

From: ptanok12@gmail.com on behalf of [Moku Loa Hawaii Island Sierra Club](#)
To: [LPCtestimony](#)
Subject: Testimony on draft General Plan 2045
Date: Friday, November 22, 2024 9:19:02 AM
Attachments: [GP2040, Aug. 2019 draft, Public Access thru Cultural&Historic Preservation.pdf](#)

November 22, 2024

Leeward Planning Commission
101 Pauahi St, Ste 103
Hilo HI 96720

Re: Final draft General Plan 2045

Aloha Madame Chair and members of the Commission,

Mahalo nui loa for your volunteer service to our community on one of the most important, consequential boards and commission in our county.
HIG's testimony today is as follows:

Public Comments

HIG is asking for clarification on the public comments provided to the Commission in its board packet for yesterday's meeting.

The draft General Plan 2045 (GP2045) is a complete rewrite and reorganization of the current General Plan. In addition, GP2045 is a complete rewrite and reorganization of the draft General Plan 2040 (GP2040) released in 2019. The comments received by the Planning Department (PD) after the comprehensive review was begun in 2015 were comments on the current General Plan. The comments received by the PD after the GP2040 was release in 2019 were on that draft.

Because GP2045 is a complete gut-and-replace of the current GP and of GP2040, the only comments that are relevant to the draft GP2045 are those received after GP2045 was released in September 2023.

HIG would like to know if the comments provided in the board packet are solely all comments received since September 2023 or if other comments prior to that time are included.

HIG would like to reiterate its request that the comment provided to the Commission be separated into the relevant sections of GP2045. For instance, since the Commission is reviewing Collaborative Biocultural Stewardship today, the Commission would be able to compare the comments list to GP2045 and determine which comments were or were not included.

In addition, comments on the GP2045 land use map should be listed by District so that the Commission can better determine if those comments have resulted in any changes to the land use map.

Standards

Section 3-15 of the county Charter states, in part, "The general plan shall contain a statement of development objectives, standards and principles with respect to the most desirable use of land within the county...".

Unfortunately, all Standards listed in the current General Plan have been removed.

Therefore, HIG requests that, at a minimum, the following Standards in the current General Plan related to Collaborative Biocultural Stewardship be restored in GP2045:

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY, Section 4.4 STANDARDS

- a) Pollution shall be prevented, abated, and controlled at levels that will protect and preserve the public health and well being, through the enforcement of appropriate Federal, State and County standards.
- b) Incorporate environmental quality controls either as standards in appropriate ordinances or as conditions of approval.
- c) Federal and State environmental regulations shall be adhered to.

FLOODING AND OTHER NATURAL HAZARDS, Section 5.4 STANDARDS

- a) "Storm Drainage Standards," County of Hawaii, October, 1970, and as revised.
- b) Applicable standards and regulations of Chapter 27, "Flood Control," of the Hawaii County Code.
- c) Applicable standards and regulations of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).
- d) Applicable standards and regulations of Chapter 10, "Erosion and Sedimentation Control," of the Hawaii County Code.
- e) Applicable standards and regulations of the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

HISTORIC SITES, Section 6.4 STANDARDS

The evaluation of the importance of specific historic sites is necessary for future action. The following standards establish a framework for evaluating sites.

- a) Importance in the life or activities of a major historic person.
- b) Associated with a major group or organization in the history of the island or community.
- c) Associated with a major historic event (cultural, economic, military, social, or political).
- d) Associated with a major recurring event in the history of the community (such as annual celebrations).
- e) Associated with a past or continuing institution that has contributed substantially to the life of the community.
- f) Unique example of a particular style or period.
- g) One of the few of its age remaining.
- h) Original materials and/or workmanship that can be valued in themselves.
- i) Sites with a preponderance of original materials in context and complexes rather than single isolated sites unless they are of great significance.
- j) Sites of traditional and cultural significance.

NATURAL BEAUTY, Section 7.4 STANDARDS

The following standards provide guidelines for designating sites and vistas of extraordinary natural beauty that shall be protected.

- a) Distinctive and identifiable landforms distinguished as landmarks, e.g. Mauna Kea, Waipio Valley.
- b) Coastline areas of striking contrast, e.g. Laupahoehoe Point.
- c) Vistas of distinctive features.
- d) Natural or native vegetation attractive to a particular area.
- e) Areas that are harmoniously developed and enhanced by man to appear natural.

NATURAL RESOURCES AND SHORELINE, 8.4 STANDARDS

The following shall be considered for the protection and conservation of natural resources.

- a) Areas necessary for the protection and propagation of specified endangered native wildlife, and conservation for natural ecosystems of endemic plants, fish and wildlife.
- b) Lands necessary for the preservation of forests, park lands, wilderness and beach areas.

- c) Lands with a general slope of 20 per cent or more that provide open space amenities or possess unusual scenic qualities.
- d) Lands necessary for the protection of watersheds, water sources and water supplies.
- e) Lands with topographic, locational, soils, climate or other environmental factors that may not be normally adaptable or required for urban, rural, agricultural or public use.
- f) The Coastal Zone and Special Management Area as defined by statute and in accordance with the adopted objectives and guidelines.

Carryover Sections from GP240 Relevant to Collaborative Biocultural Stewardship

HIG strongly urges the Commission to revise GP2045, Collaborative Biocultural Stewardship, to include the relevant Sustainability Objective, Policy, Action, and Agency Action sections and language in GP2040, pp. 102-117. The language contained within these sections of GP2040 better articulate and implement the draft General Plan (attached to this e-mail), including:

- Promoting Active Living Through Recreation, Trails, and Public Access: Public Access and Trails,
- Preserving Our Cultural and Historical Legacies: Native Hawaiian Values and Practices,
- Preserving Our Cultural and Historical Legacies: Multi-cultural Heritage,
- Preserving Our Cultural and Historical Legacies: Historic Preservation
- Protecting Scenic Resources

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify and provide additional information to assist in this most important task any Planning Commission can undertake.

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Moku Loa (Hawaii Island) Group, Sierra Club

We work hard to advance Sierra Club's mission to explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth; to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out these objectives.

PROMOTING ACTIVE LIVING THROUGH RECREATION, TRAILS, & PUBLIC ACCESS

Public Access & Trails

SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVE

Number of public access sites created through acquisition or easement or enhanced with assistance from CZM funding or staff.

POLICY

404. The County of Hawai'i shall establish: public access to and along the shoreline to significant historic sites, public transit along the top of cliff, streams and other natural water courses, mauka trails, facilities, and access to sites for gathering, hunting, and other recreational purposes and in accordance with Hawai'i County Code Chapter 34.
[Rationale: Based on existing County Code 34, General Plan Policy 12.3 (l, m), Ka'u CDP Policy 81, and Hāmākua CDP Policy 48]
405. Subdividers of six or more lots, parcels, units, or interests shall be required to dedicate land for public access for pedestrian travel from a public highway or street to the land below the high-water mark on any coastal shoreline or to areas in the mountains where there are existing facilities for hiking, hunting, fruit-picking, ti leaf sliding, and other recreational purposes, and where there are existing mountain trails.
[Rationale: Based on existing HRS 46-6.5 and HCC 34-4(c).]
406. Prior to disposing of, leasing, or transferring public lands, including public roads or trails, public access potentials shall be assessed, documented and protected if public access use is in the public's interest.
[Rationale: Based on existing HRS Section 46-1.5, Hāmākua CDP Policy 50, and General Plan 12.3 (n).]
407. Ensure that publicly owned historic trails and roads are properly identified, and consultation occurs to protect the public's interests.
[Rationale: Based on the Highways Act of 1892, Hāmākua CDP Policy 50, and the General Plan 12.3 (n).]
408. Alignment of coastal trails shall consider flexibility for realignment for sea level rise and other dynamic shoreline changes. [Climate Change]
[Rationale: Based on current status of some impacted coastal areas and research relating

to projected sea level rise impacts on coastal assets. See also California Coastal Commission Sea Level Rise Policy Guidance.]

409. Determine the location and ownership of historic trails and roads as early as possible in the land use application process.
[Rationale: Based on identified challenges with ownership of historic trails and roads and the subsequent legal implications. See also General Plan Policy 13.2.3 (q)]
410. Where a subdivision is traversed by a natural water course, drainage way, channel, or stream, the Planning Director should require a pedestrian, equestrian, and/or bicycle path when the opportunity exists to connect to existing or future drainage or trail corridors.
411. Trails may also be used as emergency access routes, where appropriate.
412. Support the development of a Rails to Trails type program to facilitate the conversion of old railway segments to a public trail network.
413. Seek private-public partnerships to manage and maintain public access to the shoreline, public trails, hunting areas, scenic places and vistas, and significant historic sites, buildings, and objects of public interest. [Public Access]
414. Explore options and collaborate with community groups to increase access to former sugar cane roads to be used as non-motorized trails where feasible and appropriate.

ACTION

- 4.49 Amend code to require bicycle and walking path easements be developed in urban areas to increase walkability and multimodal transportation options. [Code]
- 4.50 Work with the State and adjacent landowners in establishing old railroad right-of-ways as pedestrian and bicycle trails.
- 4.51 Identify by GPS coordinates all existing historic trail alignments that (a) have been recommended for preservation by SHPD, (b) appear on historic maps and/or are known by oral tradition, and incorporate these into the County GIS database.
- 4.52 Actively implement the Ala Kahakai National Historic Trail Memorandum of Understanding.
- 4.53 Appropriate, finance, allot, and encumber Capital Improvement Projects in support of trail development as part of a regional trail system.
- 4.54 Add public access requirements as listed in Hawai'i County Code Chapter 34 Public Access to apply to Chapter 23 Subdivision Code, SMA review, zoning code, special permits, etc. [Code]

- 4.55 Develop and implement a public-private program to establish and manage specific access points and trails.

SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVE

Develop and maintain a public access program that integrates recreation, subsistence, and cultural access priorities.

POLICY

415. Integrate Public Access into County department priorities in the following ways:
- a) Incorporate public access and development into a program overseen by the Planning Department as per Chapter 34.
 - b) Integrate PONC property management and maintenance into the Parks and Recreation code in Chapter 2: Article 11 and Chapter 15: Parks and Recreation.
 - c) Develop adequate staff to carry out the provisions of Chapter 2 Article 42, relating to the PONC maintenance fund (as per: Section 2-214.2 (b). Pursuant to section 10-16(c) of the Charter, the maintenance fund shall be administered and managed by the department of parks and recreation. Adequate staff to carry out the provisions of this article and section 10-16 of the Charter shall be provided in the department of parks and recreation.

[Rationale: Based on identified gaps in addressing or applying public access regulations and procedures consistently between the various County Departments. The County lacks capacity to fulfill its existing public access objectives without increasing staff capacity, maintenance capacity, and without having clearer directives between the various departments to implement a cohesive public access program.]

416. Integrate County public access priorities in all aspects of land use decisions and permit reviews.
417. Consistently integrate public access development and maintenance into Parks and Recreation department priorities.
418. Support facility development for access management at access points and along trail corridors.

ACTION

- 4.56 Establish a County of Hawai'i Public Access and Trail Program with sufficient staff and resources. Staff will be required to consult/consider recommendations of this program in all permit reviews. Elements of this program may include:

- a) A comprehensive access inventory;
- b) A public access rating system to help with prioritization;
- c) Comprehensive reviews of projects (on public or private lands) that will affect public accesses and trails;
- d) Inventory of ancient trails, cart roads, and old government roads in coordination with appropriate State agencies.
- e) Public outreach and coordination element.
- f) Identify agencies/groups to develop, administer, and maintain public accesses, including developing County capacity for this purpose;
- g) Identify funding sources to purchase and manage public access easement to priority areas;
- h) When public access goals will involve several landowners, acquire the public access incrementally as opportunities arise to do so;
- i) Public accesses that cross private land will be acquired and held until appropriate management of the accesses is in place;
- j) Collaborate with State and Federal agencies on public accesses that require multi-agency involvement;
- k) Develop a standardized template to promote consistency and comprehensiveness in the public access plans required by landowners;
- l) Partner with community organizations capable of assisting with public access management;
- m) Work with State agencies (particularly with DOFAW) to coordinate, survey, develop, and manage public trails and roads leading to forest reserves;
- n) In co-sponsorship with the State when possible, acquire land for public access to historic sites and objects and to the shoreline where safe transit does not already exist;
- o) Reinstitute a Public Access Wayfinding program managed by the Planning Department to assist interested community groups in maintaining appropriate signage at public access points;
- p) Provide cultural and safety information at trailheads;
- q) Provide for substantive community input to the County Planning Department and the County Council in order to finalize and accept priority access. Include community input in program policy.
- r) Whenever the County assumes the responsibility for posting and maintaining signage and maintaining public accesses and other public infrastructure, a specific County agency will be identified and assigned the aforementioned responsibilities. [Code, Public Access]

- 4.57 Amend the subdivision code to better address public access issues in the following ways:
- a) Revise/Develop enforcement protocols for public access violations, including fines for noncompliance and mechanisms to remove private obstructions from public accesses;
 - b) Review Hawai'i County Code Chapter 34 requirements for public access standards, including design that fits into surrounding community, environment, and conditions. Establish parameters for requiring appropriate right-of-way, parking, and comfort stations for various types of public accesses/trails and incorporate these into Chapter 34;
 - c) Amend Hawai'i County Code Chapter 34 to develop a clear methodology to modify public access routes in order to adapt to sea level rise, landslides and erosion, and other impacts related to environmental impacts and climate change;
 - d) Amend Hawai'i County Code Chapter 34, Rule 21, Chapter 23, and Chapter 25 CA 1.1.1 to ensure access and trail rights-of-way during subdivision. [Code]
- 4.58 Complete an inventory and database of significant natural resource areas with recreational and trail connectivity value.
- 4.59 Adopt an on-going program of identification, designation, and acquisition of areas with existing or potential recreational resources, such as land with sandy beaches and other prime areas for shoreline recreation in cooperation with appropriate governmental agencies.
- 4.60 Develop procedural rules and templates for public access agreements and Grant of Easement (GOE) to facilitate consistency and to provide mechanisms for tracking, follow-through, and geographic information system (GIS) identification in County of Hawai'i systems, etc.
- 4.61 Develop procedural guidelines for renegotiating access agreements.
- 4.62 Renegotiate public accesses that were developed prior to Chapter 34 to be consistent with Chapter 34.
- 4.63 Evaluate and initiate Charter & code amendments related to Public Access, Open Space and Natural Resource Preservation (PONC). These may include:
- a) Clearly distinguish categories of PONC property, such as active or passive use, conservation, restoration, natural buffer areas, access uses, etc. (for

- instance, lands acquired to provide access versus lands acquired to preserve from development that may not be appropriate for public access).
- b) Amend Charter Section 10-5 c & f to allow PONC funds to be used for the planning, design, development of new buildings, facilities, (including comfort stations) or infrastructure such as roads, paths, bridges, culverts, ramps, or drainage features if such improvements are necessary to meet the objectives of public safety and to meet the purposes outlined in Hawai'i County Code 2-214.1. [Code]
 - c) Interpret or amend Charter Section 10-15 (c) 3 and County Code Section 2-214.1 c) 3 referring to natural resource buffer zones to include buffer zones for natural hazard areas, such as properties facing sea level rise, lava inundation, steep slopes, or identified priority viewsheds. [Code]
 - d) Include assessments of tax revenue implications for lands nominated for PONC consideration.
 - e) Amend Charter section 10-15 (c) and County Code Section 2-214.1 (c) to be consistent with each other. For example, the County Code allows PONC funds to be used for "significant habitat or ecosystems" but the Charter does not include those terms. [Code]
- 4.64 Amend Chapter 15 to include PONC and trail development as part of the Parks and Recreation Department's priorities to be consistent with Chapter 34 in partnership with the Planning Department.[Code]
- 4.65 Conduct a performance review of the PONC Maintenance Fund and Stewardship Grant program to identify and implement ways to improve PONC management system.
- 4.66 Amend Hawai'i County Code Section 2-218 Prioritized list of qualifying lands worthy of preservation to establish a means to evaluate the socio-environmental equity of the lands nominated by district. Such as:
- a) When there are multiple lands under consideration at any one time, priority shall be given to coastal lands and lands where matching funding is available to leverage the County contribution;
 - b) Consideration should be given to lands within districts under-represented by PONC preservation program. [Code]

AGENCY ACTION

- 4.67 Coordinate with State agencies to improve access and access/trail management resources (including policies, conditions, identification, cataloguing, enforcement, maintenance, etc.).
- 4.68 Consider establishing a working group with surrounding land owners and the user-community to educate users and manage ATV use to ensure that non-pedestrian allowances are not permitted within sections of modern trails that overlap, are congruent, or correspond to ancient or historic trails and its associated features.
- 4.69 Coordinate with hunting associations and other land stewards, to establish clear hunting policies and disseminate education regarding these policies.
- 4.70 To facilitate greater public access to and along the shoreline and elsewhere, amend Hawai'i Revised Statutes 520, Hawai'i's Recreational Use Statute (RUS), to make it less ambiguous and to discourage frivolous lawsuits.

PRESERVING OUR CULTURAL & HISTORIC LEGACIES

Native Hawaiian Values & Practices

SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVE

Native Hawaiian language, values and practices are integrated into all County processes.

POLICY

- 419. Ensure Native Hawaiian access rights are clearly expressed in County code, policies, and procedures.
[Rationale: Based on identified gaps in County code and an over-reliance on State statutes to address Native Hawaiian rights. See HRS Section 1-1, 7-1 and Article 12 Section 7 of the Constitution of the State of Hawai'i.]
- 420. Protect all rights, customarily and traditionally exercised for subsistence, cultural, and religious purposes and possessed by ahupua'a tenants who are descendants of Native Hawaiians who inhabited the Hawaiian Islands prior to 1778, subject to the right of the State to regulate such rights. [Public Access, Natural Resources, Health]
[Rationale: Based on identified gaps in County code and an over-reliance on State statutes to address Native Hawaiian rights. See HRS Section 1-1, 7-1 and Article 12 Section 7 of the Constitution of the State of Hawai'i.]

- 421. Prioritize and maintain an education and awareness program for County employees regarding Native Hawaiian culture, values, and resource management.
[Rationale: Based on identified gaps in County capacity to sensitively address Native Hawaiian issues.]
- 422. County shall staff include qualified personnel versed in Hawaiian language, Hawaiian history, and historic preservation to provide dedicated expertise in support of the objectives, policies, and actions stated in this plan.
[Rationale: Based on identified gaps in County capacity to sensitively address native Hawaiian issues.]
- 423. Ensure access for cultural practitioners in areas that may not be appropriate for public access (e.g. Burial sites, specific heiau).
[Rationale: Based on examples of sensitive areas that may need special treatment based on cultural protocol.]
- 424. Support festivals and events that promote Native Hawaiian history and culture.
- 425. Support the development a multi-sector public education program regarding historic sites that target the hospitality industry, real estate agents, site developers, consultants, schools, youth groups, civic organizations, etc.

ACTION

- 4.71 Codify protections of Native Hawaiian customs and gathering rights related to access and cultural preservation.
- 4.72 Identify and inventory important Native Hawaiian cultural and historic places, traditional cultural properties, traditions, and practices, through the use of architectural, archaeological, ethnographic surveys, and oral histories. [Mapping]
- 4.73 Develop an inventory of Native Hawaiian cultural resources and practices with potential to be impacted by sea level rise. Work with Native Hawaiian communities to determine steps they want to take regarding climate impacts. [Climate Change]
- 4.74 Amend the County building code to add standards for structures utilizing traditional Hawaiian building design and construction methods. There may be certain limitations placed on the occupancy or use of these structures, such as for cultural purposes, accessory uses and/or occasional gatherings only. [Code]

PRESERVING OUR CULTURAL & HISTORIC LEGACIES

Multi-Cultural Heritage

SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVE

At least one yearly cultural event is supported by the County in each district.

POLICY

- 426. Support festivals and events that promote the island's multi-cultural heritage.
- 427. Represent Hawai'i as a place that embraces not only its own multi-cultural heritage, but all world cultures in inclusive and celebratory ways.
- 428. Promote educational and celebratory opportunities for cultural exchanges with other world cultures.
- 429. Promote opportunities for 'sister city' and other types of place-based cultural enrichment opportunities with international communities.

ACTION

- 4.75 Establish and maintain a County Program (including grants) to support festivals and events that promote history and culture.

PRESERVING OUR CULTURAL & HISTORIC LEGACIES

Historic Preservation

SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVE

Achieve 100% preservation of sites identified for preservation by State Historic Preservation Division.

POLICY

- 430. Historic Preservation shall represent the full range and diversity of the multi-cultural heritage of Hawai'i Island.
[Rationale: Based on General Plan Goals 6.2, and Policies 6.3 (a-o).]

431. The County shall maintain an inventory of significant cultural and historic sites and districts compatible with that of the State Historic Preservation Division. The inventory shall identify the location of sites on the Hawai'i and National Register, the State Inventory of Historic Places, and may also include sites of community significance identified as being:

- a) Important in the life or activities of a major historic person;
- b) Associated with a major group or organization in the history of the island or community;
- c) Associated with a major historic event (cultural, economic, military, social, or political);
- d) Associated with a past or continuing institution that has contributed substantially to the life of the community;
- e) Unique example of a particular style or period;
- f) One of the few of its age remaining;
- g) Original materials and/or workmanship that can be valued in themselves;
- h) Sites with a preponderance of original materials in context and complexes rather than single isolated sites unless they are of great significance; and
- i) Sites of traditional and cultural significance.

[Rationale: General Plan 6.3 (a-o).]

432. Preservation plans shall be completed for all subdivisions with cultural or historical properties (sites, buildings, objects, landscapes) identified for preservation prior to approval of the final plat map or any site work.

[Rationale: Based on identified issues where development commences prior to County permit approvals, thereby possibly damaging historic sites or areas. See also General Plan 6.3 (a-o).]

433. The County shall develop a comprehensive management plan for historic and cultural resources that are on County owned properties or on properties managed by the County.

[Rationale: General Plan 6.3 (a-o).]

434. Require completion of preservation plans for all significant sites identified for preservation.

[Rationale: Based on identified issues where development commences prior to County permit approvals, thereby possibly damaging historic sites or areas. See also General Plan 6.3 (a-o).]

435. Require completion of mitigation plans for identified sites, or resources that have been identified as historic but will not be preserved.

[Rationale: Based on identified issues where development commences prior to

completion of mitigation plans, thereby possibly damaging historic sites or areas. See also General Plan 6.3 (a-o).]

436. Require stewardship and/or protection of sites, buildings, objects, and landscapes of significant cultural and historical importance to the County.

[Rationale: Based on General Plan 6.3 (b).]

437. Partner with DLNR-SHPD to outline how each agency will cooperate to ensure historic and cultural protections, verify that approved Preservation Plans are being implemented, and promote appropriate restoration of historic sites and cultural landscapes.

[Rationale: Based on identified needs for further collaboration between State and County agencies and on General Plan 6.3 (a).]

438. Through the Hawai'i County Cultural Resources Commission, the County shall engage in consultation with Section 106, National Historic Preservation Act, and shall use this opportunity to engage the community, especially those with generational and traditional environmental knowledge, in the consultation process.

[Rationale: Based on Section 106 National Historic Preservation Act and the HCC Chapter 2 Article 44.]

439. Subdivisions subject to cultural or historic surveys shall have all sites approved for preservation, including any required buffers or access easements, identified on the plat maps of the subdivision prior to granting of final subdivision approval. The metes and bounds descriptions of the preservation easements and all applicable covenants and restriction pertaining to the preservation easements, shall be added to applicable deeds prior to the transfer of subdivided properties. [code/mapping]

[Rationale: Based on consultation with Administrative Permit Division of Planning Department and identified gaps in comprehensive recordkeeping in subdivision files. See also General Plan 6.3 (g).]

440. Outstanding natural or cultural features, such as scenic resources, water courses, fine groves of trees, heiau, and historical sites and structures, shall be identified and preserved during subdivision.

[Rationale: Based on preserving public trust, and Hawai'i County Code Section 23-26, and General Plan Goals of 6.2, 6.3 (g).] [Mapping]

441. The County shall use and promote the use of interpretive signage and/or other appropriate methods to recognize landscapes, sites, buildings, and objects of significant historical and cultural importance.

- 442. Partner with Community Development Plan Action Committees and the Cultural Resource Commission to develop design guidelines for designated communities containing significant historic buildings, sites, or landscapes.
- 443. Partner with DLNR's State Historic Preservation Division to increase, maintain, and regularly update the State inventory of Historic Places database with significant historical and culturally important sites, buildings, objectives, and landscapes on Hawai'i Island.
- 444. Seek private-public partnerships to maintain and steward the preservation of sites, buildings, objects, and landscapes of significant cultural and historical importance.
- 445. For new County community facilities, incorporate and consider cultural design elements appropriate for the region.
- 446. Establish Historic Districts, Heritage Landscapes, Corridors, Areas, and Centers as land use designations for purposes of preserving, conserving, or restoring historic properties for the benefit of communities' sense of place and appropriate adaptive reuse for future generations.

ACTION

- 4.76 Identify and map valued cultural and historic places, structures, traditions, and practices, and Hawai'i's multi-cultural heritage through the use of architectural, archaeological, ethnographic surveys, and oral histories. [Mapping]
- 4.77 Compile and maintain a list of cultural/historic experts by island districts who may be consulted, as needed.
- 4.78 Complete community-level historic surveys.
- 4.79 Amend the subdivision code, Section 23-69 to include a requirement that the final plat map reflect information from the preservation plan, including any required buffers or access easements. [Code]
- 4.80 Down-zone identified State and County-owned parcels that have special cultural and/or scenic value.
- 4.81 Amend the zoning code to include criteria for requiring cultural preservation plans prior to development. [Code]
- 4.82 Adopt rules that establish when ethnographic Surveys or Cultural Impact Assessments will be required and what standards should be followed.
- 4.83 Develop County-wide Cultural Resource Commission processes for reviewing permit applications that relate to identified cultural or historic resources.

- 4.84 Develop protocols for receiving community input during capital project siting and design. Consult with and solicit input from community members with generational knowledge to minimize the impact of proposed changes to the use of land on cultural practices, cultural sites, and culturally significant areas, including burials.
- 4.85 Adopt design guidelines for designated communities containing significant historic buildings, sites, or landscapes.
- 4.86 Prepare Cultural Landscape Reports, prioritizing Historic Districts to articulate preservation goals, objectives, and policies that provide the basis for making sound decisions about management, treatment, and use of historic and cultural resources. [Report]
- 4.87 Promote the real-property tax incentives for preservation of historic properties.

PROTECTING SCENIC RESOURCES

SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVE

Increase participation in scenic preservation programs (Heritage Corridors, Scenic Byways, Scenic Corridors and Exceptional Trees)

POLICY

- 447. Hawai'i County shall use the following place types as guidelines for designating sites and viewsheds that shall be protected:
 - a) Distinctive and identifiable landforms distinguished as landmarks and/or cultural landscapes, e.g. Mauna Kea, Waipi'o Valley.
 - b) Coastline areas of striking contrast, e.g. Laupāhoehoe Point
 - c) Vistas of distinctive features
 - d) Natural or native vegetation attractive to a particular area.
 - e) Landscapes that are harmoniously developed, enhanced by man while maintaining their natural appearance, e.g. Pu'ukoholā, 'Akaka Falls.
 - f) Lands with a general slope of 20 percent or more that provide open space amenities or possess unusual scenic qualities.

[Rationale: Based on the Standards from General Plan 7.4 (a-e) and 8.4 (c).]
- 448. Visual impact assessments shall include photo simulations or balloon tests with views from various vantage points to show visual impact of a proposed project.

[Rationale: Creating visual modeling through photo simulations or balloon tests are

common strategies used in visual impact assessments in other municipalities. These visual impact assessment tools would help achieve General Plan 7.2 Goals and policies 7.3 (b, e, h, i).]

449. Prioritize maintaining the views at scenic overlooks with a frequently maintained vegetation management program which includes eradication of invasive species. Coordinate this work with regular roadway vegetation management maintenance program.

[Rationale: Based on identified challenges with vegetative management of existing scenic overlook and the prevalence of the views being obstructed by invasive species or other vegetation. See also Hāmākua CDP 38, Kōkua Action 9, and General Plan 7.2 (b), 7.3 (a, b, c, f).]

450. Maintain a continuing program to identify and inventory exceptional trees, forest areas, or groves/stands of trees.

[Rationale: Based on Standards from General Plan 7.3 (g) and policies 7.4 (a-e) 8.3 (j, k, m).]

451. Maintain the Exceptional Tree Program for the recognition and protection of trees with significant or unique historical, ecological, cultural and/or aesthetic significance.

[Rationale: Based on General Plan policy 7.3 (g).]

452. No variance shall be granted unless appropriate conditions are imposed to minimize adverse impacts on public views to, from, and along the shoreline.

[Rationale: Based on Hāmākua CDP Policy 17, General Plan goals 7.2 (a-c), and policies 7.3 (b), 8.3 (c, d). See also HRS 205A.

453. Do not allow incompatible development in areas of natural beauty that have been identified through the Scenic Resources Protection Program.

[Rationale: Based on an identified need to identify natural beauty areas through a scenic resource protection program and restrict development appropriately to ensure scenic resources are not lost to development. Based also on General Plan policies 7.3 (h, i).]

[Mapping]

454. Applications for Special Permits and environmental assessment reports for proposed changes of zone on property that may impact open space, viewsheds, and areas of natural beauty shall include visual impact assessments and propose conditions to mitigate scenic impacts.

[Rationale: Based on identified needs to protect scenic resources, open space and natural beauty in the special permit process. Also based on Hāmākua CDP policy 33 and Kaʻū CDP policy 57.]

455. Hawai'i County shall seek to minimize, any development which would substantially interfere with or detract from the line of site toward the sea from the State highway nearest the coast.
[Rationale: Based on Hāmākua CDP Policy 35, Ka'ū CDP Policy 54, General Plan policy 7.2 (b) and 7.3 (f).]
456. Ensure that new developments are compatible with their visual environment by designing and locating such developments to minimize the alteration of natural landforms and existing public views to and along the shoreline.
[Rationale: Based on an identified need to ensure that development is managed appropriately to protect natural landforms and viewplanes. Based also on General Plan policies 7.3 (h, i).] [Land Use]
457. Preserve roadway corridors that have historic, scenic, or unique physical attributes that enhance the character and scenic resources of communities.
458. Support the development and promotion of Heritage Corridors and Scenic Byways where appropriate.
459. Support the designation of scenic byways through the State Scenic Byway Program.
460. In reviewing Special Permit applications, rezoning, and other land use changes in the Agricultural District, appropriate conditions should be determined to preserve existing viewsheds to and along the coastline. [Land Use]

ACTION

- 4.88 Develop and establish viewshed regulations to preserve and protect from obstruction scenic resources, vistas, viewsheds, open space, prominent landscapes, and areas of natural beauty identified in the General Plan.
- 4.89 Develop and maintain a program to identify, inventory, preserve, acquire, and develop (where appropriate) viewing sites on the island. [Transportation]
- 4.90 Collaborate with the State to modify zoning on publicly-owned parcels that have been identified as having special cultural and/or scenic value. [Land Use]
- 4.91 Identify valued scenic resources in the Coastal Zone Management area. [Land Use, Mapping]
- 4.92 Identify and develop scenic lookouts along highways to ensure important views (coastal, mountain, and waterfall) are preserved from development, create various opportunities to view these scenic resources, and develop a vegetation maintenance program.

- 4.93 Establish a Scenic Resources Protection Program to identify, inventory, and protect areas of significant beauty. The program would include:
- a) Rate viewsheds and roadway corridors documented in the Scenic Resources Inventory and Mapping Project (June, 2016)
 - b) Develop scenic resource and viewshed corridor maps
 - c) Develop administrative rules to implement Hawai'i County Code section 25-6-60
 - d) Develop Scenic Corridor Management Plan(s) for specific corridors identified. Scenic Corridor Management Plan(s) should include permit conditions, such as design guidelines, landscaping, screening, or structural setbacks from major thoroughfares and highways, to mitigate any visual impacts from development.
 - e) Prepare Urban Design and Scenic Resource Protection Guidelines
 - f) Staff and Planning Commission Training;
 - g) Set Guidelines for Development Compatibility Standards. [Program]
- 4.94 Develop, maintain, and implement design standards to protect important viewsheds and ensure structural setbacks from major thoroughfares and highways.
- 4.95 Develop Scenic Corridor Management Plans.
- 4.96 Adopt administrative rules to implement Hawai'i County Code for Scenic Corridors.
- 4.97 Perform a feasibility study on developing a scenic route from Waipi'o Valley Lookout extending mauka to connect Mud Lane at the entrance of Waimea and a scenic park with a viewing area of Hi'ilawe Falls.
- 4.98 Coordinate with the State to upgrade the viewing site from the rim of Pololū Valley.

AGENCY ACTION

- 4.99 Encourage the State to develop and maintain scenic lookouts along highways where appropriate to ensure ocean, mountain, pastoral, and waterfall views are preserved from development, and coordinate a regular roadway vegetation maintenance program.
- 4.100 Consider adding/improving viewing locations and interpretive signage near the scenic bridges for safe parking and views of the areas' waterfalls and coastline and along Saddle Road (Route 200) for views of the summit.