plans should be made to conduct a review every few years, ensuring that current resources are re-examined and properties added if newly discovered or removed as their integrity is affected. The Aspen non-profit Community Vision for the Aspen Area is a good model for creating a review of the preservation processes and publishing a white paper to assess the state of preservation every few years. A survey is the important initial place to consider what other resources are necessary. This may also prompt the initiation of fundraising efforts. Many groups solicit donations in the form of items, space, money and time. By having a clear and organized survey, the pressing needs will be determined and priorities set.

### Preservation Legislation

While these actions may be enough to begin a local preservation initiative, taking legal action is the next step to strengthen and secure preservation goals. Creating local legal protections adds validity to the cause and serves notice to the community about the importance of preservation work. One successful approach, as seen in Breckenridge, is to include the guidelines for historic buildings as part of the local town laws or code. By creating laws or codes in favor of preservation, an architectural review committee is usually necessary. In order to receive a building permit, plans must meet the guidelines and be approved by the committee, a practice seen in all of the case study towns.

An architectural review committee can take various forms. In some cases it will be a design review; in others it may include code enforcement. As seen in Aspen and Telluride, many successful architectural review committees consist of elected positions advised by preservation professionals. The preservation positions are usually the local government's full time staff, and meetings are included in their job duties. The elected positions are generally local citizens with some knowledge of preservation, architecture, design, planning, or a related field. Telluride has the Historic Architectural Review Committee; Aspen has the Historic Preservation Task Force; and Breckenridge has Land Use Guidelines that must be reviewed by the development department in order for a building permit to be issued, all of which serve as good examples for developing a review commission. Each town has a slightly different approach that works for its locality. Depending on the town's preservation goal they may find following the format of Telluride successful, where they have given significant power to the HARC and they, in turn, issue awards and disseminate preservation information throughout town. When

forming a committee the town should consider if there is enough interest among knowledgeable professionals to field a volunteer committee, how stringent the reviews will be, and the format and frequency of committee meetings. The committee should plan to follow the legal structure regardless of personal opinions. The committee may be instrumental in helping to develop and administer these laws or codes and should work to develop the design guidelines that will be used for review. It may be beneficial for the group to meet with city planners to develop a historic preservation section in the town's comprehensive plan.

Because the number of court decisions involving local preservation commissions is continuing to grow, a preservation commission should work with staff in the city attorney's office to create a local file of court decisions involving the powers of preservation commissions. Such a file can be helpful to commission members and may save city legal staff valuable time should a challenge to the commission's power ever be made in court. The chairman of a local preservation commission should try to become generally familiar with the principles argued and decided in these cases, and may want to bring this information to the attention of the local municipal attorney who works with the preservation commission.<sup>120</sup>

As seen in Telluride, some commissions distribute to commission members notebooks with pertinent materials such as copies of the local preservation ordinance, the state enabling legislation under which it was adopted and even copies of court decisions in the state involving local preservation commissions. This information can do much to reassure preservation commission members that their goals are valid so long as their

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<sup>120</sup> Colorado Historical Society, Colorado Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, SHPO, National and State Registers, Publication #808.

actions are correct. New commission members, in particular, need to develop quickly a basic understanding of the broad issues which have been argued and decided in these cases.

Another consideration when examining the politics of preservation is determining the controlling body of the town and the likelihood of that body to change. By looking at the time when Telluride took political action in the 1970's when the population was no longer pleased with the current administration, a town can understand the dynamics of town politics. This upheaval sparked a rapid change in the politics and procedures of the town. This activism led to Telluride being one of the earliest historic districts in Colorado. The political climate can often have an effect on preservation. It will be beneficial to understand the constituency and their inclinations toward or against historic preservation. This can help the organization define how they plan to educate the town about preservation issues. When examining the legal aspects of preservation, one should consider the current situation and the potential for change, and try to encompass all the protections necessary for preservation. It is also beneficial to review any current legislation that may affect preservation or the development of new legislation.

Perhaps the most valuable legal mechanism for the town is local ordinances. A town should consider creating ordinances when developing the preservation plan. All three case studies utilize ordinances and design guidelines for review and enforcement of historic preservation. It is recommended that ordinances be created and incorporated into the town plan or comprehensive plan. A town may follow Telluride's example and specify them for each treatment area to be considered. Or a more general plan, as seen in Aspen, may benefit the town by covering areas of design regardless of location. I feel

that Breckenridge's breakdown may be helpful to a town just beginning this process because it provides guidelines of varying stringency based on proximity to areas of historic character. However the town chooses to approach the process, guidelines and legal ordinances are necessary for enforcing preservation legislation.

Another legal approach in addition to design guidelines and review committees may include special taxes, such as Telluride's hotel tax, for funding preservation projects. While the town government may play a large role in creating guidelines, they can also influence projects and programs that may indirectly aid preservation, with the creation of easements or special taxes. This has been done in each case study city. As similarly done in all three case studies, examining the relationship between the town's land holders, may provide a partnership in dealing with conservation, easements, or other land management issues. Having a firm grasp of the public land boundaries and growth line limitations, may add weight to legal arguments.

Non-profit organizations may also assist with legal issues. Because non-profits are governed by state and federal legislation, they may have fund raising opportunities the town may not, as seen with Telluride's Valley Floor Preservation Partners. They may also have the ability to step in and purchase land or take a stand, where it would be a conflict of interest for the town to do so. Forming a non-profit with these separate powers is recommended so that the town has all resources available. In addition to non-profits, elite foundations with innovative funding ideas or entrepreneurial plans may be formed, similar to those private organizations seen in Aspen. These groups may be able to provide legal assistance or funding that would otherwise be unavailable. It is

recommended to look into options such as this when examining the legal limitation of the town government.

Town legal representation should also be sought. Due to the litigious nature of society it will be beneficial to engage legal counsel for the drafting of legal documents, trying of lawsuits, or resolution of property disputes that may arise. Most of the towns examined had a board member with the necessary skills, who volunteered or prorated their legal assistance. As with the case of Breckenridge, the city might consider contracting out to a codifier, who documents the town codes and assists with the legal work of setting up a legislative preservation process. To avoid serious legal snafus the town is advised to consult legal council.

### Interpretation of Resources

The interpretation of historic resources is one of the superlative ways to promote preservation awareness. Due to the variety of historic resources and interpretive methods, approaches can take many forms. The Town of Breckenridge has developed a very popular walking tour program, using docents to guide visitors through the historic district of town, which serves as a good example. Telluride has taken the approach that interpretive signage and trails are the best ways to convey information to the public. They also have a comprehensive museum that hosts walking tours, events, and other community minded preservation activities which have proved effective and could thus be emulated. While Aspen has little interpretation throughout the city, other than a scattering of building plaques, the history society owns a number of historic properties that are open for visitors at certain times of year. Through the Aspen Modern project, the

town is working to bring awareness using creative forms of interpretation including lectures, forums, and art openings. Towns may want to consider an idea such as this to incorporate unique interpretation into their plans.

Interpretation can be diverse depending on the historic resources the town determines as significant. A variety of methods may need to be employed to determine the most effective interpretative approach. The case study towns have shown that interpretive signage and trails, unique social activities and fundraisers, docent led walking tours, and local historic sites and museums are the most effective forms of interpretation. Conducting research and focusing on a period of significance will assist in determining how best to interpret the historical resource. Interpretation could include a broad or a very narrow time span. As with Telluride and Aspen, interpretation could also include a variety of resources such as small items housed in a museum, documents from an archive, structures, districts, old travel routes and more. Each historic resource may exist in varying forms of integrity, an important consideration when dealing with visitor management. Consider what story should be told and whose perspective it should be told from. It is essential to remember who writes history and to recognize the number and types of people that could and or should be represented. Analyze the available funding and develop a plan based on the goals and available resources. Not all interpretation has to be expensive or explicitly spelled out. Sometimes a more passive approach is best. Telluride uses this approach with the interpretation of their old mining areas. There is little history or interpretation, but by skiing past the mining equipment that has been abandoned, the visitor gets a sense of the historic landscape. This is an affordable, more passive approach enabling visitors to experience history and a sense of place. It allows



the viewer to experience the romantic notion, that they are sharing an experience from the past, and thus is an effective means of interpretation. Once a course of action has been determined, execute it and then review its success. If the plan is not sustainable or does not convey the necessary message, revisit the methodology and attempt a new approach.

### Environmental and Related Organizations

Frequently other local organizations or initiatives can have a significant impact on a local historic preservation organization. All three case study cities exhibit a relationship with environmental organizations that aid preservation. In Telluride the Valley Floor Preservation Partners have highlighted how the relationship can be beneficial to both parties by using a joint effort to protect the open space in town. While these organizations may not directly affect historic preservation, they may be a strong ally in local causes. Often groups with parallel goals will communicate with each other in order to share membership bases or create fundraising opportunities. As seen with the Telluride Institute, it may be a good practice to maintain an inclusive list of other preservation organizations in the region as well as environmental or social organizations that may aid or hinder the group's efforts. The presence of related organizations can be seen and felt in each of the case study cities. Telluride is known as a city with an activist mentality and numerous non-profit, charitable, and environmental groups. Breckenridge hosts a number of environmental initiatives and has a strong local community. Due to the affluence in Aspen, there is a strong charity network. Each of these factors can benefit preservation when organizations become allies. Even without a direct connection, like-minded groups can bring awareness to preservation issues.

Another related area that can negatively and positively affect preservation is the green building movement which advocates for environmentally friendly design. With the large number of vacation homes in these vicinities, builders and homeowners are willing to be more creative in their approach to building and design. As seen in Aspen, many people and resorts are now attempting to build Leadership for Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) buildings. While this can be positive, especially for renewable resources, it can be detrimental to historic structures. Many historic structures have been removed to make room for modern, larger buildings. There is an opportunity for preservationists to take advantage of this movement and suggest rehabilitating historic structures as the ultimate form of recycling. Examples of this can be seen in Telluride and Breckenridge, where old industrial buildings and barns have been converted into desirable condominiums, studio spaces, and retail outlets.

Land conservation is another area of concern and interest for preservationists. All of the case study cities have land conservation groups working in their vicinity. These organizations can aid preservation by discouraging new development on historic sites, maintaining historic character, and preserving cultural landscapes. Telluride preserved the valley floor through a massive local fundraising effort, and historic mining areas have been saved from development through conservation organizations aiming to save the waterway, big horn sheep, and general landscape. By seeking organizations with similar goals and forming alliances, preservation groups are strengthened and the public gains an increased awareness of preservation issues.

### The Role of the Resort

In examining historic ski towns, it is important to consider the role that the resort will play in the plans of the preservation organizations. Historically there has been little interaction between the resort and preservation organizations. However, through clear communication, the resort can become an associate in preservation endeavors. The ski resorts have an interest in historic preservation because it enhances the value of unique place, as seen in all three case studies. The ski resort development can pose a large threat but it can also be an ally to preservation initiatives. Resort development may directly affect historic properties. This can be especially true with old mining areas, travel routes, cultural landscapes, and historic structures. As done in Telluride, it is best to engage in dialogues and express concerns, offering to assist with the creation of a preservation plan or providing assistance in preservation questions. Often resort property has been obtained through the purchase of private lands and has little effect on the historic resources. Even if the resort is not in juxtaposition with these resources, there is still a direct effect from the traffic and the influx of visitors. Many resorts are part of large corporations and are seeking non-profit or environmental partners for tax incentives, or as a way to improve their ethical and moral principles. This creates a prime opportunity for preservation organizations to collaborate with the resorts and garner support for local historic causes. Towns should contact the resort and discuss a joint preservation program that protects the unique sense of place, as seen in Telluride, where the resort encourages the preservation of the town's historic character. The resort may find this to be an opportunity to engage a consulting group, such as the Aspen Sustainability Associates, to develop community minded environmental initiatives. Resorts should also consider

adding a special tax allocated for preservation projects to their fees. This money could then be used for joint resort town programs, such as interpretation or visitor programs.

Consideration must be given to the impact directly and indirectly that these resorts will have on the town's historic resources. The preservation organization may enlist the resort's aid in documenting the resources. It may also be important to discuss possible impacts, such as increased traffic and parking, gentrification, real estate values, and community outlook. Telluride faced complex issues with the arrival of a ski resort. Division still remains among the town citizens over the development of the resort, as well as newer valley developments, demonstrating the need for an open relationship between town and resort. The ski resort saved the Town of Breckenridge from ghost town status and thus has power and support in the town, showing that a resort that is willing to invest in the future and growth of the town will be rewarded. Aspen's resort was initially embraced but in hindsight has been criticized for its rapid and unplanned development. It is recommended that the resort use a combination of approaches from all the case studies. The resort should embrace the town and work to further its progress both in areas of preservation for unique place and economically. This balance will allow the resort to play a significant role in town politics and to profit through tourism as seen in the case studies. Each case study provides a unique look at the relationship between resort and town. This relationship is a critical consideration in creating a successful comprehensive plan.

### State and Federal Aid

While this thesis proposes an outline for local governments and organizations, it is also important to consider the State and Federal aid, protection, and funding that can be utilized for historic preservation projects. There are numerous Federal and State programs aimed at aiding preservation efforts. Each case study city utilized assistance from both Federal and State sources.

The United States government has enacted a number of laws to provide protection to historic resources. The National Park Service, through the Department of the Interior, is the body responsible for maintaining the National Historic Register and National Historic Landmarks. Both Telluride and Breckenridge are listed in these national databases, with Telluride having a National Register District, National Register properties, and National Register Landmark, and Breckenridge having a National Register District. It is recommended that the town seek out a designation similar to those in the case studies. The city of Aspen has no such federal protections, due mostly to inaction and the lack of historic integrity. Any town with a historically significant property should work to develop a nomination. This can be done for individual properties but may be more beneficial for town character if a National Register District is attempted. Because this designation is widely known and recognized, this can add credibility and validity to local design guidelines and the process of enforcing them. These designations will also trigger a Section-106 review of the properties for proposed changes or developments that utilize Federal funds affecting the historic properties are planned for the area. Some of the resort lands may be on property leased from the NPS and so it is recommended that the town and resort explore ownership options, lease

options and the protections that each afford. The holding of land by the NPS can be seen in each case study as most of the resorts boarder or incorporate National Forests or Parks. Seeking assistance from a national or state preservation group is also advised. As seen in the case study of Telluride, in addition to the legal presence they provide, national preservation groups are often willing to lend expertise to preservation projects.

Many states offer similar protections at the state level. Every state has a State Historic Preservation Officer to execute the state preservation plan and uphold state legislation regarding preservation. This organization acts as the reviewing body for National Register nominations before they are sent for final review. In addition to the SHPO, many states have Certified Local Governments, issued through the state. Additionally, states generally have numerous historic preservation and related organizations.<sup>121</sup> All of the case study cities are located in Colorado and benefit from either a direct partnership or indirect influence from multiple state organizations. In Colorado, the Colorado History Society, Colorado Preservation, Inc., and numerous other organizations all offer major contributions in preservation efforts throughout the state. Preservation organizations are encouraged to enlist the aid of these groups as they often have better funding and are willing to share expertise, especially in areas where experts may not be plentiful in more isolated locations. All of the case study cities have used or been advised by a state preservation group. These organizations are available in each state and should be used as a resource.

In general State and Federal agencies and organizations are an excellent resource for a city attempting to enact historic preservation legislation or initiatives. These groups

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<sup>121</sup> Colorado Historical Society, Colorado Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, SHPO, National and State Registers, <http://oahp.historycolorado.org/programareas/register/1503/cty/st.htm#breck>.

are a good initial information source for gathering ideas and garnering support. State groups can be a good ally once a local organization is established. The multiple challenges of preservation efforts mandate the use of all resources available for the best outcomes.

### Conclusion

The thesis of this study aimed to define which preservation efforts implemented in historic Colorado ski towns have been successful and thus could be used for development of preservation recommendations to be implemented in other similar communities, sites with a unique character and history. Cities with other recreational draws, such as outdoor adventures or gambling, as found in Central City, Glenwood Springs, and Blackhawk, may find this thesis valuable. Indeed, through the examination of three case study cities and their preservation efforts, recommendations for comparable cities were extrapolated based on the research and analysis of each site's preservation plans.

This claim is important for a number of reasons. It is an approach to the study of preservation that is seldom used because of its scope, it provides a comprehensive overview for a specific type of city to develop a preservation plan, and it serves as an example for other communities with distinct historic characteristics to create preservation plans based on a similar method. The fact that a preservation plan can be formed by combining the positive aspects and learning from the challenges of a number of small historic cities provides a foundation on which to base future plans. Through the use of this thesis, towns may be able to ascertain the preservation path before them, allowing this document to be a catalyst for execution of further preservation work.

This thesis has discussed the various formations of preservation organizations, those groups' organizational structure, the survey of local resources, the preservation legislation implemented, interpretation methods, related environmental efforts and the impact of the ski resort development, showing both the successful preservation efforts and the challenges allowing the formation of further guidelines and creation of future recommendations. This is important because it provides a preliminary point for historic ski towns to develop an historic preservation plan, providing a distinct document that encompasses the many aspects to consider in implementing a preservation plan.

The early chapters of this document aim to provide a general history of Aspen, Breckenridge and Telluride. This is included to give context to the project as well as emphasize the importance that history plays in historic preservation. While there has been a strong focus on the mining and skiing histories of these areas, it is important to remember that those histories are just a larger part of a whole. Further research could include the technological advances, migratory patterns of inhabitants, and cultural complexities of the areas, to name a few. By following the recommendations proposed and using them as a general guideline to initiate a preservation organization or strengthen an existing program, similar cities will have a good initiation point for the further development of preservation practices.

While this thesis provides a comprehensive look at the preservation plans of historic Colorado ski towns, it is by no means an exhaustive study. The research conducted in this document and these practices can be implemented in many historic areas and contexts. Further research could be made in the examination of other similar case study towns; this concept could also be utilized in the research of other distinct



historic towns of unique character in different regions. It is my desire that this thesis works to further the field of historic preservation, to provide assistance to those looking to institute preservation practices, and to bring attention to the unique resources of Colorado mining towns, turned ski resorts.

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