

To: Chair Don Couch
Planning Committee
Maui County Council

From: Albert Perez, Executive Director
Maui Tomorrow Foundation, Inc.

Re: PC-40, Community Plan Update Process

Date: May 20, 2016

Aloha Chair Couch, and members of the Planning Committee,

The Maui Tomorrow Foundation is very concerned with the explanation given by South Maui Council Representative Don Couch in County Communication 16-85, with regard to the cause of delays in finalizing the Lāna`i Community Plan.

Properly implemented, the existing community plan update process encourages community involvement in the planning process. Properly implemented, community plan updates are certainly achievable every ten years. Properly implemented, the Lāna`i Community Plan could have been updated in a reasonable time frame.

The recent delays that have occurred are entirely due to improper implementation of a good process. Significant changes were proposed by the Planning Committee Chair, and fully supported by the Planning Director, that would undermine much of the important work done by Lāna`i's very engaged community. Since these changes were introduced after the CPAC and the Planning Commission had made their recommendations, neither body was aware of the changes that were proposed by Don Couch, to turn the community plan into a toothless "guide," until after their deliberations were completed. Indeed, Chair Couch has made it clear many times that he feels the Community Plan Advisory Committees and the Planning Commissions are "only advisory," and that the Council can therefore disregard their wishes as it desires. While technically true, this attitude is a slap in the face to the many citizens who have spent significant portions of their lives working for a better future for Maui County.

The community planning process is not broken. It just needs to be followed with respect for the citizens of Maui County. We urge the Planning Committee to file this communication.

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