

## Appendix 2: Agricultural District Rezone Justification

The areas currently zoned as Agricultural (A) consist of a wide variety of land use and development patterns. However, there is a clear difference between areas largely utilized for residential purposes and areas that remain primarily utilized for productive purposes<sup>1</sup>. The proposed split of the Agricultural District into two new districts—Mixed Use - 20 (MU-20) and Mixed Use - 40 (MU-40)—was driven by the observation that there are distinct areas throughout the county that tend towards one or the other use and that these areas could be logically determined through development patterns. Whereas the productive land use areas tend towards larger contiguous parcels with low dwelling and road density, the residential lands tend towards clusters of smaller parcels and higher dwelling and road densities. The geographic division of the two new districts reveals these areas and was produced by a geospatial statistical analysis (with some minor edits) to back up what intuition suggests.

The boundaries for the proposed MU-20 and MU-40 district were determined by using a geospatial statistical tool for determining spatial autocorrelation based on feature locations (parcels in the Agricultural District) and attribute values (parcel size). Spatial autocorrelation is a tool for looking at how well spatial objects correlate with other nearby objects over an area. In this case, planning staff wanted to identify areas within the Agricultural District which were characterized by higher concentrations of small parcels on the assumption that these areas suggested residential land use. The results of this geospatial analysis can be viewed in Map 1. The results of the analysis provided the basis for the boundaries of the proposed MU-20 and MU-40 Districts by assigning the two districts to a combination cluster or outlier group.<sup>2</sup> To further verify land use for the resulting statistical areas, staff imported the county's issued permits database into a geographic information system and compared the permits database with the land use patterns suggested by the spatial autocorrelation analysis. This comparison can be viewed in Map 2. Some manual editing of the boundaries was made but by-and-large the proposed districts follow the original outcome of the analysis.

Given the geographic division of the MU-20 and MU-40 districts, it became possible to produce zoning regulations for those districts that cater to their predominant land use characteristics while working towards established Growth Policy goals and objectives (refer to Appendix 3 for a comparative table). Since the areas proposed to be zoned MU-20 are largely

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<sup>1</sup> Productive land use, as used in this document, refers to the predominance of production-oriented land uses and can be contrasted with residential land use where the predominant land use is habitation. The productive use will vary in essential character. Generally, Cascade County productive land use can be broken down into three main categories: crop production, animal production, and manufacturing. Crop production is the prevailing productive land use in the northern and north-central parts of Cascade County while animal production is the prevailing productive land use in the southern half of the county (this is clearly demonstrated by the USDA CropScape map for the county). Manufacturing operations tend to be located along major transportation routes such as railways and arterial roadways. The use of the term “productive use” or a variation of it identifies a generalized land use pattern that assists in explaining why the current Agricultural District is proposed to be split into the MU-20 and MU-40 Districts and why these districts are characterized by different allowed uses (refer to Appendix 3).

<sup>2</sup> The MU-20 District was formed out of the Low-Low Cluster and High-Low Outlier areas. The MU-40 District was formed out of the High-High Clusters, Low-High Outliers, and the statistically insignificant areas. Refer to Map 1.

residential and located along major transportation corridors and amenity areas (eg. rivers, mountains, and forests), the MU-20 district diverged from the current Agricultural district by allowing conventional mixed uses that are currently not allowed. For example, the MU-20 district allows restaurants, micro-breweries, and other commercial uses that provide services to seasonal and year-round tourists as well as the increasing exurban residences whether seasonal or permanent. Additionally, the allowance of these uses under an approved Special Use Permit (SUP) provides an opportunity for the public and adjacent property owners to be heard.

The MU-40 district diverges from the Agricultural district through the removal of uses that are more appropriate for MU-20 along with an increase in permitted principal uses for agricultural uses which were previously allowed only through an approved SUP. For example, tourist homes and bed and breakfast operations are not allowed in MU-40, however, they remain an allowance in MU-20. This preserves the ability for desired amenity areas to cater to temporary tourist occupancy while keeping those operations in closer proximity to service centers and transportation corridors. Additionally, this protects productive land use areas from types of development driven by demand for amenity destinations which have infringed upon ranching and farming areas throughout the county and the state. Some productive land uses allowed through an approved SUP in the Agricultural district are proposed to be permitted principal uses in the MU-40 districts. For example, value-added agricultural commodity processing facilities, wild-game processing facilities, agricultural commodity storage facilities, and other uses are allowed as permitted principal uses. With the Agricultural district divided between the MU-20 and MU-40 geographies there is less of a need for the use of the SUP process since there are fewer potentially impacted residences and those around are likely to be involved in a productive land use.

Staff finds that the following goals are served by the proposed split of the Agricultural district into MU-20 and MU-40: Goal 1, Objective A; Goal 5, Objective A; Goal 9, Objective F; and, Goal 11, Objective A. The MU-20 district opens commercial uses in strategic areas thus promoting the retention of existing businesses and promoting new business opportunities in the county while the protection of MU-40 areas leaves those areas open to larger-scale productive land uses (Goal 1, Objective A). The commercial allowances in MU-20 and reduction of SUP processes for conventional agricultural uses reduces local government intervention (Goal 5, Objective A). The creation of the MU-20 district out of the current Agricultural district produces an open buffer (minimum 20 acre lot) between many rural community Mixed Use districts and other primarily residential districts and surrounding agricultural lands (Goal 9, Objective F). Finally, the MU-20 and MU-40 division of the Agricultural district—in conjunction with the changes in allowed uses and the increased minimum lot size of 40 acres—promotes cluster development in denser developed areas characterized by the MU-20 geographies while protecting the open spaces of the MU-40 geographies (Goal 11, Objective A).

#### Relevant Growth Policy Goals and Objectives

- Goal 1: Sustain and strengthen the economic well-being of Cascade County’s citizens.
  - Objective A: Stimulate the retention and expansion of existing businesses, new businesses, value-added businesses, wholesale and retail businesses, and industries including agriculture, mining, manufacturing/ processing and forest products.
- Goal 5: Preserve and enhance the rural, friendly and independent lifestyle currently enjoyed by Cascade County’s citizens.
  - Objective A: Maintain Cascade County’s citizens independent lifestyle and minimize local governmental intervention, to the extent possible, consistent with the requirements of a continually evolving economy and constantly changing population.
- Goal 9: Foster the heritage of the area in agriculture and forestry in recognition of their economic contribution and the intrinsic natural beauty of grazing areas, farmlands, and forests.
  - Objective F: Encourage open buffers between rural residences and adjoining agricultural lands.
- Goal 11: Protect and maintain Cascade County’s rural character, encourage efficient use of land.
  - Objective A: Preserve the county’s open space setting by encouraging cluster development.