

Planning for a Lifelong Aspenite



Vision

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

Philosophy

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 human and social services needed to support our community. Providing these 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. 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, optimal health and public safety.

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. It is important that we provide a wide range of options to achieve this goal.

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 strive to achieve 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, providers, and non-profits must work together to ensure community-wide access to a comprehensive set of health services.

Policies and Action Items

The policies and action items below are adopted to address the following critical issues: 1) General, 2) Self-Reliance, 3) Public Safety, and 4) Health.

I. GENERAL

Policies

I.1. Provide access to comprehensive health and social services.

Community Health 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.

I.2. The impacts on public health and welfare from development, activities, events, and policy changes shall be mitigated.

Action Items

- I.1.a Conduct a Community Health Assessment for the Aspen Area every 5 years and analyze, prioritize and implement findings. *(I – HHS, PH, LPHA, EH, AVH, Community Non-Profits)*
- I.1.b Identify specific gaps in our health and social service networks. *(I – HHS, PH, LPHA, EH, AVH, Community Non-Profits)*
- I.1.c Establish and implement a long term strategic plan to fund creative and sustainable solutions to the gaps in service. *(I - HHS, LPHA, PH, EH, City Manager, County Manager)*
- I.1.d Address the gaps in the health and social service networks, with a goal of providing accessibility and affordability. *(LT- Aspen K-12, HHS, Private Sector, Community Organizations, KF)*
- I.1.e Create comprehensive, accessible and bilingual tools, such as a phone and web directory, that provide information about available health, safety, education and social services. *(I – HHS, LPHC, All Departments/Agencies)*
- I.1.f Continue collaboration and communication between the City and County Boards of Health. *(I - PH, EH, LPHA)*

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 (aka the Board of Health) for their jurisdictions.

- I.2.a Explore possible amendments to the City and County codes to include review criteria for self-reliance, health, and safety issues. *(I – P, HHS)*
- I.2.b Explore the creation of a fee or other methods to mitigate impacts from development, activities/events, and policy changes. *(I – HHS, P, PH, SE)*
- I.2.c Add Health and Human Services to the regular internal review of land use applications. *(I – HHS, P, APCHA, PH, LE, Community Non-Profits, EH)*

II.SELF-RELIANCE

Policies

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

II.2 Expand the opportunity for safe and healthy housing for those in need, including older adults, people with disabilities, and low-income populations.

Transitional Housing: Housing that provides stability for residents for a limited time period to allow them to recover from a crisis such as homelessness or domestic violence before transitioning into permanent housing. Transitional housing often offers supportive services, which enable a person to transition to an independent living situation.

II.3 Ensure that all community members have access to all public assistance programs for which they qualify.

Action Items

- II.1.a Establish an on-going program that encourages and supports parent engagement and leadership in childcare programs and schools. (LT – Aspen K-12, KF, PH, Community Non-Profits, HHS)
- II.1.b Work with local, regional, state, and federal organizations to maintain and increase funding so that early childhood education remains affordable. (I – KF)
- II.1.c Improve the quality of childcare through a variety of tools, such as grants, coaching, pre-licensing support and Qualistar Rating. (I – KF)
- II.2.a Establish a comprehensive network of in-home services to support seniors and people with disabilities. (I – HHS, SrS, Senior Council, Private Sector)
- II.2.b Explore a range of options to ensure availability of all levels of care accommodations and services for older adults and the disabled so they can choose to remain members of the community for life. (LT- SrS, Senior Council, Private Sector)
- II.2.c Explore the concept of transitional and permanent low-income housing for community members striving to become self-reliant. (LT- Private Sector, HHS, Community Non-Profits, APCHA, P)
- II.3.a As the budget allows, maximize all state/federal allocations by increasing the income levels under which members of the community may access public assistance programs. (I – HHS, KF, APCHA)
- II.3.b Lobby the state and federal government to change assistance guidelines and funding to reflect the self-sufficiency standard. (I – HHS, City Manager, County Manager)
- II.3.c Explore public transportation options to enable community members to access public assistance programs throughout the Roaring Fork Valley. (I – RFTA, T, HHS)

II.SELF-RELIANCE, cont.

Policies

II.4 Promote self-sufficiency and self-reliance through coordinated, comprehensive and sustainable programs.

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.

II.5 Encourage businesses to adopt family-friendly employment policies.

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

Action Items

- II.4.a Educate our community about the Self-Sufficiency Standard, the importance of earning a livable wage, and the resources available to promote self-sufficiency. (I – HHS, PH, Aspen K-12, KF)
- II.4.b Provide access to career paths using local educational partners - Colorado Mountain College, Aspen School District and others - for community members to train and pursue educational interests leading to locally-based careers. (LT – CMC, Aspen K-12, HHS)
- II.4.c Explore opportunities for our youth to return here as adults. (I – Private Sector, CMC, Community Non-Profits)
- II.4.d Develop targeted education programs, such as reducing early parenthood, to maximize teens’ ability to be self-sufficient as adults. (I – Community Non-Profits, HHS, Aspen K-12, CMC)
- II.4.e Incentivize the creation of jobs and volunteer opportunities for seniors and people with disabilities. (LT- City Manager, County Manager, HHS)
- II.4.f Identify all local subsidies, such as RFTA, APCHA, Child Care assistance, food programs and health care, and educate our community about their monetary value. (LT – HHS, RFTA, APCHA, KF, PH, Community Non-Profits, Private Sector)
- II.4.g Encourage programs that will foster cultural and language integration in businesses and schools. (LT- Community Organizations)
- II.4.h Ensure that community is literate by providing opportunities for English and other language learning. (LT- Aspen K-12, CMC, Community Organizations)
- II.4.i Promote enforcement of fair job and housing laws and ensure effective bilingual communication. (LT- Community Non-Profits, APCHA)
- II.5.a Educate employers, increase public awareness and explore lobbying for legislation regarding the “best business practices” to enhance business productivity while supporting families. (I – HHS, KF, CMC, Private Sector)
- II.5.b The public sector should serve as a model for implementing this policy. (LT – HHS, KF, City Manager, County Manager)

II.SELF-RELIANCE, cont.

Policies

Action Items

II.6 Ensure everyone has local access to quality food.

II.6.a Create incentives so Women Infants and Children (WIC) nutrition program vouchers are accepted for fresh produce at the Aspen Farmer’s Market. (I- PH, LPHA, City Manager, County Manager)

II.6.b Explore programs to implement the policy. (LT- P, EH, Private Sector, Community Non-Profits)

WIC: The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (known as WIC) is a Federal assistance program for healthcare and nutrition of low-income pregnant women, breastfeeding women, and infants and children under the age of five. The eligibility requirement is a family income below 185% of the U.S. Poverty Income Guidelines.

II.7 Promote organic and sustainable local and regional food production.

II.7.a Implement programs and policies to support co-operatives and local production of good, clean, and fairly priced food. (LT – City Manager, County Manager, LPHA, EH, Community Organizations)

II.7.b Amend City and County land use codes to eliminate regulatory barriers to small-scale personal agriculture, such as rooftop gardens, green roofs, cold frames, and green houses. (LT – P)

II.7.c Explore the use of public lands for community gardens and permaculture activities. (I – P, P/OS, Community Organizations)

II.7.d Coordinate efforts to educate the community about local food production, including programs that teach gardening. (LT – CMC, EH, Community Organizations)

Permaculture: A land use and community building movement which strives for the harmonious integration of human dwellings, microclimate, annual and perennial plants, animals, soils, and water into stable, productive communities. The focus is not on these elements themselves, but rather on the relationships created among them by the way we place them in the landscape. This synergy is further enhanced by mimicking patterns found in nature.

Good, clean, fairly priced food: A concept from the Slow Food Movement, as outlined below.

Good: Enjoying delicious food created with care from healthy plants and animals.

Clean: Nutritious food that is as good for the planet as it is for our bodies.

Fair: Food that is accessible to all, regardless of income, and produced by people who are treated with dignity and justly compensated for their labor.

III. PUBLIC SAFETY

Policies

III.1 Ensure a safe environment exists for all.



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

Action Items

III.1.a Strengthen coordination between public safety, schools and non-profits to support education and prevention programs. (Ex: Teen and Dating Violence Education courses at Aspen HS) (*I – HHS, LE, Community Non-Profits, Aspen K-12*)

III.1.b Establish reliable funding and staffing levels to provide public safety operations to meet growing public needs and unfunded mandates. (*LT - HHS, PH, LE*)

III.1.c Promote conflict resolution skills amongst neighbors and homeowners' associations. (*I - LE, Community Non-Profits*)

III.1.d Explore expanding community policing and neighborhood watch programs. (*LT - LE*)

III.1.e Participate in local and regional training on emergency plan components and instill a strong incident command culture (*LT - LE*)

III.1.f Encourage the Public Safety Council to continue clarifying roles and responsibilities in order to be responsive to changes in homeland security and to protect the Aspen Area residents, workers and visitors. (*LT - LE*)

III.1.g Strengthen local and regional emergency response teams. (*LT - LE, PH, HHS, AVH, Aspen K-12, CMC*)

III.2.a Create programming to reduce the incidence of family violence and ensure the safety, permanency and well being of children in the Aspen area. (*I – HHS, LE, PH, Aspen K-12, KF, Community Non-Profits*)

III.2.b Streamline and coordinate the community response to incidents, such as family violence, financial exploitation of adults, and sexual assault, through enhanced collaboration among the appropriate agencies. (*I – HHS, Response, DA's office, Law Enforcement, Mental Health and Substance Abuse counselors, Probation, Case management programs, Community Non-profits*)

III.2.c Develop a comprehensive inmate re-entry program. (*LT – LE, HHS, Community Non-Profits*)

III.2.d Explore the creation of year-round homeless shelters, half-way houses and programs that address mental health, substance abuse, physical health, job assistance and case management. (*LT - Community Non-Profits, HHS*)

III.2.e Ensure dedicated funding and comprehensive resource development to provide coordinated, timely and quality services to at-risk Aspenites. (*LT- HHS, City Manager, County Manager, LPHA, PH*)

III. PUBLIC SAFETY, cont.

Policies

III.3 Reduce juvenile and adult crime.

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.

Action Items

III.3.a. Support recreational, cultural, and educational choices for youth to keep kids safe and engaged in the community, including mentoring and after-school and recreation programming (*I - HHS, Community Non-Profits, CR, Aspen K-12*)

III.3.b. Create a Restorative Justice Program and/or other alternative sentencing for juveniles and adults that allow for people to learn from and make amends for their crimes (*I - LE, Community Non-Profits*)

III.3.c. Develop and implement programs that provide prevention, intervention and treatment for juvenile sexual offenders. (*LT - HHS, Community Non-Profits*)

IV. HEALTH

Policies

IV.1 Ensure that a comprehensive health care system exists and that the community is aware of the system.

Action Items

IV.1.a Educate the community about the importance of environmental and lifestyle risk factors, and provide programs to help reduce those risks (*I – EH, HHS, LPHA, PH*)

IV.1.b Strengthen partnerships and communication between health care agencies and providers to enhance community health programming, cohesive case management and electronic communication. (*LT- PH, HHS, AVH, Private Sector Health Providers, KF, EH, LPHA*)

IV.1.c Create a seamless system of services for families to support their children’s positive development from birth through school-age. (*LT - KF, PH, Aspen K-12*)

IV.1.d Create an outreach program to link community members to health insurance. (*I – HHS, Private Sector Health Providers*)

IV.1.e Support future opportunities and programs that will maximize the local benefits of Health Care Reform. (*LT - HHS, PH, AVH, Private Sector, Community Non-Profits*)

IV.1.f Educate the community regarding the connection between improved child development and success in school and life. (*I – KF, Aspen K-12, PH, HHS*)

IV. HEALTH, cont.

Policies

IV.2 Ensure that residents have access to primary care including prevention, palliative care, long-term care and health maintenance services, regardless of payer source.

Action Items

- IV.2.a Work with local and regional healthcare partners to develop, implement and align community health priorities through the Community Health Assessment. *(I - PH, LPHA, EH, AVH, Community Non-Profits)*
- IV.2.b Determine and address the need for improved access to Medicare, Medicaid, CHP+ and indigent care providers in the Aspen Area. *(I - PH, Community Non-Profits, HHS, AVH, private providers, SrS)*
- IV.2.c Collaborate with local, regional and state organizations to implement the policy. *(LT - KF, PH, AVH, HHS)*
- IV.2.d Support community efforts to attract and engage health care providers to share in the provision of health services to residents over 65 (Medicare insured). *(I - PH, HHS, SrS, AVH, Private Sector)*
- IV.2.e Explore the creation of a school-based health clinic and resource center in the Aspen School District *(LT - Community Non-Profits, Aspen K-12, HHS)*
- IV.2.f Address the causes of childhood and adult obesity through development of comprehensive programs and education about nutrition, physical activity and access to healthy food. *(LT - PH, LPHA, Aspen K-12, Community Non-Profits, Private Sector)*
- IV.2.g Support partnerships to create year-round safety education and prevention programs, and secure funding. *(LT - AVH, PH, EH, LE, Aspen K-12, RFTA, CMC)*

IV. HEALTH, cont.

Policies

IV.3 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.

IV.4 Ensure that all residents have access to a comprehensive dental program.

Action Items

- IV.3.a. Work with community non-profits and local mental health and health care providers, to create a comprehensive, integrated and sustainable mental health system. *(I – Community Non-Profits, HHS, Private Sector)*
- IV.3.b. Collaborate with local, regional and state organizations that work with children and families, to increase access to preventive care in all mental health areas for children. *(LT – KF, Community Non-Profits, HHS)*
- IV.3.c. Ensure that accessible and affordable mental health screening and treatment is available. *(I – Community Non-Profits, SrS, HHS)*
- IV.3.d. Work with public and private mental health practitioners to create an action plan that addresses senior issues, especially depression and anxiety. *(I – SrS, Community Non-Profits)*
- IV.3.e. Support the creation and implementation of a comprehensive suicide prevention program. *(I - Community Non-Profits, HHS)*
- IV.3.f. Enhance substance abuse prevention education for children, adults and families. *(I - Community Non-Profits, Aspen K-12, HHS)*
- IV.3.g. Establish sustainable detoxification services and programs for the Aspen Area. *(LT- Community Non-Profits, HHS)*
- IV.4.a. Explore the creation of a local and/or regional low-income dental care program. *(I- PH, LPHA, HHS, Community Non-Profits)*
- IV.4.b. Provide community outreach, communication, and education on the importance of oral health and the availability of affordable dental services available in the Roaring Fork Valley. *(I – Community Non-Profits, PH, HHS)*
- IV.4.c. Ensure dentistry for all ages is accessible and affordable. *(LT- Private Sector)*

IV. HEALTH, cont.

Policies

Action Items

IV.5 Promote healthy family functioning.

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. Unlike any other social group, families are able to provide the close emotional support needed to produce self-confident and well-adjusted children and adults. Likewise, families that function in a healthy manner are well equipped to deal with the many normal changes and unexpected crises that confront them throughout their lifetime. Therefore, the family’s primary function is to create a healthy environment where family members can successfully grow and develop.

- IV.5.a. Provide consistent, quality education about what behaviors reflect healthy family functioning and about the availability of resources that support healthy family development. (LT - KF, PH, HHS, Aspen K-12)
- IV.5.b Create a network of “Family to Family” support programs to use local families to mentor residents who have relocated to the area, who may be isolated from extended family or who may lack the knowledge or skills related to healthy development and interactions. (LT - HHS, PH, Community Non-profits)
- IV.5.c Support intergenerational and intercultural programming in all public facilities. (LT - KF, SrS, HHS)
- IV.5.d Establish an “Active Retiree Database” that includes a list of retirees and their talents/skills, along with a list of volunteer and part-time/full-time “help wanted” opportunities to match people with activities/jobs (LT - ACRA, Private sector, SrS)