



County of Hawai'i PLANNING DEPARTMENT

SOUTH KOHALA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN ACTION COMMITTEE

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Tuesday, February 21, 2023 DRAFT Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

This meeting was attended by members of all Community Development Plan (CDP) Action Committees (AC) in the County of Hawai'i. Long-Range Planner, Heather Bartlett serving as a non-voting Chairperson for the island-wide convening of CDP ACs, called the South Kohala Community Development Plan (CDP) Action Committee (AC) to order at 5:00 P.M. Due to provisions set by Sunshine Law, this meeting was held via the Zoom interactive video platform with one on-site location at the Aupuni Center Conference Room.

ROLL CALL

Action Committee Members Present: Kevin McLaughlin, Karen Anderson, Bill Sanborn, Pete Hendricks, Scott Nagata, Tristie Licoan, Julia Also, Mark Gordon.

Planning Department Staff: Zendo Kern (Planning Director); April Surprenant, Heather Bartlett, Kim Tanaka, and Courtney Vincent (Long Range Planners)

Members of the public attended the meeting via Zoom. The meeting was also available for synchronous viewing via the [COH Planning Department YouTube Livestream](#). The livestream is available at [Island-Wide Action Committee Meeting February 21, 2023 - YouTube](#).

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS:

Five (5) members of the public provided oral testimony.

1. Community member Cory Harden, representing herself, provided testimony with regard to Sunshine Law and the Planning Department's lack of staff. She provided two suggestions to all Action Committees, the first that they request a formal opinion from Corporation Counsel on Sunshine Law, and the second to reason that the Planning Department cannot fulfill its obligations to the ACs due to lack of staff. Ms. Harden explained that AC members have been told that no more than two members are allowed to go to the same community meetings outside of an Action Committee meeting or discuss topics that may become subject at a future Action Committee meeting. She expressed that people have a constitutional right to freedom of speech and assembly and stated that other people in government bodies attend various meetings, but make it

known they are in attendance representing themselves only. She noted that if Corporation Council is sticking to this strict interpretation of Sunshine Law, then people should seek to amend it. Ms. Harden also informed that it is required by law for the Planning Department to administer support to the ACs and questioned the legality of the department providing support in a way that the ACs cannot fulfill their legal obligation. She suggested that the ACs inform Corporation Counsel of this issue so they can help Planning find a solution. Ms. Harden hoped that the original intent for the ACs as strong advocates for the community could be fulfilled.

Note: Information about the State Sunshine Law can be found on the Office of Information Practices website at the following link: <https://oip.hawaii.gov/laws-rules-opinions/sunshine-law/>

2. Community member Rebecca Melendez, representing herself and those who signed her petition to “Help Prioritize Big Island Homes to Keep Safe Infrastructure,” provided testimony on how Kona’s infrastructure cannot support high population growth. She expressed concern for the growing amount of traffic, parking issues, and development on the island. She informed that on her petition, there is a photo of an ambulance that is unable to make it through Kona traffic on a Wednesday at 3PM. Ms. Melendez questioned if reports were being done on traffic, population growth, and tsunami evacuation before approving new developments. She explained that her petition emphasizes the need for a stipulation for the local people to be placed in newly built homes before newcomers. She also requested that more notice of department meetings be given prior to the date of the meeting as she would like to get the word out and meet testimony deadlines.
3. Community member Chuck Flaherty, representing the Sierra Club Hawai’i Island Group, provided testimony regarding the current state of the CDP ACs. He referenced a letter from the Planning Department Director dated August 18, 2022, that was sent to inform all ACs of the department’s staffing issues. He also expressed that County laws related to the CDPs and ACs are vague and subject to various interpretation which has caused confusion and disfranchisement for the community and County of Hawai’i employees. Mr. Flaherty expressed that not providing staffing for the CDP ACs is a violation of the Kona CDP which is a law, and it is impossible for the ACs to perform their intended duties on a strictly volunteer basis. Mr. Flaherty proposed possible solutions, some of which included amending the CDPs to coincide with organizational structure of the General Plan, amending the County Code to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the ACs, and having the Planning Department and other County agencies draft and pass laws requiring sufficient funding and administrative support.
4. Community Member Indy Rishi Singh, representing Ono Seeds, testified and provided information regarding his non-profit organization. Ono Seeds, located in Hakalau, focuses on saving local, indigenous, and native seeds. Mr. Singh informed that they host many educational events for community that are centered around natural and indigenous farming and indigenous medicine. He encouraged everyone to explore more collaborative spaces, to bring more aloha in the ways they listened to one another, and to engage in others’ ideas to find solutions in fun ways rather than with antagonism and

72 anger. Mr. Singh provided information about the Civic Action for Intentional Communities
73 event, to be held at the Seaview Lawn on Thursday, February 23, 2023. He informed that
74 the event would be focused on strengthening local relationships, building solidarity, and
75 bolstering farming. He noted that it would be a good space to collaborate and find
76 solutions to proactively grow healthy food here to ensure food security for the people.
77 Mr. Singh encouraged everyone to participate with more hope from all different
78 perspectives and expressed his belief that they all could find solutions for the island that
79 served everyone.

- 80 5. Community member John Winter, representing the North Kohala Advisory Group,
81 testified and provided information on the differences between the North Kohala Advisory
82 Group and the ACs. He explained that the North Kohala CDP AC dissolved in 2021 in part
83 due to dissatisfaction with the rules and procedures guiding County boards and
84 commissions. He also explained how members of the community took a different
85 approach to continue efforts to implement the North Kohala CDP, thus creating the
86 North Kohala Advisory Group. Mr. Winter informed that their group consists of 9
87 members who are selected by the community with 2-year terms, only allowed to be
88 renewed once. He also informed that they are much less formal, not subject to Sunshine
89 Law, are able to communicate between meetings, and strive to serve the community and
90 allow all who attend meetings to speak on any issue under discussion. Mr. Winter stated
91 that the group is presently addressing the need to update the North Kohala CDP and
92 have formed several focus groups with the intention to uphold community networks and
93 government participation.

94 **BUSINESS:**

95 1. **Planning and Action Committee Program Update:**

96 Planning Director Zendo Kern provided an update on Planning Department staff, projects,
97 activities, and a 2023 roadmap. He expressed the importance of having a “two-way
98 street” when it comes to government with regard to accountability and open
99 communication. Director Kern noted, although the department currently has numerous
100 vacancies, solution-based elements have been incorporated to ensure work continues to
101 be done efficiently and effectively. He shared that the letter sent out to all ACs was
102 meant to provide transparency and communicate that the department would not be
103 able to provide the same level of support while they work to replace staff. He felt it
104 would be preferable to share those challenges openly to find collaborative solutions.

105 Director Kern informed that the Planning Department’s Electronic Processing and
106 Information Center (EPIC) has been an effective tool for moving and stabilizing workloads
107 digitally. He also said that the department is working to digitize files.

108 Project updates included:

109 The Climate Action Plan - Director Kern informed that the Planning Department is
110 working in partnership with Research & Development to create an integrated Climate
111 Action Plan. The document would aim to identify targets, action steps, and funding for
112 Hawai’i County operations to reach climate mitigation, adapt goals, and support

community level action to create resiliency. He noted that this would be a living document, attached to the General Plan, which would constantly evolve, grow, and build as climate change continues.

Science-Based Shoreline Setbacks - Director Kern informed that three different criteria were being looked at: one for steep pali, one for regular setbacks, and one for areas where sea level rise would occur. He also informed that the Planning Department was working with the University of Hawaii to develop a menu of those three elements, to be used when applied to property. He noted that the project would be presented to the public, within the next six to seven months, to get feedback and continue work towards bringing something forward that works for Hawaii Island.

Ohana or Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) legislation - Director Kern informed that this initiative seeks to reduce barriers on the creation of Ohanas or ADUs for long term rentals.

The General Plan (GP) - Director Kern provided an update on the General Plan Comprehensive Review. He explained the goal of constructing a clear and concise document that moves the island, community, and uniqueness in the right direction. Director Kern informed that through the drafting process, the department is lifting up important elements of the CDPs into the GP. The plan incorporates policies to focus growth within the urban core, encourage the productive use of agricultural land, utilize rural districts, and incorporates aspirations, climate change, and economic drivers. He noted the goal of the GP to direct the County on critical decision points or critical actions that should be taken. He expressed the need to strategically maintain and construct infrastructure to address needs and population density. Director Kern informed that the department would also take all the feedback from the 2005 GP and previous engagement efforts to develop a clear and concise document that moves the island in a direction that addresses the challenges we face. He shared that the draft would be presented this year for public review.

Zoning and Subdivision Code Update - Director Kern provided an update on the Zoning and Subdivision Code Update Project. Community outreach has been underway and continues through community meetings and online forums to collect feedback. Director Kern explained that the General Plan will be adopted first and is being used to inform the Code update. He also stated that the staff who are working to support ACs are not working on the Code Update project.

Director Kern addressed concerns he had heard previously related to the AC program. He informed that the Planning Department is working diligently to provide more support and that staff continue to work closely with the Chairs and Vice-Chairs to support meetings, and AC-driven projects. He stated that ACs will be engaged for feedback on the General Plan draft. Director Kern acknowledged that staffing challenges are occurring across several County departments and that the Planning Department is continuing to actively recruit for new or upcoming vacancies. Regarding AC recruitments, Director Kern informed that recruitments largely depend on having applications from diverse

backgrounds, locations, and are ideally longtime residents of Hawai'i Island. He encouraged the ACs to help get the word out for new applications.

Director Kern discussed the importance of keeping our youth on the island. He informed that the department has been participating in the Lead for Hawaii (LFHI) fellowship program, which focuses on leadership development and capacity building through recruiting, training, and retaining Hawaii's young leaders. This provides pathways for young people to address critical needs in their hometown, and activate the leadership needed to revitalize communities. Director Kern shared the experience of one fellow who graduated from a mainland college and was able to move home to be of service to his community.

Questions and Answers:

Planning staff noted that any questions not answered due to time constraints would be followed up on. You can read additional questions and answers in the attached "Frequently Asked Questions."

How can we add our density before we address all parts of our infrastructure?

Director Kern explained that additional density should not be added without proper infrastructure and the importance of prioritizing infrastructure in the areas that need it most. One way of doing that is through urban growth boundaries. He shared that the challenge of implementing infrastructure projects in rural areas as there is sometimes not enough population density for that to be realized. Director Kern informed that they are trying to find creative ways to finance infrastructure by participating on the State Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Council. He noted that there was a permitted interaction group that brought on consultants to explore infrastructure financing options.

Given the staffing issues, what efforts are being made to attract and retain staff, such as salary raises, benefits, etc.?

Salaries are based on collective bargaining units across the entire state and there are no cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) we can offer. We have been working with Human Resources (HR) to see what other areas we can work on to improve quality of life, to attract and retain staff. Some elements include flex time, work from home with proper monitoring, and to give more flexibility with work schedules while making sure there's still staff in office to assist the public. We want to build bridges, provide opportunities for staff to grow, and make sure they know they are appreciated for the public service work that they do. We hope the elements we are working on with HR will attract more people to open positions and retain them as well.

What happened to the 2019 General Plan Draft and the feedback from previous public outreach efforts, and why are Action Committees only being invited to participate when the draft is out?

Director Kern expressed gratitude for the feedback collected during the previous public outreach efforts and shared that the CDPs have been a great resource to pull information from. He informed that all the GP elements continue to come from community by taking

all previous feedback combined with new data we have gathered from the COVID pandemic, the Kīlauea eruption, and recent efforts on the County Climate Action Plan.

Why is there no stipulation to ensure that the island's infrastructure is safe for residents, to account for the impacts of population growth? Could there could be a stipulation to ensure that a percentage of new housing developments go towards locals first?

Director Kern explained that when it comes to measuring impact, there are processes in place to ensure reports are conducted, considered, and addressed prior to development approval. Imposing exclusionary requirements for buying or renting housing is complicated due to legal limitations and risk of discrimination. He acknowledged that while he does not have the details to share on the matter, he had discussions with the Office of Housing and Community Development about potential ideas for that.

Are there actions to review and amend the building code to allow for alternative building materials, techniques, or alternative building types to support less costly homes?

The Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS) restricts counties from adopting less stringent building requirements than what the current State Building Code allows. We are currently following State legislation that would give counties the power to adopt a less stringent building code. This would give Council and the Department of Public Works (DPW) the ability to adjust our building code to allow the usage of alternative building materials.

2. Updates on Community Implementation Per District:

Action Committee chairs provided updates on their recent achievements, current initiatives, and their goals for 2023:

Ka'ū Action Committee Chair Enos shared that their CDP has the most recent formed Action Committee and that they have met twice since October 2022. During the first meeting, held in Pahala, elections were held and AC members shared initiatives that they were currently involved in as individuals. Chair Enos also informed that the AC established four investigatory subcommittees; three for coastline access to Papakōlea Green Sand Beach, Pōhue Bay, and Punalu'u Beach; and one subcommittee for Kupuna housing. She shared that at the committee's second meeting, reports were made by the subcommittees, and another was created to focus development in Ka'ū. The Ka'ū Action Committee hoped to establish a meeting schedule for 2023. Chair Enos shared that the AC would advocate, kokua, and recommend community projects that benefit the Ka'ū community, within the guidelines of the CDP, and that the committee would practice flexibility, creativeness, and openness to change as time evolves.

Hāmākua Committee Chair Keeney informed that the AC had two subcommittees. The first for Waipi'o Valley, as wahi pana, meaning revered place with special, cultural, and historical importance. Chair Keeney conveyed the challenge the committee faced in its efforts to designate Waipi'o Valley, including the valley ramp, as wahi pana. The idea is to create a resource protection overlay and regulations that will protect the valley's natural resources, preserve its historic past, and perpetuate its agricultural traditions and unique rural lifestyle. He informed that the AC would collaborate with the Waipi'o Valley

community to develop a long-range management plan to address public access, carrying capacity, resource management, and potential funding sources for ongoing maintenance of the streets and roads. Chair Keeney informed that their second subcommittee was dedicated to dealing with infrastructure for the proposed and permitted Lehua street subdivision in Honokaʻa. He also suggested that all Chairs of the ACs should meet and assist Planning staff to conduct Joint AC meetings, in the future. Chair Keeney felt that the most important challenge was to increase the communication with and between the ACs and the communities. He noted that access to the newspapers and social media outreach would be extremely important in helping to address that challenge.

South Kohala Committee Acting Chair McLaughlin shared that their Action Committee created four subcommittees at their last meeting to address various topics for 2023. The first, to follow up on the Hawaiʻi tourism authority plans to collaborate and provide input on tourism in South Kohala. The second, to start preemptively investigating revisions to the South Kohala CDP. The third, to focus on Waimea preservation with regard to development and historical preservation. The fourth, to investigate status and situations related to roads and bridges in South Kohala. Acting Chair McLaughlin informed that all subcommittees are just getting started with their work and they hope to have updates on each topic by the middle of the year. He also informed that the committee is working to build an agenda and would schedule the next AC meeting soon.

Puna Committee Chair Brewer shared that the committee, with help from the County, had launched a network of Resilience Capacity Areas (RCA) and action teams to support community-based actions for Puna revitalization after various natural disasters over the past years. She informed that all Puna AC members were either chairing or co-chairing the RCAs. Within the RCA structure the committee was able to build cultural, economic, ʻōpio (youth), social, and natural environment RCAs so that members can focus on an area that they are specifically interested in or have expertise on. She noted that through this alternative structure, they can bring in more community members. She acknowledged that the downside to this is that they do not have much time to focus on the AC, however, the work is very similar. Chair Brewer informed that the biggest projects happening in Puna are still related to recovery issues, such as repairing the Pohoiki boat ramp. She also informed that quarterly RCA activation events take place where members from the RCAs and from different County departments gather to present information to the community. Chair Brewer shared that the AC created one subcommittee which is working to revise a brochure called "The Building in Puna" brochure. She noted that information in the brochure may apply to other districts as well and the AC would be happy to share it out with the other ACs once they are done revising it .

North Kohala Advisory Group member John Winter briefly reiterated information regarding the advisory group, as most of the information was shared during his earlier testimony. He looked forward to learning more about Sunshine Law and how to creatively partner with the county. Mr. Winter encouraged all ACs to be vigilant in their recruitment efforts and noted that he was open to any questions regarding their work in North Kohala.

Questions and Answers:

How will Director Kern and the Planning Department leverage all the great things that the ACs have to offer, rather than view them as something you have to administer because it is written in the code?

Director Kern shared his hope that through continued collaboration with the ACs, they would find solutions to challenges and serve the community. He felt that they could work to improve our communities by continuing to come together and work collectively to make informed decisions. He emphasized and appreciated the great work the ACs do and did not feel that they were just a task to be dealt with. He noted that he would come back with a more considered answer and to collaborate more on ways they could help one another.

Would it be possible to do Joint Action Committee Meetings more regularly in order to get more recent updates on various topics? How can we work to address topics that affect all of us? How can ACs translate that information in order to help?

Director Kern informed that he would work with the team to find more ways to get updates out to the ACs. He noted that as more staff are hired, the Department's capacity to provide support will increase. With so many major projects underway this year we are trying not to overwhelm the community with information so people have time to digest the updates we share and provide feedback and staff in turn have time to digest and incorporate feedback.

How can we make it easier for kanaka 'oiwi to come home and have secure housing without having to navigate such a complex network of applications and competitive opportunities?

Director Kern acknowledged the issues that are easy to talk about but harder to solve, such as level of opportunity and cost of living. He noted that more innovation brings more opportunities, such as being able to work from home. He also noted that affordable housing is crucial for bringing people back.

What price range do you see as "affordable" housing for 2023 in Kailua-Kona?

Director Kern informed that right now affordability is based on the Area Median Income (AMI). He shared that in his opinion, if public servants are not able to attain housing, then that is a big problem. He noted that when public servants and low-medium income families are taken care of, then the rest should be taken care of as well. Director Kern explained that he prefers to think of it as attainable housing rather than what fits into the "affordable" definition.

What is the timeline for the completion of the draft GP?

Director Kern informed that the Planning Department was working to get the draft GP out by the end of summer. He shared that it is currently being worked on internally and the goal is to have it come out to gather more input and feedback from the public, before beginning the adoption process later in the year.

317 **ADJOURNMENT:**

318 The meeting was adjourned at 6:58 P.M.

319 These minutes and all related documents are available in the Planning Department's South
320 Kohala Community Development Plan Action Committee folder via [the County of Hawai'i Public](#)
321 [Documents Repository](#). These documents may also be requested from the Planning Department
322 by calling (808) 961-8288 or emailing cdp@hawaiicounty.gov.

DRAFT

****Yellow highlight** means they were asked and answered in the February Joint AC Meeting.

STAFFING

When will the Planning Department be hiring more staff? What attempts are made to preserve adequate staffing for the Action Committees?

We are actively recruiting for all of our vacancies in our Long Range Division and across the Planning Department. Most County and state departments are experiencing staffing challenges, and our ability to hire depends on receiving qualified applicants. This issue impacts all of us and we appreciate everyone's patience.

Given the department's staffing issues and the County's low pay, what efforts are being made to attract and retain staff, such as raising salaries?

Government salaries are based on collective bargaining units across the state and are not otherwise adjustable. We have been working with Dept. of Human Resources (HR) to identify other opportunities to improve quality of life to attract and retain staff. We want to build bridges, provide opportunities for staff to grow, and make sure they know they are appreciated for their public service.

When and how will the Action Committees (AC) receive more support from the Planning Department?

When positions fill and staff are trained and onboarded, the level of support can increase. This may take time, so it is important for all of us to *kokua* and find ways to keep momentum going for Action Committees in the meantime. Our team collaborates closely with AC Chairs and Vice-Chairs to support the continued organization of AC meetings and various AC-led projects.

How does withdrawing planning staff support for Action Committees comply with the County Code? And have staff been reduced who review applications for new development?

No staffing has been intentionally reduced or withdrawn in any areas of the Planning Department. We continue to comply with the County Code and our team continues to aim to provide service beyond our legal obligations. As we can fill vacancies, our capacity can increase.

What about more project-based hiring (half up front, half upon effective completion, as an example) that also opens the door for more effective capitalistic innovation and entrepreneurship locally?

The County is required to hire staff under state and union requirements, which require that we do not contract work for duties that permanent County positions could provide even if they are vacant. In other words, we cannot replace our existing positions with contract hires and our priority is to grow our staff.

HOUSING

How can we make it easier for kanaka 'oiwi to come home and have secure housing without having to navigate such a complex network of applications and competitive opportunities?

There are some issues that are easy to talk about but harder to solve, such as level of opportunity and cost of living. Affordable and attainable housing is crucial for retaining and bringing residents back. We also hope that by building up resident capacity through networking, education, services for small businesses, etc. we can increase levels of opportunity. With more innovation also comes more opportunity, for example being able to work from home.

****Yellow highlight** means they were asked and answered in the February Joint AC Meeting.

What price range do you see as “affordable” housing for 2023 in Kailua-Kona?

Right now, affordability is based on the Area Median Income (AMI). As an example, if public servants are not able to attain housing, then that is a big problem. There is about 30-40% of our island’s workforce that could qualify for low-income housing.

Regarding the zoning code update, is there any action being taken to review & amend the building code to allow alternative building materials, techniques, or alternative building types to support the creation of less costly homes?

The Hawai’i Revised Statutes (HRS) restricts counties from adopting less stringent building requirements than what the current State Building Code allows. We are currently following State legislation that could give counties the power to adopt a building code with more flexibility. This would give County Council and the Department of Public Works (DPW) the ability to adjust our building code to allow the use of alternative building materials.

Why isn’t there a stipulation for developers to sell a higher percentage to locals before selling to newcomers to maintain the population size?

Imposing exclusionary requirements for buying or renting housing is complicated due to legal limitations and risks of discrimination. We have collaborated with the Office of Housing and there are some initiatives to better understand ways to support affordable housing for residents. For example, one may be interested in following the conversation around County Council Bill 18:

<https://records.hawaiicounty.gov/Weblink/0/doc/1050583/Page1.aspx>

CDP/ACTION COMMITTEE

How are Action Committees going to be administered and supported?

The Planning Dept. staffing challenges do not change the way Action Committees were created in the Code, nor is it reflective of the level of support we aspire to provide. We continue to do everything we can to support Action Committee meetings and endeavors.

Are there prioritized County action items per each CDP that the Planning Department have identified and plan to include in the upcoming fiscal year budget?

The annual County Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budget is a compilation of projects proposed by all County departments, the Mayor’s Office, and the County Council.

CDPs have historically, and continue to be, a criteria of which CIP projects have been planned for and funded. There is a lot that goes into the way infrastructure projects are prioritized including public safety, cost efficiency, phasing, community needs, and other contingencies. Our County Charter requires that all CIP projects be prioritized based on criteria aligned with the General Plan, Community Development Plans, emergency expenditures, and other pertinent functional plans. Action Committees have also successfully advocated for capital improvement projects – examples of this include the Kona Open Space Network Plan and the Pāhoa Regional Town Center Master Plan.

Shouldn’t there be meetings of all AC chairs (and perhaps all AC members) every 6 months?

The County discourages any AC (and any other board or committee) deliberations from happening outside of public meetings. We have been advised by our Corporation Counsel that Action Committees

****Yellow highlight** means they were asked and answered in the February Joint AC Meeting.

are similar enough in nature and discussion content could constitute a violation of Sunshine Law. An alternative to this may be to attend the meetings of other Action Committees to discuss and share your thoughts and ideas so that there is no Action Committee business happening outside of the public meeting. On the request for more Joint Action Committee meetings - they are a great way to create a forum for topics that are not district-specific and create opportunities for ACs to connect, learn from, and inspire one another. We do not have a set schedule of future Joint Action Committee meetings, but we intend to continue organizing Joint Action Committee meetings in the future.

Would it be possible to have more regular Joint Action Committee Meetings to address topics that may affect all ACs? How can ACs translate that information to help?

We continue to look for creative ways to get updates out to the ACs. With so many major projects underway, we try not to overwhelm the community with too much information so there is time to digest the updates and provide feedback. In turn, this allows staff time to digest and incorporate feedback.

Why aren't there more regular Action Committee meetings?

The Planning Department has offered assistance for ACs to continue to meet as often as monthly if they choose. If an AC would like to meet, , we suggest reaching out to CDP staff or AC chair to offer ideas and support.

What is the status of Action Committee recruitment?

For AC recruitments, applicants are reviewed for diverse backgrounds and for people who represent various regions/communities. We seek a variety of occupations, ages, and interests, as well as numerous years of Hawai'i residency, and experience in community-based initiatives. It has been challenging to receive new applications, and we often find that word of mouth is the most effective means of outreach. We urge everyone to apply or share the need for applications. More information and applications can be found here: <https://www.hawaiicounty.gov/our-county/boards-and-commissions>.

How do Action Committee members get appointed?

Members of the public must first apply to be on an Action Committee through the Mayor's Office website. In accordance with Hawaii County Code Chapter 16 and the County Charter, members are nominated by the Mayor and confirmed by the County Council.

When was the Action Committee Engagement Survey released?

The survey was sent to all AC members and broadly to the community through our island-wide mailing lists. The original email was sent on 8/23/2022 and reminders were sent on 9/8/2022 and 9/12/22.

What is the Planning Department's legal obligation to the Action Committees? What does "administer" mean (PD administering to ACs per HCC Ch 16)?

In general terms, the Action Committees fall under the Planning Dept umbrella. Administer means to post agendas and minutes, to ensure compliance with Sunshine Law, and to help with meeting logistics as needed. In addition, our team collaborates closely with AC Chairs and Vice-Chairs to support the organization of AC meetings and various AC-led initiatives.

****Yellow highlight** means they were asked and answered in the February Joint AC Meeting.

When will the CDP documents be revised? Please advise how the Kawaihae community was involved.

Many of the big picture and islandwide policies and actions from each CDP are being incorporated in the draft General Plan. Once the General Plan is complete, the department will revisit how and when to update CDPs. Specific to South Kohala, there were 32 members of the Kawaihae community that made up the Kawaihae Focus Group during the South Kohala CDP drafting process.

CDPs need to be Implemented.

CDPs are implemented in many ways and have been since their adoption through County and community projects and initiatives:

- They are implemented when CDP are consulted for development proposals through planners, other agency officials, Planning Commission, County Council, Cultural Resources, and their community testifiers.
- They create a center-point that supports the organization of community partnerships and grassroots initiatives.
- They guide Capital Improvement Projects and influence infrastructure projects that get completed islandwide.
- They are routinely consulted in the creation of strategies and plans for County departments and other government agencies.

The Kona CDP was drafted 33 years ago, when will it be updated?

The Kona Community Development Plan was adopted in 2008 alongside the North Kohala, South Kohala, and Puna CDPs, and it was updated in 2019. For more information please go to our website here:

<https://www.planning.hawaiicounty.gov/general-plan-community-planning/cdp/kona/doc>

During the Kona CDP revisions, why did the Planning Department not change the name “Implementation Committee” to “Action Committee”?

When the Kona CDP was revised in 2019, the term “Implementation Committee” was changed to “Action Committee.” The Ramseyer’s version of the amendments can be found here:

<https://www.planning.hawaiicounty.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/301805/637205594357370000>

How will the Planning Director and the planning department leverage what the Action Committees offer, rather than viewing them as a requirement to administer?

We hope through continued collaboration with the ACs we can find creative solutions to best serve the community. We can work to improve our communities by continuing to come together and work collectively to make informed decisions. Action Committees have always been more than just a legal mandate for our department. We hope to continue to elevate the role of Action Committees through ongoing collaboration.

Will you please provide 7 days before meeting deadlines to accept emails before the meeting?

We advertise our meetings in compliance with the State Sunshine Law which requires at least 6 days advance notice of Action Committee meetings to our mailing list. We must distribute the meeting packet no less than 48 hours in advance of the meeting to allow committee members and the public time to read the materials. Testimony that is not submitted on time will be distributed to committee members and shared in our public folders after the meeting.

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Is it the AC's Corporation Counsel's opinion that existing Sunshine Law procedures are all necessary?

Yes, the Planning staff regularly communicate with Deputy Corporation Counsel and follow the State Sunshine Law requirements consistent with all other State and County boards, commissions, and committees. When questions arise, Planning or Counsel can receive guidance from State Office of Information Practices. This is necessary because ACs are formed under County Code and are required to follow procedures as outlined in the Code and County Charter.

Why do you not refer to Vision Zero as a community action plan as part of the Hilo community plan like complete streets?

The Hawai'i County Vision Zero Plan and Street Design Manual are community plans in that they were created in collaboration with community and public input. However, they do not fall under the General Plan and Hawai'i County Code Chapter 16 references to Community Development Plans (CDPs).

INFRASTRUCTURE

How can we add to our density before we address all parts of our infrastructure?

Additional density should not be added without proper infrastructure. It is important to prioritize infrastructure in the areas that need it most. The department has been exploring various planning mechanisms and creative financial tools to implement this, for example through urban growth boundaries and through participating on the State Transit Oriented Development Council. It can be a challenge to fund infrastructure projects in rural places where the low population density cannot support the expense. These issues can be reduced through increasing density in key areas to reduce sprawl and lower infrastructure costs moving forward.

Why is there no stipulation to ensure that the island's infrastructure is safe for residents to account for the impacts of population growth? (are reports being done on population growth, sewage, etc.)

When it comes to measuring impact, there are processes in place to ensure reports are conducted, considered, and addressed prior to development approval. Adequate infrastructure is a requirement for development and change of zone applications. Further, comments and/or verification are requested from related county and state agencies. Population and demographic reports can be found through the US Census, County Department of Research and Development, and State Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. Information about wastewater systems can be found with the County Department of Environmental Management.

GENERAL PLAN & ZONING AND SUBDIVISION CODE UPDATE

Will the General Plan re-write, a high-level policy document, be completed before the more detailed Zoning/ Subdivision re-write?

Yes, the General Plan will be released prior to the code updates. The first phase of the code update project has been a review and audit of the codes, so there is a better understanding of what may need to be addressed based on public input, staff review, and consultant expertise. Since the General Plan will come first, the timing of the code project will follow accordingly.

****Yellow highlight** means they were asked and answered in the February Joint AC Meeting.

What is the timeline for the completion of the draft General Plan?

We are working to get the draft General Plan out by the end of the summer 2023.

Will the Action Committees be involved in the General Plan update?

Action Committees will be engaged in the outreach of the next public draft of the General Plan and have an opportunity to review and provide comments.

If the timeline for the Zoning/Subdivision re-write were extended, would there be more staff time for Action Committees (ACs)?

The staff who support ACs are not the same as those supporting the Code Update project, so the project timeline does not affect the level of support for ACs.

Why doesn't the Planning Department abandon the Code Update and focus resources on the General Plan update?

Updating the General Plan is the priority to be adopted first to inform the code update project. However, updating the Subdivision and Zoning code is also an important element to advance GP and CDP implementation by ensuring our regulatory system is in alignment with the community's vision. CDPs cannot supersede the language in the Code and many of them call for regulations that contradict the current language in the Code. In the meantime, the CDPs continue to be implemented every day through regular actions from the County, other government agencies, stakeholders, and community groups - and these actions depend on a community planning system which we serve to maintain.

Will there be public meetings around the island to introduce the draft General Plan before submission to Leeward and Windward Planning Commissions?

Yes, there will be public meetings and the outreach plan for the draft is still being finalized. Please join the mailing list for your district CDP or the General Plan to be notified when there are opportunities to participate. <https://www.planning.hawaiicounty.gov/general-plan-community-planning/stay-informed>

What happened to the 2019 General Plan Draft and the feedback from previous public outreach efforts, and why are Action Committees only being invited to participate when the draft is out?

Feedback and data to inform the General Plan is being taken from many sources, including the feedback we collected in our 2019 community engagement events. The draft reflects the feedback we have heard and continue to hear along with new data and lessons learned as a result of the COVID pandemic, the Kilauea eruption, and recent efforts on the County Climate Action Plan.

MISCELLANEOUS

Are there written procedures publicly available to avoid the Planning Director being involved in County actions related to current and former clients?

There are procedures in place for the Deputy Director to handle all conflicts of interest related to the Planning Director, in accordance with direction from the Board of Ethics.