



waimea **community** development plan committee newsletter

may 2008

South Kohala Community Development Plan (CDP)

The South Kohala CDP Steering committee and Focus Groups representing the four planning areas of Waimea, Waikoloa, Kawaihae and Puako have worked with Townscape Inc. to create a South Kohala Community Development Plan. Townscape has released a draft of the South Kohala CDP for public review and comment. Included in the Waimea Town Plan section of the South Kohala CDP is the Waimea Conceptual Plan and Policies, released for review in January 2008. The hoped for outcome of the CDP will be to help our communities retain their special character in the face of rapid growth.

The Waimea Town Plan is developed from the Waimea Conceptual Plan and policies summarized below:

- o Preserving Waimea's "sense of place"
- o Moderating the pace of growth and change in Waimea
- o Wise management of natural resources and important agricultural lands
- o Development of affordable housing
- o Timely construction of transportation and circulation improvements

(See p. 56 of the South Kohala CDP at: WaimeaPlan.org; May 9, 2008 Public Review Draft for policy details)

The CDP contains detailed "Action Programs", which provide guidelines and protocols for carrying out proposed projects. These were selected based on the most pressing concerns expressed by the focus group and steering committee and from public comment.

Please read on for a summary of proposed "Action Programs" for Waimea.



CDP - Last Chance for Public Comment

May 28 - South Kohala Steering Committee Meeting, Waimea Senior Center, 4:30 pm and deadline for input on South Kohala CDP Public Review Draft

You may also communicate your comments directly to the CDP consultant, Townscape, Inc. at : andrewChoy@townscapeinc.com

Visit WaimeaPlan.org for resources and up-to-date meeting information.



photo courtesy Peter French © 2007

On the following page is summary of the Action Programs only. To view the draft South Kohala CDP and the draft Waimea Town Conceptual Plan in its entirety go to www.WaimeaPlan.org, or review a paper copy at the North Hawaii Community Hospital volunteer desk.

Action Program 1: Protect the pu'u of Waimea

The pu'u are a major element that "...define the special landscape and 'sense of place' of Waimea". Six of the pu'u are located on within the State forest preserve, while eleven are on private land.

STRATEGIES:

1.1 Acquire conservation easements for critical pu'u parcels

While there is a high level of control, the cost of acquiring the fee interest of a parcel is very high. Conservation easements on the other hand provide some control at a lower cost. A conservation easement is an agreement between a landowner and the County or a land trust that restricts the uses of the property to agriculture and/or open space.

1.2 Require a use permit for grading on steep ground.

Grading on steep slopes can result in significant increases in storm water runoff, soil erosion, siltation of streams and nearshore waters and house foundation failures. The County Planning Department could control construction on steep slopes such as pu'u or gulches by requiring a use permit for proposed grading and construction on any parcel where the average slope of the land is greater than 25%.



Action Program 2: Acquire critical open space areas in East Waimea

The approximately 40 small farm and ranch parcels that front onto Māmalahoa Highway in East Waimea (see map), provide a rural pastoral view. A trend towards subdivision of those parcels would soon change that view.

STRATEGIES:

2.1 Acquisition of fee interest or conservation easements.

Both these options boil down to paying property owners in order to control what happens on their land. The acquisition of fee interest is twice as expensive but would provide more control over the activities on the property. Purchasing a conservation easement means less control but at half the cost. But even with less control, a conservation easement would protect the property from development. Which option is used also depends on the plans of the property owners.

2.2 Internal transfer of development rights (TDR)

The transfer of development rights concept is used in many American communities. For example, there is a 200 acre farm that is zoned A-5a, meaning that it could accommodate about thirty-six 5-acre agricultural lots. A developer would purchase the rights to a farmer's land then transfers the 36 units to a 50 acre site, closer to town, that is zoned RS-10. This would allow him to increase the density of his development while the farmer's land is protected from development.

Action Program 3: Affordable housing for Waimea

The surging real estate market has made the price of housing in Waimea a big concern. Half of the new three-bedroom houses in Waimea were recently selling for over \$800,000. This lack of affordable housing is preventing many residents from owning their own home in Waimea, causing an increase in the amount of commuters and traffic .

STRATEGIES:

3.1 Self-help housing

The Hawaii Island Community Development Corporation (HICDC) develops self-help housing projects throughout Hawai'i County. The organization provides technical assistance to participants in self-help housing programs and assists families in applying for loans. A self help housing strategy for Waimea could be to establish an ongoing Self-Help Housing Construction Program that would provide 10 to 20 homes per year for at least the next 10 to 20 years.

3.2 Non-profit housing development corporation or similar entity

In 2006, the County's Office of Housing and Community Development set up an entity called the Hawai'i Island Land Trust (HILT), whose mission is to construct quality affordable housing. HILT's first project is the Kamakoa at Waikoloa Village workforce housing project. Prices on homes could range from \$235,000 to \$385,000 and rents would be in the \$800 to \$1,100 per month range. Smaller projects could be started in Waimea.

Action Program 4: Walkways and bikeways for Waimea

Here's one for all of you who would like to ride or walk without being in fear of your life. There is a critical need for walkways and bikeways within the existing rights of way of the main Waimea Roads: Kawaihae Road and Māmalahoa Highway. At many

locations there are 12 feet of County right-of-way available on each side of the road, but it is not usable for biking or walking yet.

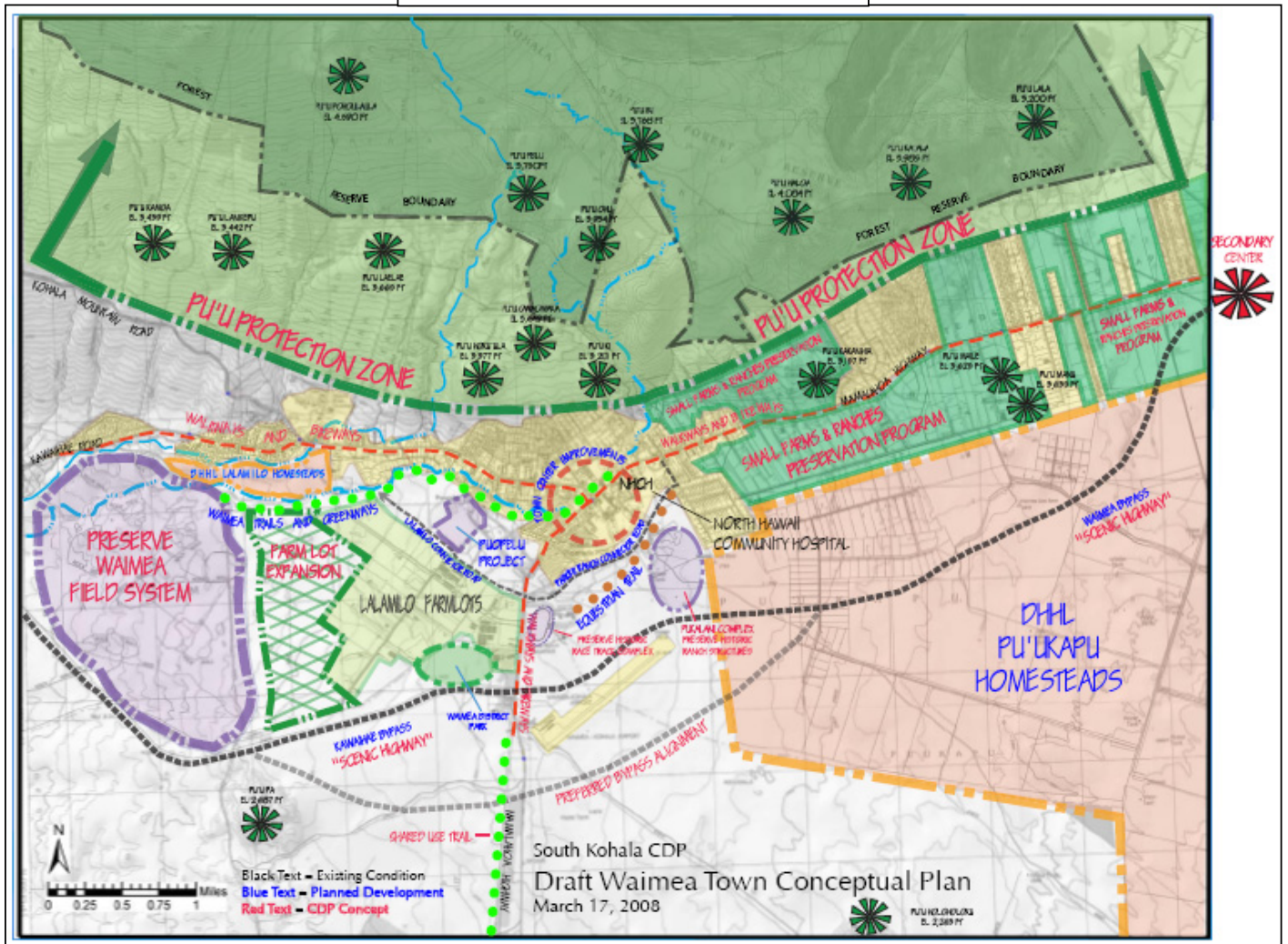
STRATEGY:

4.1 Construct walkways and bikeways

This action program can be accomplished through the

concerted efforts of Waimea-based walkways/bikeways subcommittee of the proposed South Kohala CDP Action Committee, the County Planning Department, the County Department of Public Works, the State Department of Transportation, and PATH (Peoples Advocacy for Trails, Hawai'i).

FIGURE 4.4: DRAFT WAIMEA TOWN CONCEPTUAL PLAN



*****In addition to the four town plans, the South Kohala CDP public review draft contains district-wide infrastructure policies that address the concerns expressed by many Waimea residents.**

http://townscapeinc.com/_library/documents/north-and-south-kohala-cdp/skcdppublicreviewdraftfinal05.09.08n.pdf