FUNDAMENTAL PLANNING KNOWLEDGE

Core Values
Six principles have been recognized as the standards that capture the necessary aspects of sustainability. In particular, these principles have been considered with regard to comprehensive plans, but they can be applied equally to advocacy. The six principles were derived from a review of leading comprehensive plans by the APA Sustaining Places Task Force and outlined in *Sustaining Places: The Role of the Comprehensive Plan* (Godschalk and Anderson 2012). Further, the principles also are used to shape PAS Report 578, *Sustaining Places: Best Practices for Comprehensive Plans* (Godschalk and Rouse, 2015) that represents the result of a four-year effort by APA - the Sustaining Places Initiative. The six principles are:

1. Livable Built Environment
2. Harmony with Nature
3. Resilient Economy
4. Interwoven Equity
5. Healthy Community
6. Responsible Regionalism

Best practices in support of these principles range across a wide spectrum of plan statements, policies, and actions. Key policy elements are listed after each Principle. A more complete list is presented in Appendix B of PAS Report 578.

1. Livable Built Environment

*Ensure that all elements of the built environment, including land use, transportation, housing, energy, and infrastructure, work together to provide sustainable, green places for living, working, and recreation, with a high quality of life.*

The built environment, which shapes the quality of life, encompasses physical features (such as buildings, streets, and utilities) and the systems and processes associated with them (such as movement of people, flow of water). As such, it defines the multifaceted community that people experience through their daily lives—the places where they live, work, and recreate.

*Key Policy Elements*

- State planning enabling legislation that requires local implementation efforts such as zoning to be consistent with corresponding comprehensive plans.

- Development and stewardship of communities that exemplify sustainable living practices with higher densities that support high capacity transit use and walkability, and include open spaces, habitat connections, complete streets, diverse housing, local employment, neighborhood schools and other appropriate community facilities, and local-serving businesses that meet the daily needs of residents and reduce vehicle trips and Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG emissions).
• Provisions for a variety of housing types in local government development codes (e.g., accessory dwelling units, co-housing, multiplexes, row houses, and mixed-use buildings) for neighborhood residents of all ages, with different incomes, needs, and physical abilities.

• Expanded federal, state and local agency funding and technical support for district and neighborhood-scale sustainable development projects, such as the HUD-DOT-EPA Sustainable Communities Partnership.

• Linking transportation and land use planning in order to achieve efficient development patterns that limit infrastructure costs and environmental impacts.

• Transportation practices and new transportation investments that will limit impacts to the natural environment by reducing single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) travel, limiting long commute distances, reducing the reliance on fossil fuels, and increasing transit, biking, and walking.

• Complete and green streets are used as the design approaches for new investment in a community’s street network (see the National Association of City Transportation Officials’ Urban Street Design Guide or similar guidelines.)

• Transportation demand management (TDM) strategies are widely implemented to improve congestion by offering a variety of modes; encouraging travel at non-commute times; or otherwise incentivizing different travel behavior.

• Minimum parking requirements in development regulations are eliminated and replaced with parking maximums to manage traffic. Pricing is used to encourage adequate parking availability in all places at all times. The cost of parking is required to be unbundled from housing and commercial leases, making the actual cost of providing parking visible to motorists.

• Multi-year reauthorization of federal transportation legislation to allow communities and states to plan for capital expenditures that incorporate the principles of sustainability.

• Highways and streets are constructed and maintained with recycled materials such as recycled asphalt and concrete.

• The use of cleaner fuels such as natural gas and electricity for both transit and automobiles is highly incentivized, and the adequate construction and siting of alternative fueling facilities and charging stations is completed.

• Stormwater management techniques that mitigate both quantity and quality, while being sensitive to the design requirements of each specific site.
• Water rate structures such as zone pricing and incremental pricing to reflect the true cost of water and promote conservation through increasing water rates for higher levels of water use.

• Requirements for state-of-the-art water saving technologies in all new development.

• Incentives for all types of development to use alternative renewable energy sources and meaningful energy conservation measures.

• Requiring high energy efficiency standards in new construction and building retrofits.

• State, regional, and local adoption of Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) programs and other sustainable infrastructure financing mechanisms for water, stormwater, and transportation improvements at district, neighborhood, and residential scales of development.

• Installation of distribution infrastructure for renewable energy, such as solar, wind, and geothermal power, and for reclaimed water/graywater.

• Requiring upgrades to aging and out of date infrastructure, such as electrical systems, water systems, and storm and sanitary sewers.

• Jurisdictions incorporating Life Cycle Analysis (LCA) into their planning processes to guide local development decisions.

2. Harmony with Nature

*Ensure that the contributions of natural resources to human well-being are explicitly recognized and valued and that maintaining their health is a primary objective.*

The natural environment, which can be disturbed by urban development and human activities, comprises the earth’s interrelated systems of air, water, soil, and vegetation and their ongoing processes. Human well-being depends upon a healthy natural environment to provide the services of nourishing food, breathable air, drinkable water, hazard protection, energy, and spiritual sustenance.

*Key Policy Elements*

• Implementing programs, policies and actions that enable communities to minimize their contributions to greenhouse gas emissions.

• Use of green infrastructure where feasible as an alternative to traditional systems.
• Local food production and farming practices that conserve important agricultural lands and limit pollution, provide the opportunity for extensive access to fresh food to all residents within their market area, and help promote healthy living practices.

• Water resources chapters in comprehensive plans that link water resource policies and agencies for stormwater, wastewater treatment, water management and watershed restoration with land use policies and agencies for growth areas, redevelopment, and protection of forest and agricultural land.

• Implementing coastal zone and floodplain planning and management best practices to protect surface waters, provide sediment and erosion control, and provide important community buffers during flooding and other weather-related events.

• Federal investment in the EPA’s Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) as established by the 1996 amendment to the Safe Drinking Water Act and the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) as established by the Clean Water Act.

3. Resilient Economy

_Ensure that the community is prepared to deal with both positive and negative changes in its economic health and to initiate sustainable urban development and redevelopment strategies that foster green business growth and build reliance on local assets._

The community’s economy is made up of the businesses, trades, productive facilities, and related activities that provide the livelihoods of the population. Economic health is critical in providing jobs and incomes to support the community; as it rises or falls, so do the livelihoods of people. Because local economies depend upon outside (regional, national, and even global) inputs and trends, their employment base is affected not only by local business formation and activity but also by the decisions of distant firms or governments. Therefore, more reliance on local assets increases the economic resilience of the community, as well as contributing to place-based revitalization.

_**Key Policy Elements**_

• Incentives for companies and communities to operate more productively with fewer inputs and less waste and by-products.

• Economic development policies designed to attract production activity that will fill gaps in existing regional supply chains, and provide additional economic opportunities for local goods and services.

• Infill development and revitalization investment, including building on and expanding Downtown/Main Street efforts and linking them to adjacent neighborhoods for revitalization.
- Special economic development initiatives to increase the success and number of small, locally owned businesses.

- Business incubation/flexible work access for suburban and rural areas that support teleworking and economic development in communities outside of urban centers.

4. Interwoven Equity

*Ensure fairness and equity in providing for the housing, services, health, safety, and livelihood needs of all citizens and groups.*

Equity in the provision of community decisions and services involves the fair distribution of benefits and costs. It results from applying basic fairness tests that ask whether the needs of the full range of the population served—rich and poor, young and old, native and immigrant—are served. Because disadvantaged, young, or immigrant populations often do not participate in debates over community policies and programs, their needs may fail to be recognized. Poor, underserved, and minority populations are often disproportionately affected by polluting land uses and natural disasters. Because such populations may not have the skills or community connections necessary for access to jobs, economic resources, and health care, the community may have to provide special programs to assist them. Decent, affordable housing is another critical need that falls under this principle. By weaving equity questions into the comprehensive plan, the community and its government can ensure the consideration of “who benefits” as it develops its policies, priorities, and expenditures.

*Key policy Elements*

- Equitable access to affordable housing, employment, healthcare, education, child care, and a healthy environment, through collaborative and comprehensive planning.

- Development of strong social networks to ensure communities are more resilient to disasters and other types of crisis, with a special focus on vulnerable populations.

- Meaningful community engagement in planning efforts that incorporates analysis of the social, economic, and environmental impacts of land use and community development decisions.

- Neighborhoods that welcome diversity (ethnically, economically, intergenerational, etc.) and provide equitable benefits of growth to existing community residents (e.g., non-displacement policies).

- Neighborhoods designed to promote social interaction and foster a safe, comfortable environment.

- Creating a robust community policy context for living wage jobs.
5. Healthy Community

Ensure that public health needs are recognized and addressed through provisions for healthy foods, physical activity, access to recreation, health care, environmental justice, and safe neighborhoods.

The World Health Organization defines health as a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. The Healthy Community principle and the previous four principles work together to support the mission of public health: to fulfill society’s interest in assuring conditions in which people can be healthy (Institute of Medicine 1988). In a healthy community, residents are assured that the air and water are safe, open space and recreation are convenient to use, local food outlets are located near neighborhoods, public schools and access to health care are provided equitably, and active public safety programs are in place. Because the normal operations of the private economic market may not ensure that these common public benefits are uniformly available, it may be necessary for the government to fill the gaps.

6. Responsible Regionalism

Ensure that all local proposals account for, connect with, and support the plans of adjacent jurisdictions and the surrounding region.

Regional planning agencies, although typically without regulatory authority, provide perspectives broad enough to encompass the scope of various regional systems, such as transportation and water supply, which extend beyond local jurisdictional boundaries. As authorized by federal surface transportation legislation, transportation planning is the core responsibility of designated metropolitan planning agencies (MPOs). Increasingly, progressive MPOs and other regional planning agencies are addressing other issues with regional implications, such as open space and environmental protection, housing, economic development, utility infrastructure, and hazard mitigation. Because regional agencies coordinate the activities of groups of local governments, they provide an institutional setting for joint decision making that transcends local politics.

Key Policy Elements

- Greater use of urban growth boundaries that can be expanded for planned compact, development.

- Comprehensive plans that direct new development into established growth areas and recognize that revitalizing existing communities decreases the need for greenfield development on agricultural and forest land.

- Determining development densities at the watershed scale to ensure more efficient, coordinated, and context-sensitive development patterns that have less impact on regional water resources.
• Integrated water resources management planning and techniques to address the multifaceted nature of water planning.

• Enhancing regional coordination of development and infrastructure planning with economic projections and funding to ensure development supports economic needs and provides amenities for workers and residents alike.

• Provision of mass transit facilities such as rail, local and commuter bus, and bus rapid transit (BRT) through funding, incentives, and grant opportunities, in order to provide an alternative to SOV travel and improve mobility, as well as producing environmental benefits such as reduced congestion, air pollution, and vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

• Regional, local, and district-level utilization of decentralized utility and distributed energy systems.
Sustainability

Sustainability means improving the quality of people’s lives while living within the capacities of supporting natural and human systems.
Sustainability is a core fundamental principle of planning

- Over-reaching
- An umbrella
- Lens
- Framework

An over-arching truth to sustainability is that compact development is so critical that it trumps the collective efficiencies of every other green tool, technology or practice by orders of magnitude.

Making buildings and practices more energy efficient and sustainable will never have the impact that comes from transforming our communities to be more compact and walkable.
Why Sustainability is Important

• Climate change
• Population shifts to urban areas (75% of the world population in 2050 will be living in urban places)
• Recognition that the sprawling patterns on post WWII are not sustainable.
• To be truly sustainable must be equitable.
• Need for finding alternative energy resources and assessing the environmental impacts of these alternatives.
Planning Principles for Sustainability

- Livable Built Environment
- Harmony with nature
- Resilient economy
- Interwoven equity
- Healthy community
- Responsible regionalism
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDICATOR</th>
<th>BENCHMARK</th>
<th>TARGET</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gross county production in major economic sectors</td>
<td>10.5% in 2000</td>
<td>Increase 10% by 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of certified green businesses</td>
<td>0 in 2000</td>
<td>Increase to 250 by 2010 and 400 by 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unemployment rate by county</td>
<td>3.2% in 2000</td>
<td>Do not increase unemployment rate from benchmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child care supply and demand</td>
<td>Demand exceeds supply by 42%</td>
<td>Supply increases until it is within 10% of child care demand by 2015</td>
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<td>Survey of public perception of safety in unincorporated areas</td>
<td>89% in 2000 and 88% in 2004</td>
<td>No decrease through 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recidivism (reoffenders) rate</td>
<td>61% recidivism rate</td>
<td>Decrease recidivism rate through 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voter turnout in general elections</td>
<td>84.6% in 2000</td>
<td>No decrease through 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amount of solid waste exported from Marin County annually</td>
<td>216,211 tons in 2000</td>
<td>No increase through 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of servings of fruits and vegetables consumed daily by children</td>
<td>53% of children ate five or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day</td>
<td>Increase 10% by 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percentage of population overweight and obese by age and gender</td>
<td>15% as of 2003 for adults over the age of 18</td>
<td>Decrease 10% by 2020</td>
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<td>Number of artists participating in the fine arts exhibitions at the Marin County Fair</td>
<td>1,210 artists participated in 2000</td>
<td>Increase 20% by 2015 and 30% by 2020</td>
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<td>Parks in County government</td>
<td>459 acres in 2000</td>
<td>Acquire 40 acres by 2010</td>
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