

HĀMĀKUA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN
ACTION COMMITTEE
COUNTY OF HAWAII

DRAFT MINUTES
Wednesday, October 9, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

Chair David Meyer called the Hāmākua Community Development Plan (CDP) Action Committee (AC) to order at 5:21 p.m. A quorum was established with five members in attendance. This meeting was held in person at the Kulaʻimano Community Center and via the Zoom online platform.

The full YouTube video of this meeting can be found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Enui0rgMilE>

ROLL CALL

Members Present (in person): David Meyer (Chair), Mahealani Maikui (Vice-Chair), Tawn Keeney, Robert Nishimoto, and Brad Kurokawa

County Staff Present (in person): April Surprenant, Janice Hata, Kawelo Kalili, and Jessica Lahip

Also in Attendance: Heather Kimball (County Council, District 1)

There were approximately thirty-six members of the public in attendance (thirty in person and six via Zoom).

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

Cory Harden testimony [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 31:34]

Kale Kailikini testimony [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 34:13]

Roger Christie testimony [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 37:54]

Chris Hirose testimony [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 41:18]

Millicent Cummings testimony [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 44:50]

Rebecca Melendez testimony [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 48:52]

Eric Weiner testimony [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 52:30]

Kevin Hill testimony [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 55:05]

Michelle Melendez testimony [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 58:47]

Patti Luzo testimony [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 1:03:20]

Jim Lazo testimony [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 1:05:45]

Pam Elders testimony [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 1:08:12]

33 Michael Tivana testimony [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 1:12:13]
34 William Meurer testimony [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 1:15:55]
35 Michele Preuost testimony [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 1:19:50]
36 Fran Copp testimony [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 1:21:25]
37 Megan Isaac testimony [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 1:23:30]

38 BUSINESS

39 **1. Final Draft General Plan 2045 Presentation** – Presentation and Q&A by Planning
40 Department Staff regarding the Final Draft General Plan 2045.

41 This item was called to order at 5:07 p.m. [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 1:30]

42 County Planning Department Long Range Program Manager, April Surprenant, provided a brief
43 presentation on the General Plan (GP), outlining the next steps and an overview of the document.
44 She discussed the outreach conducted and reviewed the project timeline, as well as the vision
45 statement. The plan includes sustainability principles and practices, covering cultural, economic,
46 and environmental aspects. Additionally, Ms. Surprenant briefly reviewed the draft land use goals,
47 objectives, and the General Plan Land Use (GPLU) designations.

48 During the presentation, the public raised questions about whether the County Council and
49 Planning Commission have the authority to amend the plan, and how sustainability (as outlined on
50 page 32) is measured. Clarification was also sought on the term “stakeholder” and who is
51 responsible for approving the plans, along with concerns regarding the protection of private
52 property rights under the U.S. Constitution.

53 Several comments reflected strong objections to the plan, with some calling it unconstitutional.
54 There were concerns that the plan aligns with the UN Agenda 2030, infringes on constitutional
55 rights, and constitutes a breach of public trust, with calls for greater emphasis on self-sufficiency
56 and support for agriculture. Additional concerns included rising property taxes, a lack of public
57 awareness, and specific language related to small farm regulations. Some expressed frustration
58 over not being heard and raised issues about government accountability, as well as concerns about
59 equity, property rights, and potential health risks from microwave radiation.

60 This item concluded at 6:46 p.m.

61 **2. Updates on Implementation Priorities** – The Action Committee will provide updates on
62 their respective implementation priorities:

- 63 • Fire Preparedness & Public Access – Committee member Tawn Keeney
- 64 • Coastal Resource Community Based Hui – Committee member Robert Nishimoto

65 This item was called to order at 6:47 p.m. [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 1:43:46]

66 Committee member Tawn Keeney had no updates regarding fire preparedness and public access.

Committee member Robert Nishimoto had no updates but asked Ms. Surprenant who he could contact regarding the marine management area. Ms. Surprenant informed Mr. Nishimoto that he could speak with her directly to connect with the appropriate individuals.

This item concluded at 6:55 p.m.

3. Proposed Transient Accommodations Rental Code Amendment (TAR Bill) – Discussion and potential decision-making on providing testimony to County Council’s TAR Bill package (Bill 121, 122, and 123). More information: <https://www.hawaiicountytar.com/>

This item was called to order at 6:55 p.m. [*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 1:51:47*]

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

This item concluded at 6:56 p.m.

4. County Council Bill 181 – Discussion and potential decision-making on providing testimony to County Council’s Bill 181. The drafted bill can be viewed here:

This item was called to order at 6:56 pm [*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 1:52:27*]

County Council Member, Heather Kimball, provided a brief overview of the TAR bill, which includes a package of three bills (121, 122, and 123). Bill 121 proposes amendments to short-term vacation rentals and is still pending approval. Bill 122 aims to retain the name “Bed and Breakfast”, while ensuring that these establishments operate under the same standards as transient accommodations (TAR). Both Bill 121 and 122 are currently in committee. Bill 123, concerning accessory dwellings, has been adopted.

Questions were raised about the County Council’s process for passing bills and whether CDP action committees are allowed to propose amendments during the interim period. In addition, an audience member questioned what gives the County Council the authority to dictate how people use their property. Ms. Kimball responded by explaining that the County is guided by Chapter 46 of the Hawai‘i Revised Statutes (HRS) and the State of Hawai‘i Constitution, which determine the acceptable property uses within different zonings.

Ms. Kimball also encouraged everyone to visit the Hawai‘i County Real Property Tax website to download the fillable farm plan form related to agricultural taxes. The purpose of Bill 212 on agricultural taxes is to provide benefits to those who are actively engaged in legitimate farming, whether through selling, bartering, or sharing their products. The bill aims to distinguish these individuals from those who simply keep a pet cow in their backyard and are not genuinely farming.

This item concluded at 7:19 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES [*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 2:16:20*]

Committee member Robert Nishimoto motioned to approve the August 14, 2024 meeting minutes. Committee member Tawn Keeney seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING [*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 2:16:49*]

1. Updates on Action Priorities

- 103 2. General Plan Letter in support of Bill 181 regarding the Final Recommended Draft General
104 Plan 2045
105 3. Kō Education Center Meeting Report

106 **ANNOUNCEMENTS** [*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 2:19:17*]

- 107 • Mahalo to Richard Bidleman for his time and community dedication to the Hāmākua CDP
108 Action Committee.
109 • The Planning Department is currently seeking applicants for the Hāmākua Action Committee
110 and is requesting assistance to get the word out to interested community members. The
111 application can be found on the Mayor’s Office website at:
112 <https://www.hawaiicounty.gov/our-county/boards-commissions-application>
113 • Message from Committee member Robert Nishimoto.

114 **ADJOURNMENT**

115 Vice-Chair Mahealani Maikui motioned to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously. The
116 meeting was adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

117 These minutes and all related documents are available in the Planning Department’s Hāmākua
118 Community Development Plan Action Committee folder via the County of Hawai‘i [Public](#)
119 [Documents Repository](#). These documents may also be requested from the Planning Department
120 by calling (808) 961-8288 or emailing cdp@hawaiicounty.gov