

Town of Madison 2023-2033 POCD Update

2023 Executive Summary: *Guide the conservation and development of Madison to maintain and enhance quality of life in a resilient and sustainable community.*

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SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

- OVERALL NOTE: PUBLIC EDUCATION ON ROLE OF PLANNING COMMISSION AND THE PURPOSE OF POCD

CONSERVATION is the preservation and protection of cultural and natural resources through planned management.

DEVELOPMENT is the process of planned change and growth for the betterment of the community.

A. What is a Plan of Conservation and Development?

A **Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)** is an advisory document which provides the blueprint for the future of a municipality, prescribes its goals and guides its future action for the next ten years and beyond. The POCD does not specifically mandate what any Town Commission, Department, or organization is required to do, but instead, provides goals, objectives, policies, and strategies to allow the Town and its various entities to implement a coordinated long-term vision and address multiple aspects of townwide planning including economic development, natural resource protection, transportation, infrastructure, housing development, sustainability, and resiliency. The execution of the POCD is carried out by the towns staff, its boards and commissions, community groups, and private development.

Goals – Broad and overarching ideas and visions for the Town. Goals can incorporate specific objectives and can span across sectors.

Policies – Adopted frameworks which are intended to guide decisions about the desired visions and goals. Policy formulation can coordinate the comprehensive planning efforts by exploring different courses of action to address a problem or achieve a goal.

Implementation Strategies – The process for transforming plans into actions and actions into desired outcomes. Implementation may involve specific prescribed steps and assign designated bodies for completion and monitoring.

B. Statutory Basis for the Plan of Conservation and Development

Connecticut Law¹ mandates that Connecticut Municipal Planning Commissions periodically prepare or amend and adopt a Town Plan of Conservation and Development. In the Town of Madison, this responsibility falls on the combined Planning and Zoning Commission. State law requires that the Town review its Plan, and make revisions, as needed, at least every ten years.

In each Plan, The Town Planning Commission is required to consider:

- the need for housing, health, recreation, social services, utilities, safety, transportation, and communications;
- the need for affordable housing; protection of drinking water supplies;
- the use of clustered and other housing development patterns instead of conventional development patterns;
- the state and regional Plans of Conservation and Development;
- the need for energy-efficiency and energy conservation;
- the protection and preservation of agriculture;
- and physical, social, economic and governmental conditions and trends, in general.

Commented [SH1]: Added per Bob R. footnote for CGS ch. 126?

C. State Plan of Conservation & Development – Growth Management Principles

The State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management prepares the **State Plan of Conservation and Development** every five years². Any adopted Municipal Plan of Conservation and Development is required to be consistent with the Growth Management Principles identified in the 2018-2023 State of Connecticut’s State Plan of Conservation and Development which became effective May 3, 2022. The six Growth Management Principles identified in the State C&D Plan are outlined below:

- 1) Redevelop and Revitalize Regional Centers and Areas with Existing or Currently Planned Physical Infrastructure;
- 2) Expand Housing Opportunities and Design Choices to Accommodate a Variety of Household Types and Needs;

¹ Connecticut General Statutes Chapter 126, Section 8-23

² Connecticut General Statutes Chapter 279, Section 16a-27.

- 3) Concentrate Development Around Transportation Nodes and Along Major Transportation Corridors to Support the Viability of Transportation Options;
- 4) Conserve and Restore the Natural Environment, Cultural and Historical Resources, and Traditional Rural Lands;
- 5) Protect and Ensure the Integrity of Environmental Assets Critical to Public Health and Safety;
- 6) Promote Integrated Planning Across all Levels of Government to Address Issues on a Statewide, Regional and Local Basis

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D. Regional Plan of Conservation & Development

While not required by State Law, the Town Planning and Zoning Commission may also consider the **South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG) Plan of Conservation and Development 2018-2028** (Regional POCD) which was developed pursuant to Section 8-35a of the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS). The regional plan is a guidance document which sets policy priorities for the future of the region and its communities.

E. History of the Madison POCD

The Town of Madison adopted its last plan of Conservation and Development and 2013 and prior to that in 2000. Following the adoption of the 2000 Plan, Madison appointed a Town Plan Advisory Committee which established priorities and coordinated implementation. Subsequent to the adoption of the 2013 Plan Madison has undertaken several other planning studies including a Coastal Resiliency Plan in 2016 and an Affordable Housing Plan in 2022.

The 2013 POCD was broken down into Plan themes and their corresponding objectives which included the following:

- 1) Community Character and Quality of Life
 - a) Maintain Excellence In Community Facilities
 - b) Enhance Community Character
 - c) Preserve Open Lands
 - d) Support Community Pride And Spirit
 - e) Improve Options For Mobility And Recreation

- 2) Madison Center
 - a) Maintain The Character Of Madison Center
 - b) Enhance The Overall Experience
 - c) Address Septic Limitations In The Center
 - d) Encourage Additional Development
- 3) Community Development
 - a) Encourage Economic Development
 - b) Manage Residential Development
 - c) Manage Activities In Coastal Areas
 - d) Evaluate Wastewater Issues
 - e) Enhance Communications Capability
- 4) Conservation and Sustainability
 - a) Protect Important Resources
 - b) Encourage Sustainable Practices
 - c) Promote Regional Solutions

The 2023 Plan of Conservation and Development is intended to take the pulse of Madison’s progress on the prior plan’s objectives, while also establishing new goals, policies, and implementation strategies for the next decade in Madison and beyond.

F. Background Demographics in Madison/Population Profile

This Plan utilizes recently released 2020 United States Decennial Census Population data. As of 2020 Census Data, 17,691 people reside in Madison which equates to a population density of 489 people/square mile. Like most other Connecticut suburban communities, Madison experienced a period of significant growth following World War Two and the constriction of the Connecticut Turnpike, known today at Interstate 95. From 1950 to 1970, Madison’s population tripled, going from slightly over 3,000 residents to nearly 10,000 residents by 1970. From the period of 1970 to 2000 Madison’s population continued to grow to about 18,000 residents and has since stabilized and begun to slowly decrease.

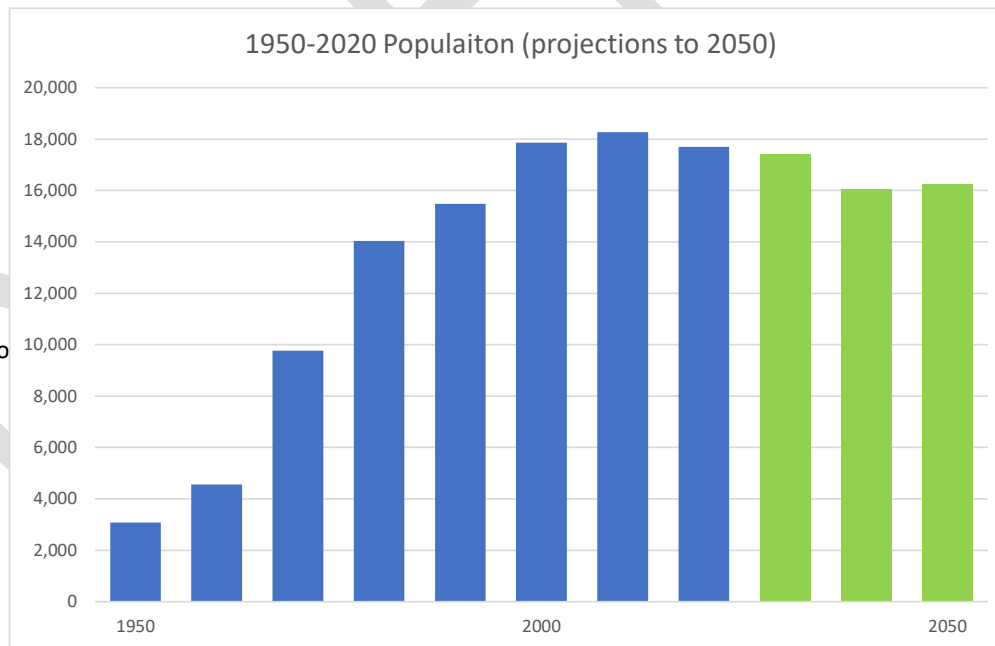
In terms of general population trends and makeup, a sizable portion, 91.9%, of Madison is White, 3.0% is Asian alone, 2.8 % is Hispanic or Latino, and 3.8% is Two or More Races; a very small percentage, 0.5%, are Black or African American. Like the State overall, Madison has an aging population, with a median age of 49 expected to trend older over the next two decades. (2020 U.S. Census).

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the resident population counts include all people (citizens and noncitizens) who are living in the United States at the time of the census. People are counted at their usual residence, which is the place where they live and sleep most of the time. The 2020 U.S. Census surveying was conducted April 1, 2020 – October 16, 2020. (U.S. Census Bureau).

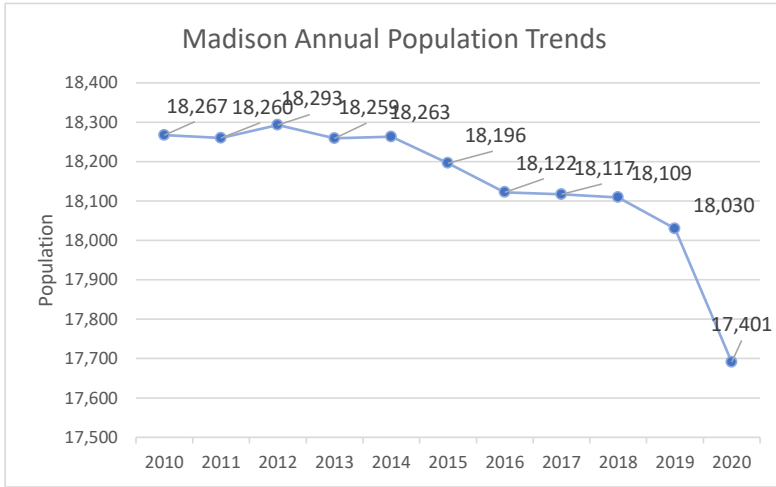
Seasonal Population - Madison, like its surrounding shoreline communities, experiences seasonal population increase as a result of seasonal housing units, summer rental dwellings, hotel and resort lodging and visiting guests. There are currently no precise measurements of seasonal population fluctuation generated from the Town of Madison, The State of Connecticut, or the U.S. Census Bureau.

Although seasonal campground residency is not included in the U.S. Census calculations, it is worth acknowledging that Hammonasset Beach State Park has 558 public access campsites available for occupancy from late May to October, which if operating at full capacity can provide temporary residency for up to approximately 3,000 people.

**2020 Census Snapshot:
Madison Households**



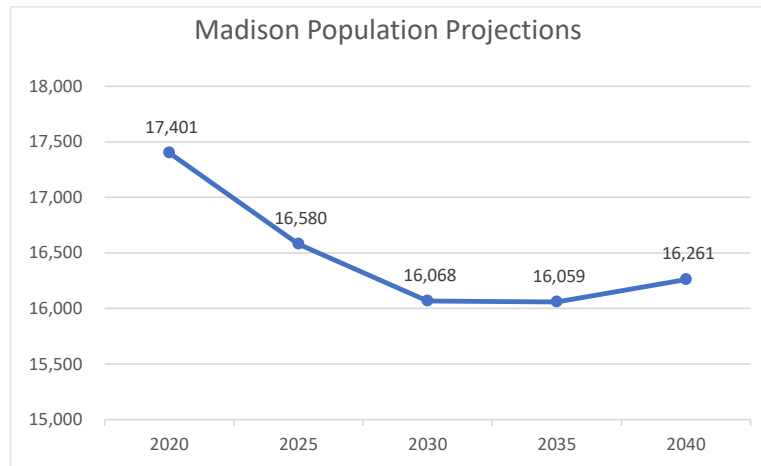
Households	6,719
Individuals per Household	2.61



Madison’s overall population has been on a decline for the last nine years, which is expected to continue to decline over the next two decades. In line with the shrinking population, the average household size in Town has been decreasing, dropping from 2.72 in 2000 to 2.61 in 2020. Although there is no single factor responsible for this current and projected decline, and it may not accurately represent Madison’s future, it is likely attributed to an overall aging of the population without sufficient replacement numbers. Population projections have been developed by the CT State Data Center based on state and locally derived fertility rates.

Source: CT Data Collaborative

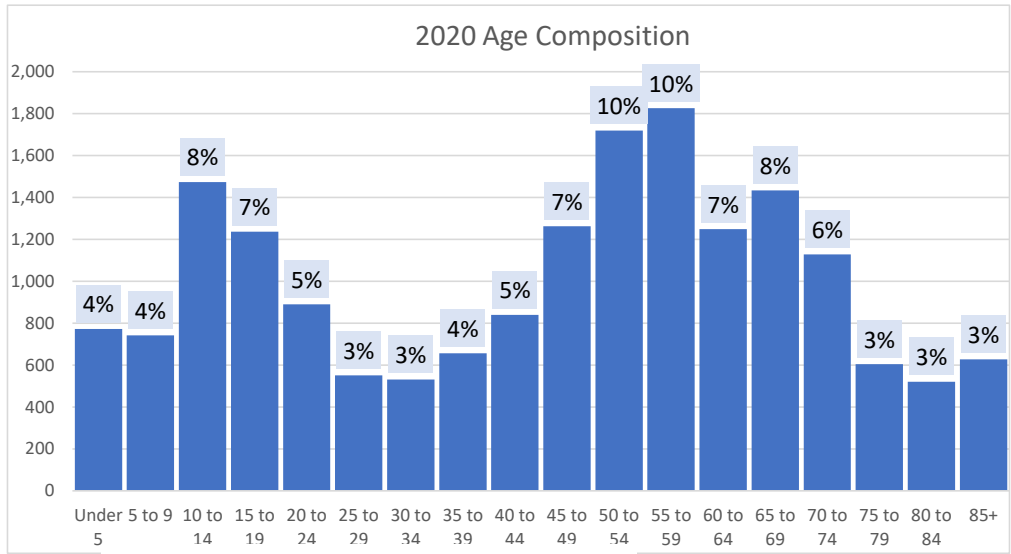
Year	Population
2010	18,267
2011	18,260
2012	18,293
2013	18,259
2014	18,263
2015	18,196
2016	18,122
2017	18,117
2018	18,109
2019	18,030
2020	17,691



Source: CT Data Collaborative Annual Population Estimates by Town, 2020 Census of Population and Housing

As the proportions of various age groups change, so too does Madison’s typical household size and type. Reflecting on changes in age cohorts in Town is important, as different age groups have different needs. For example, a large increase in 25-35 year olds in town may be a leading indicator for a significant increase in school aged population which requires further investment in town schools. Likewise, a significant increase in senior age residents may indicate the town has to increase investment in senior facilities or senior services and cater housing development for citizens who are looking to downsize. Whatever those preferences may be, an understanding of Madison’s changing age groups and their needs and desires is helpful to plan for future development and investment.

Source: 2020 U.S. Census



Source: 2020 Census of Population and Housing

Madison’s largest age cohorts are the very young, and the older groups.

- 24% of the population is 19 years old or younger.
- 57% of the population is 45 and older
- 23% of the population is 65 and over. Individuals in the age range of 55-75 (born between 1945 and 1965) represent the “baby boomer” generation, which total 31% of the population of Madison. This growing pre-senior and senior demographic can potentially require more assisted or supportive living arrangements and might seek to live outside of Madison in their later years if local options are unavailable.

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	United States	Madison	+/-
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Population below 19	25%	23.8%	-1.20
Population above 45	41.80%	57.4%	15.60
Population above 65	16.40%	23.9%	7.50
Baby Boomers (55-75)	22.80%	31.2%	8.40

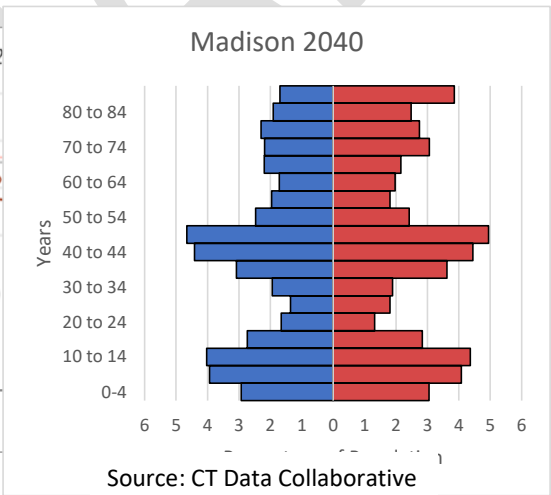
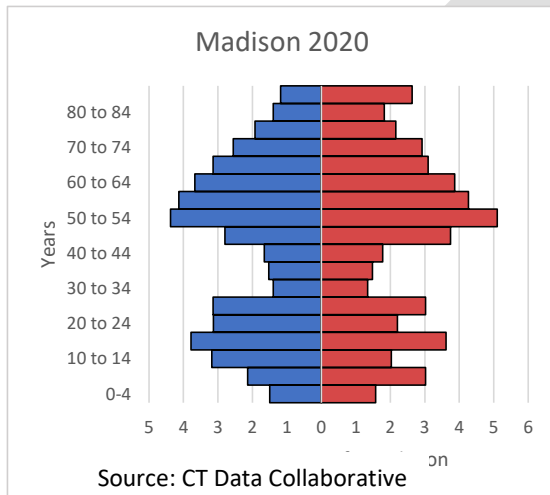
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Source: 2020 Census of Population and Housing

Projections for the next twenty years show potential shifts in Madison’s age distribution:

- The largest and fastest growing age group in Madison will be the under-19 population, which is expected to increase from 22% to 28% of Madison’s total population in the next two decades.
- The largest decline is in the 40–64-year-old population which is projected to decline from 37% to 31% of Madison’s population.

Both the 20-39 and the over 65 groups are expected to change little



- Ethnicity
 Madison’s population in 2020 was as follows:
- 91.9% White
 - 3.0% Asian
 - 2.8 % is Hispanic or Latino
 - 3.8% is Two or More Races
 - 0.5%, Black or African American.

SECTION II: COMMUNITY VISION & PLAN GOALS

Plan of Conservation & Development Mission Statement

To guide the conservation and development of Madison to maintain and enhance quality of life in a resilient and sustainable community

Plan of Conservation & Development Vision Statement

The Town of Madison Planning & Zoning Commission, in developing this update to the 2013 Plan of Conservation & Development (PoCD), is guided by an interest in protecting and enhancing the cultural, historic, recreational and natural resources of Madison and by the desire to promote activities and policies that will foster a more vital, connected, resilient, and sustainable community where opportunities for growth are available to all.

We envision a Madison that provides economic, educational, housing, cultural, recreational, and civic opportunities that establish a high and sustainable quality of life. We envision community growth that welcomes new residents, encourages broad participation, and safeguards the integrity of our natural and cultural resources through sustainable conservation. We envision civic and private investment that acknowledges and plans for a changing climate and the need for increased equity for current and future residents.

Growth in Madison will continue to have a strong focus on Madison Center as the economic and cultural heart of the community, while integrating thoughtful development into surrounding areas and throughout the Town. Development and redevelopment to strengthen connections among all areas balanced with conservation of natural and cultural resources are essential to the realization of this vision.

Core Themes of the Plan of Conservation & Development

When identifying goals and recommended actions within a long-range planning document like a PoCD, the general topics (such as housing, transportation, economic development, etc.) can very quickly get into the weeds of fine detail (bus stops along certain roads, housing lot sizes) in a way that can seem disconnected. Further, there may not be any evident connection between the detailed recommendations and the Plan's Vision.

In an effort to facilitate both decision-making on priorities and to weave “common threads” throughout each of the topical areas, this Plan has identified six paired themes that will guide each detailed goal and recommendation. Drawn from the Vision Statement, these core themes are: *Vitality and Connectivity; Resilience and Sustainability; and Opportunity and Growth.*

Vitality and Connectivity: A community's vitality is a subjective, intangible quality that is nevertheless perfectly clear to residents and visitors that experience it. Community engagement in public celebrations and events, a wide variety of civic, recreational, and commercial activities that attract participation from across the demographic and cultural spectrum, a thriving school system, economic activity, and an engaged government and business community all contribute to the vitality of a community.

Connectivity can describe both the physical and figurative bonds that knit together a community. The Town is connected physically through its system of roads, sidewalks, and trail systems. It is connected through the water, telephone, cable, and data infrastructure running underneath and above our streets. It is connected through the civic and educational institutions that formally engage with the residents and students of Madison. It is also connected, just as significantly, through less formal social networks (both on- and off-line) where cultural information is shared, distributed, and reinforced. They are the systems, physical, virtual, and cultural, that enable people to be "a part of" Madison.

Resilience and Sustainability: Just as connectivity has both tangible and symbolic meaning, so too can resilience. In an organizational and structural sense, resilience refers to the reality that natural hazards such as storm intensity and frequency, drought, flooding and coastal inundation are all likely to be increasingly exacerbated by global climate changes. Land, property, and infrastructure that was relatively safe from storms ten years ago will likely be less so over the next ten. The Town must consider investments and land use decisions, planning for a reimagined worst-case scenario, and spend more resources in planning for recovery. This means not only decisions about where and how to build, but also the systems to escape, retreat, and recover when that is needed. More metaphorically, the community must strengthen its relationships and communication systems so the community can work together in preparing for and recovering from a wide variety of challenges.

Sustainability is often misused as a synonym for resilience, but it defines something well beyond simple preparedness for recovery. Sustainability is the ability of a community to provide for the needs of the current generation without sacrificing the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It uses a "triple bottom line" of analysis to ensure a balance between necessary economic growth, social equity, and environmental stewardship. Decisions about municipal growth and investment should seek to satisfy each of the central considerations.

Opportunity and Growth: Opportunity is about openness and continuity. Madison is a great community in which to live, work, shop, learn and play. It should strive to provide the chance for all of its residents, workers, and visitors to engage with these resources as freely as possible. Opportunity extends to the possibility of finding suitable and affordable housing, a quality education, a clean and

safe environment in which to raise a family, a variety of good employment options, and a freedom of movement to interact with the community. Providing opportunities includes removal of structural and regulatory barriers, proactive investments in community assets, and protection of critical resources.

While we seek to preserve and protect Madison in a way that maintains the fundamental vitality of the town, some level of change over time is inevitable, and growth is essential. Though large-scale economic and market forces are largely out of the control of a small town, a community can both encourage and regulate growth in directions and at a rate that fit the capacity of the Town's resources. Being thoughtful about these processes can motivate appropriate growth.

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SECTION III: NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Introduction – what is the Natural Environment, what is included?

The “**natural environment**” refers to everything living and nonliving occurring naturally in Madison. From the Town’s beaches to its wildlife, forests and wetlands, the natural environment in Madison includes a large list of natural areas and features throughout the Town.

Madison’s natural environment is highly valued by the community. Its protection, preservation and conservation is critical to the overall **sustainability** and livability of Madison. The quality of our air, water, and soil directly impacts the health and well-being of our residents. Clean air is essential for the healthy lungs of all creatures, while clean water sources are crucial for hydration, agriculture, and sustaining aquatic ecosystems. Madison’s natural environment also plays a pivotal role in mitigating the impacts of climate change. As we face the challenges posed by rising temperatures, extreme weather events, and shifting ecological patterns, the preservation of our forests, wetlands, and other natural areas becomes paramount. These ecosystems act as carbon sinks, absorbing greenhouse gases and helping to regulate local climate conditions. They also provide natural buffers against flooding, erosion, and other climate-related hazards. In addition, Madison’s natural environment is heavily intertwined with its built environment, as it is associated with many economic, social, and health impacts. The natural environment provides key resources, recreational opportunities, ecosystem services, and is a major source of community pride for Madison.

As Madison continues to grow and develop, it is critical that the Town has information and a plan for safeguarding its natural environment and using it in a way that is sustainable and responsible. Concerns like climate change, sea level rise, and air, water, and noise pollution threaten the natural environment, requiring proactive planning by the Town.

Through collaborative efforts between the community, local organizations, and government entities, we can ensure that Madison’s natural environment continues to thrive, supporting a healthy and resilient community for generations to come. By valuing and conserving our natural resources, we not only enhance the quality of life for our residents but also fulfill our responsibility as stewards of this land.

Plans and Studies:

Plans and studies guide the protection and conservation of Madison’s natural environment. The plans below characterize the Town’s existing efforts and initiatives related to the natural environment.

2013 Plan of Conservation and Development – Planning and Zoning Commission (2013)

Madison’s previous Plan of Conservation and Development was adopted in 2013 and has served as the guiding document for the Town’s policy and planning initiatives for the past ten years. The 2013 Plan discusses the natural environment in two different chapters: Chapter 6: Conservation and Sustainability, and Chapter 3: Community Character and Quality of Life.

Coastal Resiliency Plan – Planning & Zoning Commission (2016)

In 2016, Madison adopted its Coastal Resiliency Plan, which considers various methods of adapting to sea level rise, including accommodation, protection, and retreat. As a coastal community, Madison must plan to protect vital natural resources as well as our community from the potential damage of sea level rise.

Stormwater Management Plan

The Town’s Stormwater Management Plan established, implements, and enforces a stormwater management program that protects surface and groundwater resources from negative impacts brought by stormwater flowing from roads, parking lots, rooftops etc. These management practices protect and preserve Madison’s water quality.

Existing Resources:

Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) – Conservation Commission

The Conservation Commission develops the Natural Resources Inventory, which is a critical resource for the Town’s boards, commissions, and departments. With this tool, the Conservation Commission is better able to act as an advisor to other town boards and commissions on the status of Madison’s natural resources.

Maps

Open Space (2013 PoCD)

Preserved Lands (2013 PoCD)

PA-490 Map (2013 PoCD)

Madison Recreational Shell-Fishing Map (Shellfish Commission Webpage)

Scenic Resources Map (2013 PoCD)

Locational Guide Map (Conservation) (2013 PoCD)

Natural Resources Plan (2013 PoCD)

Coastal Resources Maps (West/East) (2013 PoCD)

Shoreline Susceptible to Sea Level Rise Maps (2013 PoCD)

Boards and Commissions:

Many of the Town’s plans, studies, and other initiatives have been led by Madison’s Boards and Commissions who work on issues associated with the natural environment. Below is a short description of each Board and Commission dealing directly with the natural environment in Madison.

Conservation Commission

The Conservation Commission was established out of the recommendations of Madison’s 2000 Plan of Conservation and Development. They serve as technical advisors to other boards and commissions seeking guidance about the best use of natural resources. The Commission also develops the Natural Resources Inventory (NRI).

Beach and Recreation Commission

As Madison is home to several beaches and parks, the role of the Beach and Recreation Commission is vital to ensure the responsible use of Madison’s natural areas for recreation.

Coastal Resiliency Commission

One of Madison’s more recently established commissions, the Coastal Resiliency Commission works with state agencies to identify the impacts of climate change and sea level rise and develop a Coastal Resiliency Plan for Madison.

Flood and Erosion Control Board

The Flood and Erosion Control Board is authorized to establish flood and erosion control systems, as well as municipally owned dam repairs. The Board also hears and decides on appeals and requests for variances of the requirements set by the Town Floodplain Management Ordinance.

Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency

The Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency regulates activity within proximity of wetlands and watercourses in town. The Agency works to mitigate and eliminate negative impacts of development on any wetlands and watercourses.

Shellfish Commission

The Shellfish Commission develops rules and designates areas for shell fishing in Town. The Commission provides useful information and resources for those interested in shell fishing.

Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA)

Madison’s WPCA works to protect ground and surface water through various policies and procedures, including developing and updating a Water Pollution Control Plan and a Wastewater Facilities Plan.

Advisory Committees

In addition to the above Boards and Commissions, there are several advisory committees that guide specific areas or parks in Town. These committees include the Rockland Preserve Advisory Committee, Bauer Park Advisory Committee, and the Salt Meadow Park Advisory Committee.

These organizations work hard to safeguard and support Madison’s natural environment. In addition to the Town’s Boards and Commissions, efforts are supported by Town departments, such as the Beach and Recreation Department, the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency, Risk Management, and Emergency Management. Together, Madison’s Boards, Commissions, and Departments form a critical network for environmental protection and management.

Policies and Actions – How do the Core Themes Guide the Town’s Approach to the Natural Environment?

Vitality and Connectivity

POLICY A: Focus on Understanding and Sharing Knowledge of Natural Environment

The health of our natural environment is inextricably linked to the health of our community and its population. While the natural environment, including open spaces, tidal marshes, and connected forest tracts, have inherent value, they will only continue to thrive through active attention. Ensuring that both community leaders and the general public understand this value is a critical baseline step. In order to support this policy, the following actions are recommended:

- Action A.1: Conduct a Natural Resources Inventory
- Action A.2: Update GIS mapping of all key natural resources and create public map portal
- Action A.3: Encourage environmental education and stewardship curriculum at Madison schools

Action A.4: Expand public engagement efforts such as Mad for Trees, Mad for Bees, No-Mow May, and Single Use Plastic Bag ban

POLICY B: Connect People to the Environment

A baseline understanding of the value of the natural environment of Madison is an appropriate first step, but it must be followed by efforts to place people into relationship to nature. The Town must align its priorities to connect its residents and visitors to an active and continual experience of the natural world. In order to support this policy, the following actions are recommended:

- Action B.1: Update Beach and Park Facility Master Plan
- Action B.2: Work with the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) and neighboring Towns on Shoreline Greenway connections
- Action B.3: Make municipally-owned farmland and other unused arable lands available for active agriculture
- Action B.4: Develop sidewalk and trail connectivity plan and identify gaps between key resources and destinations
- Action B.5: Increase public amenities for both passive and active recreation facilities
- Action B.6: Include consideration of active recreation opportunities, including youth sports, as part of land acquisition process

Resilience and Sustainability

POLICY C: Focus on Preparedness and Resiliency from Effects of Climate Change

The last few decades of increasing storm frequency and severity, extreme weather, and repeated damage in coastal areas have resolved debates about reality of climate change. Madison should focus on understanding the potential parameters of this threat, and modify municipal investments accordingly. Pre-event preparedness and mitigation as well as recovery planning will ensure that the community will be able to continue to grow and thrive despite changes. To support this policy, the following actions are recommended:

- Action C.1: Increase standards on development within flood-prone areas
- Action C.2: Actively implement recommendations in the SCRCOG Regional Multi-jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Action C.3: Focus on property acquisition and limiting vulnerable development along the shoreline and in coastal wetland areas
- Action C.4: Increase use of green infrastructure and low-impact development techniques to manage stormwater

- Action C.5: Empower broader action by the Coastal Resilience Commission to update and implement recommendations of 2016 Coastal Resiliency Plan
- Action C.6: Review major municipal investments in infrastructure and physical facilities for vulnerability
- Action C.7: Maintain municipal emergency management preparedness for major flood, drought, heat emergency, winter storm and other increasing frequency events
- Action C.8: Work with property owners in increased vulnerability areas on preparedness, evacuation planning, and structural improvements

POLICY D: Consistently Update Policies and Undertake Tasks for Sustainability

Municipal budget constraints play a significant role in decisions about policies and investments. The Town must be disciplined in its decision-making to equally weigh both social equity issues and the ability of the environment to adapt to a changing world and continue to provide critical resources to the community. Long-term thinking that balances the needs of the present day with an eye on the future is essential. To support this policy, the following actions are recommended:

- Action D.1: Work with Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency to ensure that wetland integrity is protected through regulation and enforcement
- Action D.2: Increase participation in Sustainable CT, seeking Bronze Certification
- Action D.3: Provide additional technical and financial resources to addressing invasive species
- Action D.4: Increase active management of trees within the public way and within town properties, including development of forest management plans for Town properties
- Action D.5: Develop and provide funds for management plans for Town open space properties

Opportunity and Growth

POLICY E: Increase Active Stewardship of Natural Resources

Far too often, the glamour and excitement of a high-profile acquisition or protection of a key piece of open space receives all of the attention. While a community’s desire to protect an important property is worthy of praise, the element of maintaining and caring for that resource in the long term can be neglected. The continued value of these assets, providing ecological and community opportunity over decades, requires attention to stewardship. Devoting sufficient resources to care and maintenance should be an essential part of the Town’s approach. To support this policy, the following actions are recommended:

- Action E.1: Devote a portion of Open Space Acquisition funds for active stewardship of existing holdings
- Action E.2: Consider sale of “surplus,” small, or non-contiguous easements or parcels held by the Town, with proceeds going into Open Space Fund
- Action E.3: Work closely with Land Trust on stewardship plans for existing holdings
- Action E.4: Undertake an education campaign on the Natural Resources of Madison, focusing on resource stewardship

POLICY F: Develop Stronger Strategic Approach to Property Acquisition

With numerous conservation partners, including the Town, Land Trusts, the State of Connecticut, homeowners associations, and nonprofits, across decades, acquisition and protection of property can seem somewhat unfocused. Priorities can come and go with different administrations, and pet projects come and go without sufficient coordination. A more focused approach, including all key stakeholders, should assist the Town in identifying and prioritizing future acquisitions that will maximize benefit to the natural environment and the community and be efficient and effective within the Town’s financial resources. To support this policy, the following actions are recommended:

- Action F.1: Develop criteria for identifying target properties and the target specific properties for resource conservation and future community needs (develop criteria for identifying target properties)
- Action F.2: Develop a formal Open Space Plan
- Action F.3: Maintain funds in reserve for opportunistic acquisitions
- Action F.4: Build on investment and resources at Rockland Preserve (MUCH MORE DETAIL)
- Action F.5: Seek to connect properties and open spaces through trails and corridors
- Action F.6: Pursue acquisition of Right of First Refusal on target properties
- Action F.7: Focus on fee-in-lieu and annual budget allocation for Open Space Fund
- Action F.8: Develop partnerships with Land Trust, Regional Water Authority, DEEP, etc.

Commented [SH5]: "focus on fee in lieu, guided by the state statutory standard of 10%.