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February 27, 2006

Mayor Harry Kim  
Hawaii County Building  
25 Aupuni Street  
Hilo, Hawaii 96720 Fax to 808-961-6553

By mail and fax

**Re: Waimea Connector Road** [*Part A*: "the County section": from Kawaihae Road above the Transfer Station running on the north edge of the Lalamilo farm lots along the Parker Ranch Historic Home Lands to Mamalahoa Highway just north of the Parker Ranch rodeo grounds; *Part B*: "the Parker Ranch section": at that same location on Mamalahoa Highway just north of the Parker Ranch Rodeo grounds, going along the several subdivision developments and around the Parker Ranch Shopping Center and subdivision developments to Kalamalu Street on the east side of town near the police station, with connections on to Lindsey Road and Pu'ukalani Road.

Dear Mayor Kim:

There is a belief in this community that you are aware of the extreme traffic crisis here in Waimea and that we do not need to send you letters, telephone your office, or try to meet with you, to inform you that we desperately need the Waimea Connector Road built as soon as possible. It does not take a rocket scientist to realize that constructing this connector road around the center of Waimea is urgently needed.

For those of us who are aware of the ten million dollar county bond available to address traffic congestion here in Waimea, we assumed these funds would be used to construct the County's portion of the Connector Road and assumed that you would make sure that Parker Ranch in good faith complete its portion of the Connector Road, so that this "town center" alternate route and bypass would be completed very soon.

As you are probably aware, Parker Ranch's obligation to complete its portion of this Connector Road was part of the approval for its several subdivisions in this area – which approvals allowed these subdivisions to be for high density lots and multi-family buildings at variance with the standard lot size requirements and waived other requirements such as for sidewalks, gutters, and curbs. When last I checked, the Ranch is obligated to complete this connector road project by March of 2008, with one possible extension, or otherwise its subdivision approvals will be vacated. [Preliminary Luala'I Subdivision Approval by Christopher Yuen dated March 22, 2005]

Yet it is my understanding that several Lalamilo farmers met with you recently and that out of consideration for their personal concerns you have agreed to write a statement that you will oppose the use of the County bond funds for the County's section of the Connector Road. This is very sad news. For you to try to hold up progress on the Connector Road would undermine the public's trust in you.

Be very clear, there is no community opposition to the County's section of the Connector Road other than from those whose property abuts the proposed route, including the several Lalamilo farm lot owners (and from some associated with these landowners). The Lalamilo farmers' concerns, though real, are minimal compared to the anguish that so many of your constituents endure because of the daily traffic jam in Waimea .

As you must be aware, there are only nine farm lots affected by the proposed Connector Road, each of about 20 acres, with minimal farming currently being carried out near to the site of the proposed Connector Road ("Alternate Alignment A"). Certainly farmers all around the county deal with the presence of roads without any serious problems. The concerns these farmers have expressed at public meetings (e.g. dust from the road, spray drifting from fields on to the road, possible lettuce thieves) can be readily addressed by way of on-site mitigation efforts including fences. Moreover, no land is being "taken" from these lot owners. The affected farm lots were acquired subject to this 100 foot right of way for the Connector Road and utilities. There is no current vehicular use of this designated right of way. And keep in mind that no one in the community wants to instead locate the Connector Road through the middle of the Lalamilo farms on the existing "Lalamilo Farm Road" – where undeniably there would be conflict with the current slow moving vehicular and non-vehicular farm traffic. We all care about preserving agriculture in the county and consider farmers to be a politically important group, but the way this appears is that you are willing to sacrifice the needs of all who on a daily suffer in the Waimea traffic jam in order to appease the owners of several Lalamilo farm lot owners.

The other player here is Parker Ranch. It seems as if that Parker Ranch is seeking to avoid building the section of the Connector Road that it agreed to build unless the County is willing to turn over the bulk of the ten million dollar bond to Parker Ranch to complete its section of the Road, with possible repayment at some point in the future. The farmer's opposition to the County's section of the Connector Road appears to be the smokescreen to this behind the scene politics of catering to the wishes of Parker Ranch. This point of view was reinforced when Riley Smith of Parker Ranch, in the role of head of the Waimea Community Association, advised Councilman Higa that Parker Ranch would like to be given the County's bond funds. Make no mistake, there is certainly no community support for that position outside of those representing the interests of Parker Ranch. Likewise, statements by County officials to the effect that Waimea would be better served by adding another highway lane through the center of Town (rather than constructing the Connector Road) are absurd and do not represent the sentiment of the community. It is as if this County is being held hostage to the whim of Parker Ranch. This situation is certainly reminiscent of the circumstances that lead to the Hokulia lawsuit.

Councilman Hoffman also advised that one reason the County is not committed to the Connector Road is that it is not part of the County's General Plan for this area. He however is absolutely wrong. The one entry in the General Plan regarding Waimea's

traffic problem specifically addresses the need for the Connector Road. Section 13.2.5.6.2(g) of the Hawaii County General Plan "Courses of Action" provides:

"To relieve traffic congestion through Waimea town, implement construction of a) Parker Ranch's connector road from Kamamalu Street to Mamalahoa Highway; and b) the County's extension of this road, between Mamalahoa Highway and Kawaihae Road in the vicinity of the Waimea solid waste transfer station."

It is also my understanding that a consultant – Parsons Brinkerhoff – is about to commence a study to confirm the best use of the ten million dollar bond fund to address Waimea's traffic congestion. Prior to completion of that study, it seems inappropriate and premature for you to announce that you agree with the owners of several Lalamilo farm lots that the ten million dollars bond not be used for the Connector Road – a road that this community (and all who travel through Waimea) so desperately needs.

It is clear that the voice of the community at large is not being heard and therefore we are forming a "WAIMEA TRAFFIC CRISIS ACTION PLANNING COMMITTEE" aimed at construction of the Connector Road ASAP. [There is a Waimea Traffic Safety Committee, however the focus of that committee is specific safety issues, not planning relating to the construction of the various road projects].

The bottom line here is that we trust in your leadership that you will not take a stand that is contrary to the County's General Plan and contrary the best interest of the Waimea community as a whole. We as a community want to work with you to address traffic problems in a way that is fair to all and does not destroy the small town feeling of Waimea.

In order to get this letter to you immediately, I am not taking the time to pass it around for many members of the community to sign. However I assure you, if you want this letter signed by any number of constituents, that can be arranged.

Sincerely,



Margaret Wille

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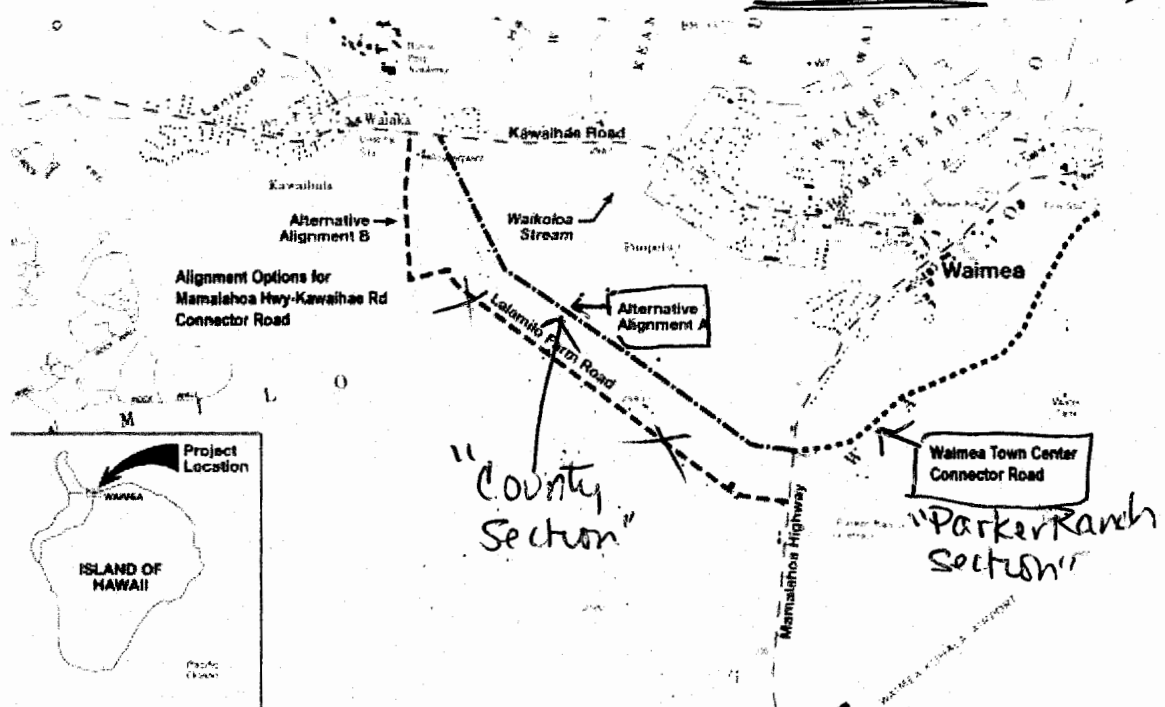
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## Mamalahoa Hwy-Kawaihae Rd Connector Project



Alternative Alignments for Mamalahoa Hwy-Kawaihae Rd Connector Road

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### Introduction

The Mamalahoa Hwy-Kawaihae Rd Connector Project will be designed using a portion of the \$10 million that the County plans to spend on roadway improvements in the Waimea area. It is not clear at this point when it will be constructed. The following consultants will be involved:

Belt Collins will be the engineering consultant. Contact information is:

Jane Dewell, Project Environmental Scientist  
Belt Collins Hawaii Ltd.  
2153 North King Street, Suite 200  
Honolulu, HI 96819  
(808) 521-5361 FAX (808) 538-7819  
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