

Memorandum

Date: January 3, 2018
To: Planning Commission
From: Kevin Cook, Senior Planner
Subject: MUA-20 Properties in Farm Assessment Program (PC-2016-6021)

This memo provides additional information regarding the Multiple Use Agricultural – 20 (MUA-20) properties that would potentially qualify to conduct agri-tourism under the proposed ordinance.

Commissioner Foster inquired about the provision that agri-tourism events must be tied to existing agriculture on the property. That provision is found in the proposed definition of Agri-tourism Event:

A commercial event or activity that is incidental and subordinate to the existing farm use and that is significantly and directly related to and supportive of that farm use. Any assembly of persons for such an event or activity shall be for the purpose of taking part in agriculturally based operations, events or activities such as classes about animal or crop care, cooking or cleaning farm products, or tasting farm products; learning about farm or ranch operations; or other similar events and activities relating to the farm uses on that farm. Farm-to-plate meals are agri-tourism events if more than 50 percent of the food making up the meal comes from farm crops or livestock grown on the farm or on other farms within the “local agricultural area” as that term is defined in MCC 33.(34, 35, 36).6755. Agri-tourism does not include commercial events or activities that are not incidental and subordinate to the existing farm use and do not directly relate to and support that use, including but not limited to celebratory gatherings, weddings, concerts, corporate retreats, sporting events, amusement park rides, or similar activities where the primary focus is the underlying cause for the event or activity rather than the farm operation.

(Emphasis Added)

In addition to the proposed five acre minimum lot size, the tract must be engaged in existing farm use to qualify for agri-tourism:

(2) Within the MUA-20 zone, the agri-tourism event is held on a tract that is five acres or larger in size, there is existing farm use on the tract, and the tract is not within a designated urban or rural reserve.

(Emphasis Added)

Typically, a property owner seeking to qualify for an agriculture related use (i.e. an agricultural building) provides evidence that a property is engaged in farming by proving that the property is receiving special farm assessment from the County Dept. of Assessment Recording and Taxation (DART). Property owners enrolled in farm assessment have demonstrated to DART that they meet the farm income requirements for the program and in turn, pay less property taxes. The table below indicates the number of MUA-20 properties that are potentially eligible for agri-tourism events that are also currently in special farm assessment:

Parcel Size Range	5.0-5.99	6.0-6.99	7.0-7.99	8.0-8.99	9.0-9.99	10+	Total
Total Number of Parcels	21	7	5	5	6	2	46
Total Number of Parcels in Farm Assessment	4	0	3	1	1	1	10

Please note that applicants are not required to be enrolled in the County farm assessment program in order to demonstrate that the property is engaged in agriculture, but staff notes that most property owners engaged in farming are also enrolled in the farm assessment program and therefore the table above may prove useful for your consideration of the proposed ordinance.