



PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Gary Conte, Planning Manager

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE VILLAGES AT ALMOND GROVE SPECIFIC PLAN

Date: December 23, 2021

To: Office of Planning and Research, Responsible and Trustee Agencies, Other Public Agencies and Other Interested Parties

Subject: Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for The Villages at Almond Grove Specific Plan

Lead Agency: City of Madera

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Comment Period: December 23, 2021 to February 7, 2022

Notice is hereby given that the City of Madera (City), as the Lead Agency, has completed the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for The Villages at Almond Grove Specific Plan, which is being distributed for public review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the California Public Resources Code.

The City has sent a copy of this Draft EIR to the State Clearinghouse and to those who requested a copy by responding to the Notice of Preparation (NOP). The City has also posted a copy of this Notice of Availability at Madera City Hall, with the Madera County Clerk Recorder's Office, and posted in the Madera Tribune.

The Draft EIR is available for review at the following location:

City of Madera
Planning Department
205 West 4th Street
Madera, CA 93637

The Draft EIR document is also available on the City's website at:

<https://www.madera.gov/home/departments/planning/#tr-current-projects-environmental-review-2436011>

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

The City of Madera will receive public comments on the Draft EIR from December 23, 2021 through February 7, 2022. Written comments should be received no later than 5pm (PST) on February 7, 2022. Please send your written comments to Mr. Conte and include your name, address, and phone number and/or email address so that we may contact you for clarification, if necessary.

Project Location

The project area (Specific Plan Area) is approximately 1,900 acres in size and is located on the western edge of the City of Madera. In October 2018, the Madera County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) approved the expansion of the City's Sphere of Influence to include the Specific Plan Area. The proposed project is bounded by the Fresno River to the south, Road 24 to the east, Avenue 17 to the north, and Road 22 to the west.

Project Description

The overall proposed project to be addressed in the EIR is referred to as the Villages at Almond Grove Specific Plan, or simply the Specific Plan. The Specific Plan envisions the development of a new compact mixed-use community that creates walkable and bikeable streets, and integrates open space throughout the area west of the City limits. The Specific Plan proposes to implement a village concept that would create opportunities for commercial development to be integrated with park and open space amenities, and to accomplish the following objectives:

- Address the City's current and projected housing needs
- Create mixed-use development to attract businesses and employment opportunities
- Achieve the goals related to community character and pedestrian-friendly design of the General Plan's Community Design Element and Land Use Element
- Facilitate annexation of areas in the Specific Plan Area that are outside of the City limits of Madera
- Create a transportation network to meet the objectives of the General Plan's Circulation Element
- Promote opportunities for water efficiency and incorporate sustainable building and operating practices
- Incorporate green and sustainable practices, as practicable, in developing buildings and infrastructure
- Undertake development of the Specific Plan Area that is economically feasible and balanced to address the City's economic interests

Development considered in the EIR consists of 10,783 residential units, approximately 2.1 million square feet of commercial and office space, approximately 164 acres of parks and recreational area, and approximately 54 acres of public facilities, including schools. In addition, the proposed Specific Plan would include infrastructure improvements including roadways and utilities. The proposed project would require a General Plan Amendment, rezoning, and annexation of the Specific Plan Area into the City. Additionally, future development proposals within the Specific Plan Area would be required to be consistent with the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan for

Madera Municipal Airport, and some parcels would require removal of active Williamson Act contracts prior to development.

ANTICIPATED SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The Draft EIR identifies potential significant effects in the following areas:

Aesthetics	Hazards and Hazardous Materials
Agriculture and Forestry Resources	Hydrology and Water Quality
Air Quality	Land Use and Planning
Biological Resources	Noise
Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources	Public Services and Recreation
Energy	Transportation
Geology and Soils	Utilities and Service Systems
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	

Mitigation measures identified in the Draft EIR would reduce potentially-significant effects to less-than-significant levels in all areas except Aesthetics, Agriculture and Forestry Resources, Air Quality, Noise, Public Services and Recreation, Transportation, and Utilities and Service Systems.

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