

Aspen Area Community Plan



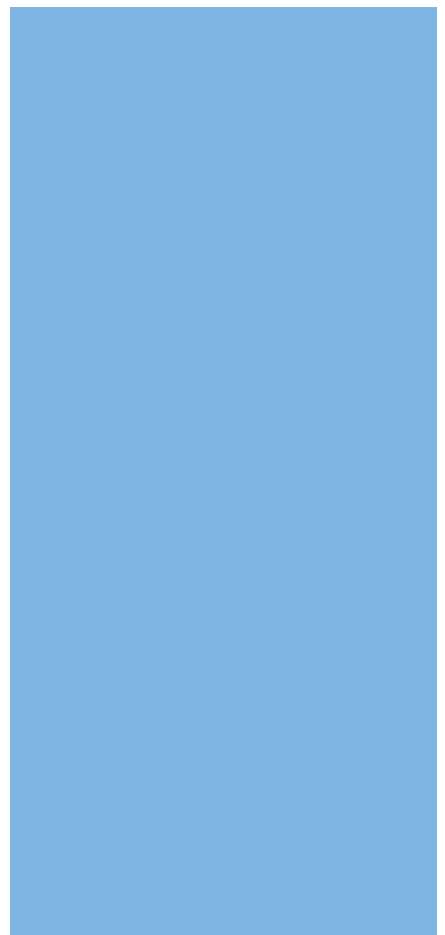
City of Aspen
and
Pitkin County

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Introduction



Background

The 2011 Aspen Area Community Plan (AACP) is intended to describe a vision for the future of the Aspen Area that will help guide community decision-making for the next 10 years. But before moving into the substance of the plan, it's important to briefly describe the setting in which we live, and provide some historical context that brought the community to this unique point in time.

The scenic mountain views, biking along a river, unparalleled skiing, rural character, extensive Wilderness Areas, a historic downtown, outstanding arts and cultural events and the sense of a small-scale community are among the many reasons why the Aspen Area has attracted national and international visitors and compelled many to make it their home.

Since the 1940s, Aspen has taken numerous intentional steps to create an ideal environment in which to live and visit. With the concept of the Aspen Idea as its foundation, ski areas were founded in the 1940s and '50s, attracting international ski racers. Dozens of small lodges and condos were built through the 1950s and '60s.

In the 1970s, Pitkin County took ambitious steps to preserve rural character, a grass roots effort began to preserve Victorian architecture, and the City of Aspen began buying open space.

All types of recreational activities emerged over the years, including hang-gliders landing on the Thomas Open Space in the mid-1970s. Another grass roots movement resulted in the establishment of Wilderness Areas in the late 1970s. Arts and cultural events proliferated with the renovation of the Wheeler Opera House in 1984. At the same time, a range of non-profit groups focused on everything from the arts to social causes to science to international affairs.

All through the 1960s, '70s and '80s, citizen planners and local government consistently linked the beauty of the natural environment and the desirability of the area as a place to live and visit, and they identified small town scale as worthy of protection. Even then, people were worried about the unintended impacts of success.

In 1966, the Aspen Area General Plan worried that "The most significant change has been ... the gradual encroachment of (housing and lodges) on the countryside."

- *The 1973 Aspen Land Use Plan was committed to "control growth and prevent urban sprawl," adding that, "Emphasis will be placed on preserving the natural environment where new development occurs."*
- *"... eliminating indiscriminate development in environmentally sensitive areas ... " was an important concept in the 1976 Aspen/Pitkin County Growth Management Policy Plan.*

- *Maintaining "Aspen's unique small town character and scale as one of its major attractions to residents and visitors," was part of the 1986 Aspen Area Comprehensive Plan: Historic Element.*

With the expansion of arts and cultural institutions in the 1980s, Aspen was truly maturing as a resort economy. It was during this same period that national economic trends resulted in a proliferation of wealthy households across the country, creating an entirely new level of demand for resort properties.

Although the 1993 Aspen Area Community Plan clearly said that, "Tourism is the economic force of the community" – that statement was no longer true by the end of the decade.

"During the late 1990s, real estate surpassed retail and lodging to become the dominant factor in the Aspen economy," according to The Aspen Economy, a 2008 report commissioned by the City of Aspen. "By 2007, real estate transactions approached \$1.8 billion, generating far more economic activity than the \$508 million of taxable sales (that year)."

Themes of the 2011 AACCP

This fundamental shift from tourism to real estate as the primary economy was strongly manifested during the economic boom period of 2004 – 2008, and prompted community concerns. Although the 2011 AACCP was drafted during a deep economic recession amidst little or no development, many residents remain uneasy about this fundamental shift.

Taken as a whole, the main theme of the 2011 AACCP is to focus on the elements of the Aspen Area that make it such an attractive place to live and a compelling place to visit. We seek to manage future development so that it contributes to the long-term sustainability of a vibrant and diverse tourism economy and a strong year-round community.

Public Engagement Process

One of the primary goals of the 2011 Aspen Area Community Plan process was to undertake the broadest public feedback effort possible, in an effort to gauge community consensus on a vision for the next 10 years. This initial effort was described as "direct democracy," and was intended to include everyone who "lives, works or visits" the Aspen Area.

Phase I began with extensive educational outreach, including the State of the Aspen Area Report: 2000-2008, and The Aspen Economy, a white paper on the history of the local economy. Educational outreach was followed by an attempt to identify shared values, explore common ground and articulate community consensus. This effort included a series of focus groups, large meetings that used instant voting technology, and social networking tools. Phase I of the public process included more than 1,000 participants, and won four awards.

The purpose of Phase II was to further articulate the community's vision and philosophy, while drafting carefully worded policies to implement community goals. This process included the joint City and County Planning and Zoning Commissions, resource experts and the public.

Phase III was the final adoption process, including the joint P&Zs, the public-at-large, the Aspen City Council and the Pitkin County Board of County Commissioners.

Many parts of the 2011 AACP focus on affirming the Aspen Area's unique ideals, which has the dual effect of sustaining a viable tourism economy. The following are some of the central themes of this plan:

- *Rediscovering and reinvigorating the Aspen Idea.*
- *Protecting the natural ecosystems and scenic settings of mountainsides and riparian areas.*
- *Managing development pressures.*
- *Replenishing our lodging inventory to encourage a diverse visitor base.*
- *Promoting a unique and interesting downtown for a diverse visitor base.*
- *Exploring residential design concepts that reaffirm our small town heritage.*
- *Exploring physical planning and design concepts for the West of Castle Creek Area*
- *Improving and linking alternative methods of travel, including commuter trails and transit.*
- *Continuing to acquire open space and improve recreational opportunities.*
- *A renewed focus on environmental stewardship, from water and air to reducing greenhouse gases.*
- *Preserving historical architecture, helping us tell the unique story of our past.*

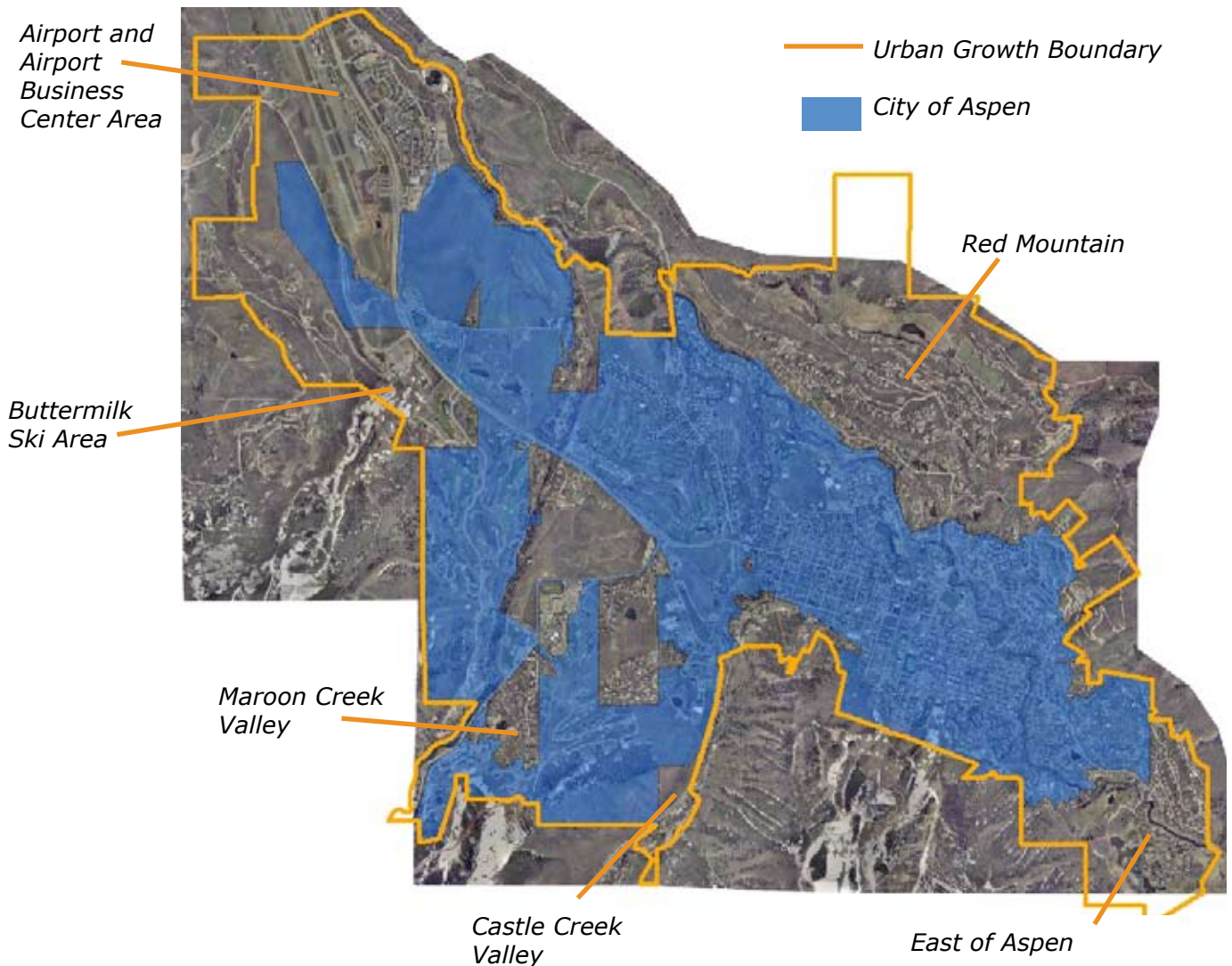
Providing a critical mass of affordable housing remains a long-standing goal of the community, so those who work here can have an opportunity to make Aspen their home, and become vested members of a strong year-round community. The plan includes an emphasis on the livability and quality design of Community Workforce Housing. The 2011 AACP acknowledges problems in the City and County housing mitigation strategies, and seeks to re-examine such requirements to ensure that new development fully offsets its impacts. For the first time, the 2011 AACP calls for all new development to provide housing for all the new employees that are generated. At the same time, the plan focuses on the need for additional local-serving business.

In addition to housing, the 2011 AACP also focuses closely on the day-to-day lives of year-round residents and commuters. That includes a new chapter called the Lifelong Aspenite, which focuses on services ranging from day care to education, from public safety to senior services. This new chapter invites collaboration between a wide range of government entities, taxing districts, non-profits and other organizations.

Planning Area

The Aspen Area Community Plan is the Comprehensive Plan for the area within the Aspen Urban Growth Boundary. The map below depicts the planning area. The City is shaded in blue, and the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) is outlined in orange. The portions that are not shaded are located in unincorporated Pitkin County. The UGB includes Red Mountain, East of Aspen neighborhoods, the Airport Business Center, the Airport, Buttermilk Base area, and portions of the Castle Creek and Maroon Creek valleys.

While the boundaries of the planning area are limited, we recognize that the Aspen Area is an integral part of the Roaring Fork Valley. We are dependent upon our commuting workforce, second homeowners, tourists, and those who live here full time. As a result, this plan recognizes the interconnectedness of all those people who make Aspen work as a community and as a resort.



Accomplishing Goals

It's important to remind ourselves that the Aspen Area community has achieved many ambitious and impressive goals over the years. Sometimes the process has been long and controversial, and just as often those achievements have ultimately become a norm for the community, taken for granted as a shared value. Here are just a few examples:

- **Red Brick Center for the Arts:** A former school on Hallam Street, today's Red Brick Center for the Arts was purchased for \$3.6 million by voters in August 1992. The tally was 526 in favor, and 523 opposed.
- **Pedestrian Malls:** The two downtown pedestrian malls that are widely enjoyed and appreciated today were controversial subjects. One City Council action denied design funds in 1975 – finally approving full design and construction funds in 1976.
- **Housing and Day Care:** In 1990, there was extensive debate on establishing a .45% sales tax for affordable housing and day care. It was a close vote, with 53% in favor. In 2008, opinions had changed – it was reauthorized with 66% in favor.
- **Historic Heritage:** The Aspen City Council established the Commercial Core Historic District in 1974, ultimately resulting in the preservation of structures like the Elks and Brand buildings. It was controversial at the time, but now we now take for granted that such buildings will be protected forever.
- **Mass Transit:** Paid parking was the subject of widespread ire, and even picketing outside City Hall, but Council approved it as part of the Aspen Transportation Implementation Plan in July 1993. Paid parking was part of the reason why RFTA ridership doubled in the mid-1990s.
- **Backcountry Preservation:** In 1994, Pitkin County adopted Rural and Remote Zoning, along with a new Transferrable Development Rights (TDR) program amidst extensive debate. Today, it's accepted as a program that has preserved more than 5,840 acres outside of the Urban Growth Boundary.

Achieving important public policy milestones is never without lively debate and discussion. We hope the 2011 Aspen Area Community Plan includes important new policies that will ultimately become critical turning points for the community over the next 10 years. Nothing worthwhile is ever easy.

We hope this plan captures the broad outlines of our aspirations as a community, and that it will help steer us into a future where our challenges come only from our continued success.

Good Local Governance

As part of this aspirational plan, it's worthwhile to reflect on some of the most critical principles of "good governance."

It's helpful to recognize that the word "governance" did not originally refer to some kind of governmental structure as we know it today. The word "governance" comes from the Greek *kubernao*, meaning "to steer."

In the spirit of this plan, a community can find its path through collaboration and leadership not only through the processes of local government, but from the private sector and a wide range of groups and individuals.

Good governance is transparent, participatory, educational, inclusive, collaborative, civil, consensus-oriented, responsive, effective and efficient, follows the rule of law, and is accountable.

Transparency means that the process of decision-making and implementation is carried out so the public can readily engage in debate, and that reliable information is freely available. Modern technology should be used to help convey and illustrate facts and information.

Informed participation is made possible by our constitutional rights to freedom of association and freedom of expression. Providing reliable information and *education* allows for informed debate and discussion.

Inclusiveness means ensuring that the public feels they have a stake in decision-making, and does not feel excluded. Participation can evolve into *collaboration* across public and private sectors that can serve the whole community.

Good Local Governance , cont.

Civility sets the tone of productive community discourse. Civility means encouraging active debate on the issues, but discouraging personal affronts. To be *consensus oriented* means weighing different interests to reach a broad agreement on what is in the best interest of the whole community.

Good governance requires that institutions and processes are *responsive* to the needs of the public within a reasonable timeframe. *Effectiveness and efficiency* means producing results that meet the needs of society while making the best use of resources.

The *rule of law* means a fair legal framework that is enforced impartially. It also means there is predictability and fairness in government review processes.

Accountability is key to effective local government, and cannot thrive without transparency and the rule of law. The private sector and local organizations must also be accountable.

Good governance is an ideal that can be difficult to achieve in its totality. However, to ensure sustainable human development, actions must be taken to work towards this ideal with the aim of making it a reality.

Purpose of the Plan

Simply put, the 2011 AACP is intended to reflect community aspirations. As we encounter new challenges and changing conditions in the future, this plan is intended to be used as a compass, to help steer us in the right direction.

The 2011 AACP is not intended to provide an exact road map to follow for the next 10 years, step-by-step. It is simply impossible to anticipate all the twists and turns that will face the Aspen Area in the future.

At the same time, this plan recognizes that community goals are often inextricably linked: sometimes they complement each other, and at times they come into conflict. Preserving a healthy and beautiful natural environment, providing recreational opportunities, maintaining historical architecture and providing arts and cultural events are all shared community values that are also foundations for an unparalleled resort experience. But there are fundamental conflicts as well.

A community plan is not intended to be a tool that easily reconciles all community goals in every instance. Instead, it is a broad, aspirational plan with an articulated vision for the future that serves as a reminder of what’s important to the community. As a community we are constantly in a state of weighing and balancing a variety of competing goals.

Going Forward

The Aspen Area has a long history of planning for our future – from the first growth management codes in the 1970s to the first Aspen Area Community Plan in 1993. This update continues our tradition of comprehensive city-county planning.

Without implementation, comprehensive plans are meaningless. Annual performance review is critical to the continuing viability and relevance of this plan.

How to Use the Plan

The Aspen Area Community Plan shall be adopted by ordinance in the City of Aspen in conformance with Section 4.8 of the Home Rule Charter of the City of Aspen. It shall be adopted by resolution by the Pitkin County Planning and Zoning Commission in conformance with Section 30-28-108, C.R.S. There are subtle differences in the application of the plan in the City of Aspen and Pitkin County:

City of Aspen

In the City of Aspen the AACP shall be used as both a guiding and regulatory document as described below.

The Use of Guiding Provisions in the Plan:

The entire AACP should be considered a guiding and philosophical document to assist the City Council, appointed boards and commissions, City staff, and the citizens of the City of Aspen, in establishing priorities for future legislation, work plans, budgets, and the further development of future community goals. The guiding "Vision" and "Philosophy" statements contained in the AACP should be considered as aspirational and goal setting tools to assist the Aspen community in achieving its long range objectives and ambitions for the continued health and vitality of the Aspen area, its residents, and guests.

The Use of Regulatory Provisions in the Plan:

The Land Use Code of the City of Aspen, Chapter 26 of the Aspen Municipal Code, currently requires applications for certain land use development to be consistent with the Aspen Area Community Plan. Provisions of the AACP that are intended to be regulatory and therefore subject to the consistency standard of review contained in the Land Use Code are expressly identified as such in the "Policy" or "Action Items" sections of each Chapter of the Plan. Each regulatory provision has been written with sufficient specificity so that proponents of new development are afforded due process of law; reviewing bodies do not retain unfettered discretion in approving or denying development applications; and, decisions by reviewing bodies can be clear for reasoned judicial review.

Applications for land use development that are required by the land use code to be consistent with or in compliance with the AACP shall include an analysis section entitled "Consistency with the Aspen Area Community Plan." The application should address those provisions in the AACP that are identified as regulatory and provide an analysis explaining how the proposed development will be consistent with the AACP.

An application for land use development shall not be denied by any reviewing body on the grounds that the proposed development fails to comply with any provision of the AACP that is not specifically identified as regulatory.

Pitkin County

Pitkin County recognizes the AACCP as an advisory document as described below:

All land use applications are subject to the Policies in the Land Use Code, including one (section 1-60-20) that says "It is... policy....to ensure that the use and development of land...and any actions committing such land to development or change in use should consider Pitkin County's Comprehensive Plan." The County Land Use Code specifically requires consideration of Comprehensive Plans as a criterion of approval for certain types of land use reviews, (including special review, location and extent review, Code amendments, rezoning, activities of local and state interest, and growth management exemptions). Reference to Comprehensive Plans in the Land Use Code as a basis for reviewing and taking action on a land use application has the force of law, and where such reference is made, Plans (including the AACCP) may be used accordingly.

How to Read the Plan

The Aspen Area Community Plan is divided into nine different chapters. Each chapter contains:

Vision

The Vision for each chapter is the first item you will read. These are short statements intended to outline community aspirations.

Philosophy

The Philosophy is a longer explanation of the Vision statement. It addresses each topic area in more detail and often provides a brief overview of historical context.

What's Changed Since 2000

Outlining recent history relevant to the chapter.

What's New in the 2011 Plan

Summarizing new policy direction, compared to the 2000 AACP.

Linkages

Outlining ways chapters and topics are related to one another.

Policies

Policies are based on the Vision and Philosophy statements for each chapter, and are intended to direct decision-making. For the City, the vast majority of Policy Statements are guiding in nature, but there are some Policies that can be used to regulate development (see the "How to Use the Plan" section for more detail). Reference to "guiding" or "regulatory" Policies is specific to the use of the Plan in the City of Aspen. In the County, policy categories are for descriptive purposes only. Each policy falls into one of seven categories that are intended to identify the underlying purpose of each policy. For City purposes, categories 1 – 6 are "guiding" and category 7 is "regulatory." Each category is outlined in detail below:

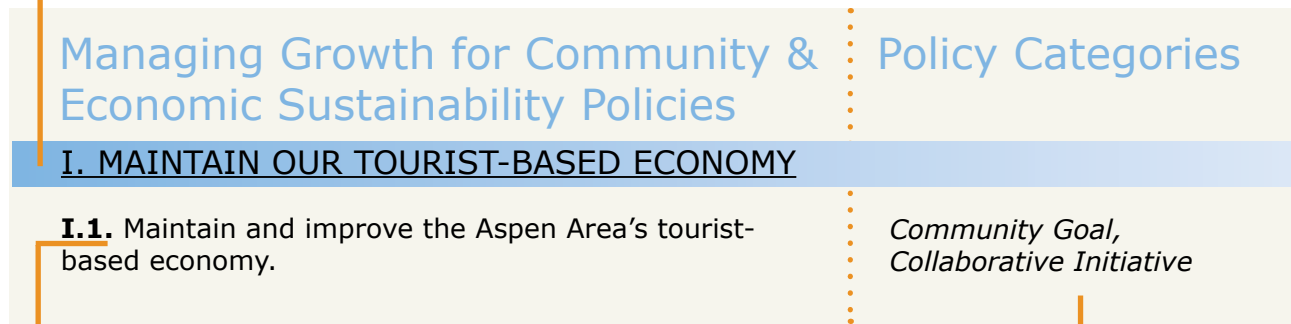
1. **Community Goals** – These statements articulate our broad community aspirations. They help guide decision-making on a variety of topics.
2. **Collaborative Initiatives** – These statements suggest collaboration between a variety of groups, including the city, county, non-profits, other government agencies, businesses, etc. Additional work may result from the collaboration, but the first step is working with interested and affected parties.
3. **Incentive Programs** – These statements do not direct regulatory code changes, but look to implement new voluntary programs and policies.
4. **Work Programs** – These statements describe potential departmental work programs. They may require work from one or more departments. They do not direct code changes, but may direct internal city/county policy changes.

- 5. Data Needs** – These statements clearly identify the need for new data gathering. Data gathering may ultimately support code changes, budget priorities, work programs, and initiatives.
- 6. Proposed Code Amendments** – These statements are guiding, and provide direction for future code changes. These code changes range from exploring the creation of a development pacing system to updating affordable housing mitigation levels. These policies will require follow-up and prioritization by appointed and elected officials.
- 7. Regulatory** – These statements are regulatory in nature. Any development application submitted subsequent to the adoption of the 2011 AACP, which is required to show consistency with the Aspen Area Community Plan, will have to show consistency with these policy statements.

A series of Action Items are located at the end of the plan, following the chapters.

Below is an example of how to read the Policies in each chapter:

*Each chapter includes a number of Policies that are divided into sections, identified by a band of color. Maintain our Tourist-Based Economy is the first section in Managing Growth for Community & Economic Sustainability. Each section is labeled with a roman numeral, in this case **I**.*



*This is the first Policy under the Maintain our Tourist-Based Economy policy section. Each Policy is numbered based on policy section, in this case **I.1**. All policies are in **Bold**.*

Each Policy is divided into categories, which are identified immediately to the right of each Policy.

How to read the plan, cont.

Action Items

A series of Action Items are located at the end of the plan, following the chapters.

The Action Items represent a set of tools to implement the Vision, Philosophy, and Policies. They are in no way an exhaustive list of everything that could be done to further community goals, but they provide a possible road map toward implementing the community's shared vision and philosophy. The Action Items are found in their own section, toward the end of this document. In the Action Item section, the policies are re-printed, with a list of directly associated Action Items.

Each Action Item identifies a department or agency that should be responsible for the implementation of the Action Items. In addition, each Action Item is identified as something that should be pursued immediately (labeled with an "I"), or in the long-term (labeled with an "LT"). Each Action Item also includes the entities that are responsible for implementing the plan. The list on the following page identifies the entities referenced in the plan.

Below is an example of how to read the Action Items that are in the Appendix.

*Each chapter includes a number of Policies that are divided into sections, identified by a band of color. Maintain our Tourist-Based Economy is the first section in Managing Growth for Community & Economic Sustainability. Each section is labeled with a roman numeral, in this case **I**.*

*This is the first Policy under the Maintain our Tourist-Based Economy policy section. Each Policy is numbered based on policy section, in this case **I.1**. All policies are in **Bold**.*

This Action Item is identified as a Long Term ("LT") Action Item, and Planning Staff ("P") is listed as the responsible department.

Managing Growth for Community & Economic Sustainability Policies and Action Items

I. MAINTAIN OUR TOURIST-BASED ECONOMY

I.1. Maintain and improve the Aspen Area's tourist-based economy. (Community Goal, Collaborative Initiative)

I.1.a Establish a collaborative working group including major institutions, the public sector, ACRA, the retail sector, the SkiCo and larger lodges, to develop a community-wide strategic resort analysis and plan to maintain sustainability for the tourist economy. (LT - P)

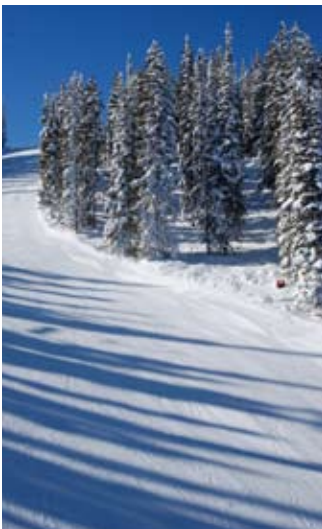
I.1.b The working group should conduct market research and brand development, including examining what other resort communities are doing to attract visitors. (I - P, SE)

This Action Item is identified as an Immediate ("I") Action Item, Planning and Special Events Staff ("P, SE") are listed as the responsible departments.

Entities Referenced in the Plan

- A – Airport
- ABC Group – Airport Business Center Neighborhood Group
- ACRA – Aspen Chamber Resort Association
- AO – City Attorney’s Office
- APCHA – Aspen/Pitkin County Housing Authority
- ARD – Aspen Recreation Department
- Aspen K-12 – Aspen School District
- Asset – City Asset Department
- AVH – Aspen Valley Hospital
- B – Building
- CDOT – Colorado Department of Transportation
- CI – Canary Initiative
- City Manager – City Manager’s Office
- CMC – Colorado Mountain College
- County Manager – County Manager’s Office
- CR – City and County Community Relations
- EH – Environmental Health
- EOTC – Elected Officials Transportation Commission
- E/SW – Engineering and Stormwater
- Fire – Fire Department
- HHS – Health and Human Services
- HPC – City Historic Preservation Commission
- KF – Kids First
- L – Landfill
- LE – Law Enforcement
- LPHA – Local Public Health Agencies / Boards of Health
- LM – County Land Management Department
- P – Planning
- PH – Public Health
- P/OS – City and County Parks and Open Space Departments
- PW – County Public Works Department
- RFTA – Roaring Fork Transit Authority
- SE – Special Events
- SkiCo – Aspen Ski Company
- SrS – Senior Services
- Streets – City Streets Department
- T – City Transportation Department
- U – City Utilities

Aspen Idea



Vision

We are committed to sustaining and revitalizing the Aspen Idea.

Philosophy

The Aspen Idea is a fundamental awareness that mind, body and spirit can be fully integrated parts of a whole and balanced person, and this interconnectedness entails the cultivation of all three. At a basic level, this valuable concept can help us balance our every-day life.

The concept is attributable to Walter and Elizabeth Paepcke, and a circle of friends from Chicago who began convening intellectuals, artists, skiers, philanthropists and philosophers in Aspen after World War II.

The Aspen Idea is a legacy that has established Aspen as a place known for its arts, culture, athletic endeavors, philanthropy, lifelong education, spiritual pursuits, environmental consciousness and humanitarian service. We also value authentic engagement with others, including civil discourse about the kind of community we want to create and maintain. The Aspen Idea is a core element of the community's heritage and identity, enriching our quality of life and reinforcing Aspen's national and international profile.

Despite its central role in forming Aspen's character, the Aspen Idea can sometimes feel like a historic chapter in our past, rather than an enduring and uniting concept that defines our community and sets us apart in a unique and positive way.

There are promising opportunities to raise the profile of the Aspen Idea while widening and broadening the perception of Aspen. A collaboration including local business, ACRA, the public sector, key institutions and non-profits can explore strategies to collectively rediscover and reinvigorate the Aspen Idea. We can illustrate how the experience of Aspen can stimulate mind, body and spirit.

Many different non-profits and the public sector produce arts and cultural events, many local businesses focus on recreation and other groups have a strong spiritual component. It is difficult, and perhaps unnecessary, to categorize one activity as only focused on the mind, or only related to the body, or the spirit. For example, skiing, backcountry hiking or hang-gliding are about the body and physical health, but often include a strong spiritual component. Attending a concert or a seminar on the classics can stimulate the mind and the spirit at the same time.

In a seasonal resort environment, it is understandable that many local organizations are in competition to attract attendance and customers. But if the recent recession has revealed anything of value, it is that collaboration across the private and public sectors can result in a bigger picture that is somehow greater than the sum of its parts.

A collaborative approach to reinvigorating the Aspen Idea can create common ground among those who live, work and visit the Aspen Area, while strengthening a diverse visitor base into the future.

What's Changed Since 2000

A number of local institutions and non-profits have expanded their programs and facilities and since 2000. The following are just a few examples:

- Aspen Music Festival Music Tent (2000)
- Spiritual Paths Foundation at Community Chapel (Est. 2000)
- Aspen Ideas Festival (2007)
- Doerr-Hosier Center at the Aspen Institute (2007)
- Shigeru Ban-designed Aspen Art Museum (Approved 2010)

A 2004 Economic Impact of the Arts Study showed that total expenditures by audiences for arts and cultural events average \$31.3 million in the summer, and \$4.8 million in the winter.

At the same time, there has been some disconcerting recent developments regarding some local institutions, including the closure of the Silver Lining Ranch, a non-profit supporting children with cancer; and the closure of The Given Institute, which has been sponsoring retreats, conferences and public lectures since 1972 under the auspices of the University of Colorado.

What's New in the 2011 AACP

This chapter was originally titled "Arts, Culture & Education" in the 2000 Aspen Area Community Plan. The new title reflects a desire to reinvigorate and sustain the concept of the Aspen Idea.

This new chapter also focuses on the accessibility of events and educational opportunities related to arts and culture, and also suggests a set of standards to consider when developing new essential public facilities.

Finally, this chapter calls for exploring methods to address the further loss of quasi-public institutions.

Linkages

This plan recognizes that community goals are often inextricably linked: sometimes they complement each other, and at times they come into conflict. The Aspen Idea is the basic underpinning of our tourist-based economy. It is manifested in many ways, including our outdoor lifestyle, arts and cultural events, continuing education and the preservation of the natural environment.



The Aspen Area is home to a wide variety of events - from the Music School and Festival to Food & Wine to Winerskol (pictured above) to X-Games - that play an important role in the communication of the Aspen Idea to visitors and locals alike.

Aspen Idea Policies

Policy Categories

I. REVITALIZING THE ASPEN IDEA

- I.1. Revitalize and sustain the original intent of the Aspen Idea.
- I.2. Encourage collaboration among non-profit organizations, local government and local businesses.
- I.3. Foster greater inclusivity and participation in cultural events from within the spectrum of community residents and visitors.

*Community Goal,
Collaborative Initiative*

*Community Goal,
Collaborative Initiative*

*Community Goal,
Collaborative Initiative*

II. ARTS FACILITIES

- II.1. Maintain the legacy of the Aspen Idea by enhancing and preserving our non-profit and quasi-public facilities and spaces and ensuring that development of new facilities is consistent with community goals. (see also Managing Growth for Community & Economic Sustainability section V)

*Community Goal,
Collaborative Initiative*

Managing Growth for Community & Economic Sustainability

Vision

We are committed to managing growth in order to achieve the community values and goals that are expressed in this plan. In the broadest terms, these goals include a thriving and sustainable year-round community and a unique and vibrant resort in the context of a healthy natural environment. We recognize that all of our community goals can and should benefit those who live and work here, as well as those who visit.

The community goals we seek to achieve in this chapter include (in no particular order):

- Providing affordable housing for a “critical mass” of local residents.
- Managing the impacts of development to maintain a high quality of life.
- Preserving mountain views and the natural ecosystems, including riparian areas.
- Maintaining a high quality of life and resort experience.
- Planning for a tourism economy that is supported by future generations of diverse visitors.
- Facilitating a diverse, unique and vital downtown area.
- Supporting a vibrant non-profit sector, including arts and cultural organizations.
- Preserving the historic character of the built environment so we can “tell the story” of Aspen to future generations.
- Replenishing the lodging base with a focus on diversifying the lodging inventory.
- Encouraging a local business sector that provides basic products and services for everyone, and encouraging an appropriate level of local-serving business.



Philosophy

This community plan recognizes that managing growth and economic sustainability are closely inter-related, and have therefore been combined into one chapter for the first time in order to identify how they work together.

The City and County growth management systems are effective tools that can help the community reach desired goals. The management of development through growth management and other land use tools influences our three intertwining economies:

- Resort tourism
- Development/Real estate
- Year-round Community

None of these economies stands discrete and alone; they are inextricably connected at a number of levels. The economic impact of growth management and other land use tools have been debated for many years, and should continue to be a focus of discussion, study, and visual and economic modeling.

For example, preserving scenic views, riparian areas and a pristine natural environment are important aesthetic and philosophical values held closely by local residents, but these efforts have also contributed to a highly attractive resort, and resulted in substantial economic benefits across the board. Studies have repeatedly shown that open space and opportunities for recreation reflect a kind of natural capital that enhances the economic well-being of the entire community.

As the resort matured in the 1980s, additional venues for arts and cultural groups complemented the already outstanding recreational opportunities and scenic views, and the development economy began growing dramatically. A 2008 economic study commissioned by the City of Aspen found that by 2000 – for the first time – the economic activity related to the development industry eclipsed and surpassed the economic activity related to the tourism industry.

While the development industry has been hit hard by the current recession, to assume that it will not make a rebound during the 10-year life of this plan would be irresponsible. Therefore, one of the broad themes of this plan is to manage future development so that it contributes to the long-term viability of a sustainable, diverse tourist-based economy and a strong year-round community.

Definitions

Growth: Growth is any increase in the size or activity of the community. Growth can be an increase in population, jobs, infrastructure, demand for public services, or an increase in the size or use of buildings. Growth can be a result of new development, changes in use, redevelopment, or fluctuations in the economy (jobs and public services).

Infrastructure: The physical and operational systems that support the Aspen Area. This includes traditional concepts of infrastructure, such as roads, the sewer system, water system, and the trail system. Infrastructure also includes systems that make the Aspen Area a healthy, lively, and socially balanced community, such as, affordable housing, a balanced lodging inventory, a lively and interesting downtown, unique restaurants, historic landmarks, engaging outdoor areas, recycling programs, clean air and water, compelling special events, healthy civic and non-profit organizations, essential businesses, and renewable energy systems.

Ensuring a Sustainable Tourist-Based Economy

Our long-term sustainability as a visitor-based economy depends largely on our ability to remain an attractive, welcoming and accessible place for future generations. Aspen has a long history of loyal visitors who return at a rate of about 70% -- far higher than other mountain resorts.

At the same time, we recognize the importance of looking to the future, and considering the interests and needs of the next generation of residents and visitors. As a resort, it's important to ask ourselves: How will Aspen continue be relevant in the next 10-20 years? Some of our local businesses and institutions have anticipated these questions, and adjusted their programming. Aspen has a history of innovation and reinvention, and that creative and groundbreaking spirit should serve us well in the future. We support a working group to generate strategic planning that supports the tourist economy.

There are a set of basic principles that have served the Aspen Area well for decades. These include preserving scenic landscapes, protecting the natural environment, creating an extensive trail network, providing unparalleled winter and summer recreational opportunities, maintaining our unique architectural heritage, supporting arts and cultural institutions, maintaining a safe community, facilitating an interesting, vital and walkable downtown, and maintaining a sense of place.

This fundamental set of values evolved over the years by responding to changing conditions. The Community Workforce Housing program has provided a service to the resort by providing working residents a place to live, and reducing pressure on our challenged transportation system. Today, we seek to bring the lodging inventory into balance by encouraging economy/moderate lodging. We also strive to improve the everyday quality of life by finding better methods to manage the impacts of development.

Residential Sector

While some potential remains for residential development on vacant lots, the primary source of future residential construction will be redevelopment. The Aspen Area's recent track record shows that residential redevelopment typically means the demolition and replacement of existing homes with larger structures.

Current city and county zoning regulations should be reviewed and amended to better protect and preserve environmentally sensitive and scenic areas through various methods, including allowable house size. Zoning that protects environmentally sensitive and scenic areas has been in place since the mid-1970s, and has been updated from time to time. This plan calls for a renewed focus on these zoning rules. At the same time, this plan also focuses on the neighborhoods on either side of City/County boundaries, where allowable house size differs dramatically and can result in sudden changes in neighborhood character.



The Aspen Area is home to many special events that draw a wide-range of visitors. These include Food and Wine (pictured to the left), Winter X-Games, the Music Festival, Ruggerfest, Jazz Aspen Snowmass events, and events held by the Aspen Institute.

Protecting and preserving environmentally sensitive and scenic areas is an essential part of maintaining a sustainable resort in the long-term.

Lodging Sector

During the last 10-15 years, an aging lodging infrastructure, shifting expectations of travelers, and high financial returns for alternative uses such as 2nd homes has resulted in a declining lodging inventory. More specifically, dozens of moderate to economy lodges have converted to other uses. New lodges have tended to be in the deluxe category, with large rooms and extensive amenities.

The formulation of a strategy that replenishes the lodging base, and favors economy/moderate lodges is important to the long-term sustainability of a tourist economy that purposefully seeks to attract a diverse visitor base. Without "entry-level" lodging, we limit the ability of future generations of visitors to experience the Aspen Area and its surrounding public lands. It's undisputed that many of today's longtime locals and second homeowners first experienced Aspen thanks to "entry-level" lodging. The concept of providing equal access to Aspen has been present in long range plans dating back to 1976.

The need to accommodate a diverse visitor base is also a well-known fact of our dual season resort – while the winter visitor tends to reflect a higher-end demographic, the summer visitor is more family oriented. Finally, we also recognize that adequate economy/moderate lodging provides a place to stay for those who produce and participate in many of our critically important special events, workshops, and other activities.

We recognize the financial challenges of bringing our lodging inventory into balance by encouraging economy/moderate lodging and the viability of existing small lodges. This plan strongly encourages exploring a wide range of models, including additional zoning incentives and possible public/private partnerships.

Commercial Sector

This plan calls for exploration of the existing balance between local-serving and tourist-serving businesses, and to determine if the level of local-serving business is appropriate to serve year-round residents.

Due to high land and leasing costs, we are concerned that businesses providing basic necessities for both residents and visitors could be replaced with alternative uses that bring higher financial returns. A comprehensive investigation of this issue was undertaken by City staff in 2006/07, and ultimately recommended outreach to businesses, the potential future use of publicly-owned property, exploring community-based cooperatives and other possible tools.

Additionally, this plan calls for a unique and vital downtown area that serves a diversity of visitors, addressing the interests of future generations as well as the differing make-up of winter and summer tourists.



In March 2006, the Aspen City Council identified four "themes" to explore as part of a moratorium on land use applications: one of them was "Commercial Mix." Concerns ranged from whether there were enough "locally-serving" businesses for local residents, to whether retail stores were too "high-end" for tourists. This Plan attempts to address these concerns.



Poet Christopher Merrill reading at the 2003 Aspen Writer's Foundation Summer Words event. Aspen is known around the world for our many cultural events that seek to expand the mind, body, and spirit.

Public, Institutional, and Non-Profit Sectors

Active and influential civic and non-profit organizations, many of which found their roots in the legacy of the Aspen Idea, provide cultural experiences and educational opportunities. They are integral to our character and we depend on their continued strength. They also set us apart as a well-rounded resort with a wide range of choices to balance mind, body and spirit. It is critical to find ongoing methods of supporting these organizations.

Pace of Construction

The intense periods of construction activity that occur during national economic booms can reduce our every-day quality of life and the long-term sustainability of the visitor-based economy. Although significant improvements were made to construction management practices during the last economic boom, this plan calls for a renewed focus on managing the impacts of intense construction activity.

While citizen plans going back to 1976 and various surveys have shown consistent support for some kind of pacing system, specific methods have met with substantial opposition in the past, and none have been implemented. A comprehensive effort to explore pacing models must be deliberate and transparent, including substantial public outreach and feedback.

Mitigating Impacts on Community Infrastructure

The City of Aspen and Pitkin County currently require new development and redevelopment to at least partially offset its impacts on the community, including fees and other mitigation tools which provide for parks, schools, affordable housing, air quality, renewable energy systems, and the transportation system.

Some of our mitigation methods are sound and reliable, but others may not be achieving community goals in the most efficient manner. With the recent adoption of the Affordable Housing Certificate program, the City should comprehensively re-evaluate its "menu" of affordable housing mitigation to ensure the viability of this new certificate program. The County should re-evaluate the housing mitigation fee exemptions currently granted in the building permit process.

Both City and County mitigation strategies require further examination, research and potential changes to ensure that:

- Mitigation tools are effective in reaching community goals.
- Job generation and other impacts are being accurately calculated.
- New development and redevelopment offsets its impacts.

At the same time, this plan establishes a new goal of requiring that all new development fully offset the impacts of job generation by providing housing for 100% of the new employees generated. This policy is in part a response to the

2007 Affordable Housing Summit in Aspen, which concluded that the Aspen Area continues to fall behind in its effort to provide Community Workforce Housing (CWH).

The continued conversion of locally-owned homes to 2nd homes is just one trend that erodes the amount of workforce housing in the Aspen Area. Other long-term trends include substantial increases in downvalley home prices, limiting options for Aspen Area workers. In addition, the Aspen Area is on the cusp of a long-term trend that will result in more and more local workers retiring in affordable housing. While this is a minor factor at this time, baby boomer demographics clearly show that current Community Workforce Housing will steadily convert to affordable housing for retirees during the next 20 years.

This plan anticipates a continued reduction in the number of both free market and affordable housing units that will be occupied by working residents in the Aspen Area in coming years. These trends will reduce the ability of local businesses to hire local workers to support the tourism economy – and will result in even more profound impacts on our already challenged regional transportation system.

For these compelling reasons, this plan calls for every new development – public or private – to offset its job generation by providing affordable housing for 100% of all new employees. This will require considerable changes to current growth management practices, which currently reduce housing mitigation requirements if certain community benefits are provided.

What's Changed Since 2000

In 2000, the Aspen Area Community Plan re-adopted the Aspen Area Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), in an effort to prevent further urban sprawl. The concept was to encourage higher density development that met community goals in urbanized areas, with much lower density development outside of the UGB.

During the economic downturn of 2001-2003, the City of Aspen focused on allowing more “infill” within the City. At the same time, the Economic Sustainability Committee identified its top priority as replenishing the lodging base.

Just as new code changes were adopted to encourage infill and lodging, the national economy dramatically improved and several major land use applications for the downtown were submitted. The public expressed serious concerns that the downtown would lose its character, and turn into a series of tall monolithic buildings. At the same time, some longtime local-serving businesses such as Aspen Drug were converting to other uses. The City Council responded by adopting a moratorium in April 2006.

In 2007, the Council adopted extensive changes to the



A new home being constructed in the Cemetery Lane neighborhood.

Commercial and Lodging Design Standards, including new restrictive regulations and a mandate to substantially vary heights. No major development has come forward to put the 2007 design standards into practice.

Between 2000 and 2010, most construction activity occurred in the form of more than 270 homes being demolished and replaced with new and larger homes. This reflected more than 800,000 square feet of new residential space.

Since adoption of the 2000 AACP, Pitkin County modified the Land Use Code to limit house size to 5,750 square feet, allowing larger homes up to 15,000 square feet within the UGB only upon purchase of transferable development rights (TDRs) from remote or agricultural properties in the County.

As the development economy slowed to a near standstill since 2008, the focus has been on public projects, including approval for an expansion of Aspen Valley Hospital and a new Aspen Art Museum. While a new downtown Fire Station was constructed, an effort to build on the vacant lot next to the Wheeler stalled in the public process. Today, preliminary planning continues for a renovated Galena Plaza and expanded Pitkin County Library. In the Aspen Airport Business Center area, the Pitkin County Animal Shelter and Aspen Fire Protection District substation have been built in recent years.

In March 2010, the City Council adopted an Affordable Housing Certificate Program intended to make it more economically viable for the private sector to produce deed-restricted housing – and as a method to provide mitigation in a more timely manner.

What's New in the 2011 AACP

One of the broad themes of the 2011 AACP calls for managing growth so that future development contributes to the viability and stability of a sustainable, diverse tourist-based economy and a strong year-round community. While this is not an entirely new concept, the 2011 AACP places a stronger emphasis on this approach compared to past plans.

Similarly, the concept of limiting residential growth in environmentally sensitive areas and scenic areas is not a new idea. However this plan places a stronger emphasis on this effort compared to the 2000 AACP.

Seeking to replenish the lodging inventory while bringing it back into balance by encouraging the development of economy/moderate lodging is a significant new policy compared to past AACPs. It is a policy that began to evolve with the Economic Sustainability Committee Report of 2003.

Perhaps the most significant change in the 2011 AACP is a call to increase housing mitigation so that all new development

provides affordable housing for 100% of the new employees generated. This will require many changes to existing city and county codes and practices. Currently, housing mitigation is exempted or partially waived if various types of community benefits are provided. At the same time, the plan suggests that both the City and County conduct a comprehensive re-evaluation of their housing mitigation strategies to ensure that job generation is being accurately calculated, and that mitigation tools result in occupied, deed-restricted housing.

Finally, unlike the 2000 AACP, this plan does not set a cap on population growth. This decision was not made lightly, but was based on several important conclusions.

The bottom line is that a population cap is simply not legally enforceable. The fact is that every property carries with it certain property and development rights, which cannot legally be eliminated without compensation. In short, we can't simply "close the gate."

Instead, we focused our time and energy on estimating ultimate build-out as part of the State of the Aspen Area Report. And there is more statistical work to do. The 2011 AACP calls for further research on the various impacts that ultimate build-out could have on the Aspen Area, from job generation to traffic congestion. Estimating and understanding these impacts will help the community make important decisions during the 10-year life of this plan.

In addition, establishing a population cap could provide a false sense of control that might distract us from exploring realistic and effective tools that can help shape the future. For example, our zoning regulations can influence where a home might be built along a river. Our mitigation policies can offset the impacts of new development in any number of ways.

While we recognize that there are ultimate physical limitations to development in the form of eventual build-out, we also concluded that a population cap was not an effective tool in shaping our future. Instead, we sought consensus on a shared vision.

Linkages

This plan recognizes that community goals are often inextricably linked: sometimes they complement each other, and at times they come into conflict. We manage growth to ensure different community functions and uses are in balance, and to help reach community goals in the broadest sense. When we discuss the different ways to manage growth, topics include ultimate build-out, job generation, affordable housing needs, environmental impacts, infrastructure expansion, the transportation system, and the viability of our tourist-based economy. We rely on the tools of growth management to encourage the uses needed by the community, and to discourage uses that don't contribute to our vision for the future.

Quality of Life

"Quality of life" is a term used to describe various, sometimes intangible factors that make a community attractive to live, work, and visit. While the term is hard to define, we believe the Aspen Area has a high quality of life, and that the AACP helps to preserve this for future generations. Below is a list of just some of the things that contribute to our high quality of life.

Community Engagement:

We have an active, engaged community with diverse ideas and solutions. Whether it's for a social or environmental cause, we have a strong ethic of volunteerism and dedication to the community. We engage in broad, inclusive, and respectful civic participation and we value and respect individuality.

Natural Environment:

Our commitment to environmental quality is community-wide. The Aspen Area is home to many businesses and non-profits dedicated to environmental stewardship, and our local government has made significant strides in this area over the last 10 years. The Aspen Area has clean water and air, and is committed to preserving our natural environment. We are all able to enjoy public lands through the extensive trails, parks, and open space systems.

Small Town Character:

The Aspen Area has many unique buildings that contribute to our small-town character. Our built environment respects historical context, while allowing for innovation. We have welcoming, non-exclusive and casual gathering places that promote interaction among locals and visitors. Our lively and diverse downtown is an important asset that contributes to our overall character.

Managing Growth for Community & Economic Sustainability Policies

Policy Categories

I. MAINTAIN OUR TOURIST-BASED ECONOMY

I.1. Maintain and improve the Aspen Area's tourist-based economy.

*Community Goal,
Collaborative Initiative*

II. RESIDENTIAL SECTOR

II.1. Encourage permanent residents to remain in existing free market homes.

Incentive Program

II.2. Ensure that the County and City Transferrable Development Rights (TDR) programs continue to effectively preserve backcountry areas/agricultural lands, and historic structures, respectively.

*Work Program for Planning,
Proposed Code Amendment*

II.3. Ensure City and County codes are consistent in the vicinity of city/county boundaries to discourage jurisdiction-shopping, and prevent sudden shifts in the character of neighborhoods.

Proposed Amendment

II.4. Preserve and protect environmentally sensitive and scenic areas by controlling the location and size of homes in those areas.

Proposed Amendment

II.5. Protect the visual quality and character of residential neighborhoods by reducing site coverage.

Proposed Amendment

III. LODGING SECTOR

III.1. Prevent the further loss of lodging inventory.

*Community Goal,
Collaborative Initiative,
Proposed Amendment*

III.2. Replenish the declining lodging base with an emphasis on a diverse and balanced inventory.

*Community Goal, Proposed
Amendment*

III.3. Lodging amenities should be designed to facilitate interaction between visitors and residents.

*Community Goal, Proposed
Amendment*

III.4. New lodging should be compatible and in harmony with the massing, scale and character of the neighborhood.

Regulatory

Managing Growth for Community & Economic Sustainability Policies

Policy Categories

V. COMMERCIAL SECTOR

IV.1. Create a commercial mix that is balanced, diverse, vital, and meets the needs of year-round residents and visitors.

Community Goal, Collaborative Initiative

IV.2. Ensure the sustainability of retail businesses that provide basic and essential products and services.

Collaborative Initiative, Incentive Program, Work Program for Planning

IV.3. Ensure that the City code supports innovative development that respects our architectural heritage in terms of site coverage, mass, scale, form and a diversity of heights.

Work Program for Planning, Proposed Amendment

V. PUBLIC, INSTITUTIONAL, AND NON-PROFIT SECTOR

V.1. Ensure that PUD and COWOP processes result in long-term community benefits and do not degrade the built environment through mass and scale that significantly exceed land use code standards.

Community Goal, Proposed Amendment

V.2. Preserve and enhance our non-profit and quasi-public facilities and spaces. (see also Aspen Idea Chapter)

Collaborative Initiative

V.3. New or expanded non-profit facilities in the UGB should be located within the City limits, as their mission allows.

Proposed Amendment

VI. MANAGING GROWTH

VI.1. Manage development so that it contributes to the long-term viability of a sustainable, diverse tourist-based economy and a strong year-round community.

Community Goal, Work Program for Planning

VI.2. Restore public confidence in the development process.

Community Goal, Collaborative Initiative

VI.3. Our public policies should be informed by reliable data on construction statistics, and population segments.

Data Gathering

VI.4 New development should be compatible and in harmony with the massing, scale and character of the neighborhood.

Regulatory

Managing Growth for Community & Economic Sustainability Policies

Policy Categories

VII. PACE OF CONSTRUCTION

VII.1. Explore better methods to manage adverse construction impacts, including a construction pacing system that respects quiet enjoyment of our community and neighborhoods.

*Community Goal, Proposed
Amendment*

VIII. MITIGATING IMPACTS ON COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

VIII.1. Ensure that new residential development and redevelopment mitigates all reasonable, directly-related housing impacts. (See Colorado Revised Statutes 29-20-104.5)

*Work Program for Planning
& APCHA, Proposed
Amendment*

VIII.2. Ensure that impact fees fully offset the associated costs of development on the community.

*Work Program for Planning
& Attorney's Office,
Proposed Amendment*

VIII.3 All development should provide housing to accommodate 100% of the employees it generates.

*Work Program for Planning
& APCHA, Proposed
Amendment*

VIII.4. On-site housing mitigation is preferred.

*Work Program for Planning
& APCHA, Proposed
Amendment*

West of Castle Creek Corridor



Vision

The West of Castle Creek Corridor area should continue to provide a gradual transition from the rural expanses of Pitkin County to the more developed neighborhoods of the West End and the urbanized atmosphere of downtown Aspen. The area should continue to feature separate and recognizable “pockets” of uses, maintaining a land use pattern and scenic quality along the Highway corridor that creates a distinct series of visual experiences that signal arrival to the Aspen Area.

Philosophy

Maintaining the transitional character of the area means a gradual lowering of density and massing as we approach the edge of the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), as well as preserving and prioritizing views of the mountains and open space between the “pockets” or “nodes” of uses. The density, size and scale of the built environment must complement rather than detract from the natural environment or become the focal point of views.

The West of Castle Creek Corridor area is the “gateway” to Aspen, and its success relies on a comprehensive planning effort that strives to maintain a memorable arrival experience. For the first time, we are committed to including all of these goals in a comprehensive land use plan for this important portion of the Aspen Area.

The West of Castle Creek Corridor is home to a wide variety of important uses that define the gateway experience – the airport, a community college, a local business center, a ski area, affordable housing, and golf courses - all of which are important components of our community. Each use is different in character and purpose, representing distinct, physically separated “nodes” of activity.

To maintain these separate and distinct functions, planning for this area should support a well-defined visual pattern and a defined set of prescribed and limited uses for each node. This area should not become an urbanized tunnel like corridor, with repetitive development and the feeling of “sameness” that define the worst kind of urban sprawl.

It is important to define and maintain the relationship between the West of Castle Creek Corridor and Aspen, with the core of Aspen remaining the primary commercial center for tourism, employment, goods and services. While convenience and land cost may encourage increased development in the West of Castle Creek Corridor, development should be limited to existing nodes in order to maintain undeveloped spaces between them.

The Airport Business Center (ABC) should remain a business service and limited light industrial area for Aspen residents and businesses. While the residential neighborhoods in the corridor should enjoy basic commercial services within the

ABC that limit residents' need to travel into Aspen. The Base of Buttermilk should continue to function as a vital recreational and lodging component of the Aspen resort community.

Critical to the success of the West of Castle Creek Corridor and the entire Aspen Area is improving our transportation system. A seamless connection between the City of Aspen and the West of Castle Creek Area can be achieved by improving transit services, integrating bike and pedestrian paths, implementing innovative Transportation Demand Management concepts and potential physical improvements to the Entrance to Aspen between the roundabout and 7th and Main.

We are committed to developing a West of Castle Creek Corridor Land Use Master Plan that incorporates all aspects of this philosophy.



What's Changed Since 2000

Since 2000 there has been momentum to update and improve aging facilities and infrastructure to allow this area to continue to function optimally in all the capacities it serves for the Aspen area. Facility master plan updates for the Aspen Airport, Roaring Fork Transit Agency (RFTA) and the base of the Buttermilk Ski Area have been initiated, as have plans for redevelopment of the Inn at Aspen, adjacent to the ski area base.

Community facility improvements include the Aspen/Pitkin Animal Shelter, constructed in 2005 and the North 40 Aspen Fire District Station, constructed in 2009 to ensure that emergencies within the district outside of the Aspen core could be readily served. With respect to transportation, the Airport gained approval to extend the runway to 1,000 feet in length to better accommodate existing air service; and bus-only lanes were constructed from the Airport to the round-about at Castle and Maroon Creek Roads to ease traffic congestion on Highway 82 as it enters Aspen. As part of an overall plan to improve transit service in the region, the Roaring Fork Transit Authority completed planning for a new Bus Rapid Transit program which will include improvements to bus stations at Buttermilk and at the ABC. Given the high level of auto and pedestrian and bicycle traffic in the area, plans were also initiated for development of safe pedestrian access across the Highway in at least one location in the vicinity of the ABC.

To help ensure that traffic continues to flow as efficiently possible given anticipated improvements in the area, Pitkin County initiated the Highway 82 Access Control Plan in conjunction with the Colorado Department of Transportation, to determine the best location for intersections and turning movements along the Highway from the round-about to Owl Creek Road.

As the area continues to provide a somewhat less expensive alternative to land prices in Aspen, it has also been the location for the purchase of lands for, and/or development of workforce

The West of Castle Creek Corridor is located from the round-about to the end of the UGB on Highway 82. It includes all parcels of land in proximity to the highway right-of-way.

housing in close proximity to Aspen. The first phase of Burlingame workforce housing was built in 2006. The City of Aspen purchased and annexed the Harbert Lumber Yard with the intent of building workforce housing. Soon to follow, the Airport Business Center (ABC) upgraded its grocery store to meet demands of the growing local resident population in the immediate vicinity of the Business Center and in nearby Burlingame.

What's New in the 2011 AACCP

As development in the West of Castle Creek Corridor area continues to evolve, so too has the desire to balance and better define its role as the entrance to Aspen, and as it relates to the Aspen core. The West of Castle chapter is new in the 2011 Plan. Though aspects of this area were addressed in broad terms in previous Aspen Area Community Plans, the new chapter provides a framework for direction as we move forward, and recognizes the need to follow up with a subsequent physical plan for the area to provide more detailed direction.

Linkages:

This plan recognizes that community goals are often inextricably linked: sometimes they complement each other, and at times they come into conflict. The new West of Castle Creek Corridor Master Plan will seek to identify and balance a wide range of factors that contribute to the success of the area, including air and ground transportation, preventing sprawl, retaining scenic views, important institutional and commercial uses, recreational opportunities that include a ski area and trail system, affordable housing, a positive "gateway" experience and protecting the natural environment. Also critical to this planning effort is understanding and addressing how this area relates to the downtown.



Both commuters and recreationalists use the bike paths connecting the Airport Business Center to the City of Aspen.

West of Castle Creek Corridor Policies

Policy Categories

I. LAND USE

I.1. Planning for the West of Castle Creek Corridor should support a well-defined visual and functional pattern for a series of distinctly different “nodes” of activity supporting limited uses that are physically separated by open space.

Community Goal

II. SCENIC

II.1. The density, size and scale of all new development and redevelopment in the West of Castle Creek Corridor should maintain, and if possible enhance, the views of the natural environment seen as one travels through this portion of the Highway 82 corridor.

Community Goal

III. TRANSPORTATION

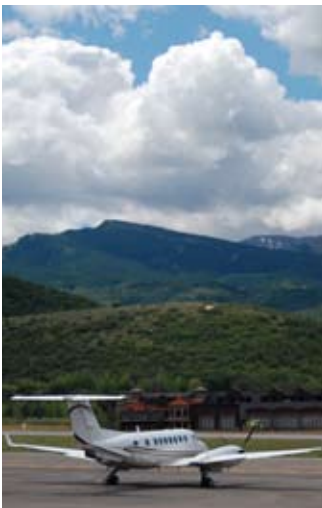
III.1. Improve the convenience, reliability, comfort, affordability, safety, capacity, and quality of experience of transit services and improve efficiency and coordination between all related aspects of transportation in the West of Castle Creek Corridor.

*Community Goal,
Collaborative Initiative*

III.2. Ensure safe and efficient pedestrian and bike connections exist within the West of Castle Creek Corridor and connect the area to the Aspen downtown.

*Community Goal,
Collaborative Initiative*

Transportation



Vision

We seek to provide a balanced, integrated transportation system that reduces congestion and air pollution. Mass transit use, carpooling, carsharing, bicycling, and walking are some of the tools that can help us achieve this vision.

Philosophy

Our transportation philosophy comes largely from our desire to maintain a quality of life that reflects how a small town looks and feels, while accommodating the functioning of a resort area. While the recent economic downturn has reduced traffic congestion, we must assume that congestion will return and possibly intensify during the 10-year life of this plan.

Therefore we remain committed to limiting the number of vehicles coming into town, as we have since 1993. Rather than building additional highway lanes for vehicles, our future should be one in which the automobile plays a smaller role in our everyday lives.

We should increase the percentage of trips made using alternative modes of transportation by continuing to make mass transit and the pedestrian/bike trail system more convenient, efficient and enjoyable. We support a valleywide Bus Rapid Transit system that efficiently connects to transit hubs, the airport, and trails.

The airport is an important component of our multi-modal transportation system and we support its mission to provide safe, efficient, reliable and environmentally-responsible airport services and facilities. We recognize that the airport offers an alternative mode of travel, and an opportunity to reduce vehicle trips into the Aspen Area. Efficiently linking the airport to a reliable and convenient mass transit system, while providing information on our comprehensive trail system, can help limit the demand for rental vehicles.

Transportation is inextricably linked to land use issues. Decisions about development have a direct impact on transportation patterns and congestion levels. Significant new development should take place only in areas that are, or can be, served by transit, and should fully mitigate for its transportation impacts. Another important factor in reducing congestion is limiting the displacement of workers through a strong Community Workforce Housing program.

Because the community remains split on potential physical solutions to the Entrance to Aspen, this community plan does not include a preference for one solution versus another. Instead, this plan emphasizes further exploring Transportation Demand Management methods, while providing important guidance for future decision-making regarding a physical solution to the Entrance.

Our commitment to alternative modes of transportation helps reduce traffic congestion, improves air quality, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, promotes public health, and reduces our dependence on non-renewable resources. But we can only provide opportunities for alternative modes of transit: Transportation solutions are achieved when each of us make the personal choice to take advantage of those opportunities.

Definitions

Transportation Demand Management (TDM):

Programs or services that maximize the use of alternative transportation. Alternative transportation generally encompasses bus, carpool, vanpool, bike, walk and carshare modes as well as compressed workweeks and telework. TDM also encompasses outreach and education programs as well as built alternatives such as park and rides, High Occupancy Vehicle lanes, etc. Economic incentives and disincentives are also considered TDM programs.

Transportation Options Program (TOP):

An employer outreach effort that currently serves about 36 businesses. It is separate from other outreach programs offered to tourists, commuters, etc.

What's Changed Since 2000

While our overall transportation policies remain consistent with those outlined in the 2000 AACP, a number of projects have been implemented since that have helped further the community's transportation goals.

In 2006, the City of Aspen initiated a comprehensive public process on the Entrance to Aspen. New data showed that the number of vehicles going in and out of town remained at 1993 levels largely because of the continual improvement and expansion of mass transit service, and limiting parking in town. However, congestion had expanded farther up and down the Highway 82 corridor as well as lasting for longer periods during the day.

One outcome of the public process was a May 2007 Citywide vote that approved the addition of two dedicated bus lanes from the airport to the roundabout, with 63% in favor. This fundamental change reflected public support for improving the reliability and efficiency of the mass transit system.

In November 2008, valleywide voters approved funding to begin implementing the concept of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) – a valleywide plan that depends partially on the success of dedicated transit lanes. At the same time, free bus service began operating from Aspen to Snowmass. In 2009, the City expanded paid parking into neighborhoods around the Commercial Core to encourage the use of mass transit.

In recent years, an Airport Master Plan process has been ongoing, focusing partly on an extended runway. This extension would not allow for larger airplanes, but would result in higher weights allowed per flight, resulting in more people allowed on each plane. The Airport Master Plan also includes a potential replacement of the aging terminal, as well as a relocated parking area, which could result in improved links to the local mass transit system.

What's New in the 2011 AACP

While the 2000 AACP sought to limit average annual daily vehicle trips (AADT), the 2011 AACP goes further by "striving to reduce peak-hour vehicle-trips to 1993 levels." This is a response to the 2007 Entrance to Aspen Reevaluation Report,

which found that while we continue to meet the 1993 average annual daily vehicle trips, congestion had expanded farther up and down the Highway 82 corridor during peak hours.

Regarding physical solutions at the Entrance to Aspen, the 2000 AACP endorsed the 1997 Record of Decision (ROD), which called for crossing the Marolt Open Space with two vehicle lanes and a dedicated mass transit corridor. The 2011 AACP doesn't endorse any particular physical solution, largely due to the extensive 2006/07 public process, which ended with no clear public support for any of the options.

However, the 2011 AACP continues to uphold other long-held Entrance to Aspen policies: to use new highway lanes only for public transit, and to ensure no net loss of open space at the Entrance to Aspen as part of any physical solution.



Traffic on Main Street. The Plan encourages alternative modes of transportation in an effort to alleviate congestion, improve air quality, and reduce the number of vehicle trips.

Linkages

This plan recognizes that community goals are often inextricably linked: sometimes they complement each other, and at times they come into conflict. Over the years, the Aspen Area has supported a transit-based transportation system, which helps to improve our air quality and reduce our carbon footprint. Our transit system is also essential to bringing a commuter workforce to the Aspen Area, helping our economy function. To the degree that our transportation system is inefficient and frustrating for users, the sustainability of our resort economy can be undermined. Future decisions regarding growth management, land use tools and affordable housing will have an impact on the function and cost of our transportation system. Major physical improvements must always be considered along with a sense of retaining community character.

Transportation Policies

Policy Categories

Primary Transportation Policy:

Continue to limit Average Annual Daily Trips (AADT) to 1993 levels at the Castle Creek Bridge, and strive to reduce peak-hour vehicle-trips to 1993 levels. Additional person trips should be accommodated using alternative transportation methods.

*Community Goal,
Collaborative Initiative*

I. PUBLIC TRANSIT

I.1. Improve the convenience, reliability, comfort, affordability, safety, capacity, and quality of the transit service experience, while ensuring physical improvements are consistent with community character.

*Community Goal,
Collaborative Initiative*

I.2. Plan for the location and development of Park and Ride areas considering ease of intermodal transition, quality of experience, effectiveness and cost.

Collaborative Initiative

I.3. Actively promote public awareness of transit alternatives for visitors and second homeowners, including bus routes and the pedestrian/bicycle trail system.

*Collaborative Initiative,
Incentive Program, Work
Program for Transportation*

I.4. Maintain the reliability and improve the convenience of City of Aspen transit services.

*Work Program for
Transportation*

II. BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN

II.1. Extend and/or improve commuter pedestrian/bike trails with the greatest potential for integration with the public transit system.

*Collaborative Initiative,
Work Program for Parks
& Open Space and
Transportation*

II.2. Expand and improve bicycle parking/storage.

*Collaborative Initiative,
Work Program for
Transportation*

II.3. Improve the convenience, safety, and quality of experience for bicyclists and pedestrians on streets and trails.

*Collaborative Initiative,
Incentive Program, Work
Program for Transportation*

Transportation Policies

Policy Categories

III. USER GROUPS AND TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT

III.1. Reduce vehicular trips through the Entrance to Aspen and in neighborhoods that are generated by employment, special events, construction activity, schools, recreation, local residents and other activities.

*Community Goal,
Collaborative Initiative*

V.1. Minimize the adverse impacts of development on the valley-wide transportation system that occur during economic booms and periods of intense construction activity.

*Collaborative Initiative,
Proposed Code Amendment*

V.2. Reduce the long-term impacts of the service industry.

Collaborative Initiative

V.3. Require development to mitigate for its transportation impacts .

Proposed Code Amendment

IV. ENTRANCE TO ASPEN

IV.1. We are committed first to reducing traffic by implementing Transportation Demand Management (TDM) solutions. Ongoing planning for physical improvements to the Entrance to Aspen should use a list of community objectives to evaluate options.

*Community Goal,
Collaborative Initiative*

V. PARKING

V.1. Manage the supply of parking to limit the adverse impacts of the automobile.

*Collaborative Initiative,
Work Program for Parking
and Transportation*

VI. EDUCATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH

VI.1. Ensure that public outreach regarding transportation issues includes the latest technologies for the purpose of well-informed decision-making.

Collaborative Initiative

VI.2. Ensure that users of the valley-wide transportation system are aware that every means of transportation is government-subsidized.

Collaborative Initiative

VI.3. Promote the use of Bus Rapid Transit as a valley-wide transportation system.

Collaborative Initiative

Transportation Policies

Policy Categories

VII. AIRPORT POLICIES

VII.1. Strengthen the Airport’s role in the valley-wide regional transportation system.

Collaborative Initiative

VII.2. Increase the quality and availability of information on travel options.

Collaborative Initiative

VII.3. Improve the efficiency and reliability of airport services while reducing environmental impacts.

Work Program for Airport

VII.4. Improve the overall quality of the airport experience in a manner that is consistent with our community character.

Work Program for Airport

VII.5. Reduce the negative impacts of Airport operations on the surrounding area.

Work Program for Airport

VII.6. Improve the convenience, efficiency and environmental impacts of ground transportation options available at the Airport.

Work Program for Airport

VIII. FUNDING

VIII.1. Increase funding for public transit so that service is consistent and reliable with a preference for stable and sustainable revenue sources.

Collaborative Initiative

IX. DATA GATHERING

IX.1. Ensure that enough clear and understandable data is gathered and compiled for the purpose of well-informed public decision-making.

Data Needs

IX.2. Quantify user groups on the transportation network to better customize TDM strategies.

Data Needs

Housing



Vision

We believe that a strong and diverse year-round community and a viable and healthy local workforce are fundamental cornerstones for the sustainability of the Aspen Area community.

Philosophy

We believe in continuing to provide Community Workforce Housing because it supports:

- A stable community that is vested in the future of the Aspen Area
- A reliable workforce, also resulting in greater economic sustainability;
- Opportunities for people to live where they work;
- A reduction in adverse transportation impacts, resulting also in greater environmental sustainability;
- A reduction in downvalley growth pressures;
- Increased citizen participation in civic affairs, non-profit activities and recreation programs;
- A better visitor experience, resulting in an appreciation of our local identity;
- A healthy mix of people, including singles, families and seniors.

It's important to note that the current AACP refers to Community Workforce Housing, rather than employee housing or affordable housing. This is an effort to acknowledge that housing is intended both to encourage a local workforce and to build a sense of community. Although the name has changed, many of the philosophical statements in the 2000 AACP still ring true today:

"We believe it is important for Aspen to maintain a sense of opportunity and hope (not a guarantee) for our workforce to become vested members of the community. .. (We seek) to preserve and enhance those qualities that has made Aspen a special place by investing in our most valuable asset – people."

"Our housing policy should bolster our economic and social diversity, reinforce variety, and enhance our sense of community by integrating affordable housing into the fabric of our town. A healthy social balance includes all income ranges and types of people. Each project should endeavor to further that mix and to avoid segregation of economic and social classes ..."

The creation of Community Workforce Housing (CWF) is the responsibility of our entire community, not just government. We should continue to explore methods that spread accountability and responsibility for CWF to the private sector, local taxing districts and others.

We continue to support the following statements in the 1993 and 2000 AACP: "Housing should be compatible with the scale and character of the community and should emphasize quality construction and design even if that emphasis increases [initial] costs and lessens production." At the same time, new construction should emphasize the use of durable and renewable materials in order to improve our environment stewardship.

The provision of CWF remains important due to several factors, including the continued conversion of locally-owned homes to 2nd homes, a more costly downvalley housing market and the upcoming trend towards retirement in CWF. With limited vacant land in the Aspen Area and limited public funds, we can't solely build our way out of this problem.

As the CWF program has matured over the years – now managing more than 2,200 units in the Aspen Area – the Aspen/Pitkin County Housing Authority (APCHA) has learned numerous lessons about managing such an impressive inventory of housing. As time goes on, new issues and challenges arise.

This plan emphasizes providing meaningful educational outreach to people in CWF regarding the need for long-term maintenance and regulatory compliance. An APCHA strategic plan for long-term maintenance of publicly-owned rental properties is also needed. A similar long-term plan for handling "unique" properties, such as those with a sunset on deed-restrictions, is critical to maintain inventory. A new focus on the issues surrounding retirement in Community Workforce Housing would be productive, as we are on the brink of a rising retiree demographic.

As the CWF program continues to grow and mature, we should always be aware that no American resort has ever produced a housing program like ours. While there is reason for pride, we must also recognize that we are continually encountering new crossroads that demand creative thinking, understanding and thoughtful action that we may not be able to anticipate today.

What's Changed Since 2000

Since the adoption of the 2000 AACP, a total of 652 new affordable housing units have been constructed, with another 181 approved but not yet built. By any measure, these are impressive accomplishments, but various relevant trends have continued to challenge the goal of establishing and maintaining a "critical mass" of working residents, as stated in the 2000 AACP.

While the ratio of local workers living in affordable housing increased from 25% to 32% from 2000 to 2008, the ratio of local workers living in free market homes dropped from 22% to 13%, the result of continued conversion of locally-owned free market homes to 2nd homes.

Definitions

Community Workforce Housing (CWH): Housing created to support a strong year-round community and a strong workforce. Also known as deed-restricted housing, and Affordable Housing.

On the Horizon

As the community continues to provide Community Workforce Housing, it is important to recognize and understand the challenges on the horizon.

We must continue to track changes to the Colorado Common Interest Ownership Act (CCIOA) and update our housing policies on a timely basis.

APCHA should vigorously promote adoption of CCIOA by existing associations, and require new associations to adopt CCIOA.

Lending practices are changing, resulting in new and potentially difficult financing.

Aspen Area Housing History

In the early 1970's, free-market housing that had primarily housed local employees was being demolished and redeveloped as second homes. By 1974, the City and County began addressing this trend by establishing separate affordable housing programs and 14 years later formed the joint Aspen/Pitkin County Housing Authority (APCHA). APCHA is currently funded through a City of Aspen sales tax and a Real Estate Transfer Tax (RETT).

The State enacted legislation in 2001 granting Housing Authorizes across the state specific powers to raise revenue through sales taxes, use taxes, an ad valorem (property) tax, and/or a development impact fee. To date, APCHA has not pursued these revenue sources.

APCHA operates under the 4th Amended Intergovernmental Agreement between the City of Aspen and Pitkin County. This agreement has eliminated APCHA's role as an active developer of workforce housing; that role has been assumed by the City of Aspen.

Currently, APCHA is principally involved in the qualification, sales, and enforcement of the workforce housing program and is involved in the oversight of over 2,800 units of deed-restricted housing. The APCHA Board of Directors alone, or in concert with other entities, suggests new policy, programmatic changes, and legislation, or makes recommendations, as required by the City, County or State.

At the same time, the economic boom period of 2004 to 2007 saw a dramatic increase in the cost of downvalley land and homes, reducing opportunities for Aspen workers to find free market ownership options in the valley. (While the recession has rolled back prices, this plan must assume that the economy will experience another period of prosperity during the life of the plan.) In addition, the number of retirees in deed-restricted housing is estimated to jump from approximately 310 today to more than 800 in 2021.

The 2007 Housing Summit considered all these factors and more. The primary outcome of the Summit was to encourage additional "land-banking," which ultimately included the purchase of the BMC West property, a parcel at 488 Castle Creek Road and others. The 2008 Affordable Housing Plan evaluated 15 potential sites for affordable housing, identifying a range of up to 685 possible housing units.

What's New in the 2011 AACP

There are no dramatic changes to the Vision, Philosophy and Policies in this chapter compared to the 2000 AACP. In fact, much of the wording remains the same. This is due largely to the long-term support in the Aspen Area for Community Workforce Housing as a critical tool to maintain a strong year-round community.

Some shifts in policy direction for the 2011 AACP can be attributed to the long-term growth and maturation of the housing program, bringing greater awareness of the need for long-term capital reserves and maintenance for individually-owned and rental properties, as well as publicly-owned rental properties.

Another difference in the 2011 AACP is the decision not to establish a specific number of housing units to be developed during the 10-year life of the plan. This should not be perceived as a wavering of support for affordable housing. Several factors were part of this decision, including:

- The amount of time and energy taken during the drafting of the 2000 AACP to establish the goal of 800 – 1,300 housing units was excessive, and needlessly controversial.
- The joint City and County P&Zs believe that 833 housing units were approved between 2000 and 2008 due to the community's ongoing support for providing such housing, not because of the adoption of a numerical goal in the 2000 AACP.
- Time and financial resources for statistical analysis are better spent on other efforts.

This plan focuses on the ongoing challenges of establishing and maintaining a "critical mass" of working residents. The policies outlined in the Housing chapter and related housing mitigation policies in the Managing Growth & Economic Sustainability chapter are intended to meet these challenges as the community continues to provide CWF.

At the same time, the 2011 AACP calls for further research on the physical limits to development in the form of ultimate build-out, projected future impacts related to job generation, demographic trends, the conversion of local free market homes and other factors. This kind of statistical analysis will help inform future decision-making in a more meaningful way compared to establishing what would, at this time, be a somewhat arbitrary numerical goal.

Instead, this plan emphasizes the need to spread accountability and responsibility for providing affordable housing beyond the City and County governmental structures, and continuing to pursue CWF projects on available public land in a transparent and accountable public process.

While past plans have supported “buy-down” alternatives, there has been little comprehensive effort in this regard. A “buy-down” program may be an expensive proposition, but this plan calls for exploring it more thoroughly. The idea is to finally determine if the community is willing to pay the price for providing long-term CWF by converting existing free market homes rather than building new development.

Linkages:

This plan recognizes that community goals are often inextricably linked: sometimes they complement each other, and at times they come into conflict. The creation of Community Workforce Housing can help reduce pressures on the valley-wide transportation system by providing housing opportunities for our local workforce in the Aspen Area, while reducing air quality impacts associated with a commuting workforce. CWH is also critical to a viable economy, and helps to ensure a strong, demographically diverse year-round community. At the same time, limited opportunities and funds mean we can't build our way out of the housing problem, and we recognize that new CWH includes infrastructure costs ranging from transportation to government services, schools and other basic needs.

Housing Policies

Policy Categories

I. SUSTAINABILITY AND MAINTENANCE

I.1. Ensure all Community Workforce Housing (CWH) has adequate capital reserves for maintenance and significant capital projects.

Collaborative Initiative

I.2. Ensure all deed-restricted housing units are utilized to the maximum degree possible.

*Collaborative Initiative,
Work Program for APCA*

I.3. Ensure all deed-restricted housing units are used and maintained for as long as possible, while considering functionality and obsolescence.

*Collaborative Initiative,
Work Program for APCA*

I.4. Provide educational opportunities to potential and current homeowners regarding the rights, obligations, and responsibilities of homeownership.

Collaborative Initiative

I.5. Emphasize the use of durable and environmentally responsible materials, while recognizing the realistic lifecycle of the buildings.

*Incentive Program,
Proposed Code Amendment*

II. DEVELOPMENT & PROGRAM NEEDS

II.1. Ensure the housing inventory bolsters our socioeconomic diversity.

Community Goal

II.2. Ensure Community Workforce Housing (CWH) is prepared for the growing number of retiring Aspenites.

*Community Goal, Work
Program for APCA*

II.3. Promote broader involvement in the creation of Community Workforce Housing (CWH).

*Collaborative Initiative,
Incentive Program*

II.4. Increase the rate of occupancy for existing Accessory Dwelling Units & Caretaker Dwelling Units and ensure new ADUs and CDUs are occupied by local working residents.

*Collaborative Initiative,
Proposed Code Amendment*

II.5. Ensure employers participate in the creation of seasonal rental housing.

*Collaborative Initiative,
Incentive Program*

II.6. Ensure employers who provide housing for their workers through publicly-owned seasonal rental housing assume proportionate responsibility for the maintenance and management of the facility.

*Collaborative Initiative,
Incentive Program*

II.7. Redefine and improve our policy of re-using existing housing inventory.

Work Program for APCA

Housing Policies

Policy Categories

III. DEVELOPMENT & FUNDING

III.1. Ensure fiscal responsibility regarding the development of publicly-funded housing.

Collaborative Initiative

IV. LAND USE & ZONING

IV.1. CWH should be designed for the highest energy efficiency and livability.

*Incentive Program,
Proposed Code Amendment*

IV.2. Track trends in housing inventory and job generation to better inform public policy discussions.

Data Needs

IV.3. The design of new Community Workforce Housing (CWH) should be compatible with the massing, scale and character of the neighborhood, while optimizing density.

Regulatory

IV.4. Ensure that residents of Community Workforce Housing (CWH) and free-market housing in the same neighborhood are treated fairly, equally, and consistently.

Regulatory

V. HOUSING RULES AND REGULATIONS

V.1. Ensure the rules, regulations and penalties of Community Workforce Housing (CWH) are clear, understandable and enforceable.

Work Program for APCA

V.2. Ensure effective management of CWH assets.

Work Program for APCA

Parks, Recreation, Open Space & Trails

Vision

We believe in preserving and enhancing our enjoyment of – and access to – parks, recreational opportunities, open space, and trails.

Philosophy

Scenic views of the natural environment, easy access to public lands and a range of recreational opportunities are three of our greatest assets and the reasons many people choose to visit or make the Aspen Area their home.

We have made great strides in the acquisition of open space, in the improvement of our trail system and our recreational facilities. Future acquisition of open space should focus on the intrinsic value of open space, wildlife habitat, protection of scenic resources, recreational uses and trail connectivity. Future trail expansion should connect existing trails to improve and maintain easy access to public lands and provide opportunities for the use of trails by commuters in both summer and winter.

As stated in the 2000 AACP: "Constant vigilance is required to ensure that (open space) is protected for its visual and recreational contribution to our community as well as for its immediate accessibility from all parts of town."

The City's extensive recreation programs and facilities have become a valuable community asset. These programs and facilities must be constantly reassessed and revitalized.



What's Changed Since 2000

One of the most significant accomplishments since 2000 has been the acquisition of two major open space parcels: The 250-acre Smuggler Mountain property and the 742-acre Brush Creek (Droste) property (located just outside the Urban Growth Boundary). Other major accomplishments since 2000, under the heading of Parks, Recreation and Open Space, include:

- Construction of the Aspen Recreation Center.
- New Aspen Golf Clubhouse and Championship Tennis facility.
- The Rio Grande Skateboard Park.
- The Cemetery Lane and Highlands Trails.
- Highway 82 pedestrian improvements.
- Jennie Adair Park, wetlands and storm water improvements.
- More than 2,000 new street trees planted to strengthen the "urban forest."
- New irrigation system using treated effluent water at the golf course, saving 60 million gallons per year.
- Restoring the historic Ute Cemetery.
- Designing and constructing the Maroon Creek Wetlands.

What's New in the 2011 AACP

There are no dramatic changes to the Vision, Philosophy and Policies in this chapter compared to the 2000 AACP. In fact, much of the wording remains the same. This is due largely to the long-term and unwavering support in the Aspen Area for Parks, Open Space and Recreation. Due to the need for privacy regarding negotiations over land to be purchased, public plans, including this one, typically do not identify specific parcels that may be targets for acquisition.

Some shifts in policy direction for the 2011 AACP include an emphasis on providing recreational opportunities that are "affordable." Also, promoting Aspen as a high altitude training venue is a concept that would be explored as part of updating the Recreation Business Plan. Another new policy is aimed at establishing undevelopable "buffer" areas alongside public trails to maintain and improve the recreation experience. Finally, there is a new emphasis on trail acquisition and/or improvement that targets commuter trails and connectivity with the public transit system.

Linkages

This plan recognizes that community goals are often inextricably linked: sometimes they complement each other, and at times they come into conflict. Parks, recreation, open space, and trails are an integral part of our resort economy, providing opportunities to enjoy scenic views and an outdoor lifestyle, while preserving outlying rural environment and contributing to biodiversity. Potential conflicts may arise as other community priorities are considered for our remaining open lands.

Definitions

Active Park: An active park is a park parcel that has significant maintenance and usually contains a ball field, volleyball court, or flat area which can be used for programmed sporting events, special events and parties. Wagner Park, where Rugged Fest is held, is an example of an active park.

Passive Park: A passive park is either a park parcel that is maintained in its natural or native state with little or no maintenance or is a formal park parcel that has maintenance and irrigation but does not have programmed recreational capabilities. In either scenario these parcels may have benches and trails located within the parcel. The Jenny Adair Wetlands is an example of a passive park.

Parks, Recreation, Open Space & Trails Policies

Policy Categories

I. PARKS

I.1. Acquire land for parks whenever possible.

*Community Goal,
Collaborative Initiative,
Work Program for Parks/
Open Space*

I.2. Maintain a balance between active recreational parks and passive parks.

*Work Program for Parks/
Open Space*

II. RECREATION

II.1 Provide affordable recreational opportunities for all ages.

*Community Goal,
Collaborative Initiative*

II.2 Promote Aspen as a high altitude training venue.

*Community Goal,
Collaborative Initiative*

II.3 The Aspen Recreation Department should strive to be financially self-sustaining while still providing affordable, quality recreational opportunities.

*Collaborative Initiative,
Work Program for
Recreation*

II.4. Strive to integrate physical rehabilitation and adaptive recreation into Aspen Recreation Department facilities and programs.

*Work Program for
Recreation*

II.5 New recreational facilities should offset impacts regarding traffic and job generation and maintain the contextual character of the built environment.

Proposed Code Amendment

III. OPEN SPACE

III.1. Maintain and protect existing open space parcels.

*Community Goal,
Collaborative Initiative*

III.2. Acquire open space to preserve biodiversity, wildlife habitat, scenic value and to support trail connectivity and recreational activities.

*Community Goal,
Collaborative Initiative,
Work Program for Parks/
Open Space*

Parks, Recreation, Open Space & Trails Policies

Policy Categories

IV. TRAILS

IV.1. Acquire, improve and develop trail connections throughout the Aspen Area.

*Community Goal,
Collaborative Initiative,
Work Program for Parks/
Open Space*

IV.2. Encourage regional trail planning.

*Community Goal,
Collaborative Initiative*

IV.3. Increase opportunities for summer and winter trail commuting.

*Collaborative Initiative,
Work Program for Parks/
Open Space*

V. PUBLIC OUTREACH

V.1. Promote our parks, open space, trails and recreational opportunities through maps, brochures, and on-line services.

*Collaborative Initiative,
Work Program for Parks/
Open Space and Recreation*



Examples of Passive and Active parks in the Aspen Area. The photo on the left is the Jenny Adair Wetlands, a passive park, while the photo on the right is Wagner park, an active park.

Environmental Stewardship



Vision

The Aspen Area will be a local, regional, state and national leader in all aspects of environmental stewardship.

Philosophy

As stewards of our environment and resources, it is our responsibility to balance human activity and the health of our natural environment. This ethic is our defining characteristic.

As stated in the 1993 and 2000 AACPs: "The natural environment is one of the community's greatest assets and the reason many people choose to visit or make the Aspen area their home." We do not simply aspire to be good stewards of the environment. We are committed to nurturing, sustaining, and protecting the environment, and believe in the urgency of these actions.

Some of our greatest environmental challenges include the various impacts of development and redevelopment, including:

- The treatment of run-off before it reaches riparian areas, a problem that is heightened when development occurs on steep slopes and in riparian areas.
- The generation of substantial amounts of demolition debris, a long-term problem due to strong trends towards residential redevelopment, and the impact on our limited landfill.
- Excessive energy consumption, including extensive snowmelting, outdoor pools/spas etc.
- Periods of high employment increases vehicle trips, which results in extensive idling related to heavy traffic congestion.

We recognize the decisions we make today regarding our air, water, and land will have a significant impact on our future. As such, we are committed to making choices and implementing programs that ensure our environmental sustainability. We recognize that these choices will come up even as we consider basic municipal services such as snow removal, maintaining public parks and fields, and street-sweeping and cleaning etc. We can also play a role in changing people's individual habits, from re-useable grocery bags to higher recycling rates and limiting the wasteful consumption of plastic bottles.

We continue to endorse the Ecological Bill of Rights, adopted by the City Council and Board of County Commissioners (please see sidebar on page 52-53).

What's Changed Since 2000

Since 2000, there have been a significant number of new programs and projects completed with a goal toward improving the environmental health of the Aspen community. Some of the highlights include:

- Continued improvement of the City and County Residential Energy Mitigation Program (REMP), which requires mitigation for energy consumption outside the home for of snow melt systems, pools/spas, etc.
- Continued City and County support of the Roaring Fork Transit Authority (RFTA), which saved 8,023 tons of CO₂ from being emitted into the environment in 2006.
- The City reached EPA PM-10 "attainment" status in 2003, after 15 years of devising and implementing strategies to improve air quality.
- Adopting the City's Canary Initiative in 2005 with a goal of educational outreach and aggressive reductions in our carbon footprint.
- Adopting the City's Waste Reduction/Recycling Ordinance in 2005, aimed at increasing the recycling rate, diverting yard waste from trash, and establishing a reporting system.
- Creating the ZGreen program in 2006, a City certification and outreach program designed to reduce the environmental impacts of Aspen's citizens, visitors, businesses, and events.
- Establishing a new taxing district in 2007, with the goal of treating stormwater run-off. Also, new development fees are being used to address run-off problems at construction sites, as part of the City's Clean River Initiative.
- Creating the Jennie Adair and Rio Grande Stormwater Management Projects in 2006. After six months of operation, this constructed wetlands project prevented 144 tons of sediment from discharging into the Roaring Fork River.

Definitions

ZGreen: A City certification and outreach program designed to help Aspen's citizens, visitors, businesses, and events reduce their environmental footprint.

PM-10: Small particulate air pollution including dirt, dust, and smoke. It is responsible for up to 60,000 deaths per year in the US and in Aspen it comes almost exclusively from traffic.

Ozone: A pollutant caused by upwind emissions of pollutants from gas drilling and traffic.

Canary Initiative: In 2005, the city adopted the ambitious Canary Initiative that identifies Aspen and other mountain communities as the "canary in the coalmine" for global warming. The goal is to aggressively reduce Aspen's carbon footprint to protect our community's future, and to contribute to global reduction of global warming pollution. Global warming is caused by greenhouse gasses, which trap heat in the atmosphere. According to the EPA's US Greenhouse Gas Inventory, in 2006 carbon dioxide (CO₂) made up 80% of greenhouse gas emissions in the United States. CO₂ enters the atmosphere through the burning of fossil fuels, solid waste and tree products.

Clean River Initiative: A City program dedicated to improving the water quality in the Aspen Area.

Deconstruction: The selective dismantlement of building components, specifically for re-use, recycling, and waste management. It differs from demolition where a site is cleared of its building materials by the most expedient means.

What's New in the 2011 AACP

The 2000 AACP combined the Environment, Parks and Open Space into one chapter. The 2011 update to the AACP recognizes that Environmental Stewardship is of such importance that it should be highlighted in its own chapter.

The 2011 AACP establishes a series of ambitious goals that are intended to elevate environmental stewardship to a new level during the next 10 years. They include:

- Reducing the Aspen Area's carbon footprint by 30% compared to 2004 levels.
- Reducing electricity and natural gas consumption in the Urban Growth Boundary by 15% compared to 2004 levels.
- Implementing the Clean River Initiative through additional wetlands design and construction at Rio Grande Park, including treatment "vaults."
- Initiatives aimed at on-site treatment for run-off.
- Increasing the diversion of construction debris from the landfill, and moving towards recycling programs to help extending the life of the landfill.
- Substantially reducing our dependence on non-renewable energy.



Sediment in stormwater runoff in the City of Aspen is 20 times higher than the national average. The Clean River Initiative is focused on improving our stormwater runoff.

Linkages

This plan recognizes that community goals are often inextricably linked: sometimes they complement each other, and at times they come into conflict. This community's commitment to responsible environmental stewardship has been evident for decades, and has evolved dramatically in recent years. Preserving the natural environment, scenic views and biodiversity are important to our attractiveness as a resort, and a real estate/development economy. There will always be a need to strike a responsible balance between environmental protection and physical development. We also recognize the need to strike a balance between environmental stewardship and the manner in which we provide basic municipal services, ranging from street sweeping to managing snowy and icy winters.

Ecological Bill of Rights

The community adopted an Ecological Bill of Rights in 1989, which states the overall environmental philosophy for the Aspen Area:

- The right to breathe clean air and enjoy clear vistas.
- The right to the preservation of natural riparian areas and wetlands.
- The right to permanently protected minimum stream flows in rivers and creeks.
- The right to the preservation and restoration of native wildlife and plant diversity by preservation of sufficient habitat.
- The right to protection of designated wilderness through management of adjoining land in a way that preserves the integrity of the wilderness areas.
- The right to a landscape free of noxious and invasive weeds.
- The right of appropriate access to public lands on roads and trails historically open to the public, consistent with the nature and designation of the public lands.
- The right to dedicated open space protected from urbanization and development.
- The right to the efficient and renewable use of energy.
- The right to be free from excessive noise.
- The right to see the night sky without the interference of unnecessary artificial light from growth, urbanization and highway development.
- The right to the absolute minimum involuntary exposure to toxic chemicals, radioactive substances and energy forms that are hazardous to health.
- The right to maintain and not exceed the carrying capacity (sustainability) of the land and water, including protecting water quality.
- The right to expect from our government legislation and active enforcement of land use and development regulations consistent with this Ecological Bill of Rights.

Environmental Stewardship Policies

Policy Categories

I. GREENHOUSE GASES

I.1. Within 10 years, reduce the carbon footprint of the Aspen Area from 2004 levels by 30%.

Community Goal

I.2. Incentivize alternative forms of transportation to reduce reliance on fossil-fuels.

Incentive Program

I.3. Ensure all development and uses minimize their greenhouse gas emissions.

Proposed Code Amendment

II. AIR QUALITY

II.1. Reduce the quantity of particulate pollution in Aspen's air.

*Community Goal,
Collaborative Initiative,
Environmental Health Work
Program*

II.2. Achieve and maintain healthy ozone levels.

*Community Goal,
Collaborative Initiative,
Environmental Health Work
Program*

II.3. Ensure all development and uses minimize their air pollution emissions.

Proposed Code Amendment

III. WATER

III.1. Maintain minimum stream flows for the Roaring Fork River and its tributaries.

*Community Goal, Work
Program for Water
Department*

III.2. Reduce the detrimental effects of diversions from the Roaring Fork River and its tributaries.

*Work Program for Water
Department*

III.3. Maintain and preserve existing riparian habitat and wetlands.

*Work Program for Planning
Department, Proposed
Code Amendment*

III.4. Reduce the quantity of urban pollutants in stormwater runoff that discharge into the Roaring Fork River and its tributaries.

*Work Program for
Engineering, Proposed
Code Amendment*

III.5. Optimize the natural filtration of storm- and melt- water.

*Work Program for
Engineering, Proposed
Code Amendment*

III.6. Require new development to treat its stormwater runoff, with a preference for on site.

*Work Program for
Engineering, Proposed
Code Amendment*

Environmental Stewardship Policies

Policy Categories

IV. WASTE MANAGEMENT AND REDUCTION

IV.1. Implement waste reduction and purchasing programs and encourage behavior that moves the Aspen Area toward being a zero waste community and extends the life of the Landfill.

*Community Goal
Collaborative Initiative, Work Program for Environmental Health & Landfill*

IV.2. Ensure adequate funds are available for environmental monitoring and eventual remediation of the Pitkin County Landfill.

Work Program for Landfill

IV.3. Increase the amount of construction and development materials that are diverted from the landfill, reused or recycled.

Proposed Code Amendment

V. RENEWABLE ENERGY

V.1. Reduce our dependence on non-renewable energy sources and instill an ethic of energy accountability.

Community Goal

V.2. Continue to pursue efforts to establish an electric grid of 100% renewable energy.

Community Goal

V.3. Within 10 years, reduce electricity and natural gas consumption in the Urban Growth Boundary from 2004 levels by 15%.

Community Goal

V.4. Encourage existing development and require new development and redevelopment to minimize their energy usage and use on-site renewable energies as the site allows.

*Incentive Program,
Proposed Code Amendment*

VI. WEED MANAGEMENT

VI.1. Ensure there is proper resource management to minimize the negative impacts of weeds on the Aspen Area.

Community Goal, Work Program for Parks and Open Space Departments

VII. WILDLIFE AND WILDLIFE HABITAT

VII.1. Sustain, protect and restore biodiversity and native ecosystems through land use planning, resource acquisition and best land management practices on public and private lands.

*Community Goal,
Collaborative Initiative,
Work Program for Planning,
Parks, and Open Space
Departments, Proposed
Code Amendment*

Historic Preservation



Vision

Historic preservation connects us to our heritage, enabling us to learn from and appreciate the stories and context of our past. Preserving our historic resources contributes to our long-term cultural awareness and sustainability as a unique resort.

Philosophy

Preserving the historic built environment is vital to our culture: We are all stewards of our history. Through effective outreach and education, we strive to raise community awareness so that all of us feel responsible for the preservation of our history. While the overall goal of preservation is foremost, the process should be one of balance, predictability, fairness, consistency and integrity.

Preservation of historic structures and sites connect us to the people, patterns, and events that are the fabric of our town in a way that photographs cannot replicate. In preserving our history, we ensure our culture and legacy is imparted to future generations. A respectfully restored historic structure or site honors the history and culture of our town, whereas a demolished one erases a piece of the Aspen story forever.

Historic preservation is also aligned with our environmental ethic. Energy is saved by retaining existing structures and making them more efficient rather than demolishing the structure and building anew.

Mass, scale, and building proportions directly influence how people perceive our town. We must build on what we have by authentically preserving historic structures and creating thoughtful new buildings that are compatible with that feeling of historical continuity. While creativity in development is encouraged, additions and new buildings must be sensitive to historic patterns.

What's Changed Since 2000

Over the past ten years, historic preservation policies have undergone significant changes.

In 2005, Pitkin County passed a significant revision to the Land Use Code providing for the voluntary protection of the important historic properties within the Urban Growth Boundary. These code provisions have been successful in encouraging historic preservation. In 2008 the county completed work on the Historic Preservation Handbook, which includes background information on the history of the county, a description of the incentives available to historic property owners and a listing of good preservation practices.

In December 2006, the City Council established an emergency moratorium on building permits in the Commercial Core (CC) zone district while staff researched options on preserving the interiors of historically designated buildings. In December 2008, the City Council lifted the moratorium without taking specific action on the issue.

In July 2007, City Council placed temporary protections on post-war properties that might be worthy of preservation. In January 2011, after hearing recommendations from a Historic Preservation Task Force, City Council approved changes to the Historic Preservation Program to recognize the importance of both Victorian and Modern (post-war) buildings. Referred to as AspenModern, the preservation of Modern or midcentury buildings is entirely voluntary, similar to the Pitkin County program, which requires owner consent for designation. AspenModern seeks to incentivize the preservation of important buildings representative of Aspen’s early ski era, its emergence as an intellectual center, and development as a vacation resort.

What’s New in the 2011 AACP

There are no substantive differences in the 2011 AACP compared to the 2000 AACP. Historic Preservation continues to be an important community goal. One new policy calls for further exploring methods to preserve historically significant interiors in publicly accessible buildings.

Linkages

This plan recognizes that community goals are often inextricably linked: sometimes they complement each other, and at times they come into conflict. Historic preservation is an important element of the resort economy because it helps us to physically illustrate our cultural legacy, enabling us to “tell our story” to future generations. “Heritage Tourism” is a widely accepted positive element in attracting visitors. Also, the preservation and maintenance of historically designated buildings is environmentally responsible compared to recent trends toward demolition and replacement. Historic preservation can include providing benefits to facilitate historic designations; and people may disagree on whether such trade-offs are positive or negative in a given neighborhood setting.

Aspen Through the Years

Aspen has an exciting history of pioneering spirit and innovation, including its establishment as a silver mining town in 1880 and its mid-century renaissance with the creation of the ski industry in the late 1930s and the Aspen Idea after World War II.

Between 1880 and 1892 Aspen grew to become the third largest city in Colorado, behind Denver and Leadville. In 1893, Congress repealed the Sherman Silver Purchase Act and Aspen’s development as a silver mining community quickly declined. Aspen’s population dropped from 12,000 residents in 1893 to just 3,300 by 1900. The town settled into its quiet years until the creation of a downhill ski run by Andre Roch aptly called “Roch Run Trail” or “the Roch.” Just after World War II in 1946, Aspen permanently carved out a place among international ski resorts in Europe with the longest chairlift in the world – Lift 1. Around the same time, industrialist Walter Paepcke and his wife Elizabeth began promoting Aspen as an intellectual center. The Paepckes had a clear vision for the town and brought influential and celebrated artists, writers, and thinkers to Aspen which led to the creation of the Aspen Institute, Aspen Center for Physics, and Aspen Music Festival to name a few, and ultimately led to the development of the Aspen Idea – the pursuit of mind, body and spirit.

Historic Preservation Policies

Policy Categories

I. SHARING THE ASPEN STORY

I.1. Raise public awareness and appreciation for the Aspen story.

Collaborative Initiative

II. UPDATING THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

II.1. Ensure that city codes support innovative development while respecting the historic integrity of designated structures and ensuring compatibility with the surrounding context in terms of site coverage, mass, scale, height and form. (See Managing Growth/Commercial Sector/Policy IV.1)

Work Program for Planning, Proposed Code Amendment

II.2. Ensure that the Historic Preservation Benefits Package encourages owners of landmark property to preserve structures to the highest possible degree of historic integrity while minimizing adverse impacts to the neighborhood.

Work Program for Planning Department

II.3. Maximize the use of the City's Historic Transferable Development Right Program (TDR) as a method of preserving the historic integrity of designated structures.

Work Program for Planning Department

III. PUBLIC SECTOR

III.1. The public sector should set an example as a responsible steward of preservation and adaptive re-use of historic buildings.

Work Program for Planning and Asset Management Departments

IV. PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE INTERIORS

IV.1. Explore code changes to preserve exceptional character-defining historic interiors in publicly accessible buildings.

Proposed Code Amendment

V. REVIEW PROCESS & ENFORCEMENT

V.1. The Historic Preservation Commission's review process should be positive, productive and fair, with a high level of integrity, consistency and collaboration.

Work Program for Planning Department and HPC

V.2. Routinely and fairly enforce property specific approvals.

Work Program for Planning Department and HPC

Historic Preservation Policies

Policy Categories

VI. HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM EDUCATION

VI.1. Improve public awareness and understanding of the City and County Historic Preservation Programs.

Collaborative Initiative

VII. ENERGY EFFICIENCY

VII.1. All existing and future historic landmark properties should be maintained in a manner that improves energy efficiency while maintaining historic integrity.

Proposed Code Amendment

The Lifelong Aspenite



Vision

We will strengthen the quality of life and well-being for the people in our community by providing access to services through all phases of life, from education to public safety and health.

Philosophy

Providing health and human services for anyone who calls the Aspen Area “home” is integral for the long term sustainability of our community. Local governments, non-profits and community groups have made progress in addressing the needs of the “Lifelong Aspenite,” but gaps still exist in the provision of essential services, including adequate housing and health care options for residents who are low income, seniors and disabled. We value a collaborative approach to finding creative, sustainable solutions.

We are guided by professional, legal and community standards in providing opportunities for people of all ages to achieve a higher quality of life through:

- **Self-Reliance:** We must work together to help each person in our community meet his or her basic needs and remain self-sufficient to the greatest extent possible.
- **Public Safety:** We must continue to ensure that our safety services (police, sheriff, fire, child and adult protection, Mountain Rescue and emergency response, etc.) are efficient, effective and coordinated.
- **Health:** We must encourage the highest level of personal health for everyone in our community through programs that encourage healthy lifestyles, reduce risks, and create access to quality health care regardless of age, income or ability. Local and regional public health agencies, local boards of health, providers, and non-profits must work together to ensure community-wide access to a comprehensive set of health services.

What’s Changed Since 2000

The recent economic downturn has increased the demand for health and human services throughout the country, including here in Aspen. While demand has increased, funding sources have not been able to keep pace, and private philanthropy, state and federal funding has decreased. This chapter identifies many programs and initiatives that will require funding into the future. Securing these sources will be an important part of implementing the policies in this chapter.

Aspen has the only dedicated sales tax funding early childhood education in the nation. Voters approved the sales tax in 1990, and re-authorized it in 2008. This sales tax funds over 90% of the costs to run Kids First, which provides childcare in the Aspen Area. The tax is set to expire in 2040.

Pitkin County voters approved a new property tax in 2002 to support the Healthy Community Fund, and voted to renew and increase revenues in 2006. The fund provides grants to area non-profits that support health and well-being in the community. In 2010, more than \$1.4 million was granted to 61 health & human service and community non-profit programs. The tax is set to expire in 2012 unless it is renewed again.

In 2010, Aspen Valley Hospital received approval to begin a facilities expansion. This is funded in part by a bond approved by voters in Nov 2010.

While City and County governments play an important leadership role in addressing the health and human services gaps and demands in service (as the local Boards of Health and with direct responsibility for Kid’s First, Senior Services and the Healthy Community fund) there are dozens of non-profits, taxing districts (such as Aspen Valley Hospital, schools, CMC) and other entities that provide health and human services. One of the primary goals of this new chapter is to bring a range of groups together to explore innovative and collaborative ways to provide health and human services. This ethic of community and regional cooperation and collaboration enhances our quality of life.

What’s New in the 2011 AACCP

For the first time, the Aspen Area Community Plan includes a chapter that highlights the services needed to help nurture a healthy community. While past community plans have promoted a high quality of life through growth management tools, affordable housing policies, environmental programs, and transportation initiatives, they have not comprehensively addressed the health and human services needed to support our community. This chapter focuses on the sustainability of our community through health, safety, and economic and family services.

Linkages

This plan recognizes that community goals are often inextricably linked: sometimes they complement each other, and at times they come into conflict. Our success in creating affordable housing and a demographically diverse year-round community has also resulted in increased needs for services related to health, education and safety.

Definitions

Community Health Impact Assessment: a process that measures health statutes and health risks of the population and the capacity of the public health system to meet those needs. It is a formal approach to identifying health needs and health problems in a community.

Board of Health / Local Public Health Agency: The 2008 Public Health Act requires local designation of Local Public Health Agencies to oversee public health priorities and services. In the Aspen Area the City Council and the Board of County Commissioners are each Local Public Health Agencies for their jurisdictions.

Self Sufficiency Standard: Measures how much income working families need to meet their basic costs without public or private assistance. It is calculated on a county-by-county basis, and includes all costs a working family has, including housing, child care, food, health care, transportation, and taxes.

Restorative Justice: An approach to justice where offenders are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and “to repair the harm they’ve done” - by apologizing, returning stolen money, or (for example) doing community service.

Family Friendly: A variety of working practices designed to enable employees to achieve a satisfactory work-life balance.

Healthy Family Functioning: Healthy families promote the emotional, physical and social welfare of individual family members. Among the many factors that contribute to this process are a family’s internal strengths and the durability of the family unit.

The Lifelong Aspenite Policies

Policy Categories

I. SELF-RELIANCE

I.1 Ensure that affordable, accessible high quality childcare is available.

Community Goal

I.2 Encourage businesses to adopt family-friendly employment policies.

Collaborative Initiative

I.3 Promote self-sufficiency and self-reliance through coordinated, comprehensive and sustainable programs.

*Collaborative Initiative,
Work Program for Health
and Human Services*

I.4 Expand the opportunity for safe and healthy housing for those in need, including older adults, people with disabilities, and low-income populations.

*Work Program for Health
and Human Services*

I.5 Ensure that all community members have access to all public assistance programs for which they qualify.

*Work Program for Health
and Human Services*

II. PUBLIC SAFETY

II.1 Ensure a safe community.

Community Goal

II.2 Ensure a safety net exists for all at risk Aspen Area residents, visitors and workers.

Community Goal

II.3 Reduce juvenile and adult crime.

*Work Program for Health
and Safety Agencies*

The Lifelong Aspenite Policies

Policy Categories

III. HEALTH

III.1. Promote community-wide collaboration to address health and social service needs throughout the community and in association with new development.

Community Goal, Work Program for health and Human Services, Proposed Code Amendment

III.2 Ensure that a comprehensive health care system exists and that the community is aware of the system.

Community Goal, Collaborative Initiative

III.3 Ensure that residents have access to primary care including prevention, palliative care, long-term care and health maintenance services, regardless of payer source.

Community Goal, Collaborative Initiative

III.4 Ensure that residents of all ages have access to a comprehensive mental health and substance abuse system that addresses acute and chronic mental health needs.

Community Goal, Collaborative Initiative

III.5 Ensure that all residents have access to a comprehensive dental program.

Community Goal, Collaborative Initiative

III.6 Promote healthy family functioning.

Collaborative Initiative

III.7 Promote and provide access to organic and sustainable local and regional food production.

Community Goal, Collaborative Initiative

Changes to the Urban Growth Boundary

The P&Zs reviewed the existing Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) and proposed one changes to the boundary in the West of Castle Creek Corridor Area. The map below illustrates the proposed change to add a portion of the Airport Property into the UGB (in orange hatching). The 2004 Airport Master Plan covers the entire Airport Property. The current UGB line bisects the Airport runway and does not include all the areas in the 2004 Airport Master Plan. The P&Z recommended extending the UGB line to portions of the Airport property that are zoned Public.

