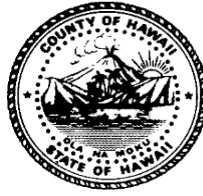


Mitchell D. Roth
Mayor



Gregory Henkel
Jennifer Scheffel
Martha Morishige
Kanoë Wilson, Chair
Leilani DeMello, Vice Chair
Vacant
Leila Kealoha
Susan Osborne
Franny Brewer

County of Hawai‘i

PUNA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN ACTION COMMITTEE

Aupuni Center • 101 Pauahi Street, Suite 3 • Hilo, Hawai‘i 96720
(808) 961-8288 • Fax (808) 961-8742

AGENDA

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN of the following matters to be considered by the Puna Action Committee in accordance with the provisions of Section 92-7, Hawai‘i Revised Statutes (HRS). This meeting will be held in-person at the location listed in this notice and by Interactive Conference Technology (ICT) through Zoom.

DATE: Thursday, December 5, 2024

TIME: 5:00 P.M.

IN PERSON LOCATION: Kea‘au Armory
16-512 Volcano Road
Keaau, HI 96749

ONLINE/ZOOM:

https://www.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJIsdu6pqjIvHWZQrIzEufJIkt_Ktc1nNeg

NOTICE REGARDING PUBLIC TESTIMONY: The public may provide oral testimony at the meeting by joining Zoom or attending in-person at the physical location listed above. Although not required, to register in advance for oral testimony please contact staff at cdp@hawaiiicounty.gov or (808) 961-8288. Pursuant to §92-3, HRS, interested persons who want to provide oral testimony may do so either at the time the committee takes public statements on the agenda, or at the time the specific agenda item is called. Please note that public testimony may be limited to three (3) minutes in length per agenda item. In addition, although not required, to ensure timely delivery of written testimony to committee members, it is requested that written testimony be submitted by 4:30 p.m. at least two business days prior to the meeting via email to cdp@hawaiiicounty.gov. When submitting written testimony, please specify for which agenda item written testimony is being submitted. All written testimony will be a part of the public record.

NOTICE REGARDING INTERACTIVE CONFERENCE TECHNOLOGY (ICT): A meeting held by ICT shall be automatically recessed for up to 30 minutes to restore communication when audiovisual communication cannot be maintained with all members participating in the meeting or with the in-person location identified in this notice. The meeting may reconvene when either audiovisual communication is restored, or audio-only communication is established after an unsuccessful attempt to restore audiovisual communication. If it is not possible to reconvene the

meeting as provided in this subsection within 30 minutes after an interruption to communication, the meeting will be automatically terminated.

AGENDA

- I. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL**
- II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:** The Committee will consider approving the draft minutes from October 3, 2024.
- III. PUBLIC TESTIMONY ON AGENDA ITEMS:** Pursuant to §92-3, HRS, interested persons who want to provide oral testimony may do so now, or at the time the specific agenda item is called. Public testimony may be limited to three (3) minutes in length per agenda item.
- IV. BUSINESS:**
 - 1. Presentation by Orchidland Neighbors** – Presentation and discussion regarding potential action for the proposed Orchidland Park.
 - 2. Presentation by Patti Pinto** – Presentation and discussion regarding highway connectivity in upper Puna.
 - 3. Discussion of AC Implementation Priorities** – Continued discussion and potential action regarding AC Implementation Priorities noted in the Google Form, such as:
 - [Puna CDP 4.3.3](#) Roadway Network
 - [Puna CDP 2.2.3](#) Native Forests and Geological Features
 - [Puna CDP 3.3.3](#) Social Services and Housing
 - 4. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair** – Discussion and potential action to elect a Chair and Vice-Chair for the Puna CDP Action Committee for 2025.
- V. PROPOSED NEW BUSINESS:** Action Committee members will discuss potential agenda items for the next meeting.
- VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS:**
 - 1. The Environmental Notice** –
 - Comments are due by December 9, 2024 regarding Hilo Benioff Medical Center Kea‘au Outpatient Center – Draft EA (AFNSI):
https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/erp/The_Environmental_Notice/2024-11-08-TEN.pdf
 - Comments are due by December 23, 2024 regarding Hawaiian Paradise Park New District Park – Draft EA (AFNSI):
https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/erp/The_Environmental_Notice/2024-11-23-TEN.pdf
 - 2. The Planning Department is currently seeking applicants for the Puna CDP Action Committee and is requesting assistance to get the word out to interested community members. The application can be found on the Mayor’s office website at:** <https://www.hawaiicounty.gov/our-county/boards-commissions-application>

VII. ADJOURNMENT

This agenda and all related documents are available in the Planning Department's Puna Community Development Plan Action Committee folder via the County of Hawai'i Public Documents Repository: <https://records.hawaiicounty.gov/Weblink/Browse.aspx?dbid=1&cr=1>. These documents may also be requested from the Planning Department by calling (808) 961-8288 or emailing cdp@hawaiicounty.gov. The recorded video of this meeting will be uploaded to the Planning Department's YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@cohplanningdepartment>.

NOTICE: The purpose of the public hearings is to afford all interested persons a reasonable opportunity to be heard on the above items. A person desiring to submit oral or written testimony shall indicate their name and whether the testimony is on their behalf or as a representative of an organization or individual. Written testimony can be submitted via email or hard copy. Hard copies should include an original and nine copies and be submitted no later than 4:30pm two business days prior to the meeting.

Anyone who requires an auxiliary aid or service, other reasonable modification, or language interpretation to access this meeting please contact the Planning Department at (808) 961-8288 or cdp@hawaiicounty.gov as soon as possible, but no later than five business days prior to the meeting date, to arrange for accommodations. If a response is received after the five-business days deadline, we will try to obtain the auxiliary aid/service or accommodation, but we cannot guarantee that the request will be fulfilled. "Other reasonable modification" refers to communication methods or devices for people with disabilities who are mentally and/or physically challenged. Upon request, this notice is available in alternate formats such as large print, Braille, or electronic copy.

If you are a lobbyist, you must register with the Hawai'i County Clerk within five days of becoming a lobbyist. (Article 15, Section 2-91.3(b), Hawai'i County Code). A lobbyist means, "any individual engaged for pay or other consideration who spends more than five hours in any month or \$275 in any six-month period for the purpose of attempting to influence legislative or administrative action by communicating or urging others to communicate with public officials." (Article 15, Section 2-91.3(a)(6), Hawai'i County Code). Registration forms and expenditure report documents are available at the Office of the County Clerk-Council, 25 Aupuni Street, Hilo, Hawai'i 96720.

PUNA CDP ACTION COMMITTEE

PUNA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN
ACTION COMMITTEE
COUNTY OF HAWAII

DRAFT MINUTES
October 3, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kanoe Wilson called the Puna Community Development Plan (CDP) Action Committee (AC) meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. A quorum was established with seven members in attendance. This meeting was held in person at the Pahoa Community Center and via the Zoom online platform.

The YouTube video of this meeting can be found here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=icRtRzihOtM>

ROLL CALL

AC Members Present (in person): Martha Morishige and Franny Brewer

AC Members Present (via Zoom): Chair Kanoe Wilson, Vice-Chair Leilani DeMello, Susan Osborne, Jennifer Scheffel (left meeting at 6:00 p.m.), and Gregory Henkel

County Staff: April Surprenant, Natasha Soriano, Maryam Palma, Shannon Arquitola, Janice Hata, Jessica Lahip, and Kawelo Kalili

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES [*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 4:33*]

Committee Member Osborne motioned to approve the August 8, 2024, minutes as amended. Motion seconded by Committee Member Henkel. Motion carried unanimously with 7 votes aye, 0 votes nay.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS [*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 8:43*]

This item was called to order at 5:12 p.m.

Virginia Aste provided testimony on Agenda Item V Proposed New Business regarding Orchidland Neighbors. [*SEE YOUTUBE TIME STAMP 9:37*]

Rebecca Melendez provided testimony on Business Item #1 Final Draft General Plan 2045 Presentation. [*SEE YOUTUBE TIME STAMP 17:10*]

Michael Tivana provided testimony to Business Item #1 Final Draft General Plan 2045 Presentation. [*SEE YOUTUBE TIME STAMP 26:03*]

Stephanie Bath provided testimony via Zoom to Business Item #1 Final Draft General Plan 2045 Presentation, Business Item #2 Drafting a Letter of Support for Conservation Efforts, and Business Item #3 Discussion of AC Implementation Priorities. [*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 29:40*]

Megan Isaac provided testimony to Business Item #1 Final Draft General Plan 2045 Presentation. [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 34:15]

Michelle Melendez provided testimony to Business Item #1 Final Draft General Plan 2045 Presentation. [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 39:22]

This item concluded at 5:49 p.m.

BUSINESS

- 1. Final Draft General Plan 2045 Presentation** – Presentation and Q&A by Planning Department staff regarding the Final Draft General Plan 2045. Please watch previous workshop recordings and review meeting packet materials as this item is intended to provide Puna specific information related to the CDP.

This item was called to order at 5:49 p.m.

Planning Manager April Surprenant and Planner Natasha Soriano provided a brief presentation regarding the General Plan and opened the floor to questions and answers from the AC and the public. [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 45:00]

The meeting raised several important inquiries, including who is responsible for making zoning changes and why the General Plan refers to stakeholders rather than homeowners. Questions about who oversees affordable housing in the County and why Waikoloa is designated as a major city despite Puna's larger population were also raised during this portion of the meeting. Further inquiries focused on the meaning of rezoning in relation to land use designations, the rationale behind selecting the 2045 date for the General Plan, and whether it can be amended to address future needs. Additionally, there was a question about why Hilo does not have a Community Development Plan (CDP).

This item concluded at 6:45 p.m.

- 2. Drafting a Letter of Support for Conservation efforts** – Discussion and potential decision making to draft a letter to support conservation around land acquisition, building permits, surpassed carrying capacity of people and the imminent threat from the lack of infrastructure in Puna.

This item was called to order at 6:45 p.m.

Committee member Brewer motioned to defer this agenda item to the next meeting. Committee member Osborne seconded the motion. Committee member Henkel requested to discuss thoughts regarding sustainability in lower Puna at the next meeting. The motion passed unanimously. [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 1:46]

This item concluded at 6:51 p.m.

- 3. Discussion of AC Implementation Priorities** – Continued discussion and potential decision making of AC Implementation Priorities.

This item was called to order at 6:51 p.m.

Committee member Brewer asked if the committee should consider updating the Puna CDP. Planning will look at updating CDPs after the General Plan is adopted. There are no specific timelines or prioritizations for which CDPs will be looked at first. Planner Maryam Palma stated that a complete comprehensive review of the CDP will require funding and staff capacity. If the AC would rather make amendments to the plan, they can start with looking at policies and land use maps. If the AC decides to implement this as a priority, it could be something to discuss in future meetings. [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 1:48]

Committee member Osborne proposed adding an implementation item aimed at incorporating criteria to prevent the approval of high-risk invasive plants in landscape plans. This item will be discussed at the next meeting. [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 1:55]

Planner Maryam presented the top priority responses from the Action Committee to reestablish connections between AC members and the CDP implementation action items. This list is intended to facilitate ongoing discussions at the next meeting.

Stephanie Bath provided testimony. [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 2:01]

Committee member Osborne and Chair Wilson concurred with Stephanie's testimony and will invite former AC member Patti Pinto to give a presentation on connectivity in Puna.

This item concluded at 7:03 p.m.

PROPOSED AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 2:07]

1. Patti Pinto present on extensive research transportation projects in Puna
2. Orchidland Neighbors regarding Orchidland Park
3. Drafting a Letter of Support for Conservation Efforts
4. Discussion of AC Implementation Priorities
5. Reach out to DOT regarding widening the Ainaloa roundabout

ADJOURNMENT

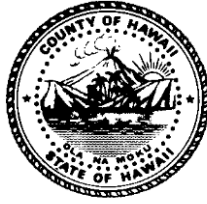
Vice Chair DeMello adjourned the meeting at 7:19 P.M. [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 2:15]

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

C. Kimo Alameda, Ph.D.
Mayor

William V. Brilhante, Jr.
Managing Director

West Hawai'i Office
74-5044 Ane Keohokālole Hwy
Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740
Phone (808) 323-4770
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County of Hawai'i

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Jeffrey W. Darrow
Acting Director

Michelle S. Ahn
Acting Deputy Director

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Hilo, Hawai'i 96720
Phone (808) 961-8288
Fax (808) 961-8742

December 5, 2024

MEMORANDUM

TO: Office of the Corporation Counsel Office of the Mayor
Planning Department Staff County Council

FROM: Jeffrey Darrow, Acting Planning Director

SUBJECT: **Puna CDP Action Committee**
Tentative Meeting Schedule for 2025

The 2025 meeting dates for the Puna Community Development Plan (CDP) Action Committee are listed below. Please be informed that the dates and venue of the meetings are subject to change.

February 27th (Thursday)

April 24th (Thursday)

June 26th (Thursday)

August 28th (Thursday)

October 23rd (Thursday)

December 11th (Thursday)

1st Priority Responses

Communication No. 2024-12

Action Item #	CDP Theme	Section	Action	Lead Supporting Agencies	Timeline
2.1.3 (b)	Mālama I Ka ‘Āina	Historic, Cultural, and Scenic Resources	Propose amendments to the county building code for traditional Hawaiian building design and construction methods	Lead: DPW Supporting: COU/PD	2008-2012
2.2.3 (a)	Mālama I Ka ‘Āina	Native Forests and Geological Features	Enact a BRBZ Design District for the Volcano area	Lead: COU Supporting: PD/DPW	2008-2012
3.1.3	Managing Growth	Land Use Pattern	Click here (page 82): https://www.planning.hawaiicounty.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/301707/637205017973800000#page=82		
3.3.3 (i) (3)	Managing Growth	Social Services and Housing	Urge the State to increase local control over public schools by measures such as: 3) Removing the cap on the formation of new charter schools.	Lead: LEG Supporting: UH	2008-2012 2013-2017
3.5.3	Managing Growth	Parks and Recreation	Not specified	Lead: DLNR/DPR/COU/DOE/DPW/NGOs Supporting: DPR/COU/NGOs/LEG/DLNR/OHCD	
4.3.3	Transportation	Roadway Network	Not specified	Lead: PD/DPW Supporting: DOT/DPW/NGOs	2008-2012 2013-2017 2018-2030
4.3.3 (a)	Transportation	Roadway Network	1) Plan and design PMAR alignment 2) Require building setbacks in HP for potential PMAR extension 3) Establish emergency routes using mostly existing road beds 4) Include pedestrian and bicycling requirements in all projects 5) Create connectivity alignments between various subdivisions	Lead: PD/DPW Supporting: DOT/DPW/NGOs	2008-2012

2nd Priority Responses

Aciton Item #	Theme	Section	Action	Lead Supporting Agencies	Timeline
2.2.3 (b)	Mālama I Ka 'Āina	Native Forests and Geological Features	Propose amendments to the County code to protect native species, geological and historic features outside of the BRBZ	Lead: COU Supporting: PD/DPW	2008-2012
2.1.1 (d)	Mālama I Ka 'Āina	Historic, Cultural, and Scenic Resources	Awareness and appreciation of the host culture is expanded.	N/A	N/A
2.1.3	Mālama I Ka 'Āina	Historic, Cultural, and Scenic Resources	Click here (81): https://www.planning.hawaiicounty.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/301707/637205017973800000#page=81	Lead: PD/ DPW Supporting: COU/ PD	2008-2012 2013-2017
3.3.3 (b)	Managing Growth	Social Services and Housing	Establish "one-stop" social services assistanve centers at various locations	Lead: NGOs Supporting: DHS/OHCD	2008-2012 2013-2017
3.6.3 (g)	Managing Growth	Energy Sustainability	Negotiate a direct use of geothermal agreement for agricultural uses as part of any expansion of the capacity of the Puna Geothermal Venture plant	Lead: HELCO/PUC Supporting: R&D	2008-2012
4.3.3	Transportation	Roadway Network	Not specified	Lead: PD/DPW Supporting: DOT/DPW/NGOs	2008-2012 2013-2017 2018-2030

3rd Priority Responses

Aciton Item #	Theme	Section	Action	Lead Supporting Agencies	Timeline
2.1.1 (e)	Managing Growth	Social Services and Housing	The native forests of Puna are revered as part of the native culture and are provided with permanent protection from degradation and loss.	N/A	N/A
2.2.3 (e)	Mālama I Ka 'Āina	Native Forests and Geological Features	Reduce the minimum lot size to qualify for the native forest preservation tax reduction and allow it in any zoning district	Lead: COU Supporting: FIN	2008-2012
3.3.3	Managing Growth	Social Services and Housing	Not Specified	Lead: NGOs/COU/LEG/OHCD Supporting: LEG/DOH/DHS/OHCD	2008-2012 2013-2017 2018-2030
4.1.3 (c)	Transportation	Traffice Demand Management	Facilitate telecommuting by developing free Wi-Fi reception in Puna	Lead: COU/LEG Supporting: FED	2013-2017 2018-2030
4.2.3	Transportation	Mass Transit	Not specified	Lead: MTA/COU Supporting: FED/DOT/DOE/LEG/FIN/EM PL/NGOs	2008-2012 2013-2017 2018-2030
4.3.3	Transportation	Roadway Network	Click here (page 86): https://www.planning.hawaiicounty.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/301707/637205017973800000#page=86		

Upper Puna Connectivity

Creating points of connectivity between subdivisions from Volcano to Highway 130 through the subdivisions makai of highway 11. Using staggered connectivity locations as recommended by the PCDP

Ad-Hoc Committee on Connectivity Goals

Puna Community Development Plan, taken from Section 4.3.3

- Establish emergency routes, using mostly existing road beds;
- Create Connectivity Alignments between the following subdivisions: Orchidland, Hawaiian Acres, Fern Acres, Kopua Farm Lots, Eden Roc and Fern Forest...These inter-subdivision roads should be staggered, low-impact, and multi-modal.

The Committee was charged with the task of investigating and identifying possible points of connectivity between the Upper Puna subdivisions in order to establish an alternative route from the Volcano area, through the subdivisions, connecting to Highway 130. Additionally to identify possible connector roads from the subdivisions to Highway 11.

Connectivity Locations – Not a Corridor

We are not proposing a road, we are recommending points of connectivity between the subdivisions.

The creation of these Connectivity Locations (CLs) will require legal agreements with the County and the Community Associations of the subdivisions. In some cases, the purchase of necessary lots or easements, and the actual creation of short connecting roads.

2013 Puna Regional Emergency Preparedness Fair



PUNA REGIONAL EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FAIR

Over 45 Presentations, Exhibits, and Contests featuring:

- EMERGENCY ROUTES
- CENTERS & SHELTERS
- PLANNING & TRAINING
- COMMUNICATIONS
- SECURITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Lucky Number Drawings every half hour for 250 Emergency Preparedness Bags Filled with goodies by our Local Businesses And Other Prizes

- Emergency Evacuation Mapping "Make and Take"
- Children's Activity Section + Keiki ID
- Career Explorations – Grades 9-12

Keaau High School
Saturday, August 31st
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Begins at 9:00 a.m. with Welcome and Entertainment by Puna Hongwanji Taiko Drummers and Keaau High School Band

An event supported by the
Puna Community Development Plan, Subcommittee on Connectivity & Emergency Response
Hawaii County Civil Defense Agency, The Puna Community and Other Local Communities

PUNA REGIONAL EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FAIR



Saturday, August 30th
Keaau High School
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Begins at 9:00 a.m. with Welcome and Entertainment by Keaau High School Band
11:00 am Puna Hongwanji Taiko Drummers

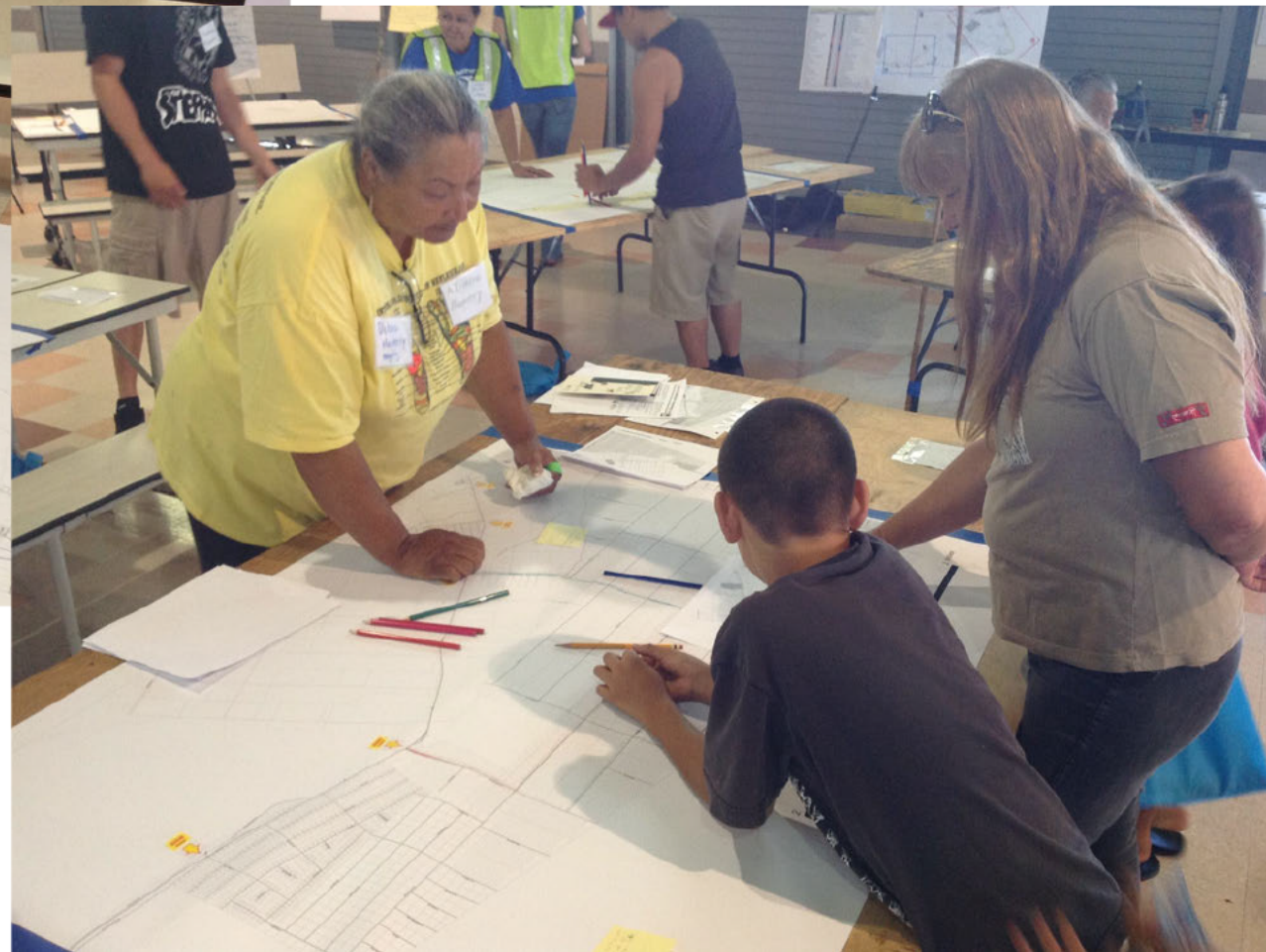
Lucky Number Drawings (18 years and older) beginning at 10 a.m. Numbers given for participating in all workshops, exhibits and demonstrations. Winners announced outside Cafetorium and at special exhibits. Must be present to win.

Family Emergency Planning- Cafetorium | Mapping Activities - Cafetorium
Career Explorations – Grades 9-12 - Pick up card outside entrance to Covered Court
Children's Activities - Covered Court

AN EVENT SUPPORTED BY THE
Puna Community Development Plan, Subcommittee on Connectivity & Emergency Response
Hawaii County Civil Defense Agency, The Puna Community and Other Local Communities

2014 Puna Regional Emergency Preparedness Fair

The Process:



Mapping Exercises at Two PREP Fairs



Community Input

- The 2013 & 2014 Puna Regional Emergency Preparedness (PREP) Fairs included mapping exercises where hundreds of Puna residents gave their input regarding connectivity needs in their neighborhoods.
- Prioritization according to criteria set out in the PCDP and the Hawaii County Department of Public Works.
- Field trip to investigate the roads and points of connectivity: participants included personnel from Department of Public Works, State DOT, Council Representatives and staff, Ad-Hoc Committee members.

Criteria for Points of Connectivity

County of Hawaii, Ben Ishii

1. Prefer to connect to a County Road at least on one end
2. Prefer that the road be open to traffic 24/7 and not just for emergencies
3. Construct roads that meet AASHTO (American Association of State
4. Highway and Transportation Officials) guidelines.
5. Prefer to do a project where there is no community opposition
6. Prefer to do a road that will improve traffic circulation
7. Prefer to do a road where there are no major drainage issues.

Criteria for Points of Connectivity

Puna Community Development Plan Connectivity Priorities

1. **Health, Safety, and Emergency Issues:** Emphasize emergency routes and other issues related to health and safety, including evacuation for all residents, with appropriate provisions made for those with disabilities (in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act).
2. **Education, Technical, and Social Issues:** Emphasize connectivity related to local educational and applied technological issues, as well as to social interactions that enhance personal safety, consider the appropriateness of creating linear parks connecting subdivisions and inter-subdivision gathering places (in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act).
3. **Transportation, Non-Vehicular:** Consider pedestrian, cycling, equestrian, and other non- vehicular transport.
4. **Transportation, Mass Transit:** Address essential mass transit services
5. **Land Use, Environment:** Protect cultural, natural, and other environmental values, including preserving open spaces for a variety of purposes identified in the PCDP.
6. **Land Use, Low or No Impact Design:** Use no impact or minimum impact design and construction.
7. **Safe Routes to Schools:** Include safe routes to schools in all considerations related to connectivity
8. **Community Alliances:** Provide examples of how communities are creating alliances related to connectivity

4/30/2014

MAPPING DATA CONNECTIVITY LOCATION PRIORITY LIST

Puna Uka

[illegible]

Upper Puna CL Map



Connecting Fern Forest to Eden Roc Kaleponi to Punahele

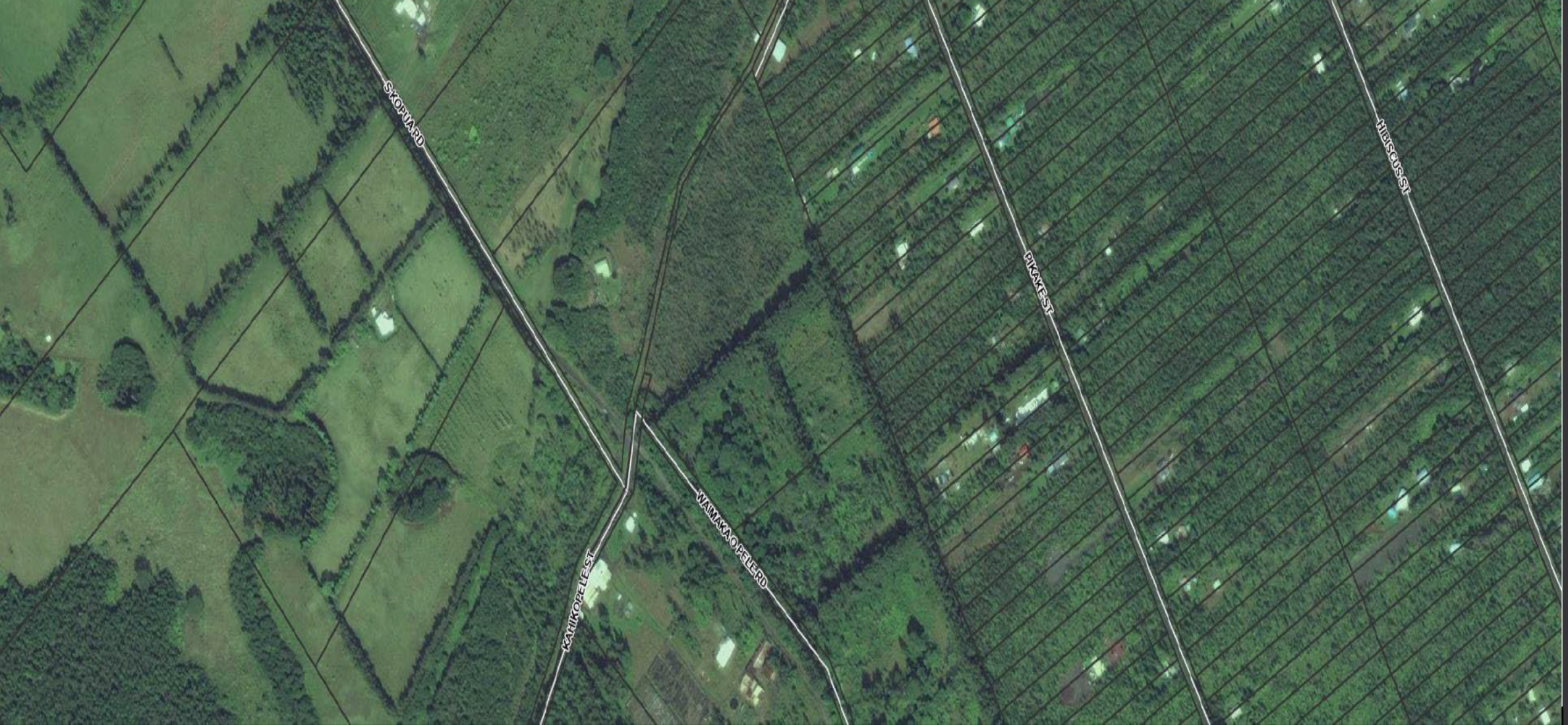




Gravel Road in Fern Forest runs to Eden Roc border. Eden Roc Road Lot is overgrown.

Connecting Kopua Farm Lots to Fern Acres – Kahikopele to Puhala





CL #14 shows the property line easement between Wamaka
O Pele and Puhala in Fern Acres

Connecting Fern Acres to Hawaiian Acres – Orchid to 1 Road (Uhini Ana)





CL #4 shows end of Orchid St. in Fern Acres at Plumeria St.
Fern Acres road lot is forest land abutting the undeveloped
lot in Hawaiian Acres.

Connecting Hawaiian Acres to Orchidland on Pohaku





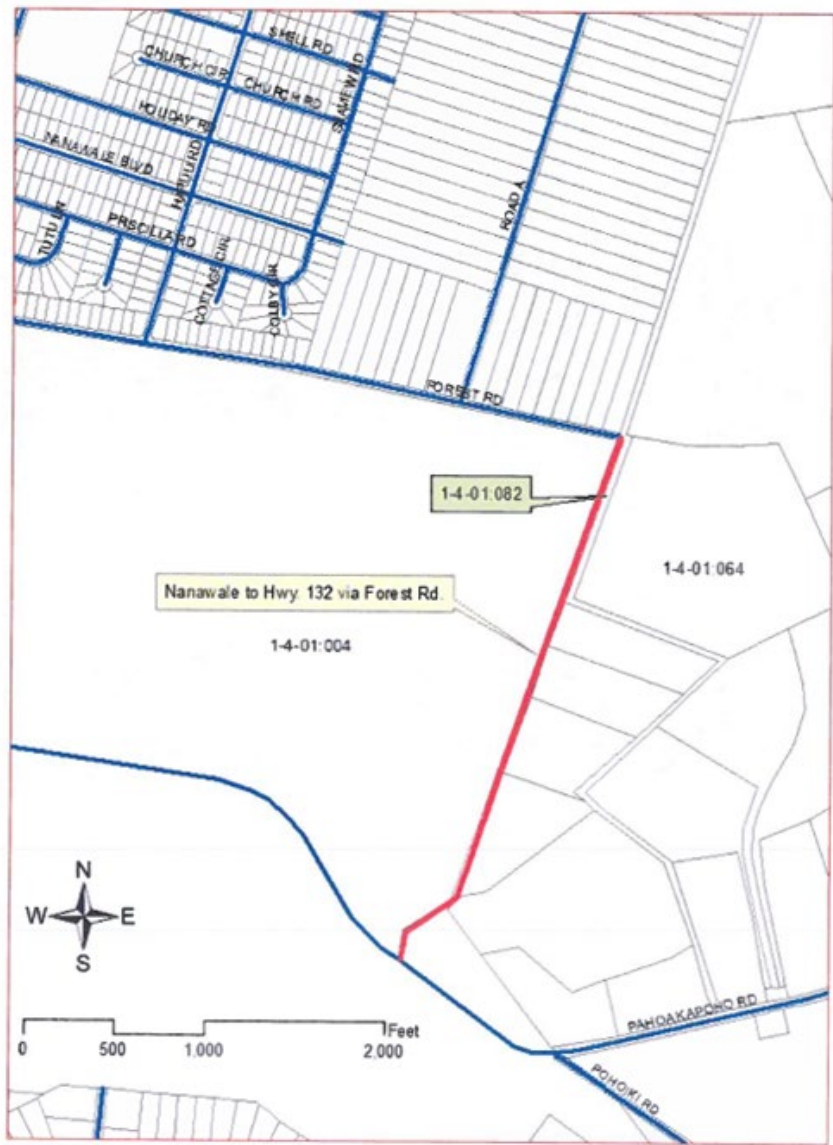
CL #5 shows 11 Road (Pulelehua) connecting to Pohaku Road in Orchidland across an undeveloped lot in Hawaiian Acres.

[illegible][illegible]

Nanawale Emergency Evacuation Route



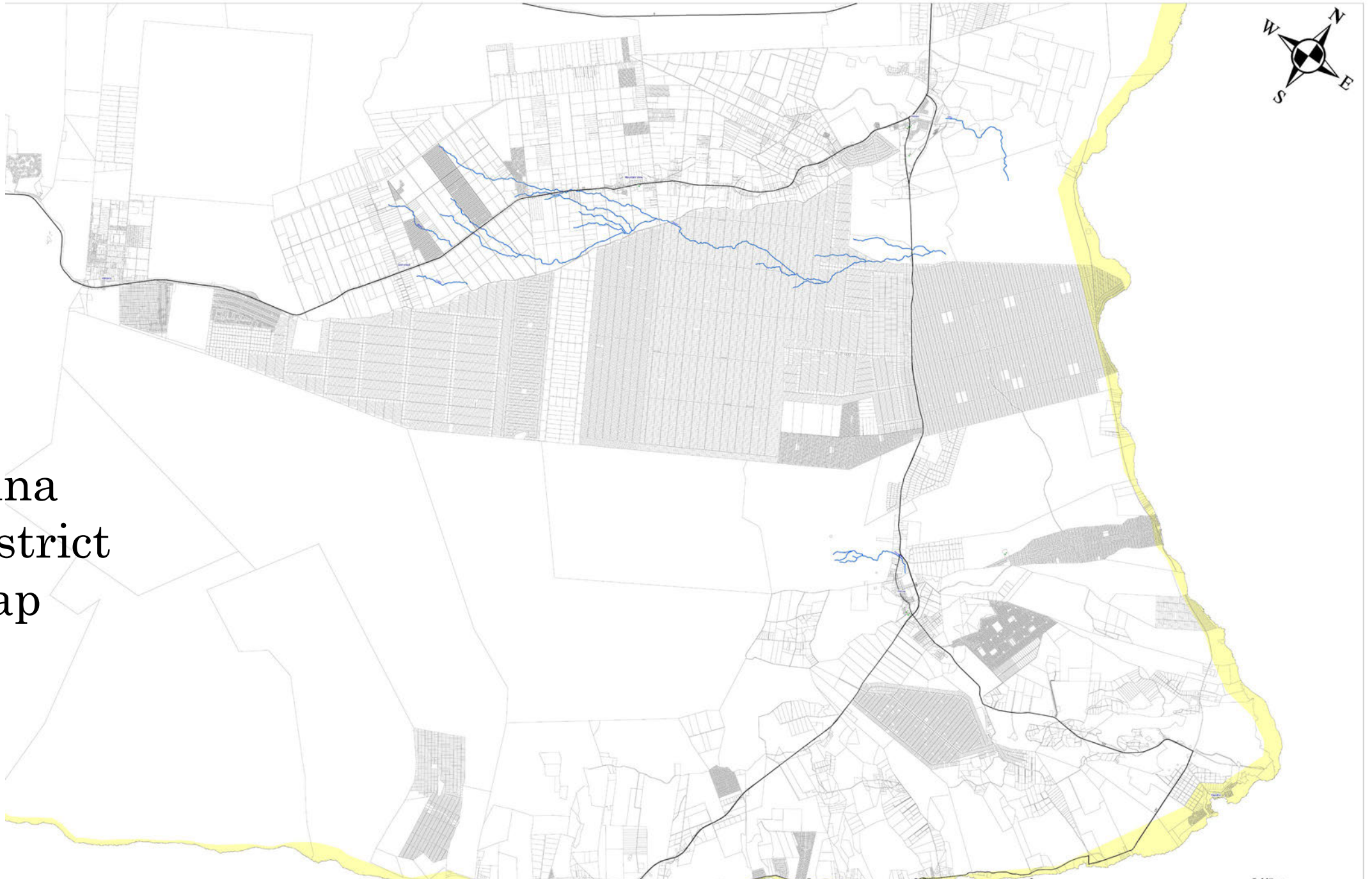
Puna Kai #2: Nanawale to Hwy. 132 via Forest Rd.



Proposed Nanawale Bus Route Extension



Puna District Map





PAU

From: [Melissa Fletcher](#)
To: [Planning CDP](#)
Subject: Written Testimony for CDP meet Dec 5th.
Date: Monday, December 2, 2024 1:18:33 PM

Re: Business Item #2, Presentation by Patti Pinto

Aloha, my name is Melissa Fletcher. I am currently the president of the Fern Forest Community Association, entering my 4th, final consecutive year in this position. I apologize I could not make this meeting and speak in person.

I salute all of you working the CDP, for your efforts to get these critical phases in motion. I am fully in support of Highway connectivity/Alternative routes throughout Puna. As a resident in Upper Puna for nearly 20 years, there have been countless times where this critical need has become apparent and we have been lucky that catastrophe hasn't struck any harder. Our dependency on this one route, Highway 11, comes clearly into play when large storms hit, or volcanic eruptions cause fissures crossing our only through route, or a major collision, fallen Eucalyptus, or power lines shut down the road. These occurrences happen regularly; It is not a simple matter of inconvenience to residents, it is a matter of safety. Being limited to one through route without any connecting alternative routes in remote areas creates an inability for help to arrive and prevents proper egress for residents during emergencies, much like we saw in Maui during the Maui Fire. One-through-route designs have been proven time and again, world wide, to be catastrophically poor planning in community design, let alone in areas like Volcano (with an Active Volcano) or Lower Puna, where lava flows occur periodically without much warning.

My reason for commenting is to deal more specifically with some of the proposed routes through private subdivisions and the issues that come with those proposed routes.

Fern Forest, Eden Roc, and most other subdivisions in Puna are private subdivisions, which means they are not County owned, maintained, nor covered by county or state funds in any way. Each property owner there has to pay a mandatory fee each year, on top of their state and income taxes, to maintain their private, commonly owned roads. The requirement that Fern Forest residents pay mandatory road fees for commonly owned property is based in Federal case law as well as State law (Civil No. 87-519 Third Circuit Court of Hawaii). The need for that ruling came from the way the County allowed developers to subdivide the land in Puna back in the 70's and earlier. It worked well for State and County then - and has for many years, since none of our tax dollars ever need to be spent on the roads throughout some of our largest subdivisions, saving millions of dollars of their funding.

The problem becomes clear pretty quickly: If the County or State wants to now use these ignored private subdivision's roads/property as their solution to necessary alternative routes/Highway connectivity, then

- a) How do they get them all to agree without major legal battles? Will they try force? Eminent Domain?
- b) How do they propose to ensure that the residents of these private subdivisions aren't footing the bill in any way, not only for implementation of a high traffic road, but also for the longer term effects such as road and easement maintenance, proper signage and markings, regular clean up of illegal dumping on easements, enforcement of speed limits on these routes through these communities, etc?

There are further concerns that, while these proposed mid-subdivision routes would increase subdivision connectivity, which can be good, it would also provide more access and escape routes to the rampant thieves and criminals that our State and County have a poor track record of holding accountable/protecting its residents from. I sincerely hope that some thought is being put to those valid concerns as well when planning alternative routes that best serve our communities.

In lieu of this plan to run connectivity through the middle of several large, private subdivisions, I suggest some alternatives:

- Put separate, state/county owned roads to the fronts or backs of these subdivisions. -Do not add new entries/exits that the subdivisions and its members don't approve of, but plan to connect to their existing main roads. For instance, in Fern Forest, you can run a road parallel to Highway 11, catching the front of Eden Rock, Fern Acres, Hawaiian Acres and only connect to the subdivisions via roads that already connect: Glenwood/Ala Kapena, S. Kopua, S. Kulani, etc.

- Better yet, run a new alternative route at the backs of these areas for even wider access/more spread out connectivity, granting the communities and our district a true benefit by adding true egress options to the subdivisions and a new, truly alternative route that aren't clustered near the existing main routes. This is a similar concept that has been tossed around for years with HPP and it makes sense in so many more ways. Would you go through HPP as an alternative route? No! To the back makes more sense.

I've spoken to many of our local, private subdivision boards and long-timers about this topic. There is clear consensus that there is a battle ahead with proposed routes through private subdivisions and that there are too many long term challenges currently unaddressed. I believe there are better options, some listed above, if we can 'zoom out' our lenses enough to see them and refocus.

Thank you,
Melissa Fletcher
President, FFCA
Owner & Founder, Yurts of Hawaii

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Melissa Fletcher
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Yurts: A Simple Solution.

