

6. LAND USE

THE PLAN: GOALS, POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS



AGRICULTURAL LANDS

Agriculture is deeply rooted in Maui history and will continue to be an important industry from an economic, social, and environmental perspective. Within the past two decades, Maui has experienced a decline in both the sugarcane and pineapple industries and an increase in cultivation and sale of diversified crops.. Within the context of this Plan, it is important to protect the continued agricultural use of thousands of acres of land on Maui for several reasons. Agriculture is a vital component of the island's economy. It ensures food and energy security, promotes stewardship of land and water, and shapes Maui's growth and character.

SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL LAND ISSUES

Despite existing State and County agricultural district laws that were enacted to protect agricultural resources and promote agricultural activities, inefficient conversion of agricultural lands to urban uses still occurs. Key effects of conversion of agricultural lands include:

- Fragmentation of farm parcels into noncontiguous segments affects production capacity.
- Higher land costs resulting from urban and rural development impact farmers.
- Impermanence Syndrome - farmers and other landowners are hesitant to commit to the long-term agricultural use of their land.
- Loss of *prime agricultural lands*.
- As the scale/density of farm operations dissipates, so will supportive farm services.
- Land use conflicts arise as residential neighbors complain about noise, odors and dust generated by farming operations.



GOAL & POLICIES

6.1 Goal: Maui's prime agricultural lands will be protected from urban encroachment and fragmentation.

- 6.1.1** Strongly discourage conversion of land designated by the Maui Island Plan as Prime and Productive Lands to rural or urban use, unless justified during the General Plan update, or when other overriding factors are present.
- 6.1.2** Require development projects adjacent to agricultural lands to provide an agricultural protection buffer as part of their site plan.
- 6.1.3** Reduce the subdivision potential in the County Agricultural District.
- 6.1.4** Allow for clustering of development when approved as a *Conservation Subdivision Design (CSD)*.
- 6.1.5** Protect designated prime and productive agricultural resource lands identified by the County.
- 6.1.6** Support an incentive package for prime and productive agricultural lands that ensures agricultural viability for commercial scale agricultural producers.

ACTION PLAN

The Department of Planning and Department of Public Works should collaboratively adjust zoning and subdivision standards for agricultural lands. The Department of planning should seek assistance from the Finance Department in developing and managing financial programs, grants and the purchasing or transfer of development rights programs.

- 6.1-Action-1** Formulate an agricultural development and water use plan.
- 6.1-Action-2** Develop a prime and productive agricultural lands *overlay district ordinance*.
- 6.1-Action-3** Establish transfer of development rights and purchase of development rights programs.
- 6.1-Action-4** Amend the zoning ordinance to allow for *density clustering* and conservation subdivision design.
- 6.1-Action-5** Establish alternative subdivision standards for agricultural parks.
- 6.1-Action-6** Develop an ordinance to require the preparation of an *agricultural impact assessment* for changes to the Urban Growth Boundaries, that involve the conversion of agricultural lands to rural or urban use.

RURAL LANDS

Rural and agricultural lands are inextricably linked by way of their physical, economic, and cultural connections. Rural communities and agricultural activities evolved to form a symbiotic relationship in which each land use provided and received benefits from the other. Rural areas continue to supply agricultural operations with labor, commercial and civic services, and a local market for agricultural goods. Conversely, agricultural areas provide rural communities with employment opportunities, agricultural products, and a connection to a rural lifestyle. The strong linkages between rural and agricultural areas dictate that policies implemented regarding one of these areas must consider the consequences and implications for the other. Rural lands do not only include rural zoned areas, but also a mix of rural and agricultural lands within which rural activities and land uses occur.

SUMMARY OF RURAL LANDS ISSUES

The parallel evolution of rural and agricultural areas on Maui has resulted in a distinct countryside that is important to island residents. With a mix of small country towns, productive agricultural lands, natural landscapes, and cultural resources, Maui's rural areas possess a unique character and provide a strong sense of place. However, with increasing growth pressure and limited planning and regulatory controls, the identity and productivity of these areas are in jeopardy.

- The one-acre and half-acre minimum lot sizes permitted within the County rural districts are not compatible with rural character, but instead produce a landscape pattern more appropriately identified as urban large lot residential.
- The lack of site analysis and open space requirements has led to the fragmentation of wildlife habitat, disruption of natural processes, and development in inappropriate areas such as steep slopes and floodplains.
- Demand for urban-like infrastructure and public services elevate the cost of providing these services to sparsely populated regions and change the character in rural areas.
- Development of rural homesites far from employment centers has led to bedroom communities with long commute times.

GOAL & POLICIES

6.2 Goal: *Maui will have a rural landscape in which natural systems, cultural resources and agricultural lands are protected and development is of a form and design that complements rural character and contributes to the viability of rural communities.*

- 6.2.1** Encourage conservation cluster development with a clear edge between country towns and surrounding rural landscapes.
- 6.2.2** Direct rural services and residential uses into rural country-town business and residential centers.
- 6.2.3** Promote the use of alternative storm water management techniques which limit land disturbance and protect the pre-development hydrology.
- 6.2.4** Encourage *greenbelts, open spaces, riparian zones* and other rural planning tools that minimize conflict between agricultural practices and residential development.



ACTION PLAN

The Department of Planning and the Department of Public Works will need to adjust zoning and subdivision standards for rural lands.

- 6.2-Action-1** Establish rural infrastructure and public service standards appropriate for rural areas.
- 6.2-Action-2** Coordinate with the State to develop appropriate policies and standards for rural development within the State Rural District.
- 6.2-Action-3** Amend the County zoning ordinance to allow residential uses in the Business Country Towns.
- 6.2-Action-4** Revise storm water management regulation to allow for *low impact development* techniques.
- 6.2-Action-5** Adopt procedures and standards to review development in County rural zones.

URBAN LANDS

Urban areas are characterized by a convergence of housing, jobs, civic activities, commercial services, shopping, and entertainment. Although less than five percent of Maui's lands are within the State Urban District, prudent planning and management of development within these areas is integral to the future growth of Maui as a whole. The character, design, and timing of future growth within urban areas will have significant consequences for agricultural lands, rural communities and natural resources, as well as the health and well-being of Maui island residents.

Key components of fostering sustainable land use and livable urban communities include supporting *infill development*, enabling *mixed-use development*, assuring mobility and circulation, and clearly defining town edges. Utilizing these strategies in urban areas will promote vibrant communities, economize on infrastructure and protect open space.

SUMMARY OF URBAN LANDS ISSUES

There is a common set of problems and needs that transcends Maui's urban communities. Key challenges include:

- Providing affordable housing
- Improving circulation and mobility within and between communities
- Maintaining community identity and sense of place
- Protecting life and property from natural disaster
- Providing adequate infrastructure and public facilities to support a high *quality of life*
- Revitalizing the island's small towns and aging resort areas



GOAL & POLICIES

6.3 Goal: Maui will have livable urban communities utilize an efficient and sustainable land use patterns and provide housing and services for Maui residents.

- 6.3.1 Promote *infill* and redevelopment of underutilized and vacant urban lots within *Urban Growth Boundaries* prior to expansion of those boundaries.
- 6.3.2 Promote higher density and more *compact urban* communities.
- 6.3.3 Maintain a distinct separation between Wailuku and Waikapu; Pukalani and Makawao; Pukalani and Kula; Makawao and Haliimaile; and Lahaina and Kaanapali to protect the character and identity of Maui's communities.
- 6.3.4 Require *community design charrettes* for major new urban expansion, new towns, and major urban *infill* projects.
- 6.3.5 Require the preparation and administrative approval of *Development Impact Assessment (DIA)* Reports, project master plans, and design guidelines for new urban expansion, new towns, and major urban *infill* projects within urban growth areas unless similar studies are required.
- 6.3.6 Reduce the dominating presence of parking lots on the urban landscape.
- 6.3.7 Ensure that safe and attractive public spaces (e.g., plazas, parks, town squares) are provided throughout the island's urban areas.
- 6.3.8 Develop new communities that provide sufficient commercial and industrial space to serve the daily needs of community residents and that also balances jobs and housing.
- 6.3.9 Site schools in or near residential communities and within close proximity to community facilities (libraries, parks, etc.).
- 6.3.10 Encourage mixed-use urban centers and neighborhoods and multi-use buildings that provide a mix of residential, workplace, shopping, recreation, and institutional uses.
- 6.3.11 Direct residential development to job-rich areas and commercial development to housing-rich areas to facilitate self-sufficient communities and shorten commutes.
- 6.3.12 Ensure *urban expansion projects* are a logical and beneficial extension of the existing community and do not promote automobile-oriented and homogenous *land use patterns*.
- 6.3.13 Assure flow-thru traffic in urban neighborhoods and discourage gated communities.



- 6.3.14** Ensure that major job and traffic generators are located in areas with affordable employee housing and multi-modal transportation.
- 6.3.15** Encourage new master planned communities that integrate *green building*, *smart growth*, and *urbanism* principles.
- 6.3.16** Educate property owners, developers, and lenders about the advantages of *mixed-use development*.
- 6.3.17** Promote urban fringe agriculture, community gardening, community supported agricultural programs, and farmers' markets within and adjacent to urban areas.
- 6.3.18** Encourage the establishment of small country inns and bed and breakfast homes within Maui Island's commercial districts.
- 6.3.19** Support the continued revitalization of Wailuku Town and Kahului's commercial core and harborfront.

ACTION PLAN

With the Maui County Council's support, the Department of Planning will be the agency with primary responsibility to initiate actions related to urban lands.

- 6.3-Action-1** Prepare risk and vulnerability reports for Kahului, Kihei and Lahaina.
- 6.3-Action-2** Identify receiving areas within urban growth boundaries for the transfer of development rights.
- 6.3-Action-3** Utilize the community plans to develop standards and priorities for *streetscape beautification*, pedestrian and bicycle circulation, parking, redevelopment target areas, and building form and design preferences.
- 6.3-Action-4** Develop and adopt an ordinance that mandates early consultation with communities affected by large-scale planning and land use activities.
- 6.3-Action-5** Institute a time limit on *development entitlements*.
- 6.3-Action-6** Amend the zoning ordinance to reduce minimum lot sizes in urban residential areas and facilitate the establishment of mixed-use centers.
- 6.3-Action-7** Establish minimum density requirements and maximum lot sizes within urban areas.
- 6.3-Action-8** Implement the Wailuku Redevelopment Plan
- 6.3-Action-9** Develop standards to strictly regulate the location, design, and massing of *big box* retail stores.