

Flagship Initiatives & Highlights

As a vibrant economy, Aspen is a significant generator of business and jobs. With economic activity comes the pressures of development and growth. This in turn places demands on the natural and human resources including housing, transit, childcare, and medical care. Policies and initiatives that balance these needs is the vital responsibility of today's decision makers and community members. The opportunities related to Aspen's sustainability performance are many. To give a sense Aspen's sustainability values and priorities here are some of its flagship programs and initiatives:

Emissions	 CITY OF ASPEN CANARY INITIATIVE	<p><i>By 2020, Aspen aims to reduce its GHG emissions 30% below 2004 levels. By 2050, it strives to be 80% below those levels. Aspen's community-wide emissions inventories are updated every three years. The 2014 inventory shows that Aspen's emissions have gone down 7.4% since 2004. These targets further motivate related policies and programs.¹</i></p>
Renewables		<p><i>Since 2015, Aspen's municipal electric utility has succeeded in purchasing 100% of its electricity from renewable sources. The City of Aspen electric utility uses 46% hydroelectric, 53% wind power, 1% landfill gas. This reduces GHG emissions and provides for a cleaner, more diversified energy supply.²</i></p>
Transport		<p><i>Roaring Fork Transportation Authority (RFTA) buses offer rapid service along the valley corridor. Buses between Aspen, Snowmass and the Aspen-Pitkin County Airport are free. Within Aspen there are nine free shuttle bus routes, a free mobility service called the Downtowner, and vehicle/bike share programs such as CAR TO GO and WE-cycle..³</i></p>
Housing		<p><i>The Aspen/Pitkin County Housing Authority (APCHA) provides affordable workforce ownership or rental options in the community. There are approximately 2,956 units. This breaks down to approximately 1,631 ownership-type units and 1,325 as rental-type units. APCHA continues to look at ways to enhance the existing program.⁴</i></p>
Childcare		<p><i>Kids First is an early childhood resource center that serves families and childcare programs in the broader Aspen community. Kids First helps families find, choose, and pay for childcare. The department further serves childcare programs through funding, training and development, and other support.⁵</i></p>

¹ City of Aspen website. Canary Initiative. Web. March 2016. <http://www.aspenpitkin.com/Living-in-the-Valley/Green-Initiatives/Canary-Initiative/Climate-Action-Progress/>.

² City of Aspen website. Canary Initiative. Web. March 2016. <http://www.aspenpitkin.com/Living-in-the-Valley/Green-Initiatives/Renewable-Energy/>.

³ City of Aspen website. Transportation. Web. March 2016. <http://www.aspenpitkin.com/Departments/Transportation/>.

⁴ City of Aspen website. Housing. Web. March 2016. <http://www.aspenpitkin.com/Departments/Housing-for-Workforce/>.

⁵ City of Aspen website. Housing. Web. March 2016. <http://www.aspenpitkin.com/Departments/Housing-for-Workforce/>.



Aspen School District is the top ranked in the state of Colorado. And is among the top 25 on the “2016 best school districts in America” ranking”.⁶ The high school graduation rates are consistently high at around 95%. The school system prides itself on a wide range of innovative offerings such as the outdoor/experiential education program.

One way for Aspen to show a commitment to a sustainable future is to report on the performance and progress of existing programs as well as implementing new ones when necessary. By taking a holistic approach to sustainability, the community can better balance the needs of all stakeholders. This report is testament to the community’s effort to make Aspen a sustainable and attractive place to live, work, and visit. In doing so, Aspen can play a lead role as a community exemplifying sustainability principles.

⁶ Robbie, E. Aspen Times. <http://www.aspentimes.com/news/ranking-puts-aspen-school-district-on-top-in-colorado-24th-in-the-nation/>.