

# Environmental Quality

## Small Group Meeting Summary

This session was held on October 19, 2010 in the Fire Station Meeting Room. Policies are in **bold font**. Action Items are regular front. Public feedback is inserted directly under the relevant Policy or Action Item, and is in **large font, bold and italic**.

***Add the 7<sup>th</sup> generation quote in the 2000 AACP to the philosophy statement.***

***In general, get rid of “explore,” “continue,” “examine” and replace with “find,” “do,” etc.***

### I. Greenhouse Gases Policies & Action Items

***Like the action items.***

I.1. Within 10 years, reduce the carbon footprint of the Aspen Area from 2004 levels by 30%. ***Five people agreed with this statement.***

***We need a more ambitious goal, but this will be hard to reach as is.***

I.1.a Enhance existing and create new incentives for Aspen Area property owners to voluntarily track and reduce their personal carbon footprints. (I- CI)

***Add utility companies to this – they could track and let property owners know about their carbon footprint, rather than just relying on a voluntary system.***

I.1.b Continue the Canary Initiative and Community-wide Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory and establish interim reductions goals. (LT- CI)

I.1.c Encourage businesses to decrease their greenhouse gas emissions by utilizing best practices, and becoming ZGreen and TOP certified when they get a business license. (LT- CI, EH)

I.1.d Study and implement methods to further decrease greenhouse gas emissions, such as incentivizing users to conduct energy audits, switch to renewable energy, purchase energy efficient appliances, improve insulation, etc. (LT- CI)

I.2. Incentivize alternative forms of transportation to reduce reliance on fossil-fuels. ***Five people agreed with this statement.***

**Add an action item to reduce Vehicle Miles Travelled for everyone who travels through the UGB.**

I.2.a Implement purchasing policy for new City and County vehicles to include hybrid, electric, or alternative fuel vehicles whenever possible. All vehicles purchased should score at 8 or higher for both air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions as listed in the EPA's green vehicle guide. (I – EH, CI, Streets, Asset)

**“Whenever possible” is a concern. Don’t want to not purchase hybrid/electric just because of the price...but like the 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence about level 8**

I.2.b Incentivize the use and purchase of hybrid and electric vehicles by the public, including rental car companies (LT - CI)

I.2.c Incentivize air travelers to voluntarily offset impacts from flights through the purchase of Canary Tags. (I – CI)

I.2.d Continue to work with FAA to further reduce the pollution impacts of the airport. (LT – CI)

I.2.e Explore the potential benefits of adding bike lanes to existing rights-of-way, including looking for opportunities to eliminate some on-street parking and replacing it with bike lanes. (I – T, Streets, P, E, City Manager)

I.2.f Establish a community bike sharing program throughout the UGB. (I – T)

I.2.g Encourage and increase the use of carpooling and car-sharing in the Aspen Area, including educating the public on the options and availability. (I – T)

**I.3. Strive for all development to meet the highest standards to minimize greenhouse gas emissions. Five people agreed with this statement.**

**This is very broad. What are “highest standards?” Three people agreed with this statement.**

**There are many different standards. State what standards we’re trying to meet. Clarify this.**

I.3.a Review and update elements of the Building Code to minimize the use of unsustainable resources and those that have high levels of embodied energy. (I – CI, EH, B)

I.3.b Quantify, evaluate, and reduce construction emissions. (I – EH)

I.3.c Amend the City and County land use codes to require all development to go through an environmental review that ensures it will meet the established thresholds. (I - P, EH, CI, SW, B)

I.3.d Establish a sliding scale of environmental thresholds for development. (I – P, EH, CI, B)

**Clarify what “sliding scale” refers to.**

## **II. Air Quality Policies & Action Items**

**These policies need “more meat” and more information to them. Explain why we are doing these, kind of like the water pollution ones.**

**II.1. Improve existing air quality. Five people agreed with this statement.**

**Change to “Improve existing air quality such that we exceed the EPA standards to provide high quality/the healthiest air-shed.”  
Add a call-out box that lists all the toxins/pollutants..**

II.1.a Maintain a maximum PM-10 level of 50 or less with 98% of days with PM-10 levels below 35 (I – EH, T, Streets)

II.1.b Track the use of street sanding in the winter and street cleaning in the summer and investigate ways to minimize impacts. (LT – EH, Streets)

**Statement should say “street sanding and cleaning in winter”.  
There’s no PM10 problem in the summer, so action item should be for the winter only.  
Eliminate dirt/gravel on snow – get studded tires (there’s a tire shop in town now!).**

II.1.c Continue to investigate alternatives for winter treatment of Highway-82. (LT – EH)

**Needs stronger language. Take steps to reduce and eliminate the use of sand.**

**Non-flushing based street cleaning; some water can be used.**

II.1.d Improve public education and awareness of toxic pollutants, such as pesticides and radon, and implement programs to decrease their use. (I - EH)

**Are pesticides for a water pollutant than air? Possibly move pesticides to water section.**

**Consider a pesticide notification law. People post notice on property if they plan to spray.**

II.1.e When PM-10 levels are likely to be high, inform the public and implement programs to encourage bus and carpool use. (I – EH, T)

II.1.f Explore amending the land use codes to require all development to go through an environmental review that ensures it will meet established sliding scale thresholds for air pollution. *(I – P, EH, CI)*

**II.2. Achieve and maintain healthy ozone levels. *Five people agreed with this statement.***

***What are “healthy ozone levels?” Add a call out box explaining this.***

II.2.a Monitor and determine baseline ozone levels for the Aspen Area. *(I - EH)*

II.2.b Evaluate ozone monitoring data and develop a program to attain and maintain healthy ozone levels. *(LT - EH)*

### **III. Water Pollution Policies & Action Items**

**III.1. Reduce the quantity of urban pollutants in stormwater runoff that discharges into the Roaring Fork River and its tributaries. *Four people agreed with this statement.***

III.1.a Conduct master planning of the Aspen Area’s sub-watersheds and install regional stormwater treatment facilities to capture and treat runoff, beginning with the most heavily developed areas. *(I - E/SW)*

III.1.b Reduce the potential for stormwater pollutants generated from municipal facilities and operations, such as vehicle maintenance and street flushing, by implementing storm water best management practices. *(LT – E/SW)*

III.1.c Pursue partnerships among government, local businesses and property owners and managers to develop and showcase measures that reduce the amount of urban pollutants in storm water runoff. *(LT – E/SW)*

III.1.d Educate and engage the public in Clean River Initiative project, and the impacts of pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizer on water quality. *(I – E/SW)*

III.1.e Develop and implement a plan to detect and eliminate illegal or improper discharges to the stormwater system. *(LT – E/SW)*

III.1.f Implement a regular pharmaceutical take-back program to reduce the levels of pharmaceuticals entering our rivers. *(LT – EH, E/SW)*

**III.2. Require new development to treat its stormwater runoff on site. *Four people agreed with this statement.***

III.2.a Amend the land use and building codes to require development and redevelopment to incorporate best management practices that will permanently manage and treat stormwater runoff on site. *(I - P, B, E/SW)*

III.2.b Require Construction Management Plans to include provisions for the installation and maintenance of pollution prevention measures on construction sites. (I-E/SW)

III.3. Increase the natural absorption of storm- and meltwater. **Four people agreed with this statement.**

**Should say “natural filtration” instead of absorption.  
New action item: reduce impervious surfaces.**

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III.3.a Amend land use requirements to reduce the amount of allowed impervious surfaces, such as reducing lot coverage dimensional requirements. (I – P, E/SW)

III.3.b Explore the feasibility of requiring pervious surfaces in place of impervious surfaces. (I – E/SW, Fire, P, Streets)

## **IV. Waste Management and Reduction Policies & Action Items**

IV.1. The Aspen Area’s recycling rate should exceed the national average. **Five people agreed with this statement.**

**How to measure and report on this ion a regular basis. (This also applies to other performance measures in this section). For example – City Hall reduces energy use this month by \_\_\_%.**

**Clarify – is this traditional materials only, or the non-tradition ones too (construction materials, composting...)**

IV.1.a Implement programs, including expanded curb-side recycling pick-up and increasing the kinds of materials that can be recycled, to significantly reduce waste and increase recycling. (LT - EH, L)

IV.1.b Evaluate amending regulations to require that all residences and businesses in the Aspen Area recycle office paper, comingled, magazines/newspaper, and paperboard, glass, plastic, cardboard and compost/yard waste. (I - EH, L)

IV.2. Implement programs and encourage behavior that aim to dramatically reduce waste generation and extend the life of the Landfill. **Five people agreed with this statement.**

**Include composting for businesses and residential.**

**What does “dramatically” mean?**

**Like incentives.**

**Enforcement of on-site construction waste.  
Like the “behavior change” aspect of this policy.**

IV.2.a Develop a system for food waste and organic material pickup and a permanent food waste and organics compost operation at the landfill. (I – EH, L)

IV.2.b Incorporate programs to promote and implement “zero waste,” for events, businesses, and residents. (LT – EH, L)

IV.2.c Require all events in the Aspen Area to meet the environmental requirements established by the ZGreen Program, addressing waste reduction, energy conservation, and public outreach. (I – EH)

IV.2.d Ensure that there are adequate facilities and resources to accommodate increased recycling levels and a greater diversity of materials. (LT – EH, L)

**Does “adequate facilities” mean all infrastructure and programs (curbside, dropoff, etc)?**

IV.2.e Reduce the use of paper and plastic bags in the Aspen Area. (I – EH, CI)

IV.2.f Incentivize businesses to use reusable or recyclable cups, bottles, and containers. (I – EH, CI)

**IV.3. Increase the amount of construction and development materials that are diverted from the landfill, reused or recycled. Five people agreed with this statement.**

**County needs to use trash fees to pay for recycling. Charge what we want less of, make free what we want more of.  
Tough policy. Good existing program. Maintaining the existing program would be good.**

**Incentives are good; accomplish more than restrictive policies.**

IV.3.a Amend City and County codes to require deconstruction rather than demolition of existing structures so that materials and components that can be reused are separated and made available for salvage and reuse, and recyclable materials are handled appropriately. (I/LT- B, EH, P, L)

IV.3.b Explore opportunities to create incentives in the building process for increasing deconstruction and salvage. This could include giving discounted access to the Pitkin County Landfill, adjusting landfill/building permit fees when a building is deconstructed instead of demolished, imposing fees at time of building permit to cover the costs of construction waste that goes to the landfill, or prioritizing building permit review based on the level of deconstruction and on the amount of construction and development waste that is recycled. (LT – EH, B, L)

IV.3.c Explore opportunities in the state to recycle or re-use construction and development waste that cannot be accommodated at the Pitkin County landfill. (LT – EH, L)

IV.4. Ensure adequate funds are available for environmental monitoring and eventual remediation of the Pitkin County Landfill. **Five people agreed with this statement.**

**Why is there “funding” here and not in the other policy sections?  
May fall short on action. Where do funds come from?  
Users should pay the full costs of the landfill program.**

IV.4.a Explore and implement mechanisms to ensure there are adequate funds for the landfill operations. (LT – L, EH)

## **V. Renewable Energy Policies & Action Items**

V.1. Reduce our dependence on non-renewable energy sources and instill an ethic of energy accountability. **Two people agreed with this statement.**

**Apply to both commercial and residential**

**Replace “reduce” with “eliminate”**

**“Instill an ethic...” should be a separate policy ASAP. City needs to be a leader in this.**

**This needs a hard goal.**

V.1.a Retrofit existing City and County buildings with renewable energy systems and energy efficiency improvements. (I – CI, U)

V.1.b Evaluate amending the building codes to reduce phantom energy loads in new and existing buildings. (I - B)

**Evaluate is too weak. Just do it.**

V.1.c Evaluate potential energy requirements and quantify greenhouse gas emissions if the Urban Growth Boundary was completely built out according to current zoning. Consider code and policy changes based on the study in order to conserve energy and reduce trips. (LT – P, EH, CI, T, B, U)

**Evaluate is too weak. Just do it.**

V.1.d Evaluate amending the building code to maximize the use of renewable energy in all new construction. (LT – CI, B)

**Evaluate is too weak. Just do it.**

V.1.e Continue efforts to educate and engage the public regarding energy usage and opportunities to increase energy efficiency. (I - EH, CI, U)

V.2. Within 10 years, reduce electricity and natural gas usage in the Urban Growth Boundary from 2004 levels by 15%. **One person agreed with this statement.**

**How is this measured? What are we measuring?**

**How much is Holy Cross vs city?**

**Community-wide goal?**

**It's too undefined in the policy and the action items**

**Add an action item: incentivize commercial sector to conserve – within businesses too. Government can rebate for conservation.**

**Incentives result in behavior changes.**

**We need better ways to measure energy use: front-end/real time/back-end.**

**Not aggressive enough**

**Add “instill an ethic of conservation”**

V.2.a Work with Holy Cross to increase the renewable energy mix in their electricity provided to the Aspen Area. Explore options for greater utilization of the City of Aspen's energy utility in the Aspen Area. (LT - CI, U)

**City and Holy Cross are part of the cost-benefit analysis.**

**Establish an on-line model do-it-yourself audit that's tied to points system/scale fee rebate.**

**Commercial and residential are fundamentally different.**

V.2.b Implement efficiency programs in conjunction with Source Gas. (LT - CI, U)

V.2.c Incentivize private development of ground source heat pumps, solar panels and wind power. (LT - CI, U)

V.2.d Explore opportunities for local renewable energy production, including ground source heat pumps, the creation of geothermal heating districts, and the use of solar and wind power. (LT – U)

**Methods to retrofit the Valley**

V.3. Encourage existing development and require new development and redevelopment to mitigate their energy usage with on-site renewable energies. **One person agreed with this statement.**

**Incentivize not require**

**Create a point system, scales, fee rebate, to front of the line, etc**

3.a Establish a City/County renewable energy project in the Urban Growth Boundary that projects can buy into as an alternative to renewable energy on-site. (I – CI, EH, B)

3.b Amend the City and County building codes to prohibit outdoor fire pits, hot tubs and snowmelt systems unless they are powered by non-polluting, 100% renewable energies. (I - B, EH)

3.c Require energy audits when an improved property is sold so the new buyer is aware of the energy costs, and potential improvements, of the building. (LT – CI)

3.d Adopt a program that would allow property owners to get a loan from the City or County for energy upgrades that would be paid back over time through increased property taxes (e.g. a lien on the property). (I – CI)

3.e Amend City and County land use codes to remove barriers to the use of renewable energy, such as solar panels, on development. (I – P)

***“remove barriers and incentivize through fee-based point system/loan program”***

***Subsidize on back-end with long term cost-benefit analysis.***

***Remove all historic barriers to solar.***

3.f Amend the land use code to require protection of solar access and proper siting for solar orientation in all development. (I – P)

***“...solar orientation, collection and integration with greenhouses, groundsource heat pump, and all renewable technologies...”***

3.g Amend the building code to require new construction to accommodate future energy upgrades, such as rooftop wiring. (I - B)

**V.4. Continue to pursue efforts to establish an electric grid of 100% renewable energy.  
*One person agreed with this statement.***

***Best local energy grid.***

***Remove “electric grid” (it confuses people.)***

4.a Complete and implement the Clean Energy Plan. (LT – U, CI)

## **VI. Water Policies & Action Items**

***Add a policy about healthy water. We don’t want chemicals in our water.***

VI.1. Maintain minimum stream flows for the Roaring Fork River and its tributaries. **Four people agreed with this statement.**

**Can we say “increase” instead of maintain?**

**Ensure that minimum meets the needs. Two people agreed with this statement.**

**We need a buffer for our water (what if there is a drought?). Ensure minimum stream flows during all situations.**

**Would love gold water standard in Aspen**

**We want higher standards that what the state says is the minimum.**

**Three people agreed with this statement.**

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VI.1.a Pursue dedication of water rights to maintain minimum stream flows. (I - U)

VI.1.b Develop a reliable methodology for dedication of water rights for instream flow purposes. (LT – U)

VI.2. Reduce the detrimental effects of river diversions on the Roaring Fork River and its tributaries. **Three people agreed with this statement and one person disagreed with this statement.**

**Nice goal but legally how do you do that?**

**Water law says “use it you lose it” concept. Perhaps create programs or incentives for legal leases to keep water in stream. Two people agreed with this statement.**

**Concern for personal property rights. Worried that this statement may harm personal property.**

VI.2.a Increase mitigation efforts targeted at lowering the detrimental effects of river diversions. (LT – U, E/SW)

VI.2.b Modify existing water policies and regulations to incentivize hookups to municipal water supply or other water districts such as the Buttermilk Metro District . (I - U)

VI.3. Maintain and preserve existing riparian habitat and wetlands. **Four people agreed with this statement.**

**Statement should be “Maintain, preserve and restore...” Three people agreed with this statement.**

**Go further with this statement.**

VI.3.a Examine existing land use policies to ensure they protect the riparian habitats. (I – P, P/OS)

## **VII. Weed Management Policies & Action Items**

VII.1. Ensure there is proper resource management to minimize the negative impacts of weeds on the Aspen Area. ***Four people agreed with the policy; No one disagreed.***

VII.1.a. Broaden public education about specific techniques to limit the spread of invasive noxious weeds. (I - LM, P/OS)

***Inform the public about City and/or County Departments and Staff responsible for weed management on the Rio Grande Trail to improve communication regarding weed encroachments along the trail alignment.***

VII.1.b Create new, and enhance existing, policies that enable partnerships and cost sharing between government and property owners to achieve compliance with the Colorado Noxious Weed Act. (I – LM)

***Within the City and County organizations, identify City and County Staff responsible for enforcing the Colorado Noxious Weed Act. Adopt standards requiring landscaping to be limited to non-invasive plant species. Educate the public about “integrated pest management” in lieu of spraying to eliminate weeds. Eliminate poison.***

## **VIII. Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat Policies & Action Items**

VIII.1. Sustain, protect and restore biodiversity and native ecosystems through land use planning, acquisition and best land management practices on public and private lands. ***Four people agreed with the policy; No one disagreed.***

VIII.1.a Align City and County stream buffer/setback standards to comprehensively buffer development from the riparian ecosystem associated with the Roaring Fork River and its tributaries. (LT – P)

VII.1.b Improve and coordinate existing City and County standards and incentives for the reclamation of riparian and wetland habitat mitigation and/or replacement. (I – P, P/OS)

VII.1.e. Support use of City and County Open Space and Trails funds for purchase and maintenance of intact, unfragmented wildlife habitat, or critical connections between habitats for the preservation of native plant and animal species. *(LT – P/OS)*

VII.1.f. Promote the diversity and vitality of the “urban forest” that exists both within the City of Aspen and in the Wildland Urban Interface. *(LT – P/OS)*

***Replace the term, “urban forest” with “community forest” to coincide with the term used in the existing City of Aspen “Community Forest Management Plan.”***

VII.1.g Improve existing standards, enforcement and education as needed to enhance the co-existence of bears and people in the City of Aspen and in Pitkin County. *(LT – EH, LM)*