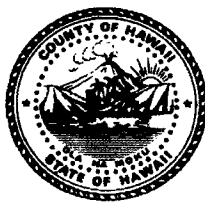


William P. Kenoi
Mayor



PLANNING DEPARTMENT
COUNTY OF HAWAII

2015 JUN 10 AM 10:35

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County of Hawai'i
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PUNA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN ACTION COMMITTEE
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June 9, 2015

Duane Kanuha
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**SUBJECT: Puna CDP Action Committee Recommendations for the General Plan
Comprehensive Review**

Aloha Director Kanuha,

This is in response to your memo dated February 6, 2015 pertaining to the General Plan Comprehensive Review. The Action Committee of the Puna Community Development Plan respectfully submits its recommendations for the comprehensive review of the County of Hawai'i General Plan. The AC appreciates the opportunity to provide comments and looks forward to working with the Planning Department as the General Plan review progresses.

Sincerely,

Patti Pinto, Chair
Puna Community Development Plan Action Committee

Encl: PCDP AC recommendations for GP Review

Puna CDP Action Committee Recommendations for the General Plan Update

Background

The headings below correspond to sections of the General Plan. AC recommendations are bulleted below the section heading. Recommendations are based off of initial excel spreadsheets that were developed and used to compare GP policies to Puna CDP policies. Side by side comparison provided context for development of recommendations. Additional recommendations were added based on comments from AC members. Recommendation alignment with PCDP is noted in parenthesis (section of PCDP or just a general comment that aligns with general CDP goals).

General Plan Sections

Introduction

- None at this time

Economic

- Strategies to improve infrastructure in substandard subdivisions (general recommendation, 3.1.2)
- Tax incentives or TDR (transfer of development rights) strategies for reducing buildable lots (3.1.1g)
- Use of village/town center concepts to target infrastructure investments (5.2)
- Use of improvement districts for infrastructure financing (3.1.3d.2.)
- Encourage village plans to guide growth and provide centralized services (3.1.2d)
- Adjust LUPAG designations as appropriate to align with CDP (general recommendation, 3.2.3c)
- Designate specific CIP projects to improve services to underserved communities experiencing higher growth (3.1.1c)
- Develop strategies that support and encourage ag tourism (3.2.2g)
- Add CDP specificity on business incubator districts (3.2.3a)
- Advocate for telecommuting opportunities (4.1.3b)
- Local job growth is primarily in “green” industries such as agriculture, alternative energy, communications technology, eco-tourism and natural resources management (3.2.1.g)
- Create new “green” opportunities in the agricultural, alternative energy, and natural resources management in Puna (3.2.2.k)

Energy

- Keep GP policy to encourage energy research and development but focus on renewable energy (3.6.3)
- Establish LEED standards for buildings (3.6.3)
- Provide additional property tax incentives for energy efficient homes (3.6.1)
- Pursue new renewable energy sources, through ocean energy or enterprise subzone (3.6.3i.)
- ADD all 3 sections (3.6.2.a,b,c)
- Review (3.6.3 actions) and ADD

Environmental Quality

- Add increased specificity to GP to incorporate CDP strategies (general recommendation)
- Encourage State legislation to prohibit the use of cesspools (2.3.3a)
- Aquifers could be used for future community wells in high growth low elevation areas are protected from pollution by untreated Wastewater disposal systems. GOAL: (2.3.1.a) & (2.2.3.e)

Flooding and Natural Hazards

- Add CIP projects that address flooding (2.3)
- Prepare water management plans (2.3.3)
- Develop community relief centers (general recommendation)
- Consider strategies that restrict grubbing and grading in flood prone areas that changes topography that could contribute to flooding.
- Encourage state legislation to prohibit cesspools as a means for wastewater disposal in areas below 1,000 feet Mean Sea Level, with the objective of protecting both water quality in coastal areas, as well as in the aquifer, particularly the portion underlying State-owned lands in the Maku'u area, where there is potential to develop the source for community potable water wells and agricultural irrigation purposes. OBJECTIVE (2.3.2.a) DOES THIS APPLY TO (11.2.2.c)?

Historic Sites

- Encourage use of Design Guidelines (2.1.2b)
- Advocate for improved database of historic sites (general recommendation)
- Structures and cultural sites that are significant to Puna's history and cultural traditions are preserved (2.1.1.a)
- Awareness and appreciation of host culture is expanded (2.1.1.d)
- ADD "Kanaka" Building Code (2.1.2.d)
- Retrieve and record information on trails and historic resources in the Puna, including research of old survey and plat maps and various records of Mahele, Land Commission and Royal Patents (2.4.3.b)
- Amendments to the County building code for structures utilizing traditional Hawaiian building design and construction methods (2.1.3.b)

Natural Beauty

- Consider scenic turnouts and linear parks with the intent to protect the intrinsic qualities of the areas (Hwy 137)
- Consider wildlife corridors and utilizing native plants for landscaping in park projects.

Natural Resources and Shoreline

- Fully utilize PONC funds (general recommendation)
- Add BRBZ to GP or additional tools for preservation of the BRBZ area (2.2.2a.)
- Add development controls for areas subject to subsidence (2.4.3)
- Support the development and preservation of wildlife corridors
- Develop strategies for combating invasive species (2.2.2)
- Consider PCDP section 2.2.2.b.d.e
- Where does the GP address tax incentives for native forests, restoration and abatement of invasive species (2.2.2.b.c.d.e)
- Reduce the minimum lot size to qualify for the native forest preservation tax reduction and allow it in any zoning district. Enrollment of a lot in this program is voluntary, but it is binding and permanent, and attached to effective measures to prevent significant clearing or other adverse alterations of the forest cover (2.2.3.e)
- Inappropriate and disproportionate County zoning can be adjusted in order to maintain and increase the quality of life and to preserve valued natural and cultural resources (3.1.1.e)

Housing

- Plan for additional retirement communities in Town Center locations (3.3.3g.)
- Consider allowing ohana dwellings on ag zoned parcels (3.3.1c.)
- Advocate for graduated conveyance taxes to discourage property speculation (3.1.2j., 3.2.3d)
- Advocate for additional “self-help” programs for affordable housing opportunities (3.3.2e.)
- Advocate or support assistance programs for repair and maintenance of affordable housing (3.3.1c.)
- Provide for transitional shelters and services for homeless (3.3.2c.)
- ADD “Kanaka” Building Code (2.1.2.d)
- Amendments to the County building code for structures utilizing traditional Hawaiian building design and construction methods (2.1.3.b)

Public Facilities

- Keep GP policy to develop new or improve existing health care facilities but apply to entire island (general comment from AC, 3.3.2)
- Consider alternate LOS criteria for determining minimum LOS (general recommendation)
- Increase emergency response capacity (3.3.1)
- Implement CERS recommendations (general recommendation)
- Use CDP specificity to locate public facilities (general recommendation)
- Explore use of existing school facilities to implement after school education opportunities (general recommendation, 3.3.2)
- As part of “safe routes to school” initiative, open Lauko Road to provide better access to Mt. View school (general recommendation, 4.5.2)

Public Utilities

- Add strategies to assist Puna communities to develop water systems, public and private (general recommendation)
- Plan for County infrastructure improvements that serve Village Town Center locations (3.4.3)
- Develop strategies to improve wastewater treatment (2.3.2)
- Develop policies for land pooling or TRDs to encourage clustering development (village/town center models, reduced infrastructure costs) (3.1.3a)
- Advocate for additional funds from PGV to be used in Puna for infrastructure improvements (general recommendation, 3.6.1d, 3.6.3g)
- Limit expansion of PGV (general recommendation, 3.6)
- Advocate for increased cell phone coverage to improve communications but ensure that cell phone towers blend in with the natural environment (3.4.3e)
- Advocate for improved internet access (3.4.3c)
- Advocate for phased undergrounding of utility lines

Recreation

- Complete the P.O.N.C. purchase of the Vacation Land Legacy Property adjacent to the Wai‘opae Reserve and implement plans to provide alternative shoreline access to the Reserve and at the southern end of the property, provide access for fishing (general recommendation, 3.5.3e.2)
- Consider additional CIP projects for recreation facilities consistent with CDP (general recommendation)
- Provide PCDP specificity for development of parks, including coastal parks (3.5.3)
- Develop and maintain new and existing trails, forest and coastal (3.5.2, 3.5.3)
- Consider adding “Friends of the Park” policy (general recommendation)
- Develop policies for linear parks (3.5.3d)

- Develop trail system that can provide for alternate modes of transportation, i.e. bike paths/walking paths, and provide recreation alternatives (3.5.3, 4.5.3e.)
- Consider additional CIP projects for ocean swimming areas at Pohoiki/Isaac Hale Beach Park

Transportation

- Include all of Puna CDP Section 4.2 on Mass Transit (MTS recommendation)
- Use CERT information to improve connectivity between communities/subdivisions (4.3.2a.)
- Provide more specificity pertaining to Puna roadways (general recommendation)
- Consider improvement districts to fund infrastructure improvements (3.1.3d.2.)
- Advocate for specialist that seeks funding for road projects (general recommendation)
- Consider including alternate route for Highway 11 from Volcano to Highway 130
- Consider paving Beach Road and keep open (general recommendation)
- Keep GP policy on developing mid-level roadway Makai of Highway 130 (PMAR) (4.3)
- Consider paving Railroad and keep open to traffic (general recommendation)
- Advocate for more emergency call boxes along highways (3.4.3d.)
- Advocate for bike paths/lanes along highway and major roadways for alternate modes of transportation (3.5.3d.1 & 5, 4.5.3a.)
- Develop trail system that can provide for alternate modes of transportation and provide recreation alternatives (3.5.3, 4.5.3e.)
- Makai route from Hawaiian Beaches to Paradise Park with connection from Railroad to South Hilo (GP: 13.2.5.1.2.a). Develop PMAR along general route shown in Figure 4-1, with specific design and alignment to be determined based on an environmental impact study that identifies a project having the least socio-economic impact (4.3.2.b)
- Transit service and improvements reinforce and complement village/town centers (4.2.1.b)
- Prepare a County-wide Transit Master Plan to provide an overall framework for transit improvements while incorporating user input from each district (4.2.3.a)

Land Use

- Support community based action groups in developing Regional Town and Village Center Plans that will guide growth and development in their communities consistent with the PCDP (5.2)
- Update LUPAG map to be consistent with Village/town center concepts (5.2.1)
- Look at current areas with multiple "special permits" and adjust LUPAG appropriately (5.2.4)
- Offer incentives (tax breaks) for people willing to designate lands for conservation (2.2.3d.)
- Add specificity from CDP – locations of industrial zoning (5.2)
- Recommend increasing consistency between LUPAG Maps and County Zoning Maps
- ADD Adopt a Biosphere Reserve Buffer Zone (BRBZ) (2.2.2.1)
- Enact BRBZ (2.2.3.a.9) "Amendment to the general plan to recognize the purpose and intent of the BRBZ and designation of State-owned lands in the BRBZ to 'open'"
- Develop and adopt special zoning and development regulations for the greater Kapoho area (Kipu Point to Pu'ala'a) to take into account the problems associated with the ongoing and catastrophic subsidence and property loss, pressure to develop lots for residential and commercial use, and increasing demand for access to the shoreline area for recreational use. Request the State to make some of their Kapoho area accreted lands available for integrated solutions, including relocation/land exchange and recreational opportunities. (2.4.3.f)
- Services and community facilities are more accessible in village/town centers that are distributed throughout the region, including underserved subdivisions that have been experiencing higher levels of development growth (3.1.1.c)

- Facilitate land use entitlements and financing for the development of new town/village centers (3.1.3.d.1)
- Propose amendments to the zoning code and/or apply district-wide rezoning to limit allowable building footprint on residential and agricultural-zoned lands, except for sites designated as village/town centers or for land pooling projects (3.1.3.e)
- Recommend reviewing the rezoning of all Agricultural (A) zoned parcels in the State Agricultural District in Puna to a zoning that would be consistent with the goals and policies of the PCDP (3.2.3.b)
- Create a real property tax exemption (perhaps 4 to 6 years) for farmers entitled to Federal crop loss insurance (3.2.3.o)

Plan Implementation

- Requesting clarification on the roles of the CDPs and the Action Committees (general recommendation)

Amendment Procedures

- None at this time