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MEETING OF THE HIGHLANDS COUNCIL**

**Goals, Policies and Objectives: Future Land Use**  
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**PART 6.  
FUTURE LAND USE**

**Introduction**

The future of the Highland Region will be determined in part by the future land use decisions. The Highlands Regional Master Plan establishes a framework for future land use which guides development away from environmentally sensitive lands and agricultural lands. This framework also promotes compact development and redevelopment in or adjacent to existing development areas where adequate public facilities are available to serve new growth and development, provided that such development and redevelopment is compatible with existing land uses and community character.

**Subpart 1  
Regional Guidance**

**GOAL 6A      GUIDE DEVELOPMENT AWAY FROM ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AND AGRICULTURAL LANDS AND PROMOTE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT IN OR ADJACENT TO EXISTING DEVELOPED LANDS.**

**Policy 6A1      To limit, to the maximum extent permitted by law, development and use of undeveloped lands that are critical to protect, restore, or enhance sensitive environmental resources of the Highlands Region, including but not limited to Forests, Critical Habitat, Highlands Open Waters and their buffers, Riparian Areas, Steep Slopes, Prime Ground Water Recharge Areas, and Wellhead Protection Areas.**

**Objective 6A1a      *Identification of lands within the Highlands Region which contain sensitive environmental resources of the Highlands Region.***

- Objective 6A1b*      *The Protection Zone of the Highlands Land Use Capability Map shall include regionally significant environmental resources to the maximum extent feasible.*
- Objective 6A1c*      *Preparation and implementation of standards and criteria governing the use and development of land in Protection Zone.*
- Objective 6A1d*      *Identification of areas within the Conservation Zone and the Existing Community Zone that contain major environmentally sensitive resources and lake communities, designation of such areas as an environmentally constrained sub-zone, and preparation and implementation of standards ensuring that development capacity is directed away from such areas to the maximum extent feasible.*
- Objective 6A1e*      *Prevent the extension or creation of water and wastewater utility services in environmentally constrained sub-zones, except where the creation of such services is necessary to support clustered development that cannot feasibly be located outside the sub-zone or address a documented public health and safety issue due to failing septic systems and will maximize the protection of sensitive environmental resources.*
- Objective 6A1f*      *Preparation and implementation of standards ensuring that development protects environmentally sensitive resources in all Land Use Capability Map Zones and sub-zones.*
- Policy 6A2      To protect and promote agriculture by protecting and enhancing lands within the Highlands Region currently or capable of being used for agricultural purposes and ensuring that lands associated with or adjacent to agricultural lands are not developed in a manner that conflicts with the ongoing agricultural uses.
- Objective 6A2a*      *Identification of Agricultural Resource Areas within the Highlands Region.*
- Objective 6A2b*      *The Conservation Zone of the Land Use Capability Map shall include regionally significant agricultural lands within the Agricultural Resource Areas of the Highlands Region.*
- Objective 6A2c*      *Preparation and implementation of standards and criteria governing the use and development of land in the Conservation Zone to ensure conformance with the relevant policies and objectives.*
- Policy 6A3      To promote compatible growth opportunities that include in-fill development, adaptive re-use, redevelopment, and brownfields redevelopment in existing developed areas.
- Objective 6A3a*      *Identification of existing developed areas within the Highlands Region using the Developed Lands Analysis.*
- Objective 6A3b*      *Designation of existing, extensively developed areas as the Existing*

*Community Zone in the Highlands Land Use Capability Map.*

*Objective 6A3c*      *Preparation and implementation of standards and criteria governing new growth and development activities in the Existing Community Zone to ensure conformance with the relevant policies and objectives.*

Policy 6A4      To promote land uses which create a sense of place with attractive, walkable neighborhoods that support community connectivity of developed lands and community facilities.

*Objective 6A4a*      *Communities of place with a mix of uses which promote multi-purpose trips, through proximity of neighborhood retail, commercial and entertainment uses to residential land uses that create communities that are largely self-sufficient regarding daily needs.*

*Objective 6A4b*      *Communities of place with a pattern of development which promotes walking and biking.*

Policy 6A5      To integrate public parks and green spaces into development and redevelopment projects and ensure restoration of impaired natural resources to the extent required by law, at a minimum, and where feasible to a greater extent to maximize long term value of the project.

Policy 6A6      Provisions and standards relating to regional growth activities which increase the intensity of development shall be discretionary for conforming municipalities and counties.

Policy 6A7      Regional growth, based on local desire, should identify opportunities to maximize land use intensity while protecting natural features and community character.

*Objective 6A7a*      *Center based development initiatives should be planned within the Existing Community Zone to meet minimum density thresholds of three dwelling units per acre. Higher densities of 5 dwelling units and above are encouraged in areas designated as TDR receiving areas. Attainment of these density thresholds is discretionary, and shall be consistent with the resource and capacity goals and requirements in this plan.*

*Objective 6A7b*      *Development and redevelopment initiatives shall maximize land use intensity provided that it enhances the existing or adjacent community while protecting local and regional natural resources.*

Policy 6A8      To incorporate smart growth principles and green building design and technology in development and redevelopment initiatives.

**GOAL 6B      USE THE HIGHLANDS LAND USE CAPABILITY MAP AS A FRAMEWORK FOR THE CHARACTER, LOCATION, AND MAGNITUDE OF NEW GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE HIGHLANDS REGION.**

- Policy 6B1** To use the Highlands Land Use Capability Map as a geographic framework for land use planning and management within the Highlands Region.
- Objective 6B1a* *A Highlands Land Use Capability Map based on the most current and available data.*
- Objective 6B1b* *A Highlands Land Use Capability Map based on a defined methodology which produces replicable outputs.*
- Objective 6B1b* *A Highlands Land Use Capability Map identifying Protection Zones, Conservation Zones and Existing Community Zones, along with environmentally constrained sub-zones for the Conservation and Existing Community Zones as appropriate.*
- Policy 6B2** To develop a program for RMP Updates for all substantive components of the RMP, based upon the receipt of new, corrected or updated factual information and verification by the Highlands Council, when and where necessary to improve the accuracy of the RMP.
- Policy 6B3** To develop a program allowing the approval of municipal and county Petitions for Map Adjustments for the Land Use Capability Map and other RMP maps, other than the RMP Updates addressed in Policy 6B2. Such Map Adjustments must be supported by a demonstration that they (1) comply with the intent of the Regional Master Plan, (2) are based on municipal or county planning that results in land use patterns and environmental protection that are at least the equal, for the municipality as a whole, as the existing LUCM and Plan policies, (3) support both smart growth and resource preservation, and (4) provide protection of Highlands resources within the municipality or county that exceeds, on a whole, the protection provided by the existing LUCM and Plan policies.