

Holomua Road Vehicular Gates Project

HRS 343 Exemption Notice

Section 1 Exemption Notice and Description of the Proposed Action

1.1 Project Information

Project Name: Holomua Road Vehicular Gates Project

Location: Holomua Road, Ha'ikū-Pā'ia, Maui, Hawai'i

Ahupua'a: Hāmākuapoko

Tax Map Key: (2) 2-5-004:999 (County Road)

Proposing Agency: County of Maui, Department of Management, 200 S. High Street, Suite 614, Wailuku, Hawai'i 96793

Approving Agency: County of Maui, Department of Planning, 2200 Main Street, Suite 619, Wailuku, Hawai'i 96793

Project Duration (design, entitlement, construction): 14 months

Construction Duration: 6 months

Permitting/Approval Authority	Permit/Approval
County of Maui, Department of Planning	SMA Minor (Gate 1 only)
County of Maui, Department of Public Works	Building Permit
County of Maui, Department of Public Works	Work to Perform (County Highway)
State Historic Preservation Division	HRS Chapter 6E Review and Concurrence

1.2 Description of the Proposed Action

The County of Maui, Department of Management proposes the installation of three motorized vehicular access control gates along Holomua Road, a County-owned and maintained roadway traversing agricultural lands in the Ha'ikū-Pā'ia area of Maui. Holomua Road extends from its intersection with

Baldwin Avenue in the south (mauka) to its intersection with Hana Highway in the north (makai), traversing between large parcels of agricultural land.

Holomua Road is not intended to be open for general public vehicular use, though it serves several uses that require regular access along its mid-corridor stretch. The roadway does not meet County standards for width, striping, signage, or sight distance, and has not been improved to public roadway standards. Despite this, the road has remained continuously accessible to the general public due to the absence of vehicular access controls. This condition has resulted in increasing incidents of unauthorized access, trespassing, illegal dumping, and unpermitted recreational use, creating ongoing public safety concerns and compounding wildfire risk in an area with a demonstrated history of fire hazard.

Gate 1 – Hana Highway. Gate 1 will be located approximately 111 feet from the Hana Highway centerline at the northern terminus of Holomua Road. This gate will operate on a daily schedule consistent with public park hours, serving as the primary point of access for adjacent landowners and the public during regular operating hours. Gate 1 is not located on State DOT highways. Some electrical work performed by Hawaiian Electric would be conducted on the highway to bring circuits to the nearest electrical utility pole to the project site. Gate 1 is located within the Special Management Area (SMA) as established under HRS Chapter 205A. An SMA Minor Permit will be separately obtained from the County of Maui Department of Planning for this gate location.

Gate 2 – Upper Hamakuapoko Road. Gate 2 will be located along Holomua Road immediately mauka of the former Maui High School site, near the intersection with Upper Hamakuapoko Road. This gate will remain closed except when activated for emergency response, emergency vehicle access, or as directed by County personnel.

Gate 3 – Baldwin Avenue. Gate 3 will be located approximately 65 feet from the Baldwin Avenue centerline at the southern terminus of Holomua Road. This gate will remain closed except when activated for emergency response, emergency vehicle access, or as directed by County personnel. Advance signage on Baldwin Avenue will notify approaching motorists that Holomua Road is a restricted roadway with no through access.

Each gate system will consist of a motorized, prefabricated, double-leaf swing gate mounted to metal posts set in reinforced concrete pier foundations engineered for operational, wind, and seismic loads. Gate materials will be selected for durability and corrosion resistance in Maui's coastal environment. Bollards will be installed on either side of each gate to prevent vehicles from circumventing the gate.

Each installation will be served by a new Hawaiian Electric electrical service connection and will incorporate battery backup to maintain gate operability during power outages. A small site wall will be constructed at each location to house electrical and access control equipment in a non-south-facing orientation consistent with equipment manufacturer requirements.

1.3 HEPA Exemption Applicability

The Hawai'i Environmental Policy Act (HEPA), codified at HRS Chapter 343, establishes the State's environmental review requirements for proposed actions. Implementing rules promulgated under HRS §343-6 are set forth at HAR Chapter 11-200.1.

HAR §11-200.1-15 identifies the general types of actions that, because they will likely have individually and cumulatively minimal or no significant effects, are eligible to be declared exempt from the

preparation of an environmental assessment (EA). HAR §11-200.1-16 further authorizes each agency to develop its own exemption list consistent with the letter and intent of HAR Chapter 11-200.1 and HRS Chapter 343, subject to review and concurrence by the Environmental Council.

Pursuant to HAR §11-200.1-16, the County of Maui has established an Exemption List identifying specific types of actions that, where they fall within the given classes of action, shall generally be exempt from the preparation of an EA. The Maui County Exemption List was reviewed and concurred upon by the Environmental Council on January 10, 2007.

1.3.1 Applicable Exemption Classes

The Proposed Action is consistent with two classes of action identified in the Maui County Exemption List:

- **Exemption Class 6, Item 3** – Installation of safety and security fences, gates, and barriers to protect the general public from entering hazardous areas.
- **Exemption Class 6, Item 7** – Installation of street lights, directional, informational, and regulatory signs, pavement markings, traffic signals, fire alarm systems, civil defense warning systems, and security systems.

The Proposed Action includes the installation of standardized, motorized double leaf swing gate systems at three locations along the corridor, with site-specific operational and design adjustments as required. The proposed gates qualify for exemption under Class 6, Items 3 and 7 of the Maui County Exemption List.

Class 6, Item 3: The gates function as safety and security barriers intended to protect the general public from entering a hazardous area. Holomua Road traverses between dry agricultural land with documented exposure to wildfire risk. Unrestricted vehicular access to the corridor during periods of elevated fire danger, particularly during nighttime hours when response times are extended, presents a demonstrable public safety hazard. The proposed gates will restrict unauthorized vehicular access to the corridor, reducing the risk of human-caused ignition events and improving the County's ability to manage access during emergency conditions.

Class 6, Item 7: The proposed gate systems additionally incorporate security systems, work in conjunction with and are integral to civil defense warning capabilities, and access control infrastructure consistent with Class 6, Item 7. Each gate installation will include integrated camera systems, intercoms, programmable access control panels with remote connectivity, and emergency vehicle siren override activation. Communications will be supported through a wireless data connection enabling coordination with County of Maui departments, including the Maui County Police Department, Fire Department, and Emergency Management Agency.

1.3.2 Statutorily Defined Areas

The Maui County Exemption List establishes that projects located within statutorily defined areas, including the Special Management Area, are not eligible for exemption. However, General Note 2 provides an exception where two conditions are met conjunctively: (1) the work is eligible for exemption under the applicable exemption class, and (2) there is no negative impact on the conditions that defined the area in question.

Gate 1 is located along Hana Highway within the Special Management Area (SMA) as established under HRS Chapter 205A. General Note 2 of the Maui County Exemption List provides that projects within statutorily defined areas (including the Special Management Area) are not eligible for exemption, except where the work is eligible for exemption and there is no negative impact on the conditions that defined the area in question. Both conditions are deemed to be satisfied.

With respect to the first condition, the Proposed Action is consistent with Exemption Class 6, Items 3 and 7 of the Maui County Exemption List, as discussed in **Section 1.3.1** above.

With respect to the second condition, the SMA is established to protect coastal resources, minimize hazards to life and property from coastal hazards, preserve coastal ecosystems and natural resources, ensure public access to shoreline areas, and protect the scenic and open space character of the coastal environment. The Proposed Action does not implicate any of these conditions. Gate 1 consists of a single vehicular access control gate installed at an existing road entry point along Hana Highway. The Proposed Action involves no grading, grubbing, or ground disturbance beyond that necessary for gate installation; no alteration of drainage patterns or natural landforms; no encroachment upon or interference with shoreline access; no removal of native vegetation or disturbance of coastal ecosystems; and no obstruction of coastal views or scenic resources. The gate is sited inland of the shoreline and does not interact with the coastal environment in any physical or functional sense.

The Proposed Action is designed to restrict unauthorized vehicular access to the Holomua Road corridor, a public safety and land management objective that is consistent with, and does not conflict with, the conditions that defined the SMA boundary at this location. Accordingly, the Proposed Action satisfies the General Note 2 exception and is eligible for exemption notwithstanding its location within the SMA.

Section 2 Existing Conditions and Environmental Effects

The Holomua Road corridor traverses between agricultural land in the Upcountry Maui region, characterized by gently to moderately sloping terrain at mid-elevation. The surrounding landscape is predominantly open, with dry to seasonally dry conditions typical of the leeward Upcountry environment. Vegetation within and adjacent to the corridor consists largely of non-native grasses, shrubs, and other introduced species associated with former sugarcane and pineapple cultivation. No perennial streams, wetlands, or coastal resources are present within or immediately adjacent to the project area. The corridor and its immediate environs are not developed for residential, commercial, or industrial use.

The three proposed gate locations are situated at existing road entry points along the corridor where Holomua Road intersects Hana Highway (Gate 1), Upper Hamakuapoko Road near the former Maui High School (Gate 2), and Baldwin Avenue (Gate 3). Each location is characterized by an existing unpaved or paved road surface, roadside shoulders, and minimal accessory infrastructure. No structures, utilities, or improved facilities requiring displacement or modification are present at the gate installation footprints.

Table 2-1 below provides a discussion on the potential effects of the Proposed Action across applicable resource areas.

Table 2-1 Environmental Effects

<p>Land Use</p>
<p>The Proposed Action is located within agricultural land use districts under both the Hawai'i State Land Use Law (HRS Chapter 205) and the Maui County Code. The installation of vehicular access control gates along the Holomua Road corridor is consistent with the surrounding lands' agricultural designation of the subject parcels and does not propose any change in land use classification or intensity. The proposed gates conform to applicable county and state land use regulations and do not conflict with surrounding land uses.</p>
<p>Traffic, Vehicles, and Emergency Access</p>
<p>The Proposed Action is designed to improve traffic management, reduce unauthorized vehicular access, and enhance emergency vehicle access to the project area. The proposed gates will be equipped with emergency vehicle access provisions consistent with applicable County of Maui and Maui Fire Department standards, ensuring unimpeded access for first responders. The Proposed Action presents no adverse impacts to traffic, circulation, or emergency access.</p>
<p>Infrastructure</p>
<p>The Proposed Action does not involve the installation, modification, or removal of water, wastewater, drainage, or communications infrastructure. The Proposed Action will require new electrical service connections from existing Hawaiian Electric distribution infrastructure at each gate location, consistent with the minor scale of the proposed improvements. No significant impacts to existing infrastructure are anticipated.</p>
<p>Public Health and Safety</p>
<p>The Proposed Action is designed to directly advance public health and safety objectives by reducing unauthorized vehicular access, trespassing, illegal dumping, and unpermitted recreational use along the Holomua Road corridor; these conditions have created ongoing public safety concerns and compounded wildfire risk in the project area. The proposed gates will incorporate emergency vehicle override capabilities and fail-safe open defaults to ensure unimpeded access for first responders under all operating conditions. No adverse impacts to public health or safety are anticipated.</p>
<p>Historic and Archaeological Resources</p>
<p>The Proposed Action is subject to historic preservation review under HRS Chapter 6E, and consultation with the State Historic Preservation Division (SHPD) is being conducted concurrently with this exemption determination. A qualified archaeologist will conduct a Literature Review and Field Investigation (LRFI) of the gate sites in support of that review. No adverse impacts to historic or archaeological resources are anticipated.</p>
<p>Cultural Practices</p>
<p>The Proposed Action involves the installation of vehicular access control gates along an agricultural road corridor. The subject parcels are designated and actively used as agricultural lands, which represents the primary land use in the project area. Alternative access routes run mauka and makai adjacent to the Holomua Road corridor. No adverse impacts to cultural practices are anticipated.</p>

Visual Resources
The Proposed Action involves the installation of modest vehicular gate structures within an existing agricultural road corridor. The gates are designed to be compatible with the rural character of the surrounding landscape. No adverse impacts to visual resources are anticipated.
Coastal Resources
The Proposed Action does not involve any work within the shoreline area or coastal waters, and no impacts to coastal resources, coastal hazard areas, or coastal ecosystems are anticipated. Gate 1, located near the intersection of Hana Highway, falls within the Special Management Area (SMA) established under HRS Chapter 205A. An SMA Minor Permit will be prepared and submitted to the Maui Planning Department for Gate 1 as a parallel permitting track to this exemption determination. Notwithstanding the SMA permit requirement, the installation of a vehicular access control gate at this location is not anticipated to adversely affect the objectives and policies of HRS Chapter 205A, including the protection of coastal ecosystems, scenic and open space resources, and public access to the shoreline.
Rare, Threatened, and/or Endangered Species
The Proposed Action involves the installation of vehicular gate structures within a previously disturbed agricultural road corridor and does not include the clearing of trees or removal of native vegetation. The 'ōpe'ape'a (Hawaiian hoary bat, <i>Lasiurus semotus</i>), a federally listed endangered species, is not anticipated to be impacted as no tree clearing is proposed. Endangered bird species, including the band-rumped storm-petrel (<i>Pterodroma castro</i>), are not anticipated to be impacted as the Proposed Action does not involve the removal of habitat or the installation of permanent artificial lighting that could cause disorientation. The surrounding agricultural lands have been subject to intensive cultivation and represent a highly disturbed landscape with extremely low likelihood of supporting habitat for endangered flowering plant or insect species. No adverse impacts to rare, threatened, or endangered species are anticipated.
Cumulative Impacts
The Proposed Action is a standalone public safety improvement and is not a component of a broader program or series of planned successive actions. The individual resource area analyses presented above identify no adverse environmental impacts associated with the Proposed Action. As no discrete impacts have been identified, no cumulative impacts are anticipated.

Section 3 Consultation

Pursuant to HAR §11-200.1-17(b), prior to declaring an action exempt from the preparation of an environmental assessment under HRS Chapter 343, an agency must undertake an analysis to determine whether the action qualifies for exemption and whether significant cumulative impacts or particularly sensitive environments would render the exemption inapplicable. As part of that analysis, the agency is required to obtain the advice of outside agencies or individuals having jurisdiction or expertise regarding the propriety of the exemption. This analysis and consultation must be documented in the exemption notice.

HAR §11-200.1-1(c) further requires that any consultation conducted in connection with the environmental review process be carried out as mutual, open, and direct two-way communication, undertaken in good faith, to secure the meaningful participation of agencies and the public.

3.1 Agencies Consulted

In satisfaction of the requirements set forth in HAR §11-200.1-17(b), G70, acting on behalf of County of Maui Department of Management, transmitted written consultation letters to agencies with jurisdiction or expertise relevant to the Holomua Road Vehicular Gates Project on April 9, 2026. Each letter described the Proposed Action, summarized the basis for the proposed exemption determination, and invited agency comment within fourteen days of receipt. Letters further advised that failure to respond within that period would be construed as indicating no objection to the proposed exemption and no assertion of jurisdiction over the action.

Table 3-1 below provides a list of the agencies that were sent consultation letters.

Table 3-1 Agencies Consulted		
Agency	Date Sent	Response Received
Maui County Planning Department	April 9, 2026	No
Maui County Police Department	April 9, 2026	No
Maui County Department of Fire and Public Safety	April 9, 2026	No
Maui Emergency Management Agency	April 9, 2026	No
Maui County Department of Ōiwi Resources	April 9, 2026	No
State Historic Preservation Division (SHPD)	April 9, 2026	No

Section 4 Mitigation

The Proposed Action involves limited ground disturbance and is not anticipated to result in significant adverse environmental impacts requiring mitigation beyond standard construction best management practices. The County of Maui Department of Management will comply with all applicable permit conditions, and standard best management practices will be employed during construction to address temporary construction-related impacts at each gate location in accordance with the conditions of their respective permits and approvals.

Separately, the Proposed Action is subject to historic preservation review pursuant to HRS Chapter 6E. The County will implement mitigation measures required by SHPD as a condition of that review prior to commencement of construction activities at affected gate locations.

No other mitigation is necessary.

Section 5 Exemption Declaration

The direct, primary, secondary, and cumulative impacts of the Holomua Road Vehicular Gates Project have been considered pursuant to HRS Chapter 343 and HAR Chapter 11-200.1. The County of Maui Department of Management declares that the Proposed Action will have minimal or no significant impact on the environment and is therefore exempt from the requirement to prepare an environmental assessment.

In support of this declaration, the Proposed Action has been evaluated against each of the significance criteria set forth in HAR §11-200.1-13(b), as follows:

1. Irrevocably commit a natural, cultural, or historic resource.

The Proposed Action area contains no known threatened or endangered species or designated critical habitat. With respect to cultural and historic resources, the Proposed Action is subject to review pursuant to HRS Chapter 6E. The County will implement mitigation measures required by SHPD prior to commencement of construction at affected gate locations. Subject to review, the Proposed Action is not anticipated to irrevocably commit any natural, cultural, or historic resource.

2. Curtail the range of beneficial uses of the environment.

The Proposed Action sites are on Holomua Road which traverses between agricultural parcels. Installation of vehicular access gates will restrict unauthorized vehicle access to the subject parcel but will not curtail beneficial use of the broader environment. No natural habitats, public access areas, or areas of ecological significance will be affected.

3. Conflict with the State's environmental policies or long-term environmental goals established by law.

The Proposed Action does not conflict with any State environmental policy or long-term environmental goal established by law. The installation of access control infrastructure on agricultural land is consistent with responsible land management and public safety objectives.

4. Have a substantial adverse effect on the economic welfare, social welfare, or cultural practices of the community and State.

The Proposed Action will not have a substantial adverse effect on economic welfare, social welfare, or cultural practices. The Proposed Action is a minor infrastructure action limited in scope and duration. No displacement of community uses, cultural practices, or economic activities is anticipated.

5. Have a substantial adverse effect on public health.

The Proposed Action will not have a substantial adverse effect on public health. Construction activities are limited in scope and duration. No hazardous materials, emissions, or other conditions posing a risk to public health are associated with the Proposed Action.

6. Involve adverse secondary impacts, such as population changes or effects on public facilities.

The Proposed Action will not induce population changes or place demands on public facilities. The Proposed Action is limited to the installation of three vehicular access gates and associated minor appurtenances. No secondary impacts of the type described under this criterion are anticipated.

7. Involve a substantial degradation of environmental quality.

The Proposed Action will not substantially degrade environmental quality. Ground disturbance associated with gate installation is limited in extent. Standard best management practices will be employed during construction to address temporary construction-related impacts.

8. Be individually limited but cumulatively have substantial adverse effect upon the environment, or involve a commitment for larger actions.

The Proposed Action is limited in scope to the installation of three vehicular access gates. There are no commitments for further action beyond the scope described in this Exemption Notice. No cumulative significant adverse effects on the environment are anticipated.

9. Have a substantial adverse effect on a rare, threatened, or endangered species, or its habitat.

The Proposed Action area does not contain designated critical habitat. No rare, threatened, or endangered species or their habitats are known to occur within the project area. The Proposed Action is not anticipated to have a substantial adverse effect on any such species or habitat.

10. Have a substantial adverse effect on air or water quality or ambient noise levels.

Any construction-related impacts on air quality or noise will be temporary and localized. Standard best management practices will be employed to minimize fugitive dust and other construction-related emissions. No long-term adverse effects on air quality, water quality, or ambient noise levels are anticipated as a result of the Proposed Action.

11. Have a substantial adverse effect on or be likely to suffer damage by being located in an environmentally sensitive area such as a flood plain, tsunami zone, sea level rise exposure area, beach, erosion-prone area, geologically hazardous land, estuary, fresh water, or coastal waters.

Gate 1 is located within the SMA as established under HRS Chapter 205A. However, the Proposed Action does not implicate the coastal resource values, scenic resources, or public access considerations that the SMA is designed to protect. The gate installation is sited on agricultural land with no frontage on or proximity to coastal waters, beaches, or shoreline areas. The Proposed Action is not located within a tsunami inundation zone, sea level rise exposure area, floodplain, wetland, or other environmentally sensitive area as described under this criterion. No substantial adverse effect on any such area is anticipated, and the Proposed Action is not likely to suffer damage by reason of such conditions.

12. Have a substantial adverse effect on scenic vistas and viewplanes, during day or night, identified in county or state plans or studies.

The Proposed Action area is not located within a designated scenic corridor or registered view plane. The gates are modest in scale and will not substantially alter the visual character of the surrounding landscape. No substantial adverse effect on scenic vistas or viewplanes is anticipated.

13. Require substantial energy consumption or emit substantial greenhouse gases.

The Proposed Action does not require substantial energy consumption and will not result in substantial greenhouse gas emissions. Gate installation is a minor construction activity, and ongoing gate operation will require only minimal energy use.

The County of Maui Department of Management has considered the primary, secondary, and cumulative impacts of the Proposed Action and has determined that the Proposed Action is not anticipated to have significant impacts on the environment. The Proposed Action is hereby declared exempt from the preparation of an environmental assessment pursuant to HRS Chapter 343 and HAR Chapter 11-200.1.

SIGNATURE



Josiah Nishita, Managing Director
Department of Management, Maui County

This document is on file and is available for public review.

This document has been submitted to the Environmental Review Program for publication in *The Environmental Notice*.

Section 6 Exhibits



Figure 1 Proposed Gate Locations



Figure 2 Special Management Area

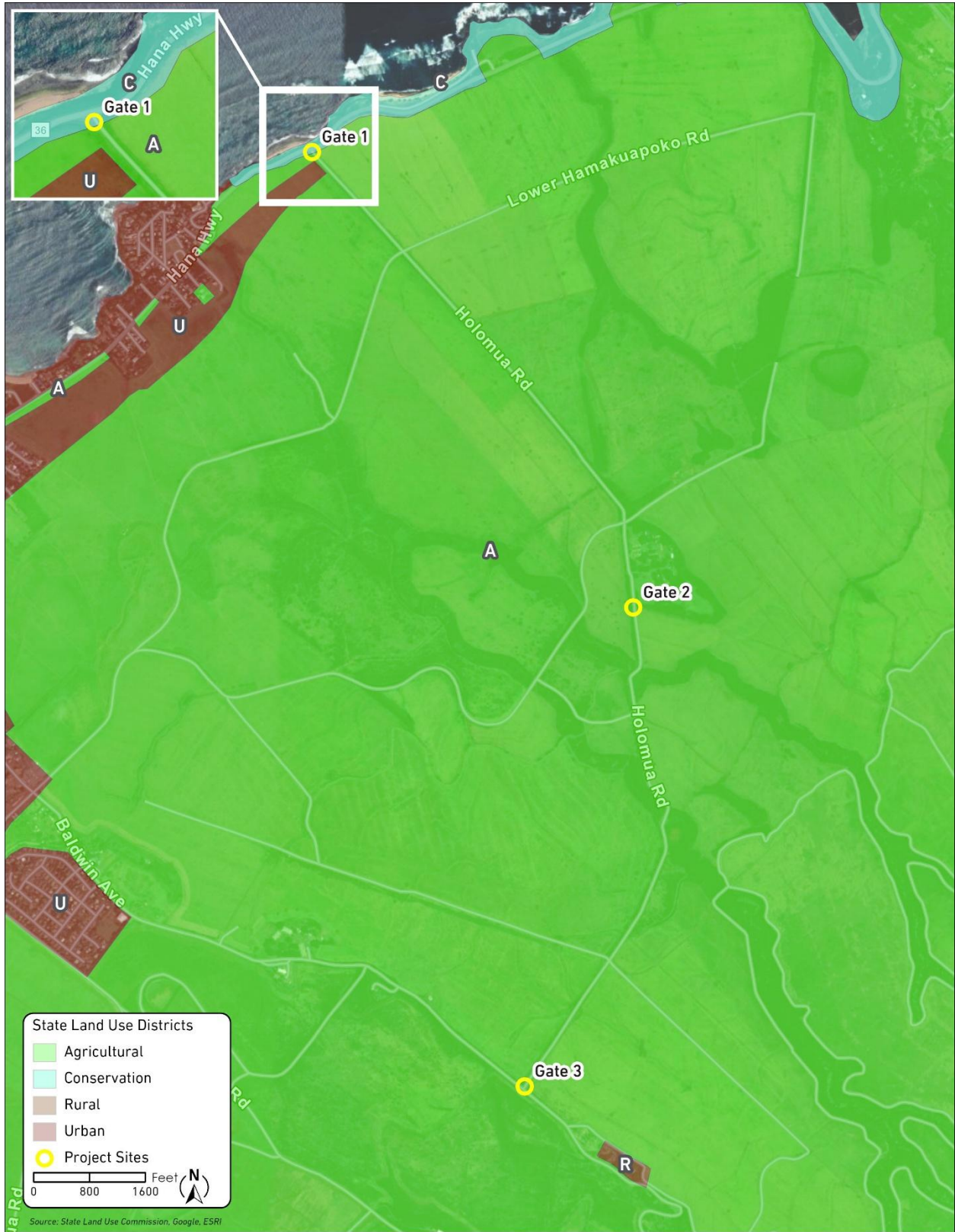


Figure 3 State Land Use Districts

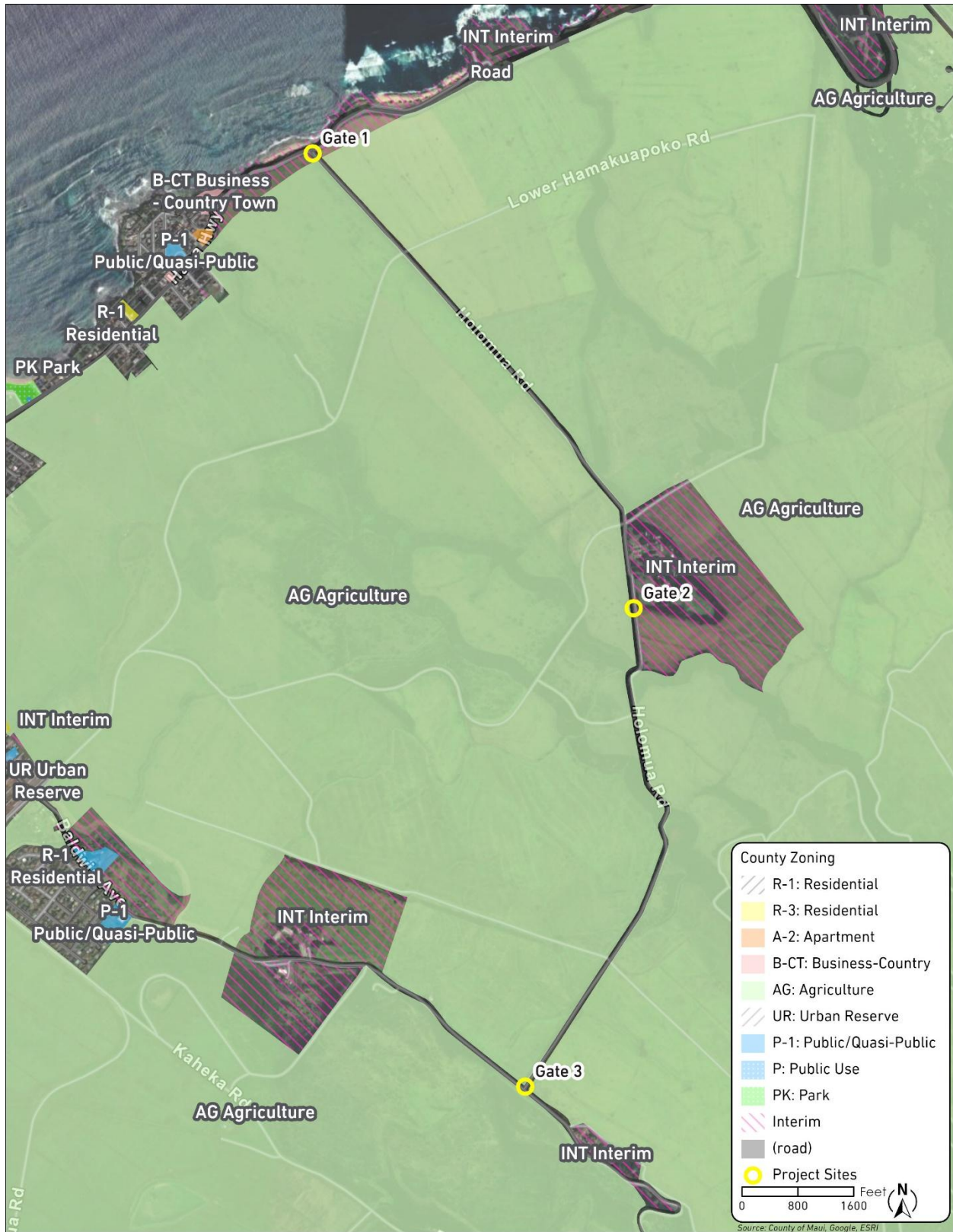


Figure 4 Maui County Zoning



Figure 5 TMK Map