

7 | COMMUNITY DESIGN

Some of the most distinctive aspects of Moloka`i are its wide open spaces, small towns, varied landscapes, and architecture, which reflects both Hawaiian tradition and the island’s plantation history. They collectively create an identity unique to Hawaii, perhaps best expressed in a sign commonly seen on the island – “Keep Moloka`i Moloka`i”.

During several community plan workshops, many residents on Moloka`i voiced a desire to maintain and enhance this rural character and natural beauty. New growth will require special attention to ensure that the rural, historic character of Moloka`i’s small towns is retained. Creating a county historic district in selected locations could help to address the loss of historic structures.

A. Existing Conditions

Moloka`i’s rural character is reflected in its settlement patterns, housing, streetscapes, roadways, public spaces, and the design of public institutions. Remnants of this era are found in Maunaloa, Kualapu`u, Ho`olehua, Kaunakakai, and parts of the east end. While Kaunakakai is compact and still retains its country town character, it could benefit from some careful design to enhance the natural beauty and improve ~~walkability its streets, and walkways~~. Unfortunately, the historic character of the streetscapes and buildings has been compromised by ~~some~~ demolitions ~~and lack of restoration~~.

One of the most important tools the County has to address this incremental loss of architectural history is the Country Town Business District Design Guidelines. These guidelines cover the small towns of Kaunakakai, Maunaloa, and Kualapuu along with the East End. Although the current version is over 20 years old, it is the only planning document ~~that~~ defines ~~appropriate~~ site design, street design, and architectural design standards.

Despite slow growth over the past 30 years, many of Molokai’s historic buildings have been significantly ~~altered~~ ~~modified~~. As an example, the plantation-town character of Maunaloa was substantially altered when many of its plantation era homes were demolished. In addition, there is little commercial activity in the town, resulting in several vacant commercial buildings, ~~there’s also are a number of undeveloped residential lots~~.

~~The rural landscape of the east end of Moloka`i is in some ways more intact, although there has been some concern (expressed in interviews and workshops) about the impact on the area by the growth of luxury vacation/second homes.~~

1 B: ISSUES
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5 Issue 1: The ~~rural and small town~~ character of Moloka`i and its small towns is an essential
6 part of the island's identity ~~that but~~ could be compromised by new development that
7 is out of scale and is visually incompatible.
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Design Principles

Preserve and maintain the traditional features of the built and natural landscape that reflect Moloka`i's history and give the island its distinctive character. Some of the character-defining features include the wide open spaces between communities, unobstructed views of the ocean, access to the shoreline, and simple, understated buildings.

Encourage a mix of land uses in Moloka`i's small towns. Encourage a mix of commercial, residential, and service uses to strengthen the island's small towns, to reduce the need for travel, and to make efficient use of infrastructure.

Preserve and enhance the historic character of Moloka`i. Renovate historic structures as a way of maintaining Moloka`i's history. Design new buildings and other improvements to complement and enhance the town's historic character.

Develop a circulation system and facilities to accommodate a variety of travel modes - bicycles, pedestrians, buses, and vehicles. Create a comprehensive network of travel options, with an emphasis on the pedestrian experience. Even as more areas are developed, they should be part of an island-wide transportation system that encourages and accommodates a variety of travel modes to serve both residents and visitors.

Maintain a pedestrian orientation in Moloka`i's small towns. Preserve and enhance sidewalks, parks, and other open spaces in small towns and other community areas to provide connectivity between land uses and offer a safe, inviting, and comfortable ~~pedestrian walking~~ experience.

1 **C: GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTIONS**
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5 **GOAL** The rural character of Moloka`i's **country-small** towns and the island's open
6 spaces will be maintained and enhanced.

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8 **Policies**

- 9 1. Continue to use the Business Country Town Design Guidelines to ensure that
10 the island's historic and rural character is maintained.
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12 2. Encourage the preservation of buildings, structures, and sites of historic and
13 cultural significance.
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15 3. ~~Encourage the revitalization of~~ Maintain Kaunakakai's ~~to encourage~~ business
16 development and ~~, enhance its~~ historical character, ~~and strengthen the town's~~
17 ~~connections to the waterfront.~~
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19 4. Promote and support projects that create a pedestrian-friendly environment
20 with street trees, benches, and other features in Moloka`i's country towns ~~that~~
21 ~~encourage people to frequent Kaunakakai.~~
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23 5. Maintain and enhance the rural character of the Kaluako`i area through low-
24 impact site design and development practices.
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26 ~~6. Encourage a thorough review of project's building size, scale, mass, materials,~~
27 ~~color, and other architectural features to ensure compatibility with its context.~~
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29 ~~7.6.~~ Encourage creative innovative approaches to site design, subdivision layout,
30 and architecture to maintain the island's rural character and to protect coastal
31 areas, natural resources, and cultural/historic resources.
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33 ~~8.7.~~ Concentrate future growth in and around existing development ~~to avoid sprawl~~
34 ~~and to minimize the cost of infrastructure development~~ that maintains county
35 rural standards, and is located outside of the flood inundation zone.
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37 ~~9.8.~~ Promote the use of sustainable building and development practices such as
38 those presented in the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
39 (LEED) standards.
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41 ~~10.9.~~ Encourage the use of native, non-invasive and drought tolerant plants.
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August 5, 2015 Version with CPAC & PD Revisions

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Table 7.1 Community Design			
No.	Action	Lead County Agency	Partners
7.01	Update <u>Amend</u> the 1993 Moloka`i Country Town Business Design Guidelines.	Planning Dept.	Moloka`i business and design professionals and community
7.02	Develop sub-area development plans for: Maunaloa, Kaluakoi Kualapu`u / Ho-olehua, and the East End of Moloka`i.	Planning Dept.	
7.03	Establish guidelines or other methods to ensure that new development maintains and enhances its rural character, natural beauty, views and viewpoints, and protects historic sites.	Planning Dept.	
7.03 4	Develop a pedestrian linkage between Malama Park and Kaunakakai through streetscape improvements.	Planning Dept.	Parks Dept. DLNR Dept. of Land and Natural Resources
7.04 5	Develop and adopt rural and small town street design standards that are appropriate for Moloka`i.	DPW	Planning Dept.
7.05 6	Create a funding source or mechanism for small business owners to renovate businesses in the island's small towns.	Office of Economic Development OED	Planning Dept.
7.06 7	Develop incentives <u>to</u> promote <u>ing</u> the use of sustainable green building and development practices.	DPW	Planning Dept.
7.07	Develop practicable incentives for Moloka`i businesses and property owners to implement sub-area development plan projects purposed to preserve, maintain, and enhance buildings, structures, sites, viewpoints, pedestrian ways, and streets.	Planning Dept.	
7.08	Conduct a study to improve walkability in Kaunakakai.	Planning Dept.	

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