

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