

Kauai Planning Commission  
4444 Rice Street, Suite A473  
Lihue, Kauai 96766

January 31, 2017

Aloha Planning Commissioners,

On behalf of many individuals at this hearing today, and as a representative of the Kauai Community Coalition, I would like to commend the Planning Department staff on developing a plan that represents great strides since the 2000 update. The plan recognizes that we are at a critical *crossroads* and sets out with a large array of actions to address the community's desire to manage the growth that is threatening our way of life on Kauai.

Having said that, we also recognize that critical foundational pieces that typically bookend any type of planning document are missing from or woefully inadequate in the Departmental Draft. Specifically, there has been no commitment to: 1) the **model** (or framework) the plan is working under; 2) the binding **policies** that provide specific and required guidance for moving forward (functioning as criteria for decision making); 3) clear **milestones** for measuring progress along the way; 4) measureable **targets** for what we are committed to achieving by 2035; and 5) a robust monitoring and evaluation plan **measuring results** rather than just inventorying activities that have been carried out.

To better understand the importance of the foundational pieces, an analogy that mirrors what it takes to build a sound General Plan is that of building a house. There are critical decisions and commitments made along the way that ultimately support and ensure that the vision and functionality of the house is realized.

The first decision in building a house is to determine what **model** best serves the builder's needs – a McMansion that stands out and has high building and maintenance costs; a LEED certified green house that may require significant upfront investments, but pays off and is more sustainable over the long run; or, a beach shack that is inexpensive to construct and maintain, but won't survive the next Iniki. We have yet to identify the model the General Plan is working under that is best suited to Kauai – such as a "Green Growth", "Ahupua'a" or even a "Climate Smart" model.

After selecting the model comes the **blueprint** which addresses the basic infrastructure of the house determining where to place the walls, doors, plumbing, electrical system – all in an integrated fashion and in consideration of the type of model that has been chosen for this house. Which takes us back to the model – the blueprint should reflect the intention of the model whether a McMansion, LEED certified house, or beach shack. The blueprint for a General Plan is represented by the policies which need to support the designated model such as "Green Growth", "Ahupua'a" or a "Climate Smart" model.

Then the **foundation** is poured – and that is where the commitment is made to build according to the model. The foundation is represented by a complete and agreed upon Final General Plan.

The foundation is **inspected** to ensure it meets the established standards. The house is framed and **inspected** to meet the established standards. The plumbing is **inspected** to meet the established standards, as is the electrical. The house is not inspected for the wallpaper, the light fixtures or the door knobs, but rather for the soundness of the foundational components. And the house is not just inspected after it is completed, but rather along every step of the construction process. And likewise, a General Plan requires regular monitoring and evaluation, preferably every 6 months.

We don't have the model or the blueprint for the new General Plan. Without the model and blueprint we can't pour the foundation. Just like Home Depot, our plan right now is full of every possibility in terms of ideas, but we need to narrow it down and pick and choose our tools and materials according to our model and blueprint if we are going to get the results we want.

The Departmental Draft clearly states: “ Although suggested actions for implementation spanned all sectors, their aggregate cost will exceed the ability's community (edit needed) to either directly pay for such implementation or receive external funds as adequate support. “. This alone suggests, in the Departmental Draft's own words, that we cannot expect to implement the current plan with any success, but rather we need a more clearly articulated model for what we are aiming to achieve by 2035.

**In order to strengthen these critical foundational pieces that ensures the General Plan directs us towards the future we collectively desire, we recommend that:**

- 1. The Planning Commission pushes the pause button.**
- 2. The Planning Department goes back and strengthens the foundational components of the plan.**
- 3. The Planning Department streamlines the plan by selecting and prioritizing from this plan only those actions that help us collectively build the model we want.**
- 4. The Planning Department builds a monitoring and evaluation plan that recognizes the importance of accountability and the need to achieve results.**

Whole countries, island states, counties and communities have dared to push the pause button, identify a new model and make the commitment. If we all do this together, it will happen. We can either apply duct tape to this old house, patching up the holes or build a new more sustainable model for our remote island community as a legacy to the generations who will follow us, just as others have chosen to do around the world.

Mahalo for your courage to do the right thing.

Respectfully,  
Anne Walton  
Wailua Homesteads

