

This pamphlet was prepared to provide an overview of the history, environmental conditions, clean up, and other environmental initiatives underway at the Stapleton Development Site, located in Denver, Colorado. It is general in nature and does not provide a complete detailed account of environmental conditions at the site. For more detailed information on the environmental conditions at Stapleton, please contact the sources listed on the back of the pamphlet.

For additional information, please contact the agencies listed below:

*Colorado Department of Labor and Employment,
Division of Oil and Public Safety*

Tower 3, Suite 610
1515 Arapahoe Street
Denver, Colorado 80202
Steve Noel: 303.318.8535

*Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment
Solid Waste Unit*

Hazardous Materials & Waste Management Division
HMWMD-B2
4300 Cherry Creek Dr. South
Denver, Colorado 80246
Derek Boer: 303.692.3329
Cindy Smith: 303.692.3322
Outside Colorado: 888.569.1831

Or, requests to the City and County of Denver can be submitted in writing to:

*City and County of Denver Manager of Aviation
Denver International Airport*

Airport Office Building
8500 Pena Boulevard, 9th Floor
Denver, Colorado 80429

Environmental summaries and selected environmental reports are available with respect to certain areas within Stapleton at the Master Community Association, 2823 Roslyn Street, Denver, Colorado, 80238. You may request a copy of the summary specific to your neighborhood at the Master Community Association Offices. Copies of additional documentation may be requested at a fee per page, and will be available within three business days after the request is made.

For more information concerning Stapleton development plans, please visit StapletonDenver.com.

STAPLETON

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Environmental Initiatives at Stapleton



STAPLETON



Stapleton History

Stapleton is best known for its 65 years of aviation activity. Prior to 1929, the area was primarily used by ranchers and farmers for livestock grazing and dairy cattle raising operations. In 1929, the original Denver Municipal Airport was constructed on approximately 345 acres east of 32nd (now Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard) and Syracuse Streets. Mobilization during World War II resulted in increased activity and expansion of the airport south of Sand Creek. With the arrival of the jet age, Stapleton International Airport expanded significantly, adding property to the north, west and east, and ultimately totaling 4,700 acres.

Stapleton International Airport closed its doors in 1995 when Denver International Airport (DIA) opened for business. The closure of the airport presented an enormous opportunity: the largest redevelopment of urban property in Denver’s history, right near the heart of the city.

Stapleton Development Plan

Planning for the future of Stapleton has been an ongoing process since 1989. A visionary development plan known as the “Stapleton Development Plan” (more commonly known as the “Green Book”) was published in 1995. In March of 1995, the Green Book was adopted as part of the City and County of Denver’s Comprehensive Plan. The Green Book presented a community-based vision for creating new jobs, housing, and open space on the former airport property.

While recognizing the potential for reuse, the Green Book also recognized the fact that environmental clean up of several areas of Stapleton would be required prior to development. In addition to the environmental clean up, restoration of natural features including Westerly Creek, Sand Creek, and Bluff Lake is creating desirable surroundings for future development.

Known Environmental Conditions

The types of environmental conditions discovered at Stapleton are generally typical of former airport sites. During its period of use as an airport, fueling facilities, storage tanks, and pipeline delivery systems; industrial service and maintenance centers; car rental facilities; and other airport support services were in operation at Stapleton. Environmental conditions that have required cleanup are primarily related to leaks or spills

from these fueling systems and other support services and structures. These conditions are, for the most part, centered around the former terminal, concourse, runways, and maintenance areas.

The parties responsible for cleanup have been working diligently to investigate and, as required by State environmental regulatory agencies (Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) and the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, Division of Oil and Public Safety (OPS).), clean up known areas of contamination before the property is sold or conveyed for development.

Environmental clean up of the property is intended to result in land suitable for residential use as determined by the State of Colorado’s environmental regulatory agencies. The following are the most common types of environmental conditions identified at Stapleton:

Petroleum Products. Petroleum products (jet fuel, gasoline, and diesel fuel) were detected in soil and groundwater from sources including underground and above ground storage tanks, pipelines, and hydrant fueling systems. Petroleum products, primarily jet fuel, by far, represent one of the most common types of contaminant requiring clean up at Stapleton. Areas known to be affected by petroleum products have been or will be cleaned up by the City and County of Denver prior to development.

Solvents. Trichloroethene (TCE) and other compounds commonly associated with cleaning and degreasing were identified in groundwater beneath certain areas of the site. One area of TCE in groundwater known as the “Lowry Plume” is present beneath the southwest portion of Stapleton at an approximate depth of 30 feet. The Lowry Plume originated at the former Lowry Air Force Base, approximately one mile south of Stapleton. The CDPHE determined that the areas where these compounds were detected in property sold or conveyed for development, including the property at Stapleton above and near the Lowry Plume, are suitable for residential use.

Methane. Methane discovered at Stapleton results from the natural breakdown of deicing agents used during airplane deicing activities at the former airport. Methane readily dissipates when exposed to air. The identified sources of methane above cleanup standards at Stapleton have been or will be removed. In general, residual methane remaining after the source is removed is addressed during grading and/or construction activities.

Nitrate. Nitrate is commonly found in groundwater throughout the Denver area. Its primary sources include livestock manure and fertilizers, as well as a deicing agent once used at Stapleton. Although nitrate is present in groundwater beneath Stapleton, it does not pose any known health risk because groundwater beneath Stapleton will not be used for drinking or irrigation by Stapleton residents and workers.

Asbestos. Asbestos was present in many of the old buildings and hangars, as well as in subsurface pipe and pipe wrapping at Stapleton. Asbestos-containing materials have been removed from the majority of these structures and the structures demolished. Asbestos removed from these structures and asbestos-containing pipe were disposed of off-site at a licensed disposal facility. Prior to demolition or removal of remaining structures, any asbestos will be removed and properly disposed off-site at a licensed disposal facility. Asbestos-containing materials also have been discovered in soils in a number of areas at Stapleton. These materials are present in abandoned utility structures and as a result of historical practices of using construction debris as fill material on the site. Prior to development, soil is screened for asbestos-containing materials and, if present, these materials must be removed in accordance with plans for the end land use approved by the State of Colorado’s environmental regulatory agencies.

Cleanup Plan

Environmental conditions at Stapleton are being addressed in an organized and comprehensive manner. The City and County of Denver and former airport tenants have been performing environmental investigations and cleanup activities since the 1980s. In 1999, the City developed cleanup standards for Stapleton. The goal was to develop cleanup standards that, when implemented, would result in land appropriate for residential use. The standards were developed using regulations and guidelines published by the CDPHE and OPS. These agencies reviewed and approved the City’s cleanup standards for Stapleton.

The parties responsible for cleanup have entered into contracts with companies specializing in environmental clean up to further investigate and, as necessary, clean up impacted areas of Stapleton. These activities are being conducted under the guidance of the CDPHE and/or OPS. As areas are investigated and cleaned up, soil and groundwater sampling and analysis or visual verification are conducted, as appropriate, to verify that the property is suitable for residential development. To date, soil that does not meet cleanup standards typically has been removed, hauled to an offsite licensed disposal facility, and replaced with soil that meets cleanup standards.

Like most residential and commercial developments in Denver, the Denver Water Department will supply water to Stapleton property owners through the City water system. The City water system must meet federal and State water quality standards. Because property owners at Stapleton are prohibited from drilling groundwater wells for any purpose, including drinking water or irrigation some compounds above cleanup standards for drinking water will be allowed to remain.

Once the regulatory agencies have confirmed that the investigation and clean up are complete, and the property meets approved cleanup standards, the regulatory agencies issue letters stating that the property requires no further action and is suitable for residential development.

For further information about a specific area of Stapleton, please contact the offices of the Master Community Association or your Stapleton home builder.

Other Stapleton Environmental Initiatives

There are many other initiatives underway or planned for Stapleton that will benefit the environment, including:

- *More than 1,100 acres of parks, trails, recreation facilities, and natural areas.*
- *Restoration of prairie and riparian corridors to increase the wildlife habitat provided at Stapleton.*
- *Planning of mixed-use communities that are walkable, bikable, and transit-oriented, thus reducing the dependence on automobile transportation.*
- *Housing at Stapleton meets or exceeds Energy Star standards, meaning that environmentally sound construction practices will result in homes with increased energy efficiency. Commercial and retail development will use other guidelines to build high-performance buildings, including LEED certification in some instances.*
- *Infrastructure planning and design stresses water reuse, energy and water conservation, renewable sources of energy supply, and innovative storm water management approaches to maximize water quality improvement.*
- *Old runways are being recycled and made into materials that will be used in roadways and other hardscaping at Stapleton.*
- *More than 200,000 tons of asphalt from airport parking areas and commuter runways were recycled and used as road base at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge.*
- *A City recycling program of household goods and trash is available to all residents and commercial facilities at Stapleton, and a City composting program is available in selected residential neighborhoods at Stapleton.*

Environmental Introduction

This informational pamphlet has been reviewed by the CDPHE and OPS.

