

# 1. NORTH SHORE'S ROLE IN OAHU'S DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

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The North Shore *Sustainable* Communities Plan area extends from Kaena Point to Waialeale Gulch near Kawela Bay, and from the shoreline to Helemano and the slopes of the Waianae and Koolau Mountain Ranges. It consists mostly of agricultural lands and open space, which surround the country towns of Haleiwa and Waialua and the residential communities of Mokuleia, Kawaihoa, and Sunset/Pupukea.

A number of distinguishing characteristics help define the North Shore *Sustainable* Communities Plan's key role within the City and County of Honolulu. For many Oahu residents and visitors, the North Shore is associated with huge winter surf, scenic shoreline and white sand beaches, picturesque valleys and coastal pali, and vast, open expanses of agricultural lands set against dramatic mountain backdrops. Nestled within the open countryside are older communities, newer residential subdivisions, and two small towns with diverse cultural heritage.

For many Oahu residents, the North Shore is “the country.” Its Hawaiian heritage, cultural diversity, and plantation past are reflected in its small rural communities and large expanses of agricultural lands and open space. The region's rural towns and residential areas still feature a country atmosphere with low-density residential structures and low-rise buildings housing retail establishments, restaurants, and surf shops. For many, the North Shore is a place for rest and recreation. They travel there to enjoy the country atmosphere and seek recreation at its numerous white sand beaches or mountain areas. It remains today as an essential haven and respite from the urbanized areas of Oahu.

The General Plan of the City and County of Honolulu directs growth to the Primary Urban Center and Ewa and limits growth in the urban fringe and rural areas (Exhibit 1.1). It designates the North Shore as a rural area where growth will be managed so that “an undesirable spreading of development is prevented, and their proportion of the islandwide resident population remains unchanged.” The General Plan also specifies that agricultural lands along the Windward, North Shore, and Waianae coasts are to be maintained for diversified agriculture.

In this context, the role of the North Shore *Sustainable* Communities Plan area is to maintain the rural character, agricultural lands, open space, natural environment, recreational resources and scenic beauty of Oahu's northern coast, in contrast to more urbanized areas of Oahu such as the Primary Urban Center, East Honolulu, Central Oahu, and Ewa. In line with the General Plan policies to preserve the open space and country atmosphere of the rural areas, the North Shore *Sustainable* Communities Plan will limit growth to “infill” areas within or adjacent to built-up areas to accommodate existing and future housing and employment needs, while maintaining the region's population at 1.8 percent of the islandwide population for the year 2020.

This update reaffirms the North Shore's role as a rural area as intended in the General Plan policies by establishing the following principles for future land use in the North Shore *Sustainable Communities Plan*:

- C Maintain the region's rural character by promoting diversified agriculture, preserving scenic open space, and retaining the small-town, country atmosphere of the region's typically low-rise, low-density communities.
- C Preserve agricultural lands for current and future agricultural uses and support the diversified agriculture industry.
- C Protect and preserve the natural environment and natural resources and features, including: mountain, forest and watershed areas; marshes, rivers, and streams; shoreline areas, fishponds, and bays; and reefs and offshore islands.
- C Preserve scenic views of the mountains, coastal pali and shoreline areas including mauka and makai views seen from near shore waters and heavily traveled areas such as Kamehameha Highway and Kaukonahua Road.
- C Protect cultural, historical, and archaeological resources by promoting the interpretive and educational use of these sites, buildings, and artifacts.
- C Manage and sustain ocean and nearshore resources to assure their long-term availability.
- C Enhance opportunities for a wide range of recreational activities by providing community-based as well as natural resource-based parks, and by securing convenient public access, including public right-of-ways, bikeways, and pedestrian walkways to beaches and inland recreation areas.
- C Facilitate the country lifestyle by establishing rural design guidelines emphasizing open space, landscaping, and the scenic qualities of an area, so that new development will be in keeping with the desired rural character of the region.
- C Support businesses which serve the agricultural, educational, health, and tourist industries and the local population, and provide employment for North Shore residents consistent with the low-key rural atmosphere of the North Shore.
- C Provide sufficient lands adjacent to built areas of Haleiwa and Waialua for housing that is compatible with the region's rural character and affordable to area residents, without exceeding the General Plan's population guidelines for the region and in line with the General Plan policies to maintain the North Shore as a rural area.

# Exhibit 1.1

## General Plan Designations: Urban, Urban Fringe, and Rural Areas

