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Wheat Ridge awarded LiveWell Colorado’s highest recognition for building a healthy community

The City of Wheat Ridge has achieved Elite Status in LiveWell Colorado’s HEAL Cities & Towns Campaign

WHEAT RIDGE, Colo. November 30, 2017 — LiveWell Colorado is proud to award Elite Status to the City of Wheat Ridge for its commitment to building a healthy community. The city achieves this milestone recognition from LiveWell’s HEAL Cities & Towns Campaign for advancing Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL) policies that help make Wheat Ridge a healthy place to live, work, and play.

“We are honored to be recognized as a LiveWell Elite City,” said Patrick Goff, Wheat Ridge city manager. “Our HEAL committee is focused on promoting healthy lifestyles for those who live and work in Wheat Ridge and clearly they are making a difference.”

Julie George, director of LiveWell’s HEAL Cities & Towns Campaign, agrees: “Wheat Ridge has made a significant investment in building a healthier community by working to improve access to healthy food and physical activity for its residents,” she said.

There are four levels in LiveWell Colorado’s HEAL Cities & Towns Campaign: Eager, Active, Fit, and Elite. In order to qualify for Elite status, a city must have adopted at least five HEAL policies. The following are just a few of the policies, programs, and practices Wheat Ridge has put into place since joining the Campaign in June 2014:

- **In 2015, the city invested funds at Happiness Gardens to increase access to healthy foods.** Enhancements included a new shelter and bathroom facility, raised beds added to plots for ADA accessibility, parking lot and driveway improvements, and park signage.
- **In April 2015, the city adopted the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.** The plan provides guidance and policy direction for parks, services, and programs based on community input and trend analysis.
- **In May of 2015, the City Wellness Committee expanded the Employee Wellness Program** by adding incentives and programs tied to employee health and wellbeing.
- **In July 2017, the city adopted a Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan.** The plan presents a framework for a practical and comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian network that promotes safe, sustainable, and healthy travel options throughout Wheat Ridge.
- **In 2017, the city adopted an Americans with Disabilities Transition Plan.** The plan decreases barriers to active living by ensuring all citizens, regardless of ability, are provided full access to city programs, services, and activities.

“Wheat Ridge is very proud of its Elite status in the HEAL Cities & Towns Campaign. We plan to continue our efforts to ensure access to healthy eating and active living for all residents, particularly those most impacted by health disparities,” said Wheat Ridge Mayor Bud Starker. “We look forward to working with LiveWell Colorado as we continue on a path to an even healthier Wheat Ridge.”

To learn more about Wheat Ridge and its healthy living initiatives, visit www.ci.wheatridge.co.us.

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About LiveWell Colorado

LiveWell Colorado is a statewide nonprofit organization that increases access to healthy eating and active living by removing barriers that inequitably and disproportionately affect low-income communities and people of color. For more information please visit livewellcolorado.org.

About the HEAL Cities & Towns Campaign

Colorado is one of five states in the national HEAL Cities Campaign founded and funded by Kaiser Permanente. The Colorado Campaign is a partnership between the Colorado Municipal League and LiveWell Colorado. The Campaign provides free training, tools, and support to help municipal leaders adopt and implement policies in three key areas: active community, healthy food access, and healthy workplace. Since 2013, LiveWell Colorado’s HEAL Cities & Towns Campaign has worked with more than 50 Colorado municipalities to adopt and implement more than 100 policies and infrastructure investments that increase access to biking, walking, recreation, healthy food, and healthy workplaces. For more information please visit livewellcolorado.org/healcampaign.

About The City of Wheat Ridge

The City of Wheat Ridge, located west of Denver with a population of 31,000 residents, is home to a mix of retail/commercial businesses and unique residential neighborhoods. Wheat Ridge is a vibrant community in a prime location, providing easy access to the Denver metro area and to recreation west into the mountains. The City was recently ranked #7 of Colorado’s Top 14 Small Cities by Washington D.C.-based WalletHub’s “2016 Best Small Cities in America.” For more information about Wheat Ridge please visit ci.wheatridge.co.us.