



# JAMAICA: MAY PEN URBAN PROFILE



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# JAMAICA: MAY PEN URBAN PROFILE

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

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## FOREWORD



According to research published in UN-Habitat's<sup>1</sup> flagship report, *The State of the World's Cities 2010-2011*, all developing regions, including the African, Caribbean and Pacific states, will have more people living in urban than rural areas by the year 2030. With half the world's

population already living in urban areas, the challenges we face in the battle against urban poverty, our quest for cities without slums, for cities where women feel safer, for inclusive cities with power, water and sanitation, and affordable transport, for better planned cities, and for cleaner, greener cities is daunting.

But as this series shows, there are many interesting solutions and best practices to which we can turn. After all, the figures tell us that during the decade 2000 to 2010, a total of 227 million people in the developing countries moved out of slum conditions. In other words, governments, cities and partner institutions have collectively exceeded the slum target of the Millennium Development Goals twice over and ten years ahead of the agreed 2020 deadline.

Asia and the Pacific stood at the forefront of successful efforts to reach the slum target, with all governments in the region improving the lives of an estimated 172 million slum dwellers between 2000 and 2010.

In sub-Saharan Africa though, the total proportion of the urban population living in slums has decreased by only 5 per cent (or 17 million people). Ghana, Senegal, Uganda, and Rwanda were the most successful countries in the sub-region, reducing the proportions of slum dwellers by over one-fifth in the last decade.

Some 13 per cent of the progress made towards the global slum target occurred in Latin America and the Caribbean, where an estimated 30 million people have moved out of slum conditions since the year 2000.

Yet, UN-Habitat estimates confirm that the progress made on the slum target has not been sufficient to counter the demographic expansion in informal settlements in the developing world. In this sense, efforts to reduce the numbers of slum dwellers are neither satisfactory nor adequate.

As part of our drive to address this crisis, UN-Habitat is working with the European Commission and the Brussels-based Secretariat of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group to support sustainable urban development. Given the urgent and diverse needs, we found it necessary to develop a tool for rapid assessment and strategic planning to guide immediate, mid and long-term interventions. And here we have it in the form of this series of publications.

The Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme is based on the policy dialogue between UN-Habitat, the ACP Secretariat and the European Commission which dates back to the year 2002. When the three parties met at UN-Habitat headquarters in June 2009, more than 200 delegates from over 50 countries approved a resounding call on the international community to pay greater attention to these urbanization matters, and to extend the slum upgrading programme to all countries in the ACP Group.

It is worth recalling here how grateful we are that the European Commission's 9th European Development Fund for ACP countries provided EUR 4 million (USD 5.7 million at June 2011 rates) to enable UN-Habitat to conduct the programme which now serves 59 cities in 23 African countries, and more than 20 cities in six Pacific, and four Caribbean countries.

Indeed, since its inception in 2008, the slum upgrading programme has achieved the confidence of partners at city and country level in Africa, the Caribbean and in the Pacific. It is making a major contribution aimed at helping in urban poverty reduction efforts, as each report in this series shows."

I wish to express my gratitude to the European Commission and the ACP Secretariat for their commitment to this slum upgrading programme. I have every confidence that the results outlined in this profile, and others, will serve to guide the development of responses for capacity building and investments in the urban sector.

Further, I would like to thank each Country Team for their continued support to this process which is essential for the successful implementation of the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Joan Clos". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

**Dr. Joan Clos**  
Executive Director, UN-Habitat

<sup>1</sup> UN-Habitat - United Nations Human Settlements Programme

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## INTRODUCTION

The Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme is an accelerated and action-oriented urban assessment of needs and capacity-building gaps at the city level. The programme is supported by the European Commission's European Development Fund and it is being implemented in 23 African countries, 59 African cities, 4 Pacific countries, 3 Caribbean countries, and 21 Pacific and Caribbean cities. The programme uses a structured approach where priority interventions are agreed upon through consultative processes. The programme methodology consists of three phases: (1) a rapid participatory urban profiling at national and local levels, focusing on governance, local economic development, land, gender, environment, slums and shelter, basic urban services, and waste management, and proposed interventions; (2) detailed priority proposals; and (3) project implementation.

Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme in Jamaica encompasses a national profile, as well as profiles for May Pen, Montego Bay and Old Harbour, each published as a separate report. This is the May Pen city report and it constitutes a general background; a synthesis of the four themes - governance, environment, slums and shelter, gender and HIV/AIDS; and priority project proposals.

## BACKGROUND

Clarendon was named in honour of the celebrated Lord Chancellor, Sir Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon in the late 1660s. The parish was formed from a combination of three parishes: St. Dorothy's, Vere and the old parish of Clarendon. Before the merger, the capital was Chapelton. The current capital, May Pen, was established as a plantation settlement by the British between 1660 and 1683 on a crossing point of the Rio Minho River. Based on the 2001 census, May Pen was identified as one of the fastest growing rural towns. It is situated, from an administrative point of view, in the middle of a largely agricultural area, and is the midpoint on the major thoroughfare leading from Kingston to Manchester.

As part of the new thrust to manage and administer urban areas effectively, the Ministry of Local Government, in 2002, divided the parishes into development areas. The May Pen Development Area comprises of 27 communities. These communities are of urban, peri-urban and rural descent. Within these communities there are formally developed areas as well as squatter settlements.

# BACKGROUND

## INTRODUCTION

### Urban Profiling

The May Pen Urban Profiling consists of an accelerated, action-oriented assessment of urban conditions, focusing on priority needs, capacity gaps, and existing institutional responses at local and national levels.

The purpose of the study is to develop urban poverty reduction policies at local, national and regional levels, through an assessment of needs and response mechanisms, and as a contribution to the wider-ranging implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. The study is based on analysis of existing data and a series of interviews with all relevant urban stakeholders, including local communities and institutions, civil society, the private sector, development partners, academics, and others. The consultation typically results in a collective agreement on priorities and their development into proposed capacity-building and other projects that are all aimed at urban poverty reduction.

Urban profiling is being implemented in 30 Africa, Caribbean and Pacific countries, offering an opportunity for comparative regional analysis. Once completed, this series of studies will provide a framework for central and local authorities and urban actors, as well as donors and external support agencies.

## METHODOLOGY

**The Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme** consists of three phases:

**Phase one** is the rapid profiling of urban conditions at national and local levels. The capital city, a medium-sized city, and a small town are selected and studied to provide a representative sample in each country. The analysis focuses on governance, slums and shelter, environment, and gender and HIV/AIDS.

Information is collected through standard interviews and discussions with institutions and key informants, in order to assess the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the national and local urban set-ups.

The findings are presented and refined during city and national consultation workshops and consensus is reached regarding priority interventions. National and city reports synthesize the information collected and outline ways forward to reduce urban poverty through holistic approaches.

**Phase two** builds on the priorities identified through pre-feasibility studies and develops detailed capacity-building and capital investment projects.

**Phase three** implements the projects developed during the two earlier phases, with an emphasis on skills development, institutional strengthening and replication.

This report presents the outcomes of **Phase One** at the local level in May Pen.

## URBAN PROFILING IN MAY PEN

The urban profiling in May Pen is one of four similar exercises conducted in Jamaica; the other urban profiling centres are Montego Bay, Old Harbour and nationally.

## REPORT STRUCTURE

This report consists of:

1. a general background of the urban sector in May Pen, based on the findings of the May Pen Assessment Report, a desk study and interviews.
2. A synthetic assessment of the following four main thematic areas; governance, environment, slums and shelter, and gender and HIV/AIDS in terms of the institutional set-up, regulatory framework, resource mobilization, and performance; this second section also highlights agreed priorities and includes a list of identified projects.
3. A strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis; and an outline of priority project proposals for each theme. The proposals include beneficiaries, partners, estimated costs, objectives, activities and outputs.

## GEOGRAPHY AND DEMOGRAPHY

The estimated total population of the May Pen Development Area is 86,586. This population represents just over one third of the total population of the parish of Clarendon which as at the 2001 census stood at 243,600. Clarendon is one of the most populous parishes on the island. The population of the May Pen Development Area is spatially and demographically expansive, with the majority of its citizens falling in the lower age group. An examination of the statistics shows that approximately 53 per cent of the population falls within the 0-24 age group, which reflects a very youthful population. Accordingly, the recognized youth population aged between 0 and 35 is representative of two-thirds of the population at 67 per cent or 58,226 persons. This expansive population of the May Pen

Development Area has the largest age group being between ages 5-9, which accounts for 11.58 per cent of the total Development Area's population.

## GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Limestone is a significant feature within the Development Area. Alluvium is also found within the area but is less significant than limestone. Numerous sinkholes often accompany the limestone formations. Within the Development Area, the Newport formation is an important extensive limestone aquifer which can be found in communities such as Effortville, Treadlight, Curatoo Hill, Palmers Cross, and the district of Sheckles.

The soils within the Development Area are also suitable for the growth of agricultural crops.

## ADMINISTRATION

The Clarendon Parish Council is mandated to govern and manage land use and the overall development of the parish including its capital, May Pen. In fact, this is the mandate for all 13 parish councils in Jamaica. However, each parish council may vary in the approach taken to achieve some of its individual mandates. Since 2002, the Clarendon Parish Council has adopted many of the proposed reforms to the local government structures and functions. Below are some of the changes made, so far, at Clarendon Parish Council:

- Councillors and senior managers have already been exposed to a special training programme, developed in association with the University of the West Indies. This programme is being further developed and expanded,
- The principle of parity between comparable central and local government staff has been accepted and is being implemented,
- A comprehensive review of the organizational structure and staffing requirements of the councils is being undertaken.

## URBAN SERVICES

The parish council provides services such as potable water, electricity, sewerage, and solid waste management in the city of May Pen. However, based on face to face interviews with residents and other stakeholders, the quality of the delivery of these basic urban services is poor.

## MUNICIPAL FINANCE

The proposed local government reform argues for greater autonomy by the local authorities over the fees and licenses that they collect. Unfortunately the Clarendon Parish Council, and by extension the city of May Pen, has not benefited directly from this proposed change as the central Government still controls the parish council's budget. However, the parish council has concentrated on increasing its revenue collection through improved collection of licences and fees.

## HOUSING

Based on the 2001 census, there are 15,756 habitable dwellings in the city of May Pen with over 10,000 houses in the sub-districts of Effortville and Bucks Common. The average household size is four persons per household. The housing stock and conditions in the May Pen Development Area vary tremendously from one community to another. The housing stock in the newer communities like Longville Park are generally in good to excellent condition, because of the age of the structures, where earth movements have not caused cracks in the walls, or weathering has not yet acted on the paint work. On the other hand, in older communities such as Palmers Cross, there are sections of the community that have houses and structures that range from fair to poor.

In addition, in some inner city or squatter settlements in the study area, the quality of housing is extremely poor. In more formal, well-established communities in and around May Pen, the housing stock was fair to good. The condition of the housing stock can be directly linked to the land tenure of the residents occupying these houses.

Regarding materials used in the construction of houses, generally homes are built to withstand hurricanes and some of the harsh weather elements. While this is the general representation, there are a large number of houses with zinc roofing that have been affected by the passage of the recent hurricane. Moreover, home building materials vary, depending on the locale.

## EDUCATION

The May Pen Development Area benefits from a wide range of academic institutions, which provide education from preschool to the tertiary level. There are approximately 24 public educational institutions in the May Pen Development Area, which include kindergartens, primary, secondary, and tertiary



institutions. There are numerous privately operated educational institutions offering computing, practical nursing, agriculture, and other technical and practical programmes. Most of the schools within the Development Area are in fairly good condition. However, minor damages caused by recent hurricanes are yet to be dealt with. Some of May Pen's educational institutions lack space to accommodate the large number of students, and have inadequate teaching facilities.

Basic schools account for the greatest educational representation in the Development Area. These are divided into publicly owned and funded, privately owned and funded and community-based organizations owned and funded. A number of basic schools within this area are operated within churches and other community based facilities such as community centres.

Primary and junior high schools rank second in terms of representation, and at least one of such facilities is found in 25 of the 27 communities in the Development Area. There are seven tertiary and vocational institutions, accounting for the smallest number of institutional representation. Inclusive in this representation is the HEART National Training Agency, the Knox Community College, along with other skills training and resource centres. The widest cross sections of institutions are found in May Pen proper which has 24 of the 104 schools, which represents just about one-quarter of the schools in the Development Area.

#### TEACHER STUDENT RATIO (PUBLIC SCHOOLS)

With respect to the teacher/student ratio, the average currently stands at 1 to 23 but varies between 1 to 13 and 1 to 31 for all schools. This student/teacher ratio in May Pen and the wider Clarendon is similar to the national ratio. However, primary schools have the greater ratio and secondary institutions have the smallest ratios.

#### HEALTH

The Development Area is served by the May Pen Hospital, which is in the community of Denbigh, and five other health centres across the Development Areas. May Pen Hospital is in South Central Clarendon on the west side of the town of May Pen. The 18 acres (7.2 hectares) of land on which it is built is known as "Denbigh" and is in close proximity to the Farmers' Agricultural Show Grounds. On 12 December 1974, the hospital was officially opened to serve the people of May Pen and its environs. Initially this hospital had a capacity of 50 beds. In 1976, with the addition of paediatrics and maternity, the bed capacity increased to 76 beds.

The population of May Pen grew by 57.8 per cent between 1970 and 1984 and by 20 per cent between 1984 and 1991. As a result of the population growth, the health facilities were deemed to be inadequate to serve the needs of the population. Government's commitment to health reforms resulted in the launch of the Hospital Restoration Project. Under this reform, the Ministry of Health administers hospitals and other health facilities from four regions. Clarendon is in the Southern Regional Health Authority. It was under this project that the new structure was built and officially opened in November 1997. It was the first hospital to be built in the 26 years since the Cornwall Regional Hospital was opened. This facility has a capacity of 150 beds, but was intended to be opened on a phased basis commencing with a complement of 86 beds. It is categorized as a Type "C" hospital with a difference. Basic x-ray and laboratory services are usually available. Services provided are medical, nutrition, antenatal, gynecological, blood centre, electrocardiogram, central sterilization, accident and emergency, laboratory, and occupational therapy. (Government First Year Review: Medical Facilities Upgraded, Kingston (JIS), Douglas McIntosh, 1 October 2008).

#### ROADS

The Development Area is well served by a network of primary, parochial and collector roads. Most of the primary and parochial roads are paved. The collector roads are sometimes in a state of disrepair, and in areas which have inner city characteristics the roads are oftentimes unpaved and pose a challenge to the residents in times of rain and flooding. Primary and parochial roads have a total length of 68,135 metres, and account for 103,565,220 square metres. Collector roads have a length of 953,492 metres, and account for 8,104,682 square metres.

Adequately maintained roads are found in the interior of the town of May Pen where there is serious congestion due to poor traffic circulation, lack of adequate parking facilities, and the lack of sidewalks and good drainage. While the Development Area is relatively well served by paved roads, those on the outer periphery of the Development Area are of poor quality and non-existent in some places (especially in some of the inner city communities). The major causes of traffic in the city of May Pen are buses and taxis.

#### WATER

The majority of households access piped water supplied by the National Water Commission. The Development Area falls within the Rio Minho and Milk River watershed, where there are numerous limestone

aquifers, springs and wells. Water from these sources is utilized for domestic, industrial and agricultural purposes, where agriculture is the largest consumer of water. At present, the Development Area utilizes water irrigated from the Rio Minho, deep wells, limestone, and alluvial aquifers. The limestone aquifers yield the highest percentage in the amount of water extracted.

Limestone aquifers are also a principal source of water for domestic and industrial use in the region. Various springs are also exploited for domestic purposes and the excess water that remains after large portions are used for agricultural and industrial purposes. Other contributing sources include the Milk River, Cockpit River and groundwater exported from numerous wells mostly along the coastal plains of Clarendon and St. Catherine.

## WASTE MANAGEMENT

Poor solid waste management within the Development Area is the result of an unreliable garbage collection system in some communities as well as the culture of residents in other communities. The illegal burning and dumping of garbage in gullies, streams and open fields are some of the more common alternatives to waste disposal practiced by some communities within the Development Area.

## ECONOMIC SITUATION

Bauxite, Jamaica's major mineral, can be found extensively in Clarendon. Bauxite mining had been established in the parish by Jamaica Aluminium

Company (or JAMALCO) and the Aluminium Company of America (or ALCOA). However, there has been significant decline in bauxite mining mainly due to the global economic recession. Several mining operations have closed or scaled down dramatically.

Agriculture has traditionally generated considerable value within the region. In addition, most of the island's tobacco is also grown in Clarendon, along with cotton, pimento, ginger, livestock, indigo, bananas, coffee, and cocoa. May Pen is also an important citrus packing centre, famous for 'Trout Hall' oranges. Additionally, dairy farming, fish farming and copper mining has been carried out intermittently, and sugar cane production contributed significantly to the amount of cane exported annually until the decline in the sugar industry. Since then, the fast emerging commercial sector has dominated the economy of the Development Area.

As the population increases within the Development Area, so does the demand of people, thus the economy has expanded to try and meet this demand. The increase in urban growth has also led to the expansion of service industries within the towns. Wholesale and retail trade inclusive of supermarkets, hardware stores and petrol stations among others, has increased in its capacity to meet the local demand in the Central May Pen Business District.

## GOVERNANCE



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Jamaica has a bicameral legislative system. This includes the House of Parliament or lower house with 60 elected members and the Senate or upper house with 21 appointed members.

A second tier of governance is the local authorities. This local government system is divided into 14 parishes, with the parishes of Kingston and St Andrews amalgamated and administered by the Kingston and St Andrews Corporation.

Local affairs are administered by individual parish councils whose members are elected. Some of the functions that are the responsibility of parish councils are public health, public markets, fire services, water supply, building regulations, public beaches, street lighting, sanitation, and street cleaning.

### RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

On 10 April 2007 and 18 June 2007, the European Commission and the Government of Jamaica, respectively, signed a EUR 10 million Financing Agreement No. 964/JM for a grant for the Poverty Reduction Programme II. Under the agreement, the European Commission undertook to provide EUR 8.5 million and the Government EUR 1.5 million as counterpart funding. The agreement entered into force on 18 June 2007 and ends on 31 December 2013.

Building upon the relative successes of the Poverty Reduction Programme I (2001-2006), continuing to learn from experience and drawing upon the commitment and flexibility of non-government organizations, community-based organizations and government agencies, the Poverty Reduction Programme II seeks to help translate agreed community priorities into practical poverty reduction activities and projects. Poverty Reduction Programme II will deepen and broaden community participation which, in turn, will help to instill a greater sense of ownership of sub-projects and thus contribute to their sustainability.

Among the activities that will be carried out under Poverty Reduction Programme II are:

- Implementation of at least 50 sub-projects,
- Establishment of benevolent societies where necessary,
- Strengthening of non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations through training, workshops, technical assistance, and equipment,
- Capacity-building of the Social Development Commission through training and technical assistance.

(Source: Jamaica Social Investment Fund –JSIF 2007)

## POLICY AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The following Acts will be amended to give local authorities autonomy in setting fees and user charges, subject to the requirement that they give 30 days notice to the minister and citizens, likely to be affected, of their intention to adjust such fees and charges. The statutes involved are:

- The Kingston and St Andrews Corporation Act
- The Parish Councils Act
- The Parochial Markets Act
- The Pound Act
- The Kingston and St Andrews Corporation Building Act
- The Public Health Act
- The Parish Councils Building Act
- The Public Cemeteries Management and Regulation Act
- The Kingston and St Andrews Corporation Cemeteries Act
- The Parochial Rates and Finance Act

Bills to amend the Acts listed were tabled in 2009/2010 and will include provisions to simplify the procedures for adjusting fees, and to increase penalties under these Acts.

Revisions of the laws and regulations relating to local government have been completed or are in progress. In addition to those already mentioned, such legislation includes:

- Building by-laws for the Kingston and St Andrews Corporation and parish councils; these were amended to increase fees, extend the building limits to cover the entire parish and impose new procedures for change of use applications,
- New cemetery regulations have been enacted for all parish councils, imposing a new fee structure and providing for more effective management of all public cemeteries,
- Cabinet has approved amendment of the Spirit Licences Act to remove bottlenecks which inhibit the granting of spirit licences and hence collection of related fees. Revision will include removing restrictions on the number of licensing sessions per year, allowing lay magistrates to be appointed to chair the licensing authorities and increasing penalties for non-compliance,
- Amendment of the Licences on Trades and Businesses Act to broaden the range of business and trade activities falling under the Act, and to rationalize the fee structure, is being prepared,
- A new Buildings Act to amalgamate and replace the Kingston and St Andrews Corporation and the Parish Councils Building Acts is presently being prepared,
- A new Act to amalgamate and replace the existing Town and Country Planning and the Local Improvements Acts, and enhance the functions of the councils as the local planning authorities, is presently being drafted (Source: Ministry Paper 8/93 Reform of Local Government).

# SLUMS AND SHELTER



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Clarendon has 16 squatter settlements that contribute greatly to crime in the city. Their lack of amenities, such as proper roads and utilities, has made them safe havens for criminals. There have been 83 murders in the parish capital of May Pen and its environs, since January, and 59 incidents of shootings. (Source: Editors Forum via Jamaica, GLEANER 2008).

For the Urban Profiling, the informal communities of Brooks Common (Bucks Common), Effortville and Breezie Castle were studied.

## URBAN SETTLEMENT DEVELOPMENT

TABLE 1: CLARENDON – HIERARCHY OF GROWTH CENTRES

DISTRICT CENTRES	SUB-REGIONAL CENTRES	REGIONAL CENTRES
James Hill	Lionel Town	May Pen
Kellits		
Hayes		
Chapelton		
Kemps Hill		
Osbourne Store		
Mocho		
Rock River		
Frankfield		
Alston		

## GENDER AND HIV/AIDS



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In the Clarendon Parish Council, women hold three of the eight key administrative positions: they are deputy mayor, secretary manager and parish disaster coordinator.

TABLE 2: JAMAICA HIV/AIDS EPIDEMIC

SUMMARY OF AIDS CASES BY PARISH IN JAMAICA (BY DATE OF REPORTING) 1982 – JUNE 2004

PARISH	CUMULATIVE TOTAL	RATE PER 100,000 POPULATION
Kingston and St. Andrews	3 594	547.4
St. Thomas	157	168.3
Portland	149	182.8
St. Mary	254	225.2
St. Ann	512	300.6
Trelawny	209	283.6
St. James	1368	766.7
Hanover	206	306.1
Westmoreland	395	279.5
St. Elizabeth	187	126.7
Manchester	215	112.8
Clarendon	310	128.0
St. Catherine	1090	224.2
Parish Not Known	19	0.0
Overseas Address	10	0.0

Source: Conrad Douglas and Associates Ltd. Jamalco RDA 5 EIA

# ENVIRONMENT



## DISASTER AND URBAN ENVIRONMENT

Clarendon covers an area of 1,142.8 km<sup>2</sup>. Land cover is characterized by a scattering of villages and major urban centres, vast areas of sugar cane, wetlands, dry forests, scrub, industrial estates, aquaculture, and mixed cultivation. The decline of the sugar industry has left large areas abandoned and taken over by scrub vegetation. Uncultivated areas due to salinity include much of the coastal side of the plains. Tidal flats are largely inaccessible. There are also the dry forests of the Brazilletto Mountains and Portland Ridge, where Taino petroglyphs and some Taino burial caves can be found.

## INSTITUTIONAL SET-UP

Clarendon Parish is covered by development orders and subsequently falls under the aegis of the Town and Country Planning Act. Thus any form of development requires an application to the relevant Local Planning Authority (Parish Council) for permission to carry out building, engineering and mining operations, or change in the use of land or buildings. There are no specific demarcated zones for land use, but there are general statements of intended uses, supporting requirements and standards. The current development order for the town of May Pen was promulgated in 1982. The Parish Council is carrying out activities to complete a new development plan for the preparation of a development order.









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## **MAY PEN URBAN PROFILE**

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