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Subject: Please OPPOSE 2045 General Plan
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As an off-and-on resident of the Big Island for over thirty years, I have witnessed the gradual erosion of our rights due to the actions of the Hawai'i County Planning Department. The department's proposed 2045 General Plan is beyond comprehension for the average citizen, with complexities that beg for transparency and accountability.

Tragically, this plan includes Land Title Changes, which are deeply concerning. When someone in the Hawai'i County Planning meeting opposed a land use title change, the director dismissed it as an "oversight." This raises serious questions about the number of oversights in their final draft. Changing land use titles strips us of our rights to private property and introduces vague, yet potentially harmful, rezoning measures.

Furthermore, the plan includes ambitions to create a broadband and smart grid, a lofty goal for an island lacking the necessary resources. This raises significant questions about the feasibility and environmental implications of such projects.

It's crucial to ensure that these changes DO NOT proceed. We must continue to push for transparency and accountability in these decisions to protect our land, Island, and future

What's more distressing is that the Hawai'i County Planning Department seems to always focus on high-end development initiatives that overtax our resources and infrastructure instead of considering the voices of our community. A clear example was when 18,569 voices opposed development in a petition. Yet, Zendo Kern, the Hawai'i Planning Director at the time, ignored these voices and stated the resort would not hurt the land even with articles like these two:

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/feature-story/cautionary-tale-2019-coral-bleaching-event-hawaii#:~:text=Coral%20Bleaching%20is%20Occurring%20more,had%20catastrophic%20impacts%20state%2Dwide>

<https://coral.org/en/where-we-work/hawaiian-islands/#:~:text=Hawaii%CA%BBi's%20reefs%20face%20major%20global,into%20Hawaii%CA%BBi's%20waterways%20every%20day>

This is the petition he ignored: <https://www.thepetitionsite.com/854/086/898/residents-who-oppose-the-resort-in-punaluu-ka%C5%AB/>

This is the article showing Kern's opposition over local voices: <https://www.civilbeat.org/2024/03/hundreds-of-hawaii-island-residents-protest-proposed-housing-project-in-punaluu/>

Additionally, we urge Mayor Kimo Alameda to reappoint a new Hawai'i County Planning Director. Jeff Darrow's 26 years with the Hawai'i Planning Department, supporting Zendo Kern, have demonstrated a lack of commitment to the land and local voices. These voices have consistently opposed high-end developments, advocating instead for the conservation of the land for endangered species and the island's future. Jeff Darrow's support against local voices in the past years shows he is not the right fit for the job, and we demand that accountability be served.

We need a Planning Director who prioritizes island resources and infrastructure over high-end developments, favors land conservation, and listens to and supports local voices. We need someone who will work to ensure the Big Island retains its unique character and doesn't turn into another Oahu.

I stand, and OPPOSE Hawai'i County Planning General Plan for the reasons stated:

In the General Plan

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9.4 Support mechanisms, such as PUD and Cluster Plan Development (CPD), that group parcel density to preserve open space, recreational areas, or scenic viewsheds.

The General Plan DOES NOT explain what a PUD means.

Taken from this site: <https://www.forbes.com/advisor/mortgages/what-is-a-planned-unit-development/>

"A planned unit development, or PUD, is a community of single-family homes, and sometimes condos or townhomes, where every homeowner belongs to a homeowners association (HOA)."

Taken from this site: https://www.zillow.com/learn/what_is_pud/

"To most home shoppers, a planned unit development (PUD) may look like a single-family home. But the legal structure for a PUD is more similar to that of a condo and can impact the mortgage process."

"Again, you'll need to read all these documents to determine whether that specific PUD is right for you. And remember, all PUDs are different, so each one will have its own set of rules and restrictions."

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9.f Study the feasibility, issues, and opportunities related to the development of a TDR program to strategically preserve open space and achieve density to remain consistent with the land use pattern in accordance with the General Plan Land Use Maps.

It's deeply frustrating that the Hawai'i County Planning Department isn't transparently explaining its Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program. It feels like they're pushing for land use changes that suit their vision without respecting the community's strong, unified opposition over the last six months. In every meeting, 100% of the community has voiced their disapproval, yet it seems those concerns aren't acknowledged.

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Everything below is to enforce their TDR program, which they are not explaining.

13.1 Encourage flexibility in the design of residential sites, buildings, and related facilities to achieve a diversity of socio-economic housing mix and innovative means of meeting the market requirements.

13.2 Prioritize increase in density, rehabilitation, and redevelopment within existing zoned urban areas already served by basic infrastructure, or close to such areas.

13.4 Encourage the rehabilitation and/or utilization of maximum density in multi-family residential areas.

13.8 Focus on medium- and high-density residential and commercial uses in communities that can sustain a higher intensity of uses and where consistent with General Plan Land Use Map and existing town character

13.9 Support the rezoning of land to multiple residential near places of employment, retail, utilities, and educational, recreational, cultural, and public facilities.

Their efforts to align with the General Plan Land Use Map are causing significant changes across the island, which is a significant concern. For example, changing the land use title from agricultural to urban for Hokulia would allow developers to bypass the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) requirements, which are crucial for protecting the land and the community. This move could have profound implications for the environment and local residents.

Moreover, they're not considering the island's resources, which are already under considerable strain. Please see these News Articles in this petition that show how the Big Island is dealing with resource and infrastructure issues because Hawai'i County Planning is not making it a priority <https://www.change.org/p/help-big-island-resources-and-infrastructure-stay-safe-for-all-who-live-here-and-visit>

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30.12 Plan for broadband infrastructure to support smart grid development

Hawai'i County Planning doesn't talk about the power broadband and a smart grid will need, and Hawai'i Electric states, "That's why we will need everyone to work together over the next month, and possibly longer, to conserve electricity. We are extremely tight on what we call our generation margin, the margin between the demand for electricity and our ability to supply it. This demand typically peaks on weekdays between 5 and 9 p.m. and that's when the margin is most critical."

<https://www.hawaiielectric.com/safety-and-outages/an-update-on-hawaii-island-power-generation>

The island doesn't have the power for broadband or a smart grid.

<https://smartgrid.ieee.org/resources?cafid=0&id=223:>

"A smart grid alone does three things. First, it modernizes power systems through self-healing designs, automation, remote monitoring and control... Thus, a smart grid sits at the heart of the smart city, which cannot fully exist without it".

Also, a Smart Grid will allow them to have more control through "remote monitoring," which will invade our privacy.

[https://minnovation.com.au/smart-cities-2/disadvantages-of-smart-cities-potential-challenges-and-concerns/:](https://minnovation.com.au/smart-cities-2/disadvantages-of-smart-cities-potential-challenges-and-concerns/)

"Privacy and Data Security:

Smart cities rely heavily on the collection and analysis of vast amounts of data from sensors, cameras, and connected devices. This data is crucial for optimizing city operations and services. However, extensive data gathering raises concerns about privacy infringement and data security. Citizens worry about their personal information being accessed or misused."

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S240584402414011X:>

Drawbacks or disadvantages of Smart Grid

Following are the drawbacks or disadvantages of Smart Grid:

Continuous communication network should be available.

During emergency situation, network congestion or performance are big challenges in smart grid system.

Cellular network providers do not provide guaranteed service in abnormal situations such as wind storm, heavy rain and lightning conditions.

Some smart meters can be hacked which can be used to increase or decrease the demand for power.

It is expensive to install smart meter compare to traditional old electricity meter.

Hawai'i County Planning Department does NOT have any research about how a broadband and smart grid will affect the health of the island, its community, animals, and plants. For example, at the bottom of this article, it

states <https://electronics360.globalspec.com/article/11104/the-dangers-that-come-with-a-smart-grid:>

"Re: The Dangers That Come with a Smart Grid

#1

John Endres

2018-Feb-23 2:31 PM

One very critical danger that comes with a "smart grid" was not mentioned: the adverse health effects from electromagnetic fields. Current estimates of people experiencing adverse health effects from wireless technology hover at around 5%--I am one of them. After the installation of a water utility smart meter at my place of work, I experienced an escalation of symptoms (over time) that started with headaches and ultimately culminated in a seizure (I lost control of my legs). One month prior to the smart meter installation I had a complete annual physical and was given a clean bill of health. I underwent a barrage of medical tests after a week of experiencing health symptoms (thyroid, EEG, MRI, etc.) and everything was normal. I did begin to feel some of the painful head and eye sensations (that I would feel near wireless sources) at the end of the MRI."

Nor do they have any research on health risks with cell towers that they are allowing to be placed anywhere, and some of these cell tower tops are just a few feet from residential homes, HWY, and retirement homes...because a lot of the island is a mountain. If you put the base of a cell tower on one street, the top could be directly across from the community.

[https://mdsafetech.org/cell-tower-health-effects/:](https://mdsafetech.org/cell-tower-health-effects/)

*** Percentage of studies that reported harmful effect of EMR in various groups in MOEF Report

Human Effects-- 62% showed effects, 13% no effect and 25% inconclusive

Plant Effects-- 87% showed effects and 13% were inconclusive

Wildlife Effects- 62% showed effects, 4% no effect and 36% inconclusive

Bee Effects--85% showed effects and 15% no effect

Bird Effects- 77% showed effects, 10% no effect and 13% inconclusive

"Overall results of this review show three types of effects by base station antennas on the health of people: radiofrequency sickness (RS), cancer (C) and changes in biochemical parameters (CBP). Considering all the studies reviewed globally (n = 38), 73.6% (28/38) showed effects: 73.9% (17/23) for radiofrequency sickness, 76.9% (10/13) for cancer and 75.0% (6/8) for changes in biochemical parameters...Of special importance are the studies performed on animals or trees near base station antennas that cannot be aware of their proximity and to which psychosomatic effects can never be attributed."

It's concerning that the Hawai'i County Planning Department isn't providing detailed information about the potential disadvantages of broadband and smart grid projects. They seem to be focusing on the benefits without addressing the possible negative impacts, especially when the island lacks the extra power for it.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S240584402414011X>:

"However smart grids, being computerized remote-control systems overseeing electricity distribution, are vulnerable to cyberattacks."

30.5 Siting of new communications facilities shall comply with performance standards and site colocation as stated in the Code.

Hawai'i Planning does not explain that they use the word "sitting" to mean the laying of cable underground. The term "siting of new communications facilities" is extremely confusing. It generally refers to the process of selecting and preparing locations for new infrastructure, such as towers and cables, needed to support broadband and smart grid projects. This often involves road construction and can lead to increased traffic and disruptions because these cables need to be laid underground.

These cables could be laid shallow as this site states <https://primex.com/fiber-optic-internet-going-underground/>:

"The terrain and the local conditions need to be taken into account when considering underground broadband deployment. In rocky terrain, cable must be laid in a shallow trench."

<https://pulsefibre.co.uk/2023/06/15/when-more-is-less-the-risks-and-downsides-of-overbuild/>:

"Cost: Fibre optic broadband infrastructure can be an expensive endeavour, especially if it involves duplicating existing networks. This cost can ultimately be passed on to consumers, making broadband services more expensive and potentially reducing the adoption rate of fibre optic services.

Inefficiency: As mentioned above, overbuilding can lead to dormant infrastructure, creating wasted resources and increased environmental impact. This is particularly relevant in the case of fibre optic broadband, where installing fibre can be resource intensive.

Fragmentation: When different service providers own and operate various parts of the infrastructure, it can make it difficult for consumers to switch between providers and could result in reduced competition.

Legal and regulatory issues: Particularly in cases where existing service providers have exclusive rights to operate in certain areas. This can result in lengthy legal battles that delay the deployment of new infrastructure.

Maintenance: Increased maintenance costs can occur, especially if there is redundant infrastructure that needs to be maintained. This can ultimately lead to higher costs for consumers or reduced network quality – something we are wholeheartedly against at Pulse Fibre.

Technology obsolescence: Expensive upgrades or replacements may be required down the line if new infrastructure is not designed to accommodate future upgrades.

Wasted resources: Overbuilding for fibre solutions can result in the waste of valuable resources, including time, money, and materials.

Environmental: Overbuilding multiplies CO2 emissions as duplicate workforces are deployed, travelling more miles, digging more holes and creating a piecemeal labour profile. As well as laying more raw materials which may never get used. More information can be found on the Journal of Lightwave Technology."

It's concerning that the Hawai'i County Planning Department isn't addressing the increasing traffic issues while pushing for broadband and smart grid projects. Infrastructure, especially roadways, is already under significant strain, and these new projects will exacerbate the problem rather than alleviate it.

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13.13 Support master planning by public and private institutions and landowners which emphasize TOD, affordable housing, and mixed-use development.

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20.e Adopt a Complete Streets ordinance.

Hawai'i County Planning Department mentions "Master Planning and Ordinances" but they DO NOT explain what these are in their 2045 General Plan.

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13.44 The development or designation of new resort areas should complement the character of the area; protect the environment and natural beauty; respect existing lifestyles, cultural practices, and cultural resources; and provide shoreline public access.

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28.11 The County shall ensure that golf course developments develop and implement grading and site preparation plans to...

It's frustrating to see so many development applications going up all over when the Big Island clearly does not need more resorts and golf courses. The island is already facing resource issues with existing developments, and there are still many years of already-approved projects that haven't even been started yet.

The island needs sustainable development that prioritizes the well-being of residents and the conservation of the island's resources.

Please read this petition: <https://www.change.org/p/help-big-island-resources-and-infrastructure-stay-safe-for-all-who-live-here-and-visit>

"The West Hawai'i Sanitary Landfill, the only remaining landfill on the Big Island, is forecast to reach capacity within the next 20 to 25 years." <https://bigislandnow.com/2023/09/17/big-island-now-poll-no-27-results-more-than-one-solution-needed-to-help-extend-life-of-west-hawaii-landfill/>

"Water issues are not just happening 'somewhere else'. In Hawaii the finite boundaries of each island requires geographically defined water self-sufficiency systems that are reliable, safe, and expandable. On each island there are dozens of micro-climates and varied geologic features that impact the availability, methods, and costs to access safe water. <http://www.oneisland.org/hawaii/green-resources/water>

"HECO issues rolling power outages around Big Island by: Emily Cervantes Posted: Feb 13, 2024 / 05:11 PM HST Updated: Feb 13, 2024 / 09:12 PM HST Hawaiian Electric initiated rolling outages for Big Island after several large generators became unavailable and reduced output Tuesday night." <https://www.khon2.com/local-news/heco-releases-conservation-alert-for-big-island/>

14.1 Support the State Land Use reclassification to Rural in alignment with the General Plan Rural designation.

What is the General Plan Rural Designation? Is this more high-end land use titles changing from agriculture to rural?

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17.4 Land use applications shall identify as early as possible any existing or potential active living corridors that should be incorporated into the County's open space network.

Who decides what a living corridor is? Is this the county's way of taking private land areas away through a Land Use Application?

I firmly oppose the Hawai'i County Planning Department's 2045 General Plan. I demand the reappointment of the Hawai'i Planning Director to someone who will prioritize addressing Big Island resources, conserving the land, and listening to local voices. We need a leader who will stand with the community, not high-end developers, to preserve the unique character and future of the Big Island.

Rebecca Melendez