



## CHAPTER 12: SUSTAINABILITY ELEMENT

“Sustainability” is the term used to show how Madera will balance the various interests and needs of our residents. This encompasses established principles of good planning and advocates a proactive approach to future development.

The concept of sustainability is meeting the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable development considers the impact of decisions on the key aspects of sustainability:

- The **Environment**;
- The local **Economy**; and
- The **Equity** of such decisions on all people.

Ensuring that a given decision or action promotes all three concepts is the basis for many of the policies and programs in this General Plan. Sustainability is reflected throughout this General Plan as a concept which is applied to all aspects of the City's operations. Examples of the principles for each of these areas include the following:

## ENVIRONMENT

Sustainability is related to the physical environment in many ways, and addresses both the manmade and natural environments which make up Madera's Planning Area. Examples include:



- Promote compact, walkable, mixed-use development. *(Addressed in the Land Use and Circulation elements)*
- Promote infill development. *(Addressed in the Land Use Element)*
- Protect open space and agricultural lands. *(Addressed in the Land Use and Conservation Elements)*
- Promote the efficient use of energy and resources such as water, soil, building materials, etc. *(Addressed in the Conservation Element)*

## ECONOMY

Maintaining a strong economy whose vitality can be relied on well into the future is key to Sustainability. Concepts in this General Plan that promote a healthy Madera economy include:

- Create strong local and regional economies. *(Addressed in the Land Use and Sustainability elements)*
- Encourage jobs/housing balance. *(Addressed in the Land Use and Housing elements)*
- Support energy and resource efficient industries. *(Addressed in the Conservation Element)*
- Promote energy and resource efficient buildings. *(Addressed in the Conservation Element)*
- Promote economic opportunity for all segments of the community. *(Addressed in the Sustainability Element)*
- Enhance the design character of commercial development. *(Addressed in the Community Design Element)*

## EQUITY

“Equity” in terms of Sustainability means ensuring equal access to the benefits of living and working in Madera and equal exposure to potential risks and hazards—essentially, dealing fairly with all segments of the community. Ideas in this General Plan that promote equity include:

- Provide adequate housing for all income levels. *(Addressed in the Land Use and Housing elements)*
- Provide a fair and predictable land use planning process. *(Addressed in the Land Use and Sustainability elements)*
- Promote development that is equitable in terms of sharing costs and benefits among all Maderans. *(Addressed in the Sustainability Element)*

- Require fair treatment in the development, adoption, and enforcement of regulations and policies. (*Addressed in the Sustainability Element*)
- Promote alternative transportation options to increase access. (*Addressed in the Circulation Element*)

## SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION

**Vision 2025 says of Schools and Education:** “Ensure that the adult and child populations of Madera have access to high quality educational opportunities. Ensure safe routes from residential areas to schools, including access by pedestrians, bicycles, buses, and personal vehicles. Establish and maintain a positive relationship with education providers in the community.”



The policies in this section support educational facilities and programs for all residents of Madera, at whatever stage of life they find themselves. Madera recognizes the importance of lifelong opportunities for residents to learn and expand their skills and knowledge. A sustainable education system will provide residents with access to the

facilities and resources they need in order to gain knowledge and skills to pursue satisfying careers. Education plays a key role in promoting a strong economy by providing a skilled workforce. Education is a powerful tool for promoting a greater understanding of sustainability and can demonstrate how everyone has a role to play in the social, economic and environmental health of their community.



## GOOD GOVERNMENT

**Vision 2025 says of Good Government:** *“Madera is a community with an ideal model of an effective local government. Services are coordinated, sufficiently funded, and accessible to all residents. Government operations strive for environmental and social equity for all residents, and are responsive to the needs of the community.”*

While this General Plan seeks to demonstrate the City’s commitment to good government by integrating sustainable principles in all Elements of this plan, this section will demonstrate Madera’s commitment as a leader in sustainability efforts by supporting greater public participation, providing access to needed services to all residents and creating a system of government truly representative of all its residents. The City of Madera will lead by way of example, by ensuring that public processes are open and accessible to the full public, and by working cooperatively with surrounding jurisdictions to solve regional problems.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/ WORK-FORCE DEVELOPMENT



**Vision 2025 says of Economic Development:** *“Madera is a community with a sustainable job market and shopping opportunities. Industry and commerce within the community are balanced to provide a range of taxes, local shopping, and goods and services. Commercial centers are integrated with public gathering spaces, and are designed to promote walking, biking, and other forms of transportation and circulation.”*

Madera is committed to providing a sustainable economy that delivers diverse employment opportunities to its residents, while addressing the environmental and social impacts of businesses’ and consumers’ actions. This section outlines policies that promote a sus-

tainable economy by ensuring a well-trained workforce; access to an appropriate range and supply of local jobs and services, and energy efficient business operations. The General Plan supports and encourages the development of programs to build and grow the downtown business area.

## SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY SYSTEMS

**Vision 2025 says of Social and Community Systems:** *“Madera is a community of connected, informed, and friendly people. Social systems within the City are coordinated to provide a range of services and opportunities for local citizens to engage in fun, creative, and engaging activities. City government supports the creation and operation of a wide range of activities and systems.”*



These policies address the concept of community systems, and their importance to a well-functioning community. Social, cultural, religious, and issue-oriented systems within the community function and inter-relate to impact sustainability.

The General Plan considers how these groups and systems can work cooperatively to enhance broad goals of the City, and function more effectively with support of the local government and population.

SUSTAINABILITY GOALS

GOAL SUS-1

Economy: Establish and maintain a diverse and sustainable local economy.

GOAL SUS-2

Environment: Effectively manage and enhance the natural environment of Madera, protecting natural resources and systems in coordination with growth and development.

GOAL SUS-3

Equity: Ensure that all persons in Madera have equal and fair access to governmental services and programs, and equal protection from environmental burdens.

SUSTAINABILITY POLICIES

SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION

Policy SUS-1▶

The City shall assist the Madera Unified School District in obtaining mitigation for the impacts of new development on school facilities.

Policy SUS-2▶

The City shall work with the Madera Unified School District to coordinate the planning of future land use and school facilities and will encourage the District to identify school site locations and routes that are safe for children to walk or bike to school (also known as “Safe Routes to School”).

Action Item SUS-2.1

Work with the Madera Unified School District to help the District identify and plan for the construction of all road, sidewalk, and other infrastructure improvements needed for new schools, and that these improvements are in place at the time the school opens.

**Policy SUS-3▶**

Co-location of schools and parks is encouraged to allow for multiple uses and programs by the City and school districts.

*Note to the Reader: Please see the Circulation Element for additional policies and actions related to creating safe walking and bicycling routes in Madera.*

**GOOD GOVERNMENT****Policy SUS-4▶**

The City will continue to promote community wide participation in the Vision 2025 process.

**Policy SUS-5▶**

The City shall review all development proposals to ensure that all services and utilities can be provided in an efficient and effective manner.

*Note to the Reader: Please see the Circulation & Infrastructure Element and the Parks & Recreation Element for additional policies and programs related to the timely provision of public services and facilities.*

**Policy SUS-6▶**

The City shall not approve developments or programs that will create significant inequities in service provision across economic segments of the community.

**Policy SUS-7▶**

The City shall support the active participation of City Council members, Planning Commissioners, city staff, and other local leaders in addressing and resolving regional issues such as traffic, housing, parking, open space, and air quality.

**Policy SUS-8▶**

The City encourages active participation by all economic and social segments of the community in city governance.

**Action Item SUS-8.1**

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Provide a variety of ways in which the citizens of Madera may provide feedback on the operations and management of the City, including access for residents of all abilities and physical means. Examples include:

- The City's web site;
- Handicapped-accessible communications (TTY, web pages accessible to visually impaired readers, etc.);
- Suggestion boxes;
- Public workshops on important and topical issues.

**Policy SUS-9▶**

The City is committed to providing open, inclusive, and participatory planning processes that include full consideration of the values, opinions, and needs of all segments of the community.

**Action Item SUS-9.1**

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Provide decision-makers, project applicants, and residents with information about planning policies and regulations, including proactive advice on getting residents more involved in local government.

**Policy SUS-10▶****ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

The City encourages a healthy and thriving arts and cultural community, recognizing that it enhances the aesthetic appeal of the community, builds opportunities for business development, and contributes to a vital economy.

*Note to the Reader: Please see the Community Design Element for policies related to art in public places and other desired amenities.*

**Policy SUS-11▶**

The City seeks to allow abundant commercial opportunities and the development of a strong local workforce. The City recognizes the interrelated nature of economic development among the various cultural, social, and economic segments of the community, and will work with local entrepreneurs to develop cooperative programs that increase and enhance opportunities for business growth within the City.

**Policy SUS-12▶**

The City shall seek to develop a comprehensive and diverse economic development strategy to ensure that the downtown maintains a variety of shops, restaurants, entertainment, cultural venues, and supporting commercial businesses.

*Please see the Community Design Element and the Land Use Element for policies related to Madera's Downtown, including the proposed creation of a master plan for the downtown area.*

**Policy SUS-13▶**

The City shall support the location and continued operation of local businesses that supply goods and services needed in Madera.

### Policy SUS-14▶

The City shall support non-traditional site plan and operational changes that reduce the environmental impacts of businesses, including participation in recycling, waste diversion, green business, and sustainable partner (businesses teaming or sharing to reduce impacts) programs, in balance with other City policies and requirements.

#### **Action Item SUS-14.1**

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Revise the City's administrative procedures to streamline review for minor projects with minimal environmental impact that enhance development of businesses within the downtown.

### Policy SUS-15▶

The City shall seek to promote, attract, and retain jobs that pay a living wage and reduce the need for residents to commute to work outside the City.

### Policy SUS-16▶

The City shall support events and gatherings designed to enhance the image of the city and strengthen the bonds of local residents. Examples include:

- Community fairs;
- City Hall open house;
- Family-themed events in the Downtown;
- "National Night Out"<sup>1</sup> and similar events;

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<sup>1</sup> "National Night Out" is an event sponsored by the National Association of Town Watch to strengthen neighborhood spirit and help fight crime. Info is available at [www.nationalnightout.org](http://www.nationalnightout.org)

- Parades;
- Blood drives;
- Child fingerprinting and immunization.

#### **Action Item SUS-16.1**

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Consider City partnership and reduced fees for permits, police protection, use of City facilities, etc., to encourage local events and gatherings.

#### **Action Item SUS-16.2**

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Sponsor and provide support for community volunteer clean-up programs.

#### **Policy SUS-17▶**

The City shall increase opportunities and seek to increase interest in safe outdoor activities.

#### **Policy SUS-18▶**

The City shall seek to provide increased opportunities for seniors and persons with disabilities to remain in their homes and neighborhoods by encouraging the inclusion of design features in homes (such as ramps, lowered counters, wider hallways, etc.) that allow the homes to remain accessible as their residents' mobility decreases.