

1 KONA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN
2 ACTION COMMITTEE
3 COUNTY OF HAWAI'I

4 DRAFT MINUTES
5 February 11, 2025

6 **CALL TO ORDER**

7 Chair Charles Young called the Kona Community Development Plan (CDP) Action Committee
8 (AC) to order at 12:01 p.m. This meeting was held in person at the West Hawai'i Civic Center, B2
9 Conference Room and online via the Zoom platform.

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

11 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zf7CF8d7b10&t=4557s>

12 **ROLL CALL**

13 Members Present (in person): Charles Young (Chair), Nancy Pисicchio (Vice Chair), John Pelletier,
14 and Charla Thompson

15 Members Present (via Zoom): David Huerta

16 Members Absent: Roselyn Molina

17 County Staff Present (in person): Kawelo Kalili

18 County Staff Present (via Zoom): Maryam Palam, Janice Hata, Jessica Lahip, and Shantel Miller

19 There were approximately 7 members of the public in attendance (2 in person and 5 via Zoom).

20 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

21 Committee member John Pelletier moved to approve the minutes from the January 14, 2025,
22 meeting as drafted. Nancy Pисicchio seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. [SEE
23 *YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 5:32*]

24 **BUSINESS:**

25 **1. Kealakehe Regional Park Update** – Update from Action Committee members and discussion
26 regarding any actions the Committee may pursue. [SEE *YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 6:01*]

27 Committee member Pelletier noted that the AC had previously sent a letter to the former Parks and
28 Recreation (P&R) Director but did not receive a response. A new letter has been sent to the current
29 director, but the AC has yet to receive a reply. The Planning Department shared that the County is
30 working on the Capital Improvements Program (CIP), where the Kealakehe Regional Park is
31 expected to be listed. Once the CIP is reviewed by the Council and made public, the AC can
32 advocate for the project. Vice Chair Pисicchio highlighted the need to track past funding allocated
33 to the project, while committee member Thompson discussed water issues at Old A's and
34 Kealakehe. Planning suggested that the AC designate members to work with CIP staff on park
35 budgets. Vice Chair Pисicchio also raised concerns about the park's reliance on recycled water and

the next steps to address the issue. Committee member Pelletier will follow up with the Hawai'i State Archives regarding the park land.

This item concluded at 12:33 p.m.

2. Leeward Planning Commission Testimony Update – Vice Chair Pisicchio and Committee Member John Pelletier gave an update on the January 16, 2025, Leeward Planning Commission meeting, where they provided oral testimony on behalf of the committee. [SEE YOUTUBE *TIMESTAMP 31:43*]

Vice Chair Pisicchio and committee member Pelletier testified at the January Planning Commission meeting regarding the Hokuli'a reclassification proposal. They opposed the reclassification from Agricultural to Rural due to concerns that urban sprawl would conflict with the CDP. Planning Director Jeff Darrow confirmed that the change was made under the previous administration, stated he did not support it, and listed it among revisions to be addressed. The Planning Department ultimately recommended keeping the classification as is, aligning with the AC's position. Vice Chair Pisicchio also highlighted the importance of addressing overlooked issues in the General Plan, emphasizing the need for infrastructure mandates alongside high-density zoning. Committee member Pelletier attempted to advocate for TOD classification in North Kona but found limited engagement from the Commission. Despite challenges, the AC saw some success in influencing planning decisions and aims to continue advocating for better community engagement and infrastructure planning.

3. State Legislature Testimony – Discussion and potential action on whether the Action Committee should submit testimony to State Legislature on bills relevant to the Kona Community Development Plan. [SEE YOUTUBE *TIMESTAMP 41:33*]

Two bills, Senate Bill 869 and House Bill 869, aim to bring neighborhood boards under the same Sunshine Law requirements. Efforts to gain support included outreach to the South Kohala and Ka'u CDP Action Committees, both of which responded positively and submitted testimony. The Senate bill was initially deferred but later passed with amendments following clarification from the Office of Information Practices (OIP) and the Public First Law Center. Overall, the response to the bills has been supportive.

The discussion centered on concerns about proposed legislation that would weaken state oversight of land reclassification from Agricultural to Rural by removing the State Land Use Commission from the approval process and granting counties greater control. Speakers warned this could lead to unchecked urban expansion, inadequate infrastructure, and environmental harm. They emphasized the importance of state-level scrutiny for responsible development and sustainability. Additionally, concerns were raised about the loss of agricultural land and its effects on rainfall, watershed restoration, and long-term planning. Some participants expressed interest in researching these issues, addressing them through community development efforts, and exploring ways to oppose such legislative changes.

PROPOSED AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING: [SEE YOUTUBE *TIMESTAMP 1:11:53*]

1. Kona Watershed and Kealakehe WWTP.

- 76 2. Kealahou Regional Park
- 77 3. SB 869 and HB 686 Update
- 78 4. Water Issues
- 79 5. General Plan Update

80 **ADJOURNMENT**

81 The meeting was adjourned at 1:44pm. [*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 1:43:45*]

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