

# TOWNSCAPE, INC.

Environmental and Community Planning

900 Fort Street Mall, Suite 1160, Honolulu, HI 96813  
Telephone (808) 536-6999 Facsimile (808) 524-4998  
email address: [mail@townscapeinc.com](mailto:mail@townscapeinc.com)

North Kohala CDP

## MEMORANDUM

To: Project Team

From: Bruce Tsuchida

Date: September 21, 2007

### NOTES ON ACCESS FOCUS GROUP MEETING OF 9/19/07

The purpose of this first Focus Group meeting on ACCESS was to provide the Group with some basic information on Access facts and issues, and for the Group to decide on how to move forward with meaningful action.

Participants were: Allen Salavea (Planning Dept.), Bruce Tsuchida (CDP consultant), Deborah Chang (subconsultant), Forrest Arnold, Sarah Bumbard, Martene Chang, Joe Carvalho, Marcia Carvalho, Mike Gomes, Mike Isaacs, Ted Matsura, Jim Sargent.

1. WELCOME – Allen Salavea opened the meeting by welcoming the participants. Allen then outlined the purpose of the meeting.
2. SELF-INTRODUCTIONS – Participants introduced themselves and briefly stated their interests/concerns about access. Comments included the following:
  - o Lateral access important
  - o Driveable access very important
  - o Need to implement access ways that so far are only on paper
  - o Need to have sensitivity to private lands and private property rights
  - o Access for young and old people important
3. INFORMATION AND DATA – Deborah Chang provided hand-outs and commentary on access laws, issues, and information. She also did a brief demonstration of the County's "Access Geodatabase" with a laptop computer and projector. The hand-outs were:
  - o State Law Chapter 34 – Public Access
  - o County of Hawai'i Planning Dept. – Rule 21
  - o Declaration of Easements for Public Access for Kukuipahu
  - o Agreement on Access between County of Hawai'i and Surety Kohala
  - o Settlement between Kohala Corporation and various parties
  - o Memo: "Re: Public Access Process & Policy"
  - o Memo: "Public Access Issues"
  - o Memo: "Factors Preventing Accesses from Being Officially Opened"

- Memo: “Selected Public Access Issues in North Kohala”

**Overall message: public (or community) access is a complex set of issues, and a lot of study and research is needed before specific actions can be initiated.**

4. DISCUSSION – The 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the meeting was devoted to a discussion of Access issues and ideas. Highlights of the discussion:
- Some accesses are poorly located; should be relocated
  - How much of the Kohala coast has lateral access?
  - No County policy re: which County department should construct, manage, and maintain access easements. Can the Mayor assign this responsibility to DPR or to DPW?
  - There was strong Kohala community interest in access issues 5 years ago, but the County did nothing so now interest has waned
  - The community needs to be well organized for something to happen!
  - What should be the State’s responsibilities? County’s responsibilities?
  - What are the details of private land owners’ liabilities in regards to public access across private properties?
  - How to get the County to accept liability for public access easements?
  - Which County entity will accept responsibility for liability?
  - Kapanai`a-Hapu`u Access – what is the status of survey work? The access road needs to be widened. The 4-foot wide lateral access needs to be located.
  - Re: access ways along edge of cliffs: should be defined as “XX feet from edge of cliff, as erosion will result in changes in actual location of the access.
  - What kind of signage is appropriate for North Kohala accesses?
  - Need County/Community partnership to create, maintain accesses
  - Idea: do walking tour of priority easements with Planning Director and County Council Chairman. **First need to be clear on what the community wants/needs the County to do.**

**Conclusion: The Focus Group needs to identify the priority access easements that need County Council approval, and then take positive action to get these easements approved and constructed.**

5. NEXT STEPS – The Group agreed to meet again on their own on Wednesday, Sept. 26 to identify priority access easements. The Group will appoint one of their members to record the results of that meeting and to send the results to Allen and Bruce. Allen, Bruce, and Deborah will evaluate the priorities, and also prepare some material on options for the management/maintenance of access ways. **We will then all meet on Wednesday, Oct. 17 to develop a draft “Action Plan” and decide on how to proceed.**