

About this Report

The Aspen Sustainability Report is a community-based report. It envisions sustainability outcomes and key performance measures that support progress toward goals and objectives.

Stakeholder Input Process

In January 2013, City staff began the process of framing a shared vision for what sustainability means for Aspen. Over the last several years, environmental, economic, and social outcome statements and measures were developed and identified in collaboration with respective community stakeholders.

Various stakeholders' subject matter expertise and experience helped ensure that the key themes and measures are relevant to the Aspen community. This stakeholder engagement process is summarized in Figure 1 below.



Figure 1. Stakeholder Engagement Process for Developing Sustainability Key Performance Measures

Because of this input, this report includes a total of 14 thematic outcome areas and 67 specific key performance measures of progress toward those outcomes. Two measures are under development as do not have sufficient data.

Sustainability Outcomes

For each sphere of sustainability, there are categoric topics, which the stakeholders identified as essential components for the achievement of sustainability. Condensed outcome statements are listed below. The full versions can be found in the respective sections of the report.

ENVIRONMENTAL

- **AIR** – *The Aspen community enjoys clean healthy air. Residents and visitors alike expect and value clear skies and unpolluted indoor and outdoor air.*
- **ENERGY** – *The Aspen community effectively manages its energy needs while minimizing adverse environmental impacts.*
- **PARKS, TRAILS, & OPEN SPACE** – *Aspen’s unique blend of natural resources provides wide-ranging habitats, recreation opportunities and connected, accessible places.*
- **WASTE** – *The amount of waste is minimal, and waste management choices protect the environment. Wastes are minimized through diversion and reuse whenever possible.*
- **WATER** – *The Aspen community has a sufficient supply of safe, clean water to satisfy a full range of municipal and other purposes while maintaining healthy streams and rivers.*

ECONOMIC

- **APPEAL OF THE ASPEN BRAND** – *Aspen is the destination of choice. Visitors and residents expect and receive the very best of recreational, educational, cultural, and business amenities.*
- **TOURISM ACCESS, LODGING, & MOBILITY** – *Visitors to Aspen can readily access the resort via air or ground transport. They have access to modern, safe, and comfortable facilities and amenities.*
- **BUSINESS DIVERSITY & SUSTAINABILITY** – *Aspen has a business environment that leads to strong year-round economic health and that caters to a variety of visitors and residents.*
- **WORKFORCE SUPPLY & MATCH** – *Aspen has a sufficient supply of well-qualified workers. Wages are competitive. Excellent transportation options are available to support mobility.*

SOCIAL

- **EDUCATION & LIFELONG LEARNING** – *The Aspen community has access to excellent (pre)schools. Students (of all ages) succeed academically. They develop the social and life assets needed for success and happiness. Continued professional development opportunities are available.*
- **HOUSEHOLD FINANCIAL SECURITY** – *Individuals and families can thrive in Aspen. Workers can find housing options; jobs are available with sufficient wages; and social assistance is available and accessible.*
- **HEALTH & WELL-BEING** – *The balance of mind, body, and spirit is exemplified in Aspen. Aspen residents have healthy life habits and have access to affordable medical and health services.*
- **PUBLIC SAFETY & PREPAREDNESS** – *Crime rates are low and public spaces do not present major safety hazards. They are also accessible to people of all ages and abilities. Effective planning is in place to prepare for emergencies.*
- **COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS** – *Residents have a variety of opportunities for nurturing relationships and spirituality. Choices of community engagement are plentiful and participation rates are high. People take pride in their community.*

Stakeholder feedback is welcome on how to continuously improve and/or expand upon the sustainability outcomes and key performance measures.

Sustainability Dashboards

Sustainability dashboards display environmental, economic, and social key performance measures developed to date. The key performance measures are formulated in one-page dashboards that explain what the measure is, why it is important, and what the data and trend show. Associated benchmarks, targets, and alerts are included where possible.

The report further highlights selected actions that the City and other key stakeholders are currently taking to achieve a more sustainable community in the three spheres highlighted. These include programs, initiatives, and plans that are designed for continuous improvement.

Baselines, Data Sourcing, & Considerations

The measures show the current state of sustainability in the community. They also serve as a tangible means to track future progress and success. Having considered a broad vision for sustainability, the first step is to establish a baseline for the community. The key performance measures are designed to:

- *Report the current position of the Aspen community regarding its sustainability outcomes*
- *Benchmark against performance targets or [alerts] where established/confirmed*
- *Communicate performance to policy/decision makers/citizens*

The development of these outcomes and associated measures enable data driven performance, planning, and action. The environmental, economic, and social measures presented in this report bring together data from a host of local, state, and national sources. To the extent possible primary sources are used and validated. Due to data availability and/or quality, not all measures are fully established. In future years, there is an expectation the City will build on these initial measures and dashboards.

The data displayed on respective dashboards show some level of variability over time. In some cases, the variability is minor while in other cases it is obvious. Such variability is often inherent and normal, but can present decision-makers with a dilemma: *When does the variability require attention and intervention?*

To help understand the variability in the data, and therefore to help assess whether some addressable factor requires attention, several steps have been taken as follows:

1. Where historical data is available, it has been included, so that the most recent year of information be part of a broader pattern, rather than in isolation and without context.
2. Where feasible, benchmarks or target values are provided. This helps illustrate whether the data is within the range desired.
3. In cases where there is a seasonal pattern to the data, average highs and lows have been added to the graphs. These averages help contextualize whether the expected seasonal peaks and valleys are trending over time. An example is provided in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2. Average Annual Valley Workforce (2006-2017)

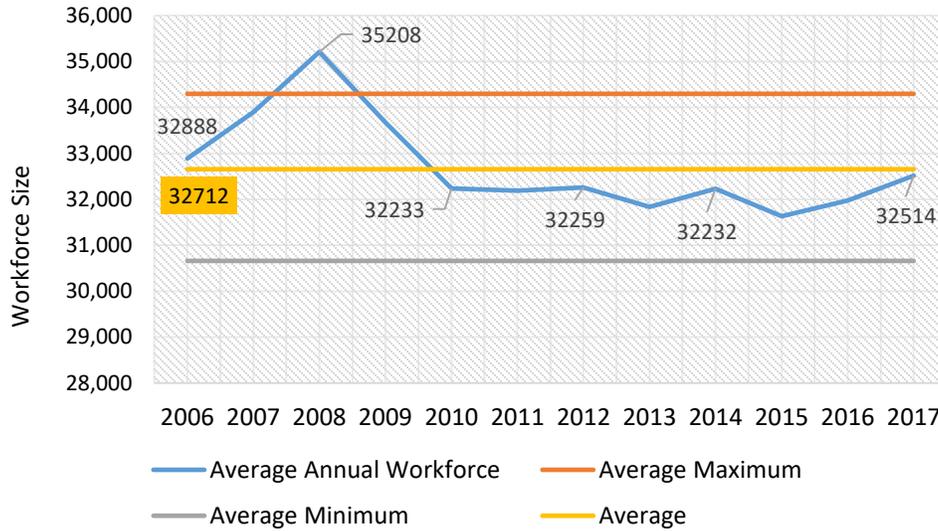


Figure 5. Sample Data Set Showing Data Variability (Average Maximums and Minimums)

The project team aimed to ensure that the information presented in this report is accurate and complete. Yet, there is no representation of guarantee expressed or implied on accuracy or completeness. Given the dynamic nature of the data included in the report, readers are encouraged to seek additional sources to further verify content before referencing and/or using it.

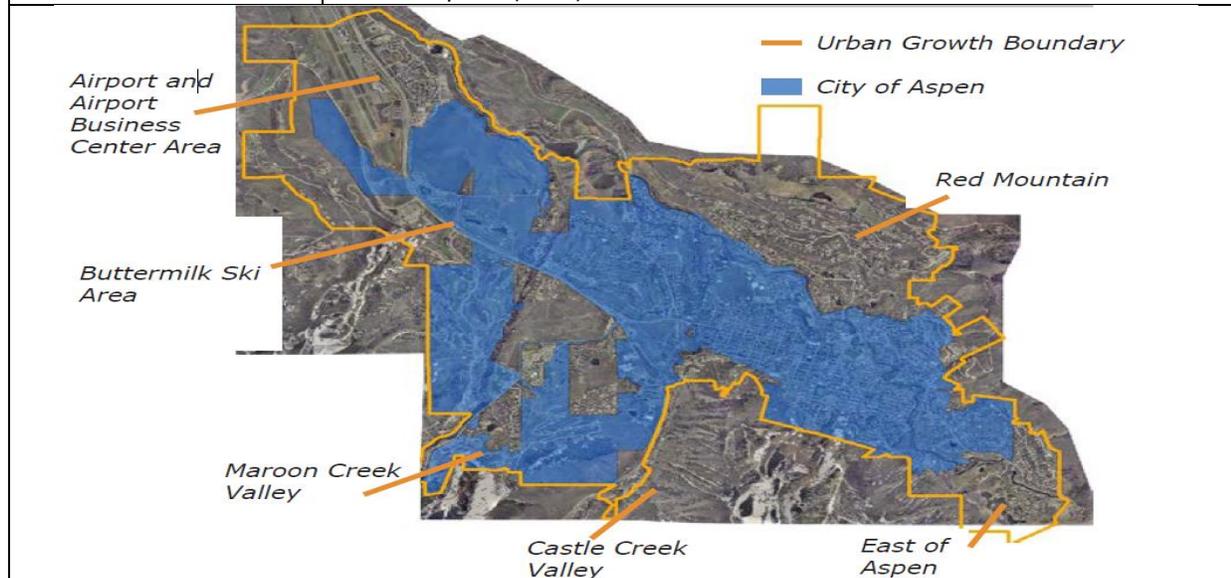
Publishing

Consistent with the sustainability principles behind this report, it will be primarily published online. This allows the use of hyperlinks to key documents and resources. Online access also increases the audience for the report. Readers are encouraged to view the report online and to limit printing.

MAP OF ASPEN ADMINISTRATIVE AREA/URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARY (UGB)¹

The below profile gives an overview of the geography and demographics of the Aspen Administrative Area. When the City of Aspen, Urban Growth Boundary, Pitkin County, and/or the Roaring Fork Valley or “Valley” is referenced in the report, the below serve as the definitions unless specified otherwise.

| ASPEN GEOGRAPHIC PROFILE ² | |
|--|--|
| Location | The city sits along the southeast (upper) end of the Roaring Fork Valley, along the Roaring Fork River, a tributary of the Colorado River about 40 miles (64 km) south of Glenwood Springs, Colorado. |
| Geography | It is surrounded by mountain and wilderness areas on three sides: Red Mountain to the north, Smuggler Mountain to the east, and Aspen Mountain to the south. |
| Land Area | Per the United States Census Bureau, the city has a total area of 3.5 square miles (9.1 km ²), all land. |
| Elevation | 8,000 feet |
| Population | 6,658 at the (Census, 2010) |
| Roaring Fork Valley³ | The Roaring Fork Valley is a geographical region in western Colorado in the United States. The Valley is defined by the valley of the Roaring Fork River and its tributaries, including the Crystal and Frying Pan River. It includes the communities of Aspen, Snowmass Village, Basalt, Carbondale, and Glenwood Springs. |
| Pitkin County⁴ | Pitkin County is one of the 64 counties in the U.S. state of Colorado. As of the 2010 census, the population was 17,148. The county seat is Aspen. Pitkin County is included in the Glenwood Springs, CO Micropolitan Statistical Area. |
| Urban Growth Boundary | The Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) was adopted by the Board of County Commissioners in 2000 and is periodically updated. It was previously called the “Metro Area boundary” or “AAPC Metro boundary.” The UGB plays a role in growth management, the transfer of development rights (TDR) program, and the Aspen Area Community Plan (AAPC). ⁵ |



¹ City of Aspen Engineering Department. *Map of Aspen Urban Growth Boundary*. 2016.

² Aspen Geographic Profile. Web. July 2016. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aspen>.

³ Roaring Fork Valley Profile. Web. 2016; 2017. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roaring_Fork_Valley.

⁴ Pitkin County Profile. Web. July 2016. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pitkin_County,_Colorado.

⁵ Aspen Area Community Plan (2012), p 8. Web. July 2016. http://www.aspencommunityvision.com/media/uploads/FINAL_AACP_2272012_reduced.pdf.