

## Section 1: Introduction

Ua mau ke ea o ka 'āina i ka pono.

*The very life of the land is perpetuated in the proper relationship of humans and nature.*

Hawai'i State Motto

### 1.1 Executive Summary

#### 1.1.1 What is a CDP, and what can it do?

“CDP” is short for “Community Development Plan.” CDPs are the forum for community input into establishing County policy at the regional level and coordinating the delivery of County services to the community. They generally do four things and require considerable coordination and collaboration to be implemented successfully:

1. **Establish County policy**, particularly for land use and development. CDPs can direct settlement where the community wants it and protect cultural resources, public access, and valuable areas like the coast, agricultural land, and forests. County land use policies are implemented primarily through the County's actions on permit applications.
2. **Direct County actions** related to land and open space protection, water, roads, transit, emergency services, and parks. These CDP strategies are implemented by County legislative and administrative processes like budgeting, capital improvements, and code amendments.
3. **Guide the policy and actions of State and federal agencies**, whose work impacts resource protections, public access and trails, settlement patterns, and education. It is assumed that the CDP Action Committee, County agencies, and County, State, and federal elected officials will collaborate to encourage federal and State agencies and other organizations to advance these CDP strategies.
4. **Focus and guide community action** in pursuit of community goals. These CDP strategies will be led by the community with support from a broad range of organizations and agencies.

For more information about the purpose and scope of the Ka'ū CDP, see Appendix V1 and Section 2 below.

#### 1.1.2 How does the Ka'ū CDP strengthen Ka'ū?

Complete, sustainable, vibrant communities do three fundamental things. First, they protect the public trust – the natural and cultural resources that are fundamental to community character and a strong community and local economy. Second, they provide public facilities and services to residents and businesses. And third, they grow local businesses that provide goods, services, and jobs. The Ka'ū Community Development Plan serves as a road map to achieve those three ends.

First, strategies in Section 4 of the CDP focus on protecting and enhancing Ka'ū's rich heritage of natural and cultural resources, including coastal areas, agricultural land, mauka forests, scenic resources, ecosystems, historic and cultural features, and public access and trails. Four basic approaches are used: land preservation, land use policy protections, governmental initiative, and collaborative action by landowners, nonprofits, and the community.

Second, Section 5 prioritizes improvements in water systems, roads, mass transit, emergency and health services and facilities, waste management, education, and parks. These improvements will require County, State, and community leadership.

Third, the Ka'ū CDP supports economic development in three ways. First, it establishes firm foundations for growth through the protections and improvements in Sections 4 and 5 and by providing room development in Section 3 (see below). Second, the CDP outlines strategic steps to seize sector-specific market opportunities. Third, the CDP provides a road map to guide coordinated, community-led economic development strategies.

The Land Use Policies in Section 3 of the CDP tie the environmental, infrastructure, and economic elements of the CDP together by clearly segregating protected areas (coastal areas and mauka forests), agricultural land, and settled areas.

### **1.1.3 What, specifically, does the Ka'ū CDP do?**

As noted in Section 1.1.1 above, CDPs do a range of things and are implemented in a variety of ways. Listed below are the specific strategies included in the Ka'ū CDP, clustered by the four sections of the CDP introduced in Section 1.1.2 above. In the list below, policies established when the CDP is adopted begin with terms like “protects,” “preserves,” “ensures,” “concentrates,” “identifies,” and “allows for.” Strategies that require follow-up action begin with terms like “guides,” “prioritizes,” “supports,” and “advances.”

The Ka'ū Community Development Plan:

#### *Protects and Enhances Natural and Cultural Resources (Section 4)*

- Guides the expansion of lands held in public trust
- Protects coastal areas, agricultural land, and mauka forests from development
- Protects open space, areas with natural beauty, and scenic view planes
- Guides the development of programs to strengthen protections for coastal and agricultural lands as well as open space and view planes
- Preserves historic resources
- Guides the restoration of historic sites and buildings, the retention of village and town character, and the documentation of oral, written, and video histories
- Supports the preservation of village and town character and guides the enhancement of communities' unique sense of place
- Ensures appropriate public access to the shoreline and mauka forests
- Guides the development of a regional network of trails
- Guides collaborative stewardship and enhancement of coastal and forest ecosystems, cultural resources, agricultural lands, public access, and trails

#### *Advances Preferred Conservation and Settlement Patterns (Section 3)*

- Concentrates future development in the existing towns, villages, and subdivisions
- Identifies specific commercial and industrial areas in Pāhala, Nā‘ālehu, and Ocean View
- Advances redevelopment and growth management with brownfield assessments, a County-wide affordable housing plan, and community-based development strategies

*Strengthens Infrastructure, Facilities, and Services (Section 5)*

- Prioritizes the improvement of existing potable water systems and wastewater systems to support infill growth
- Prioritizes formalizing and improving emergency alternative routes
- Prioritizes flood prevention
- Prioritizes the maintenance of County roads as well as safety improvements along Wood Valley, Kamā‘oa, Ka‘alu‘alu, and South Point Roads and Māmalahoa Highway
- Guides road and park improvements in Mark Twain and Green Sands
- Prioritizes bus system improvements, including a Ka‘ū loop route, an Ocean View route, evening trips to Hilo and Kona, and bus shelters
- Prioritizes new fire stations, a helipad, and upgraded equipment
- Prioritizes police station improvements, a new substation in Ocean View, and the maintenance of four police officers on each shift
- Prioritizes a civil defense sirens, hazard mitigation plans, and the Kahuku Park Community/Senior Center, Gym, and Shelter
- Prioritizes the Ocean View and Pāhala transfer stations as well as green waste drop-off and mulch pick-up sites
- Prioritizes and guides education improvements, including the development of a school and library in Ocean View
- Guides the development of skate parks and an ATV park
- Prioritizes community input during infrastructure project planning and design

*Build a Resilient, Sustainable Local Economy (Section 6)*

- Preserves opportunities to live off the land
- Guides the implementation of regional economic development strategies
- Guides the development of a regional education, enterprise development, and research network
- Guides regional strategies to increase “buying local”
- Guides efforts to strengthen the local agriculture value chain

- Allows for the diversification of agriculture-based businesses and rural uses on agricultural and rural lands
- Guides the development of local, renewable, distributed energy networks and prioritizes greater public review of commercial renewable energy projects
- Guides exploratory efforts to secure community payments for ecosystem services
- Guides the expansion of the regional network of health and wellness services
- Guides the development of a regional ho'okipa network – a place-based approach to community tourism.

In addition, a large number of CDP objectives and strategies intersect at Punalu'u, which has a rich ecological, historical, and cultural legacy and is dear to the hearts of most residents. The CDP outlines a community-driven, collaborative process for planning the future of Punalu'u.

#### **1.1.4 Where did the Ka'u CDP come from?**

The Ka'u CDP was developed in three stages, which are described in Appendix V2. Each stage was driven by extensive community input and concluded with a clear decision by the CDP Steering Committee, the volunteer advisory committee charged with recommending a CDP to the County.

During the first stage, community members identified core community values and a vision of what they'd like to see in Ka'u in 2030, as summarized in Sections 1.5.4 and 1.7.1 below. At the end of that stage, the Steering Committee affirmed a Values and Visions Statement that has since served as a compass point guiding the planning process.

Next, a detailed profile of the community (Appendix V3) was developed based on community knowledge and expertise as well as existing data, reports, and studies. Section 1.6 below summarizes the community assets and challenges identified in the profile. That stage concluded when the Steering Committee integrated the Values and Vision Statement with the Community Profile to develop the twelve Community Objectives that the CDP is designed to achieve (listed in Section 1.8.1 below).

In the third stage, extensive research was conducted to identify the range of strategies that could be used to achieve those objectives. From those strategies, a combination of policies and actions was identified that, when implemented together, will realize the community's vision for the future. Those strategies were compiled into the preliminary "working draft" of the CDP. The Ka'u CDP Steering Committee reviewed that draft, discussed it, and made recommendations for revisions. Next, the broader community and stakeholders had the same opportunity, and the Steering Committee used that input to make further revisions before it was satisfied that the CDP truly reflects community preferences.

### Section 3: Advance Preferred Conservation and Settlement Patterns

Ki'eki'e Ka'ū, kua makani,  
He umauma pā'ia e ke 'A'eloā.

*Majestic Ka'ū, of the windswept back,  
Whose chest is raised to meet the 'A'eloā wind.*

Taken from an old chant of Ka'ū chiefs; translated by Mary Kawena Pūku'i

This section of the CDP uses Land Use Policy Controls to focus future residential development in existing villages, towns, and subdivisions and identify specific commercial and industrial areas in Pāhala, Nā'ālehu, and Ocean View. This section also ensures that future land use permitting is consistent with CDP objectives and policies. Finally, this section advances redevelopment and growth management by prioritizing environmental assessments for potential brownfields, a County-wide affordable housing plan, and community-based strategies to create safe, sustainable, and connected communities.

## Section 4: Protect and Enhance Natural and Cultural Resources

Hānai a ʻai.

*To care for and eat from*

ʻŌlelo Noʻeau

Section 4 focuses on protecting and enhancing Kaʻū’s rich heritage of natural and cultural resources, including coastal areas, agricultural land, mauka forests, scenic resources, ecosystems, historic and cultural features, and public access and trails. Four basic approaches are used: land preservation, land use policy protections, governmental initiative, and collaborative action by landowners, nonprofits, and the community.

Section 4.1 guides the community- and government-led expansion of lands held in public trust, with a focus on coastal areas. It also supports landowners who seek to establish conservation and agricultural easements or use agricultural and forestry land preservation programs.

Section 4.2 protects coastal areas from development with the CDP Land Use Policy Map, shoreline setbacks, the Special Management Area, and encouragement to the State to strengthen protections and the community voice in land use decisions.

Section 4.3 protects agricultural land and open space from non-agricultural development with urban growth boundaries, permit conditions, and limits on Special Permits and lots sizes. It also prioritizes stronger farm dwelling regulations and tax incentive programs, agricultural subdivision standards, the development of transfer of development rights (TDR) and land bank programs, State Important Agricultural Land designations, and expedited lot consolidation in existing rural subdivisions.

Section 4.4 protects mauka forests from development with the CDP Land Use Policy Map.

Section 4.5 protects open space, areas with natural beauty, and scenic view planes with permitting controls and by prioritizing view plane regulations and scenic routes.

Section 4.6 encourages the removal of unexploded ordnance, the collaborative development and implementation of resource management plans, and the enforcement necessary to protect ecosystems.

Section 4.7 prioritizes the preservation of historic buildings and roads and the development of historic streetscapes and rural road standards. It also guides community-led efforts to restore historic sites and buildings, retain village and town character, and document oral, written, and video histories.

Section 4.8, 4.9, and 4.10 ensure appropriate public access to the shoreline and mauka forests, guide community-led access management and trail development, and prioritize governmental public access and trails programs and facilities.

## Section 5: Strengthen Infrastructure, Facilities, and Services

Ho 'omoe wai kahi ke kao 'o.

*Let all travel together like water flowing in one direction.*

'Ōlelo no'eau, 1102

Section 5 prioritizes improvements in infrastructure, facilities, and services, including:

- Water system improvements in Ocean View, Nā'ālehu, Wai'ōhinu, Pāhala, and for existing Hawaiian farmsteads in the South Point area (Section 5.2)
- Road and streetscape improvements (Section 5.3), including Wood Valley Road and bridges, Kamā'oa Road, Ka'alu'alu Road, South Point Road, and highway improvements
- Alternate routes connecting Kapāpala, Wood Valley, Pāhala, and Nā'ālehu as well as Green Sands and Mark Twain (Section 5.4)
- Mass transit routes and shelters (Section 5.5)
- Emergency and health services and facilities (Sections 5.6 and 5.7), including fire and police stations, fire trucks, ambulances, sirens, helipads, an Ocean View shelter, police officers, and hazard mitigation plans
- Environmental management facilities (Section 5.8), including expanded sewer lines, the Ocean View transfer station, green waste facilities, and improvements in the Pāhala transfer station
- Educational and library facilities and programs (Section 5.9)
- Park facilities and services in each community and along the coast (Section 5.10).

## Section 6: Build a Resilient, Sustainable Local Economy

I ha'aheo no ka lawai'a i ka lako i ka 'upena.

*The fisherman may well be proud when well supplied with nets.*

Ōlelo No'eau #1152

The Ka'ū CDP supports economic development in three ways: 1) establishes firm foundations for growth, 2) outlines strategic steps to seize sector-specific market opportunities, and 3) provides a road map to guide coordinated, community-led economic development strategies.

**Establish Solid Foundations:** Sections 3, 4, and 5 of the CDP establish a solid foundation for economic development. In most communities, and in Ka'ū in particular, the greatest economic assets are natural and cultural resources, like watersheds, agricultural land, coastal resources, and historic features. Section 4 of the CDP uses a wide range of strategies to ensure proper stewardship of these unique, place-based resources.

Economic development also requires appropriate facilities and services to support businesses and provide a high quality of life, like water, roads, emergency services, waste management, education, and parks. Section 5 of the CDP prioritizes those investments in Ka'ū.

Economic development also requires room for growth. The CDP's land use policies in Section 3 as well as other related strategies provide expansive room for development, including:

- Residential, commercial, and industrial infill growth in Pāhala, Nā'ālehu, and Ocean View (Section 3)
- Residential and small-scale commercial development in Discovery Harbour (Section 3)
- Small scale commercial services, bed and breakfast establishments, guest ranches, lodges, and recreational facilities in rural and agricultural areas (Policies 42 and 43)
- A community-based approach to redeveloping Punalu'u (Community Action 28).

**Seize Market Opportunities:** Ka'ū has opportunities for economic development in several complimentary sections – agriculture, renewable energy, payment for ecosystem services, health and wellness, education and research, community tourism, and retail. Most of Section 6 is organized by these sectors. Though each sub-section typically includes policies and advocacy items, growth in each sector will mostly be dependent on implementation of the Community Actions, which are detailed in the “Community-Based Collaborative Action Guide.”

**Coordinate Regionally:** There are several demonstrated ways in which communities like Ka'ū can play proactive roles in their own economic development, and there are many resources available to support such an approach. However, to be most effective, community-based economic development should be employed in a strategic, coordinated manner. Therefore, the CDP provides a road map (Community Action 20) to guide coordinated, pro-active community leadership to advance economic development by enhancing regional identity, building local industry clusters, engaging anchor institutions, advancing innovation, building entrepreneurial and business capacity, strengthening workforce development pipelines, building and retaining local wealth, and promoting Ka'ū.