



**Madera County Strategic Plan – Mission 2023
2023-2024**

Madera County Grand Jury

Final Report 2324-05

June 19, 2024

Summary

In 2018, the Madera County Board of Supervisors adopted a five-year Strategic Plan - Mission 2023 (Plan) as a model for the operation and functioning of Madera County. The Plan was created and published through the efforts of all departments of Madera, the Plan expired at the end of 2023, however, the MCGJ recognizes that on-going discussions are taking place for a revised new Plan. The operations of the County's Strategic Plan - Mission 2023 and a consideration of a revised Plan is the focus of this Madera County Grand Jury (MCGJ) report.

Glossary

- 311 app: Madera County Information app: *MadCoServices*
- ARPA: American Rescue Plan Act
- BOS: Madera County Board of Supervisors
- CAO: Chief Administration Officer
- CHA: Community Health Association
- CHIP: Live Well Madera County Health Improvement Plan
- City: City of Madera
- CSASC: California State Association of Counties
- EDC: Economic Development Commission
- ELO: End of Life; infrastructure equipment
- FMCoC: Fresno Madera Continuum of Care
- GSP: Groundwater Sustainability Plan
- IT: Information Technology
- MBHS: Madera County Health Department of Behavioral Health
- MCGJ: Madera County Grand Jury
- MWD GSA: Madera Water District Groundwater Sustainability Act
- NFPA: National Fire Protection Association
- PIT: Public Information Team
- RMS: Records Management System
- Roads: Pavement Management System
- SGMA: California Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

Background

In 2018, at the Madera County Management Workshop, planning and development for the Madera County Strategic Plan-Mission 2023¹ (Plan) was initiated. The purpose of the Plan

¹Copy of *Strategic Plan Mission 2023* as it appears on the Madera County Website
<https://www.maderacounty.com/home/showpublisheddocument/31960/637901203406030000>

was considered a means of developing a culture within the County. The Plan is a road map for government services for making improvements and continuing to learn and grow as a community. The Plan involves all 24 of the County Departments. The mission-vision statements of the Plan include *Creating a countywide Culture of Excellence through dedicated public service. Always excelling as a trusted local government.* The core values of the Plan follow the acronym P.L.A.C.E.:

- P-professionalism,
- L-loyalty,
- A-accountability,
- C-compassion,
- E-excellence.

According to the Strategic Plan - Mission 2023,

Strategic Plan Planning Process

Madera County's Chief Administrative Officer evaluated the county business model and determined that a more focused effort was needed to deliver effective and innovative services to the community.

To enhance this work, the County Administrative Officer enlisted the help of key stakeholders, staff and community to begin the process of developing and implementing a county-wide strategic plan to meet the mission of creating a Culture of Excellence through dedicated public service throughout Madera County.

The strategic plan outlines eight key focus areas over the next five years, each aligned with Objectives, Action Items and Performance Measure. A report card will be presented annually to the Board of Supervisors to ensure the document is relevant and Performance Measures are being met.

To achieve the Strategic Plan process, Team Captains were selected for each Focus Area. With input from each Focus Area, a Public Information Team developed a working document with directions from the Board of Supervisors (BOS).

The Plan was reviewed and updated at the 2019 Madera County Management Workshop. The eight key Focus Areas with “Results” and Strategic Objectives were identified:

Strategic Focus Area	Results	Strategic Objectives
1. Community	Creating a county-wide Culture of Excellence through dedicated public service.	Enhance Fiscal Responsibility Improve Customer Service Improve Transparency

		<p>Improve Delivery of Services</p> <p>Improve Community Impacts of Homelessness</p>
2. Employees	<p>Improve employee satisfaction and performance and promote wellness in an effort to enhance the health and well-being of our employees.</p>	<p>Improve Employee knowledge and skills through professional growth opportunities.</p> <p>Improve employee customer service aptitude.</p> <p>Improve employee engagement through effective management and supervision.</p> <p>Improve and promote employee wellness.</p>
3. Public Safety	<p>Ensure that the safety and security of the county is trusted, effective and efficient.</p>	<p>Streamline and Improve Public Safety.</p> <p>Improve Inmate Rehabilitation.</p>
4. Public Information	<p>Continue to market and tell the Madera County Story in an ongoing effort to improve the County image and create a Culture of Excellence.</p>	<p>Improve Constituent Satisfaction</p> <p>Improve Transparency & Branding</p> <p>Improve Customer Service</p>
5. Technology	<p>Evolve towards dynamic, flexible, and innovative solutions that can support changing business needs and data security requirements.</p>	<p>Ensure technology priorities are in alignment with and in support of County strategic goals.</p> <p>Increase the use of technology to better serve constituents and employees.</p> <p>Support, Maintain, and Secure Critical Infrastructure.</p>
6. Infrastructure	<p>Have residential and industrial diversification with smart community growth and a small-town feel for a thriving community.</p>	<p>Improve Infrastructure.</p> <p>Consider smart growth tactics (Economic Development) (water, sustainability, green space).</p>
7. Government Relations	<p>Collaborate with the Cities of Madera and Chowchilla in order to provide seamless, cost effective, and collaborative services throughout Madera County.</p>	<p>Strengthen/Enhance Intergovernmental Relationships.</p> <p>Strengthen/Enhance level of service for citizens.</p>

8. Health	To reduce the stigma associated with mental illness, suicide, and substance abuse disorders, as well as to reduce communicable diseases within our community and provide healthy, outdoor lifestyle spaces for all to enjoy	Collaborate with community partners and local stakeholders to incorporate awareness information into their existing training curriculum. Physical Health Collaboration among county departments and community stakeholders is needed to incorporate health into all policies for improved health outcomes. Complete the plan and documentation requirement for the Department of Public Health Strategic Plan (PHSP). Complete the plan and documentation requirements of the Public Health Accreditation Board.

Impacted by the COVID pandemic, the 2020 Madera County Management Workshop was canceled, and the opportunity for a review of the Plan was not possible. With COVID and a change in management, the Plan has not been as active as initially planned, nor has the public information posted on the Madera County website been updated since 2020².

At the September 26-27, 2023 Madera County Management Workshop, the expiration of the Strategic Plan - Mission 2023 was a topic of consideration. Since no new complete Plan would be in place by the end of 2023, the BOS agreed to keep the existing Plan in place until a new completed Plan would be adopted. Other broad topics of discussion included the purpose of the Plan, an examination of other California County plans, and the law requiring each local government to adopt a general plan (Gov. Code 65300³), reference to the City of Madera’s *Vision Madera 2025*,⁴ which is a 20-year plan to be used as a guide, and a format for moving forward on a revised Plan. The first step in moving forward will be to include the motto of *Live, Work, and Play* with the current Mission Statement of *Creating a countywide Culture of Excellence through dedicated public service*. The intended purpose of adding the language of the motto into the Mission Statement is to shift the focus of the Plan to be more inclusive of the public.

² Copy of Mission 2023 Update July 2020 <https://www.maderacounty.com/home/showpublisheddocument/21382/637298822947870000>

³ Gov. Code 65300: Each planning agency shall prepare and the legislative body of each county and city shall adopt a comprehensive, long-term general plan for the physical development of the county or city, and of any land outside its boundaries which in the planning agency's judgment bears relation to its planning.

⁴ Vision Madera 2025 <https://www.madera.gov/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/madera2025vision.pdf>

Methodology

- Investigated the Madera County Strategic Plan – Mission 2023
- Investigated Board of Supervisors meetings and agendas consent items
- Interviewed members of the Board of Supervisors and other County officers.
- Attended meetings of the Board of Supervisors.
- Participated in County ceremonies recognizing⁵ the achievements of various Departments and County Officers.
- Investigated Department Report Cards
- Reviewed employee surveys taken by different Departments of County Government.
- Reviewed customer service surveys received by various Departments.

Discussion

The Strategic Plan - Mission 2023 (Plan) has been a work in progress since before 2018 when BOS adopted the Plan. Even though the 2023 Plan expired as of December 31, 2023, it remains an ongoing, living document under consideration by the 24 Departments identified by Madera County.

The MCGJ has identified current, general trends the County Departments have identified as indicated in the BOS Agenda Packets. The MCGJ has also included some information on each of the individual Focus Areas with particular attention to Action Items. The term *Action Item* is not defined in the Plan. The MCGJ interprets the term *Action Item* to be those steps needed to meet the *Objectives* of a Focus Area.

The Plan calls for annual *Report Cards* to be presented to the Board to determine if goals are being met. Since the Plan has not been updated since 2020, no annual *Reports Cards* have been posted. It is presumed that such a *Report Card* is intended to be an update on the current status of the Plan in general, and is for the purpose of public information and transparency. In reviewing the BOS Agenda Packets, the MCGJ could find no items which make specific reference to annual *Report Cards*. However, there are individual Departments that have published annual reports with regard to the objectives in the Plan.⁶

This Report is not meant to be a complete analysis but rather highlights some strategies Madera County has successfully put into place and identifies Focus Areas that need improvement.

⁵ Agenda Packets include supporting documentation.

⁶ Sample of annual reports by First 5 and the need to address homelessness:

<https://first5madera.org/strategic-plan-and-reports-2/>

<https://www.maderacounty.com/government/administrative-management/madera-county-strategic-plan-to-address-homelessness>

Focus Area Trends

Beginning with the January 19, 2020, BOS Agenda Packet, a space to identify the specific *Plan Focus Area* was included on the Agenda Item Submittal form; however, it was not until the following BOS meeting, January 21, 2020, that specific Focus Areas were identified. The MCGJ reviewed all Agenda Packets beginning in January 2020 and made a careful analysis of agenda packets during the current Grand Jury term beginning July 2023 up to April 16, 2024. The MCGJ discovered frequency trends of identified Focus Areas (see Appendix A).

Using the Agenda Packets from July 11, 2023 (the beginning of the current MCGJ term) through April 16, 2024 (end of current report investigation), a total of 592 Agenda Items within 22 Agenda Packets were investigated. The Focus Areas 1, Community, 3, Public Safety, and 8, Health are prominent. The objectives for these three prominent Focus Areas are broad and reach far into the Madera Community. The overarching result that the Community Focus intends to achieve is *Creating a county-wide Culture of Excellence through dedicated public service*. Public Safety intentions include wanting to *Ensure the safety and security of the county*. The Strategic Area 8. Health identifies mental health as its strategic objective by wanting to *reduce the stigma associated with mental illness, suicide, and substance abuse disorders*. In addition to the frequency of these Focus Areas, Community, Public Safety, and Health are often identified together under the same Agenda Item. It may be reasonable to assume how and why these agenda items are connected; however, there are other situations where no apparent connection between Focus Areas exist.

Not only are Community, Public Safety, and Health identified together on the same Agenda Item, but oftentimes, many Focus Areas are identified in combination under one Agenda. For example, 46 times out of the 592 Agenda Items identify three or more Focus Areas with no explanation given for why many Focus Areas have an effect on a single Agenda Item.

Other notable trends include the least identified and the omission of identified Focus Areas. Focus Areas 4, Public Information, 5, Technology, and 7, Government Relations, trended as less frequently identified. Public Information topics cover a broad scope of topics, including proclamations, administrative codes, and road and traffic changes. Technology topics identified in Agenda Items generally include internal governmental issues such as data privacy and upgrade agreements, fee schedules, and library grants. While Public Information topics cover a broad scope, Government Relations topics cover an even wider scope and are often confusing. Topics include proclamations, taxes, calendars, traffic issues, vehicle leases, and many other matters. The only consistent, recurring topic identified is local emergencies. Government Relations topics are rarely identified alone but are included with various other Focus Areas.

Of the 592 Agenda Items analyzed, 56 did not identify a Focus Area, approximately 9.42 percent. Topics of the Agenda Items where no Focus Area had been identified routinely appear as approval of personnel appointments, emergencies due to tree mortality, drought, and fire, and considerations of approval of the responses to Grand Jury Reports. No explanation is given as to why no Focus Area is identified.

Specific Focus Areas

The Strategic Plan identified Eight Focus Areas that involved all 24 Departments within the County. The goal in developing the Strategic Plan was guided by the Mission Statement: *Creating a countywide Culture of Excellence through dedicated public service.* The MCGJ investigation found some areas of completion, with others still in progress.

Focus Area 1: Community

The desired results for Focus Area 1, Community, are to provide dedicated public service through a county-wide Culture of Excellence. The Plan outlined specific Action Items to be accomplished. In reviewing the Board of Supervisors Agendas and Agenda Packets, the MCGJ identified Focus Area 1, Community, as the one area of the Plan most often identified with Action Items. Action items completed include creating and deploying a Customer Service Survey, improving the homeless situation, and increasing grant funding.

The Customer Service Survey was created by Focus Area 1, Community, and deployed through the County's MadCoServices 311 phone application (311 app). The 311 app was activated in March of 2018 to allow Madera County residents to submit service requests and notify County departments of concerns. Focus Area 1 utilized the 311 app to discover levels of customer satisfaction when interacting with different departments within the county. An overall review of responses indicates that customers responded with 52 percent Strongly Agree, 23 percent Agree, 20 percent Neither Agree or Disagree, 9 percent Disagree, and 5 percent Strongly Disagree. In reviewing these results, Focus Area 1 evidence indicates that customers are satisfied with the services received from the County.

The need to aid the homeless is an additional Action Item under Focus Area 1, Community. The Madera County Board of Supervisors (BOS) collectively with leadership from the County Administration Office (CAO) made the decision to develop a strategic plan to prevent and end homelessness. The County contracted with Homebase- a national technical assistance provider that helps communities prevent and end homelessness. Funding for the project is being provided by the County and the Fresno Madera Continuum of Care (FMCoC). The County states that this planning is an important process that builds consensus on goals, facilitates group prioritization of key actions, fosters creative and collaborative problem-solving, provides a platform to consider resource needs and opportunities, and creates a concrete plan for action.⁷ In the spring of 2023, the BOS unanimously approved entering into a regionally coordinated action plan to address homelessness with the city of Fresno, Fresno County, and the Fresno Madera Continuum of Care to participate in the Homeless Housing and Prevention Round 5 Grant Program ending June 30, 2028. The plan includes outreach and site coordination

⁷ "Take Action: Steps to Prevent and Reduce Homelessness within Madera County 3/2023

<https://www.maderacounty.com/home/showpublisheddocument/35405/638271008122970000>

"Taking Action: A County-Wide Response to Housing Stability and Homelessness 5/9/23

<https://www.maderacounty.com/services/homelessness-madera-county/community>

and a plan to reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness when leaving an institutional setting. The agreement includes the use of local, state, and federal funds to reach out to the homeless and connect them with eligible benefit programs.

Focus Area 1, Community, also identified the need for a full-time grant writer as an additional Action Item. The Grant Services Division of Madera County is responsible for managing Madera's grant funding acquisition. The efforts include researching and securing new grants from federal, state, local, and private agencies on behalf of individual County departments and/or the County as a whole. In addition to securing grants, the Grants Division implements, manages, evaluates, and creates reports on behalf of the County's grant-funded projects. The County hired a full-time grant writer.

Focus Area 2: Employees

In reviewing the Agenda Packets, Focus Area 2, Employees, are not often identified; out of the 592 Agenda Items reviewed, Employees are mentioned 44 times or 7.4 percent. General topics include classification and appointments of personnel, policies regarding insurance, vacation and leave time, and monthly transactions. However, the stated desired result for Focus Area 2, Employees includes the statement, Creating a county-wide Culture of Excellence through dedicated public service.

In an effort to achieve the desired result of excellence through dedicated public service, an Action Item listed in the Plan is to develop and deploy an Employee Satisfaction Survey. The survey was completed throughout all departments, with generous responses for the Board of Supervisors and each department head to review the results. The MCGJ reviewed the results of the survey, which showed that out of 661⁸ responses to one of the questions, Considering everything, I am satisfied with my job, 21.4 percent Strongly Agreed, 32.22 percent Agreed, 20.42 percent Somewhat Agreed, 11.04 percent Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4.99 percent Disagree, and 4.24 percent Strongly Disagree. The survey indicates a trend that over 73 percent of the employees who participated are satisfied with their jobs with the County. The results are published on the Madera County website under Human Resources⁹.

The promotion of employee wellness is also stated as a desired result of Focus Area 2, Employees. The action item also used the above-mentioned Employee Satisfaction Survey as a tool to assist in achieving the desired result. The survey allowed employees to communicate personal concerns and feelings about jobs to management in a confidential manner. Management could address the employee concerns and make potential changes accordingly.

⁸ According to Madera County Human Resources, as of May 16, 2024, the current total number of employees is 1,779.

⁹ Madera County website link to Employee Satisfaction Survey:
<https://www.maderacounty.com/government/human-resources>

Focus Area 3: Public Safety

The third Focus Area in the Plan, Public Safety, identified the desired result to Ensure that the safety and security of the county are trusted, effective, and efficient. To this end, County Departments overseeing public safety have engaged in an intensive examination of many aspects of public safety as identified in the Agenda Packets. Action Items include a Records Management System (RMS), a Public Facilities Improvement Plan, an Acute Psych Custody Unit at the County Jail, Active Shooter training, Emergency Response pre-plans at the County Jail, and the monitoring of fire equipment.

A new Records Management System (RMS) has been purchased and implemented for the District Attorney and Sheriff. The new updated system has been in place and is fully functioning. The development of a Public Facilities Improvement Plan has been put in place and is consistent with portions of the City of Madera's Vision 2025, Vision and Action Plan adopted in 2006 for Public Facilities Improvements. An Acute Psych Custody Unit within the County jail is currently functioning for the purpose of isolating an inmate. The MCGJ was informed that an Active Shooter training program for County employees and the community has occurred and is ongoing. The MCGJ was additionally informed that Emergency Response pre-plans for the Madera County Jail are in place at the jail facility. Public Safety identified the need to maintain and monitor a fire equipment replacement plan. The MCGJ was informed that all fire equipment meets National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards.

Focus Area 4: Public Information

Focus Area 4, Public Information stated a desired result as Continue to market and tell the Madera County Story in an ongoing effort to improve the county image and create a Culture of Excellence. In early 2017, at a Madera County Workshop, the needs to expand communication outreach, increase transparency, and become more active on social media platforms were identified¹⁰. The county created a Public Information Team (PIT), which included the Human Resource Division, Information Technology (IT), and the chiefs of staff for each of the five county supervisors. The focus of PIT is to meet and identify strategies for social media press releases for the County. From the creation of the PIT in 2017 through the Spring of 2019, followers on Madera County's social media platforms doubled. In 2018, the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) awarded the PIT program with the 2018 CSCA Challenge Award, which spotlights innovative programs in county government¹¹. The PIT staff meets annually with the BOS to perform an assessment.

According to the Public Information Team (PIT), a new text notification process is currently under construction. This new notification will notify citizens who are affected by a new

¹⁰ See Executive Summary: Madera County Public Information Team: https://www.counties.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/madera_county_-_public_information_team.pdf

¹¹ See: Foor, Sara. *The County Voice*, California State Association of Counties. May 29, 2019. <https://www.counties.org/county-voice/madera-county-uses-team-approach-narrate-their-own-story>

development or permit via text message in addition to mail and postings. This type of notification will assist the PIT team and other departments in communicating information to the community.

Focus Area 5: Technology

The desired result for Focus Area 5, Technology states the need for evolving towards dynamic, flexible, and innovative solutions that can support changing business needs and data security requirements. In order to achieve this result, an Action Item includes the need to improve the end-user experience through software upgrades, the introduction of collaboration software, regular replacement of end-user computers, and cloud software. This performance measure was accomplished over the past five years. A follow-up action item included replacing End-of-Life (EOL) infrastructure equipment. Initially, 80 percent of outdated infrastructure equipment was replaced or upgraded by July 2020. After the initial upgrade project, 80 percent of EOL infrastructure equipment and licensing has been regularly replaced.

Focus Area 5, Technology, identified the need to implement security tools, security training programs, and an updated network security policy. The MCGJ discovered that a cyber-attack, including Ransomware, was successfully caught in advance due to the security tools in place.

Focus Area 6: Infrastructure

Infrastructure includes the interrelated systems that provide commodities and services essential to enabling, sustaining, or enhancing and maintaining the community's environment. By definition, infrastructure covers many aspects of the County. The desired result of infrastructure in the Plan is residential and industrial diversification with smart community growth and a small-town feel for a thriving community. Some Infrastructure advances include retail development, building development, groundwater sustainability, and opportunities to improve roads.

The improvement of County facilities is one of the many Action Items under consideration in the departments of Infrastructure. Over the last five years, several county facilities have been built. New government buildings include the Public Health and Department of Social Services building, Hall of Justice, Oakhurst Government Center, Ranchos Library, Sheriff's Substation, Ag Commission building, and the Government Building. Enhancing retail development within the County is an additional Action Item under Infrastructure. The MCGJ found that the Board of Supervisors and some County Departments are actively meeting with the director of the Madera Economic Development Commission (EDC). The MCGJ learned that the EDC recently processed several small business applications utilizing federal funds through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Additionally, the EDC leaders attend trade shows each year to market the County for new businesses. This participation

included attracting the AutoZone Distribution Center to Chowchilla. The Distribution Center's construction has provided jobs and tax revenue to the County.

A Groundwater Sustainability Plan is a 20-year plan to ensure that groundwater is managed sustainably in a groundwater basin. With the passage of the California Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) in 2014, the Madera Water District Groundwater Sustainability Agency (MWD GSA) along with its Board of Directors participated in implementing the SGMA regulations. The Madera Water District is an agricultural water district, and the MWD GSA manages uses that are agricultural in nature. In December of 2023, a press release announced that Groundwater Sustainability Plans for the Madera Subbasin are moving forward¹². The Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) was completed and the draft was published¹³.

Additional projects connected to Infrastructure include seeking opportunities to improve or update roads and highways, such as Pavement Management System (Roads), Highway 41 expansion, and Highway 99 expansion. The projects to widen Highway 41 to four lanes between Avenue 15 and Highway 145 and expand Highway 99 are currently ongoing.

Focus Area 7: Governmental Relations

The Focus Area of Governmental Relations expresses the desired results of continuing to collaborate with the Cities of Madera and Chowchilla. However, in reviewing the last ten months of Agenda Packets, the MCGJ found that most of the Government Relations topics rarely mentioned either city¹⁴. Rather, topics included proclamations, taxes, calendars, traffic issues, vehicle leases, and other topics.

When members of both County and City departments were interviewed, they offered conflicting statements on Government Relations. Members of the County government generally admitted that the County could make a better effort to improve relationships with the cities of Chowchilla and Madera. Madera City employees offered a mixed review. Some stated that the communication between the City and County is nonexistent, while others stated the belief that the working relationship between City Management and the County is excellent and a source of pride.

One Action Item both the City and County of Madera have come to an agreement on is a tax-sharing agreement. On June 7, 2017, the Madera City Council (City) along with BOS

¹² <https://mavensnotebook.com/2023/12/21/press-release-dwr-approves-sustainability-plans-for-the-madera-subbasin/>

¹³ <https://sgma.water.ca.gov/portal/gsp/preview/21>

¹⁴ References to Cities:

Madera- 2 times: 4 times: 8/1/23 Resolution authorizing distribution of excess proceeds of tax sale; 711/23 Groundwater Subbasin

Chowchilla: 3/19/24 Groundwater; 2/20/24 Trust for real property; 2/6/24 & 12/12/23 Chowchilla Subbasin; 1/16/24 Chowchilla Union High School District; 711/23 Groundwater Subbasin

Unincorporated areas: Oakhurst, Ahwahnee, Coarsegold, North Fork, Fairmead were referenced 16 times.

adopted a resolution regarding the disposition providing for fair and equitable property and sales tax sharing with the encouragement of sound economic growth. The June 2017 Agreement ultimately expired on June 2, 2022. On December 20, 2022, the BOS adopted a New Agreement including non-material revisions that do not include revisions to the property and sales tax sharing amounts or percentages¹⁵. The Madera City Council approved this New Agreement on October 4, 2023¹⁶.

Focus Area 8: Health:

The final Focus Area 8, Health is divided into subcategories of Physical and Mental Health. Physical Health asserts the desired result as the need

to reduce chronic and communicable disease without community and provide healthy, outdoor lifestyle spaces for all to enjoy. Mental Health states a desired result to reduce the stigma, inaccurate stereotypes and discrimination associated with mental illness, suicide and substance use disorders thereby reducing the barriers to services.

Physical Health

After years of financial struggles, the Madera Community Hospital and its three clinics closed on January 3, 2023. In early February, Governor Gavin Newsom announced that state agencies had approved a \$57 million loan for American Advanced Management Inc., and the company has outlined a plan to reopen the Madera Hospital by July 2024. The case is currently being argued in Federal Court. The closure of the Madera Community Hospital has had an effect on the current efforts of the County to make progress on the physical health aspect of the Plan.

One Action Item accomplished prior the the Hospital closure was the need to finalize and implement the Live Well Madera County Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)¹⁷. This plan addresses chronic and communicable diseases and

is a community-driven, strategic and measurable work plan. A CHIP provides guidance to the health department, community partners, stakeholders and residents on improving the health of the population within Madera County. This plan defines how community partners across sectors will come together to address priority health issues identified through the CHA. In coordination with partner organizations, more than 30 diverse Madera County organizations identified four priority areas for the CHIP. An additional action item accomplished was the stated desire to complete the accreditation process for the Department of Public Health. The MCGJ confirmed that the

¹⁵ <https://maderacounty.primegov.com/public/portal?fromiframe=true>

¹⁶ <https://www.madera.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/10.04.23-Final-Agenda.pdf>

¹⁷ CHIP

<https://www.maderacounty.com/government/public-health/data-reports-publications/mapp-assessment/madera-county-community-health-improvement-plan-chip>

Mental Health

The MCGJ can confirm that the Madera County Department of Behavioral Health Services (MBHS) division of the Public Health Department works tirelessly to meet the extensive needs of the Madera community. The MBHS has many programs that address general mental health for all ages, substance use disorders, and crisis intervention. Due to Proposition 63, the Mental Health Services Act, of 2004, funding has helped the County expand services in reducing homelessness, crime, incarceration, and unemployment caused by severe mental health issues. In addition, Behavior Health has increased annual training to employees. Training specifically for Sheriff officers and Correctional Officers in the jail and juvenile facility include Applied Suicide Intervention Skill Training (ASIST), Trauma Informed Training, and Mental Health First Aid¹⁸.

Looking Towards the Future: Madera's Growth and Changing Population

During this investigation of the history, past practices, and results of the Madera County Strategic Plan - Mission 2023, questions arose regarding what would happen to Madera County in the future. Several interviewees asserted that a Plan does not exist. One interviewee went further by qualifying the absence of a Plan by stating, the Plan is not a plan because it has no goals. Still others have argued that the Strategic Plan -Mission 2023 is inadequate and completely fails to consider what will happen tomorrow. They (the architects of the Plan) say nothing about goals, where the county is headed, and what to expect in the near and far future. In part, the MCGJ recognizes and acknowledges these assertions. The Plan of the past five years has functioned and some achievements in Focus Areas have been addressed. Yet, there is no current documentation for the next five years, or any apparent consideration of what will be included about the future of a growing Madera County in a new Strategic Plan.

Madera County is currently growing at a rate of 1.15 percent annually and its population has increased by 4.78 percent since the most recent census (2020)¹⁹. The current population of Madera County is a little over 156k and is projected to be 273,456 by 2030, and 344,455 by 2040. The age of the population, 65+ saw an increase from 11.5 percent in 2010 to 14.5 percent in 2022. This trend of an aging population is expected to grow.

The Strategic Plan - Mission 2023 does not include considerations of the growth and aging of the County's population, nor does it consider a world of rapidly advancing technology. Moving forward the County has the opportunity to be proactive by examining current conditions and considering potential changes for the future.

Findings:

¹⁸ For a comprehensive review of Madera County's Behavioral Health Services, see MCGJ Report Madera County's Behavioral Health Services 2324-02

¹⁹ <https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/madera-ca-population>
https://aging.ca.gov/Data_and_Reports/Facts_About_California's_Elderly/

In accordance with California Penal Code Sections §933 and §933.05, the 2023-2024 Grand Jury requires (or, as noted, requests) responses from each agency affected by the findings presented in this section.

The responses are to be submitted to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court and the Madera County Grand Jury. Based on its investigation entitled Madera County Strategic Plan - Mission 2023

The Madera County Grand Jury has arrived at six principal findings, as follows:

- F1.** The current Strategic Plan - Mission 2023 has expired.
- F2.** The Madera County BOS did not have a plan for moving forward once the Strategic Plan expired.
- F3.** Individual Focus Areas identified on BOS Agenda Packet Agenda Item Submittal forms are often grouped together or completely omitted with no explanation or rationale provided.
- F4.** In reviewing Agenda Packets, no agenda item was found that made reference to an annual *Report Card*, which would provide an update on the status of the Plan and, provide the public with information, and increase transparency.
- F5.** Madera County and the City of Madera officials are in conflict regarding Government relations.
- F6.** The current Strategic Plan - Mission 2023 did not take into consideration goals for the future.

Recommendations:

In accordance with California Penal Code Sections §933 and §933.05, the 2023-2024 Grand Jury requires (or, as noted, requests) responses from each agency affected by the recommendations presented in this section. The responses are to be submitted to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court and the Madera County Grand Jury.

Based on its investigation entitled Madera County Strategic Plan - Mission 2023 Report 2023-2024 makes the following recommendation:

- R1.** In order to permit time until a new Strategic Plan is developed and published, at the next regularly scheduled BOS meeting after receipt of this Report the Madera County BOS document and publish a statement indicating that the Strategic Plan - Mission 2023 stands as its statement of *Creating a countywide Culture of Excellence* until that time when a new Plan is in place.
- R2.** Prior to and included in the process of developing a new Strategic Plan, the BOS will determine policies and procedure for having a new Plan in place prior to the previous Plan's expiration date.
- R3.** After receipt of this Report and at the next regularly scheduled BOS meeting all Departments take into consideration how and why Focus Areas are grouped and/or omitted from Agenda Items Submittal forms and provide explanation in the space provided.
- R4.** Prior to the publishing of the version of the Strategic Plan, the Madera County BOS work with the City of Madera City Council to develop a plan for improved working relations so that process can be identified and published in the new Plan.
- R5.** To improve public information and transparency, the Madera County BOS develop a specific plan for the presentation of an annual update at BOS meetings of current status of the Plan.
- R6.** For the next version of the Strategic Plan, the Madera County BOS identify specific goals for a growing, aging, and technologically advanced population.

Required Responses:

Pursuant to Penal Code Sections 933 and 933.5, the Madera County Grand Jury requests responses as follows from the elected County elected officials within 90 days:

Madera County Board of Supervisors
200 W. 4th Street, 4th Floor
Madera, CA 93637

Invited Responses:

Pursuant to Penal Code sections 993 and 933.05, the Madera County Grand Jury requests responses as follows from the elected county officials within 60 days:

Madera County CAO
200 W. 4th Street #2
Madera CA 93637

Not This report was prepared using current information available on the websites listed.e:

Reports issued by the Civil Grand Jury do not identify individuals interviewed. Penal Code Section 929 requires that reports of the Grand Jury not contain the name of any person or facts leading to the identity of any person who provides information to the Civil Grand Jury. The California State Legislature has stated that it intends the provisions of Penal Code Section 929 prohibiting disclosure of witness identities to encourage full candor in testimony in Grand Jury investigations by protecting the privacy and confidentiality of those who participate in any Civil Grand Jury investigation.

APPENDIX A

Focus Area Trends

Using the Agenda Packets from July 11, 2023 (the beginning current MCGJ term) through April 16, 2024 (end of current report investigation), a total of 592 Agenda Items within 22 Agenda Packets were read. The table below indicates the number of times the specific Focus Areas outlined in the Strategic Plan - Mission 2023 were identified. The table also includes the frequency of a Focus Area not identified and a list of Focus Areas frequently listed on the same agenda item.

Date of BOS meeting	FA1 Com m	FA2 Emp	FA 3 PS	FA4 PI	FA5 Tech	FA 6 Infra	FA 7 GR	FA 8 Health	Not Identified *	Combined Focus Areas (Some Agenda Items list multiple Focus Areas)**
7/11/23	13	3	12	1	1	6	1	7	6	1, 3, 7,8 1, 5 3,6 1, 3, 6 1,3,6 1, 4
7/18/23	5	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1,3,6 1,4 1,2,3 3,6
8/1/23	5	0	2	1	0	0	2	4	0	2,3 1,6
8/8/23	1	0	3	1	2	1	0	0	3	1, 3, 7, 8 1, 6 (4)
8/15/23	13	2	9	1	0	8	5	7	2	1, 6 1, 3, 7, 8 1, 8 (3) 1, 2, 4, 7 1, 3, 6, 1, 6

9/12/23	20	7	10	0	2	9	4	13	4	1, 6 x's2 1,7, 6 1, 5 (3) 1, 3, 7,8 3, 7 1, 3, 6, 7, 8
9/19/23	17	3	2	1	1	7	1	3	3	1, 8 (2) 1, 6 (6) 1, 5, 6
10/3/23	9	2	10	1	0	4	1	7	2	1, 8 1, 3, 7, 8 1, 3, 6 (3) 1, 6 2, 3 1, 4
10/10/23	6	2	2	0	1	1	0	5	1	1, 6 1, 3, 6, 1, 8
10/17/23	4	1	7	1	0	0	3	7	5	1, 3,7,8
11/7/23	22	3	12	1	1	14	2	13	6	1-4, 6-8 1, 8 1, 3, 7, 8 3,6 1, 3, 6 (2) 1, 6 X's5
12/5/23	12	0	7	1	0	6	7	5	4	1,3, 7, 8 1, 6 (2) 1, 7 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 (2) 1, 3, 6, 7
12/12/23	17	1	12	2	1	9	3	4	4	1, 6 (3) 1, 4 (2) 1, 3, 7, 8 1, 4, 6 3, 6, 7 1, 3, 6 (2)

1/9/24	10	4	10	2	0	4	1	5	4	1, 6, 8 1, 6 1, 3, 7, 8 1, 2, 3, 4, 8
1/16/24	10	3	3	0	2	5	0	9	0	1, 6 (3) 1, 3, 3, 6
2/6/24	12	2	9	1	2	9	4	8	5	1, 8 1, 6 1, 3, 7 3, 6, 7 6, 7 (2) 3, 5
2/20/24	7	2	6	2	0	3	0	3	0	1, 2, 6 1, 2 1, 7 1, 3, 6, 8
3/12/24	13	4	7	3	0	11	2	5	0	1, 6 (2) 1, 2, 6 1, 3, 6, 8 1, 4, 6 (2) 1, 3, 6, 7, 8 1, 3, 6 1, 3 1, 6, 8 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
3/19/24	9	1	6	1	2	4	1	7	3	1, 8 2, 7 1, 3, 7, 8 1, 4, 7 1, 6 (2) 1, 3, 6, 8
4/2/24	7	3	5	0	0	3	0	7	1	1, 6 (3) 3, 8 1, 2, 8 1, 2

4/9/24	2	0	3	0	0	2	1	1		6, 7
4/16/24	7	0	8	2	2	5	2	6	3	2, 6 1, 3, 7, 8 3, 6 1, 8 1, 4 1, 3
22 Agenda Packets	592 Agenda Items	Com m 244	Em p 44	PS 146	PI 22I	Tech 18	Infra 112	GR 40	Health 129	Not Identified 56

*Not Identified: In the 22 Agenda Packets, 56 items did not include an identified Focus Area and no explanation was provided.

**Combined Focus Areas: Frequently, an Agenda Item identified multiple Focus Areas; no explanation was given.