

# TOWNSCAPE, INC.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND COMMUNITY PLANNING

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## Keōpū – Hienaloli Streams Flood Damage Reduction Project

### PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING

**Location:** Kahakai Elementary School Cafeteria

**Date:** January 21, 2009 (6:30-8:00pm)

### NOTES FROM PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING

#### Meeting Participants:

Wilda James

Brian McCourt

Ann Koehler

Harold Murata

Paul Koehler

Barbara Scott

Brian Komo

C. Sansen

Sandra Komo

#### U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:

Nani Shimabuku

#### Consultant Team:

Derrick Elfalan (Oceanit)

Andrew Choy (Townscape Inc.)

#### County Department of Public Works:

Galen Kuba

Noelani Whittington

**The purpose of the meeting was to inform community members about the background and scope of the Keōpū-Hienaloli Streams Flood Damage Reduction Project. The project is an interagency effort between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the County of Hawai'i Department of Public Works. The project will identify and recommend flood abatement improvements and actions that can be implemented to reduce flood damage that may be caused from the Keōpū and Hienaloli Streams. The project will consist of a feasibility study and environmental assessment.**

**Meeting participants' questions and comments are listed below:**

- How valid are the FIRM maps? Where did the information for the flood maps that you presented come from? **Ans:** The FIRM maps are developed by FEMA. FEMA conducts a very extensive and detailed study when developing FIRM maps. The data for the flood map that was presented tonight came from the *State of Hawai'i Atlas*. The Atlas mapped major flood events. However, the Atlas does not specify the intensity of the events.
- Are you familiar with the Kona Soil and Water Conservation District? They have done a lot of work in this area. **Ans:** Yes, we will seek their comments and input on this project as the project moves forward.
- I live by Waiau Stream and am concerned the stream will flood during heavy rains. I would like to see something that predicts what will happen during heavy rains.
- Will the environmental assessment (EA) determine what the final project is? **Ans:** Yes, through the feasibility study and EA process, alternative solutions to reduce flood damage will be developed. From these alternative solutions, the best solution will be determined.
- Why does the map not show flooding into the Keōpū flood channel? **Ans:** This map was done on a large scale and does not cover smaller finer details such as channel flow.
- Will the EA show what will be done to solve flooding? **Ans:** The EA will show what can be done to reduce flood damage, but not what can be done to completely "solve" flooding.
- Will open space be incorporated into the alternatives? The County of Hawai'i Kona Community Development Plan (CDP) mentions open space requirements as possible solutions to mitigate flooding. **Ans:** Yes, we are aware of the Kona CDP and will take into consideration CDP policies that relate to flooding.
- I am skeptical of any flooding feasibility study. The flow path prognosis shown is flawed. It did not talk about the lands that have been altered by development and how those alterations affect flow. Development needs to be accounted for. It will change the flow. How do we account for flooding that is caused by development? **Ans:** There are regulations and requirements that mitigate flooding and run-off that is caused by development. Developers need to show that their development plans comply with these regulations before they are permitted to begin construction.
- The project does not take a holistic approach. It just deals with certain problem areas. **Ans:** We are looking at large storm events and how these events will flow through these particular areas. Flood *control* is a really big task and a holistic view should be considered. However, this is just a flood *damage reduction* project. We are not looking

to control flooding. We are only looking at how to reduce flood damage in these particular areas.

- The problem statement that you present is the monetary losses caused by flooding. Is this project only concerned with the monetary losses caused by flooding? **Ans:** We are looking at other benefits, such as environmental benefits, that occur with flood damage reduction as well as reducing the monetary losses caused by flooding.
- How will the FIRM map and your hydrology maps compliment each other? Will this study identify areas where building and development should be prohibited? It seems like that in the past, developers have altered flood maps in order to allow their developments to proceed. How will the study affect County permitting? **Ans:** The Corps of Engineers focuses on existing conditions and mitigating existing problems. It does not focus on future development or try to influence local land use policies.
- Run-off can be managed through either directing flow or by increasing percolation. Who is responsible for managing run-off? **Ans:** No one public entity is responsible for managing run-off. The County does have rules and regulations that require development plans to plan for run-off mitigation. Run-off is the responsibility of the private property owner. Private property owners cannot increase run-off or change drainage patterns in a way that will have a direct impact on downstream properties when they develop their lands.
- Does the project involve watershed management? Watershed management is the crux of the problem. The project cannot only look at part of the watershed. In order to solve flooding problems, you need to look at the source of the water flow. **Ans:** That is a good point. However, watershed management involves a lot of different government agencies. This is a more specific project that is tasked with only looking at specific areas in the watershed.
- What is the maximum flow of Keōpū Stream? **Ans:** It is hard to determine the maximum flow for Keōpū stream because it is a non-perennial stream. The stream bed is dry for most of the year. Water only flows in the stream after significant rain events.

## **OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- The County will be holding public meetings for separate flood studies in North and South Kona. These meetings will be addressing wider concerns than the area of focus for the Keōpū-Hienaloli Flood Damage Reduction Project. These meetings will be announced by the County in the next 60 days.

## **NEXT STEPS FOR THIS PROJECT**

- A public scoping meeting will be conducted to discuss the proposed alternatives in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2009.
- The draft feasibility study and environmental assessment are currently scheduled for completion in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2009
- Meeting participants along with other members of the public will be informed about future public meeting dates, times, and locations.