

News & Success Stories from Around the Region

June 2019



Town of Breckenridge creates Destination Management Plan aimed at balancing quality of life and growing tourism

source: Summit Daily News 5/16/19 by Eli Pace

Imagine what Breckenridge might be a decade from now. What does the town look like? How does it function and balance quality of life issues for the people who live here against boosting experiences for the tourists who comprise the lifeblood of the local economy?



Tourists pass the "Syncline" metal sculpture at the Riverwalk Center in Breckenridge on Wednesday, June 20, 2018. Hugh Carey / hcarey@summitdaily.com

Research shows rapid growth in the travel industry is overwhelming iconic destinations like Breckenridge, not just across the U.S., but worldwide. All that growth is causing considerable friction between residents, governments, tourism organizations and the tourists themselves. Left unmanaged, the rise in tourism can undermine residents' quality of life and erode visitors' opinions of a destination, according to officials at the Breckenridge Tourism Office. With this in mind, the BTO began soliciting community feedback over two years ago, and that feedback has made its way into a new destination management plan. Breckenridge Town Council unanimously ratified the plan and the four strategic goals detailed within it: (1) delivering a balanced year-round economy by 2024; (2) fiercely protecting Breckenridge's character; (3) having fewer cars on the roads; (4) making the town a leader in mountain environmentalism. The continued development of sustainability initiatives is another consideration - as is experimenting with modern co-living and micro-housing designs - in addition to more support for local nonprofits. [Read full story here.](#)

First-Ever Techstars Startup Week on the Western Slope pushes innovation, investment off the Front Range

source: [Colorado Sun, 5/30/19 by Jason Blevins](#)

Justin Bradshaw and Mark Roebke knew where they wanted to be: close to the ski hills and trails in a riverside mountain town. They just had to convince investors that Colorado's West Slope was the perfect place to anchor their global technology company. The entrepreneurs who founded



Mark Roebke, left, and Justin Bradshaw founded the motorcycle ride-tracking application Rever in 2015 in Eagle. Rever has almost 1 million users, and the company is among a growing number of innovative, global businesses thriving on Colorado's West Slope. (Jason Blevins, [The Colorado Sun](#))

Rever - the Eagle-based motorcycle navigation and ride-sharing app that is nearing 1 million users in more than 140 countries since its creation in 2015 - are among a growing number of start-up companies seeded by an increasingly receptive cadre of Colorado-loving angel investors who see the Western Slope and its outdoor lifestyle as fertile ground for innovation.

Bradshaw and Roebke normally can't attend networking events and regular gatherings that foster entrepreneurship in urban hubs like New York, San Francisco, Austin and Colorado's Front Range. Last week, they did. The first-ever Techstars Startup Week West Slope launched June 5 with free educational and networking events in Carbondale, the Yampa Valley, the Vail Valley and largely Grand Junction. The four-day celebration of innovation expanded the idea of start-ups beyond tech, with discussions targeting small and large businesses involved in food, beverages, outdoor gear, agriculture and service. Brad Feld, the venture capitalist behind Boulder's Foundry Group and cofounder - along with Gov. Jared Polis - of international start-up accelerator Techstars, kicked off the rally in Grand Junction on June 6 with a discussion on how to foster start-up communities beyond the Front Range. [Read full story here.](#)

Peak Health Alliance in Summit County Paves the Way for Access to High-Quality, Lower-Cost Health Care

Peak Health's Purchasing Collaborative model blessed by the State with the signing of SB19-004 to make it easier for other communities to form their own purchasing collaborative
source for this story: [Summit Daily News, 5/24/19, by Deepan Dutta](#)



The Peak Health Alliance, the state's first-of-its-kind health care purchasing collaborative created in Summit County, has announced that it has finished rounding up health insurance partners who will provide plans to Peak Health members once the initiative goes live next year. After reviewing bids, Peak Health has chosen Grand Junction-based Rocky Mountain Health Plans as its carrier for employer group plans, and Minnesota-based Bright Health as its individual insurance carrier.

"RMHP and Bright Health stood out from their peers in their commitment to Peak's mission of helping residents of Summit County have access to high-quality, lower-cost health care," Peak Health Alliance stated in a press release. Signing the insurance carriers is another major component to assuring the viability of Peak Health, which intends to lower health care costs by representing Summit consumers at the negotiating table with providers and insurance carriers. Costs for Summit consumers are expected to decrease by up to 20% with rates Peak Health has negotiated with providers and carriers, and up to 35% with the added impact of the state's recently signed health reinsurance law.

The nonprofit Peak Health Alliance was formed in Summit County as a response to staggering health care costs for Summit and Western Slope residents, who pay among the highest premiums in the nation. The alliance brings together Summit County's small and large employers, as well as individuals, into a single negotiating bloc to bargain with providers and insurance carriers for lower care and insurance costs. Peak's health care purchasing collaborative model was blessed by the state for use elsewhere when Gov. Jared Polis signed SB19-004, Address High-Cost Health Insurance Pilot Program, into law last week cleaning up existing statutory language to make it easier for other communities to form their own purchasing collaboratives.

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