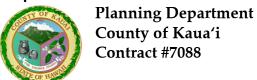


# LĪHU'E TOWN CORE URBAN DESIGN PLAN

### Prepared for:



## Prepared by:



June 2009

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(August 9, 1950 – September 17, 2006) Member of the Līhu'e Urban Design Plan Citizen's Advisory Committee

Warmly we recall the fond memory of our friend and colleague, Mike Furukawa, whose work and community spirit exemplifies the many devoted citizens, present and past, who built this town and our cherished legacy of aloha...

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# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 PURPOSE

Līhu'e is the center of government, business, and the major hub of air, ocean, and vehicle transportation on Kaua'i. The 2000 Kaua'i General Plan Update identifies Līhu'e as the "heart" of Kaua'i and the focus of urban growth. It is well-positioned to handle much of the projected growth for Kaua'i including higher density residential, commercial and

industrial uses in order to keep other parts of Kaua'i more rural and less dense. As a result, a major part of managing Kaua'i's future growth involves the appropriate building and physical development of Līhu'e.

This report, the Līhu'e Town Core Urban Design Plan, builds upon the policies set by the 2000 General Plan and will provide direction for updating other County



planning documents such as the Līhu'e Development Plan and Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance. It will guide development by describing an overall vision specific to the town core that covers urban design guidelines and standards. It will also address other planning issues such as historic preservation, neighborhood character, socioeconomic conditions and trends, circulation, parking and traffic.

By detailing development guidelines specific to each area within Līhu'e Town, sensitive development can occur that enhances Līhu'e Town's sense of place, history, and civic pride. The overarching purpose of this document is to renew and revitalize Central Līhu'e, recapturing the charm of this historic town and making it a destination and source of pride for Kaua'i once again.



### 1.2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

### 1.2.1 COUNTY OF KAUA'I PLANNING SYSTEM

In general, the County of Kauai Planning Department utilizes a planning system that is very similar to those of the other counties in Hawai'i. Kaua'i County's planning process involves working within the framework of a strong centralized State government as well as within the framework of County government. Consequently, a major part of Kaua'i County's planning program involves coordinating the County's planning efforts with both State and County government.

The foundation for Kaua'i's planning system is the County General Plan (adopted in November 2000). It establishes the policies, vision, and updated direction for the entire island. Both government and the private sector planning for Kaua'i rely heavily on the General Plan for guidance and direction.

Other plans that help in the implementation of the General Plan are the Development Plans, Special Planning Area Plans, Functional Plans (which focus more on infrastructure), and Special Project plans. Figure 1-1 shows a diagram of how the Līhu'e Town Core Urban Design Plan works within the existing County regulatory environment. It builds upon the description of the Kaua'i Planning System and Figure 1-1 of the Kaua'i General Plan which demonstrates how County policy is integrated and implemented into construction projects. Additional information about each of the regulatory documents can be found in the General Plan itself. Section 3.5 provides a description of how some of the key regulatory documents will relate to this Līhu'e Town Core Urban Design Plan and its recommendations.

The following Līhu'e Town Core Urban Design Plan falls into the Special Project category of planning instruments. Since the General Plan is the policy document, this Urban Design Plan provides more detail on how to guide development in order to implement the vision and policies stated in the General Plan. The General Plan and Līhu'e Town Core Urban Design Plan will subsequently be used to guide the update of the Līhu'e Development Plan which has been designated for funding for the 2009-10 fiscal year.

In order to ensure consistency between the various planning instruments, an important component of this planning project involved communicating with and coordinating the planning efforts of other State and County agencies such as the State Department of Transportation, State Historic Preservation Division, State Department of Education, the County Public Works Department, County Economic Development Office, and the

1-2 INTRODUCTION

County Water Department. This effort helped to ensure that this project would be consistent with other existing plans and/or current planning projects at achieving common goals for Līhu'e.

### 1.2.2 LĪHU'E DEVELOPMENT PLAN/KAUA'I GENERAL PLAN

One of the major concerns that appeared early in the process was that the Līhu'e Development Plan is thirty years old (November 1977) and may be outdated. Utilizing and building upon the existing Līhu'e Development Plan for this planning project was questioned.

In preparation for these types of questions, the County of Kaua'i General Plan project in 2000 updated and expanded upon the various components of the current Development Plans that were adopted in the mid-1970s. This effort was done to ensure that planning projects within the various Development Plan areas could be undertaken without having to update all six Development Plans.

It is important to note that the General Plan project received additional funding to update portions of the Development Plans in areas that were found to be necessary (mainly vision, policies, and implementing actions) through the context of the General Plan. This presented a very viable opportunity since the General Plan update involved a comprehensive island-wide process and would entail working with all of the communities. In this manner, the General Plan could serve to update pertinent areas of the various Development Plans to be concurrent with it through its context. As a result, the Kaua'i General Plan is written in more detail than most other County General Plans that function mainly as policy documents. However, it is still very important to update of the Development Plans to bring up to date and expand upon the directions and recommendations set under the General Plan.

By examining the General Plan, it is apparent that the vision, policy directives, and implementing actions proposed in it are specific and clear enough to guide Special Project type plans such as this throughout the various Development Plan areas without having to update the entire Development Plan. At the same time, the pertinent components of the Development Plans that are still considered applicable today could work in conjunction with the updated General Plan to guide planning projects such as this Līhu'e Town Core Urban Design Plan. Consequently, this planning project was developed through the use of both the Līhu'e Development Plan and Kaua'i General Plan.

**GENERAL PLAN (2000) DEVELOPMENT PUBLIC PLANS FACILITY** (1976 - 1977)**PLANS** UPDATE (2009-10) **LĪHU'E TOWN** COMPREHENSIVE **ZONE** SIX-YEAR CAPITAL **CORE URBAN ZONING CHANGE IMPROVEMENT DESIGN PLAN ORDINANCE ORDINANCES PROGRAM** MPLEMENTATION/REGULATION **SPECIAL MANAGEMENT SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE AREA RULES** LĪHU'E CIVIC **CENTER MASTER PLAN** (DPW-Building Division) **LAND USE PERMITS** APPROPRIATIONS/ **IMPROVEMENT** & SUBDIVISION APPROVALS **PROJECTS** 

Figure 1-1: County of Kaua'i Planning System

Based on Figure 1-1 of Kaua'i General Plan, 2000.

# 1.2.3 <u>LĪHU'E TOWN CORE URBAN DESIGN PLAN PLANNING</u> <u>INSTRUMENT</u>

The Līhu'e Town Core Urban Design Plan will act as an adjunct guidance document for projects specific to the town core neighborhoods. It updates the requirements developed for the Līhu'e Town Core Special Planning Area as identified in the DP and will support interpretation of the County's existing regulatory ordinances for the Līhu'e Town Core and supersede them where there is conflict. It should also be used to inform future updates of the County regulations, particularly the Līhu'e Development Plan which is expected in 2009-10. It is recommended that the Līhu'e Town Core Urban Design Plan will be reviewed and commented upon by the Planning Commission and portions of it enacted as an ordinance by the County Council to revise relevant sections of the existing Līhu'e Development Plan Ordinance as needed (Kaua'i County Code §10-5).

### 1.3 PROJECT SITE

A regional map of Līhu'e and the project site in relation to the surrounding communities is provided in Figure 1-2. Early in the process, the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) recommended that the Urban Design Plan focus on the historic core of Līhu'e Town. This area is outlined in Figure 1-2. The CAC and project team also recognized that even within this historic core, there are several different neighborhoods each with their own identity, history and character. Figure 1-3 shows an aerial photograph of the project site and the project neighborhoods. It also identifies other key neighborhoods and destinations near the project site.

The five main project neighborhoods that are the focus of this plan are:

- Rice Street Neighborhood
- Kūhiō Highway Neighborhood
- 'Akahi/'Elua/'Umi Streets Neighborhood
- Līhu'e Civic Center and the Adjacent Public Facilities Neighborhood
- Old Līhu'e Mill Site and Halekō Road

For each of the project neighborhoods, detailed site analyses and recommendations for allowable land uses, site planning, architectural design guidelines, street sections, and landscaping are developed.

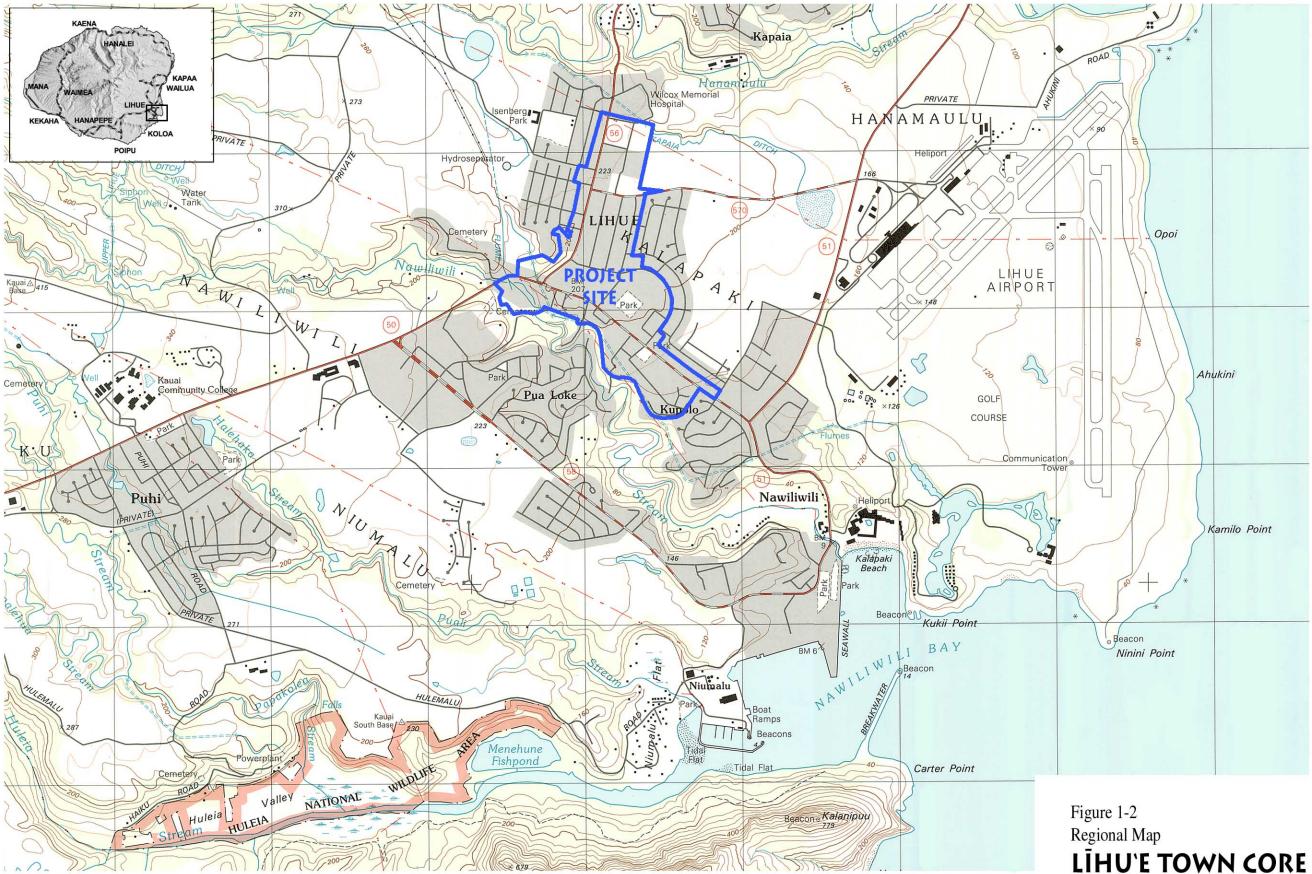
The adjacent Līhu'e-Hanamā'ulu project neighborhood outlined in a dashed line in Figure 1-3 is envisioned as an infill development that will

accommodate much of Līhu'e's projected growth. It has a separate Urban Design Plan that was completed in August 1995 and has been adopted by County Ordinance No. PM-326-96. This plan includes architectural design guidelines for the various land uses within this area as well as special street sections, landscaping guidelines and development standards. Development within this area of Līhu'e must follow the guidelines developed in this plan. Therefore, it is excluded from the design guidelines developed for the Līhu'e Town Core Urban Design Plan to avoid redundancy.

For the Līhu'e Industrial Park (also shown in Figure 1-3 with a dashed outline), recommended street sections were developed for future improvements to the right-of-ways within this area. Since industrially zoned land on Kaua'i is at a premium and the CAC felt that this area was on the fringe of the town core, the recommendations for the Industrial Park were kept to a minimum.

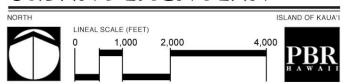
Where appropriate, a larger study area was analyzed in order to understand regional concerns related to the Līhu'e Town core such as traffic and socio-economic trends.

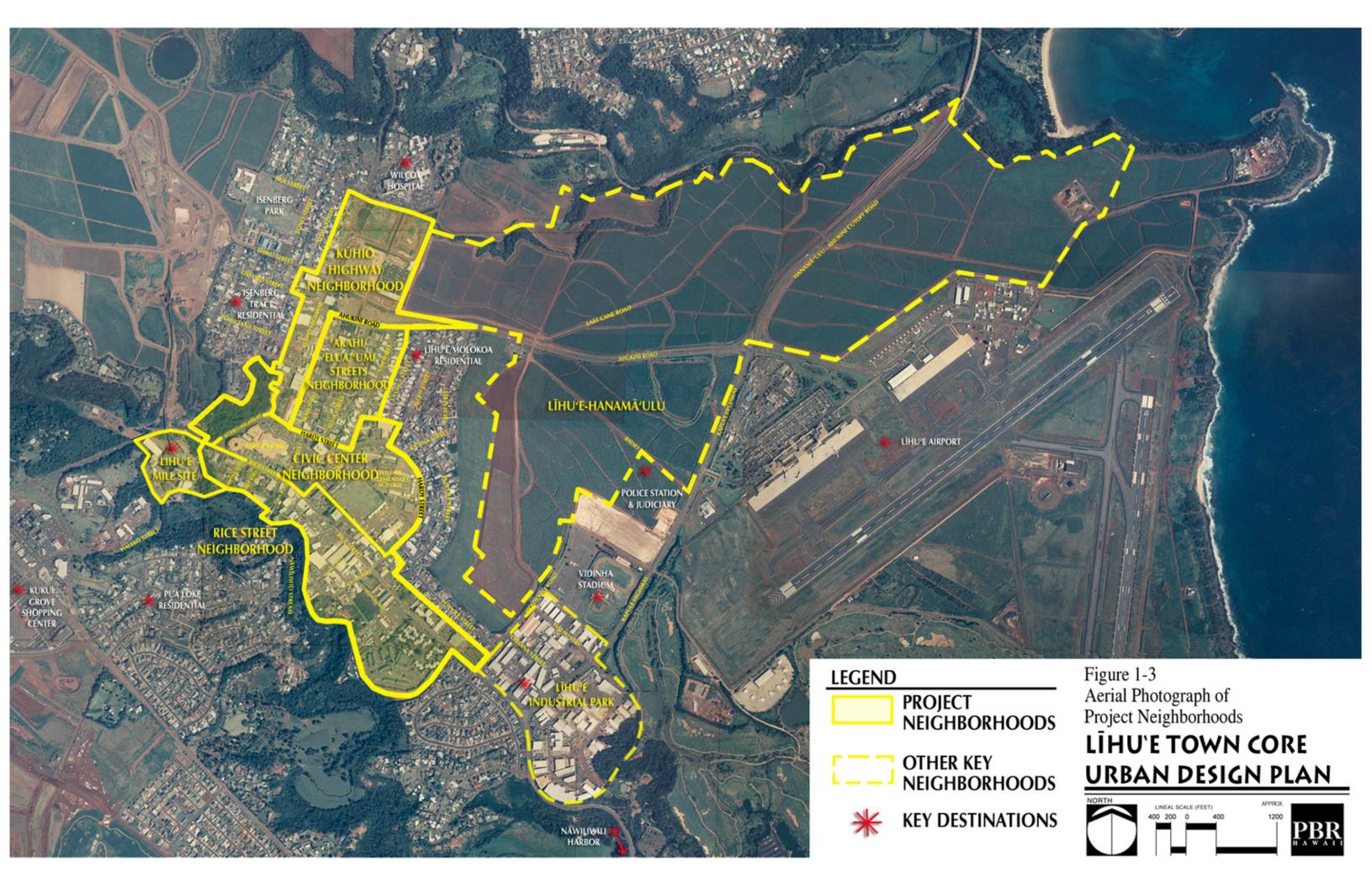
1-6 INTRODUCTION



SOURCE: U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY (LIHUE QUADRANGLE, 1996) DISCLAIMER: THIS MAP HAS BEEN PREPARED FOR GENERAL PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY.

# LĪHU'E TOWN CORE URBAN DESIGN PLAN





### 1.4 PLANNING PROCESS

The County of Kaua'i Planning Department contracted PBR Hawaii to develop the Līhu'e Town Core Urban Design Plan to help them review construction and development projects within the Town Core. preparation for the project, PBR performed background research including site visits and site analysis, historical research, meetings and correspondence with County staff, State representatives, and community members. Several public meetings were held with the Citizen Advisory Committee and the general public to gather feedback and input on the development of the plan. A preliminary draft of this report was then prepared and distributed for review by the CAC, County and State representatives, the Līhu'e Business Association (LBA), Kaua'i Chamber of Commerce, and posted to the County website. The report was then revised and presented to the Planning Commission for their input and review. The following report is a culmination of these efforts. Figure 1-4 shows the process chart for the Līhu'e Town Core Urban Design Plan planning process.

### 1.4.1 CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Significant contributions to the project were made throughout the process by the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). The CAC was appointed by the Mayor and included a wide-range of active community members, including people who grew up in Līhu'e, Kaua'i residents knowledgeable about local culture and historic traditions and architecture, representatives from the State Department of Transportation, Līhu'e Business Association, USDA Garden Island Resource Conservation and Development, and a long-standing major Līhu'e landowner, as well as Kaua'i-based design professionals. Several meetings and workshops were held with the CAC to develop the vision, goals, and the Urban Design Plan itself. All CAC meetings were open to the public with meeting notices posted a week prior to the meetings in accordance with the State's Sunshine Law.

### 1.4.2 PUBLIC INPUT

In addition to the CAC meetings, two community-wide public meetings were held in January and May 2005 at key stages of the planning process to gather wider public input. The first public meeting was held jointly with the Līhu'e Civic Center Site Improvements project (County of Kaua'i Department of Public Works Building Division) on January 26, 2005 since the two project areas overlap one another. A public survey was administered at this meeting and was later posted to the County's website between February and March 2005 to allow for further public input. The survey was held before any plans were developed and sought public

input on a broad range of topics including transportation alternatives, parking preferences, architectural resources and visual preferences. A copy of the survey and the responses are provided in Appendix A.

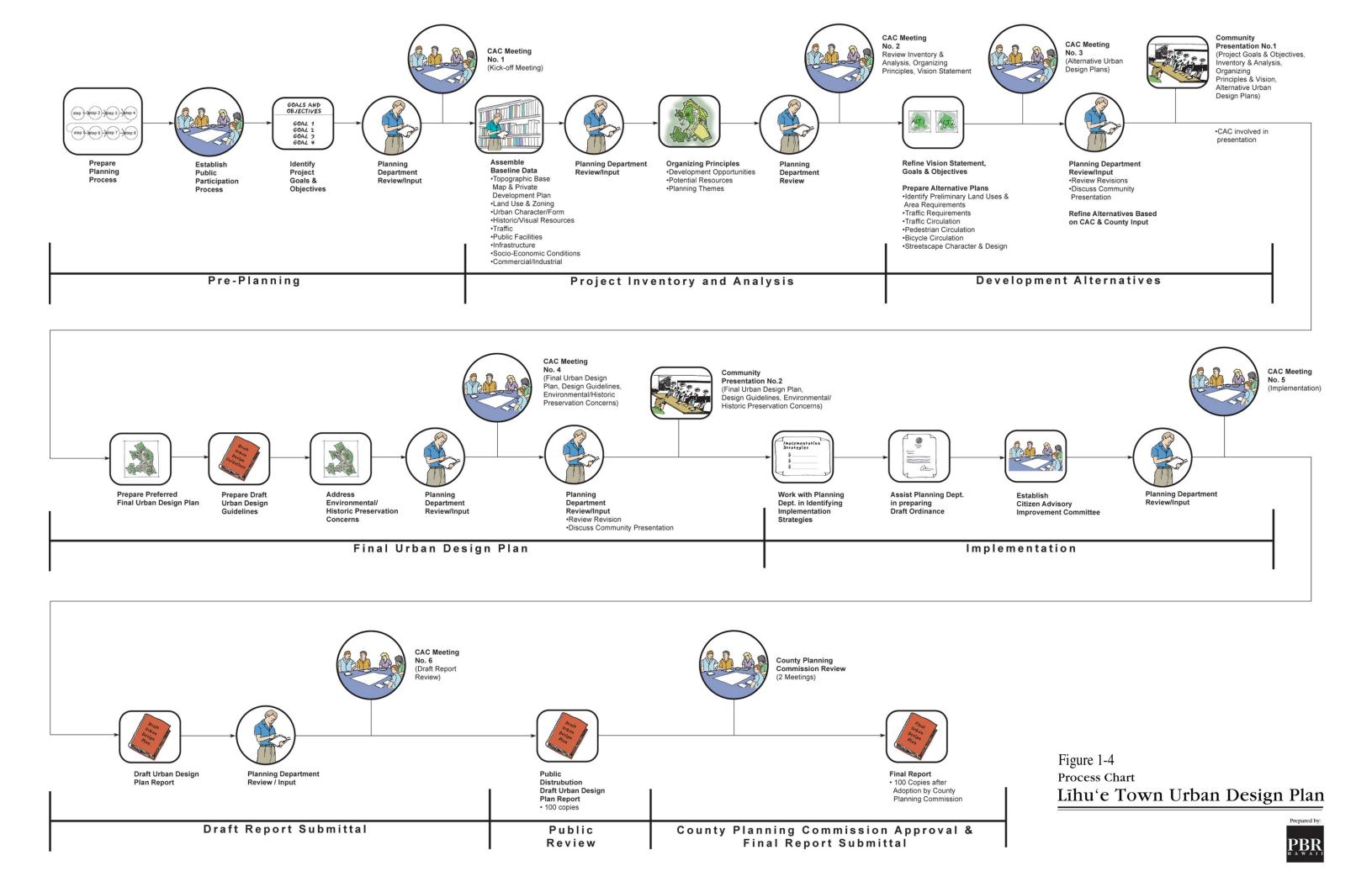
The second public meeting was held on May 11, 2005 after a preferred draft plan was developed with the CAC. Design concepts and standards for the different neighborhoods and streetscapes were presented and feedback from the meeting attendees was gathered and incorporated into the plan.

# 1.4.3 <u>LĪHU'E CIVIC CENTER SITE IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT</u>

The County of Kaua'i Department of Public Works-Building Division contracted PBR Hawaii a year prior to this Līhu'e Town Core Urban Design Plan to prepare a master plan for future site improvements and construction projects at the Līhu'e Civic Center. The Civic Center is the two-block area of Līhu'e Town that historically has been the commercial and governmental center of Kaua'i. The Civic Center project involved significant community participation and includes an environmental assessment and the first phase of design and construction to begin implementing the master plan.

Since PBR Hawaii was contracted to work on both the Līhu'e Civic Center and the Līhu'e Town Core Urban Design Plan, community input gathered during both processes was used to inform the development of both plans. Coordination of the two Līhu'e projects allowed various design concepts to inform the other so that integrated and appropriate solutions could be developed. Furthermore, design concepts from one project that affected the other project could be incorporated into the various analyses performed for the respective plans such as traffic studies, streetscape designs, parking alternatives and circulation plans.

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### 1.5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Līhu'e Town Core Urban Design Plan is the culmination of months of research, planning, and meetings with individuals and organizations who share an interest and concern for the Līhu'e. *Mahalo nui loa* to all those who have participated in the development of the plan. Your time, dedication, and *mana'o* have been invaluable.

#### **Citizen Advisory Committee**

Steve Kyono/State Department of Transportation Highways-Kaua'i

Pat Griffin/Public (Historic)

Palmer Hafdahl/Public (Architect)

Laurie Ho/Federal (Garden Island Resource Conservation & Development)

Cheryl Lovell Obatake/Public (Nāwiliwili)

Sonia Topenio/Līhu'e Business Association, Bank of Hawai'i

Mike Furukawa/Grove Farm

Neil Clendeninn/Public

Marc Ventura/Public (Architect)

Morton Yamasaki/Business (Landscape Architect)

Russell Seacat/Public (Architect)

Avery Youn/Public (Architect)

#### **Community Participants**

William Bodenstab/Kaua'i Medical Center

Kurt Bossart/'Elua Street

Larry Chaffin

Jonathan Chun/Belles Graham Proudfoot & Wilson

Connie Clausen

Barbara Curl

Dixie Daniel/Dynasty Court

Gary Furugen/Big Save, Inc.

Mamo Cummings Graham

Lynn Garcia

Karen Higa

Jerry Hirata/'Umi Street

Doug & Bernie Kaeo

Charles Kawakami/President, Big Save, Inc.

Clyde Kodani / Kodani & Associates

Kris Kono

Phyllis Kunimura/Historic County Building Restoration

Mary Ann Kusaka

Nani Larsen/Hawai'i Community Foundation

Dennis Makiya/Big Save, Inc.

Lynn McCrory/Pahio Development

Kathy Miyake/Central Pacific Bank

Clyde Nakaya/Vice President, Central Pacific Bank

Ed Nakaya/KIUC

Leland Nishek/Kaua'i Nursery & Landscaping

Rayne Regush/Kaua'i Planning & Action Alliance

Wally Rezentes Jr./First Hawaiian Bank

Calvin Sakai / Big Save, Inc.

Robert Schleck/Historic County Building Restoration, Grove Farm Homestead

Wanda Shibata/WEBCO

James Sone/Verizon Hawai'i/Hawaiian Telcom

Ken Stokes

Michelle Swartman/Grove Farm Company

Roy Tanaka/M. Tanaka Store

Chuck Trembath

Eduardo Valenciana/Tres Hermanos de Kaua'i

JoAnn Yukimura/Former Councilmember

Diane Zachary/President, Kaua'i Planning & Action Alliance

### **Government Participants**

County of Kaua'i (Non-Project Team Participants)

Bernard Carvalho/Mayor

Bryan Baptiste/Former Mayor

Tim Bynum/Councilmember

Bryan Mamaclay/Planning Department

Gary Hennigh/Former Deputy Planning Director, County of Kaua'i

Caven Raco/Planning Commission

Douglas Haigh/Chief, Department of Public Works Building Division

Beth Tokioka/Director, Office of Economic Development

Sumi Seacat/County Grants Administrator

Janine Rapozo/Executive, Transportation Agency

Pat Fleck/Office of Economic Development

Art Umezu/Office of Economic Development

#### State of Hawai`i

Stanley Doi/District Engineer, Department of Accounting and General Services - Kaua'i

Andrea Erichsen/DLNR Division of Forestry and Wildlife

#### <u>Project Team</u>

Ian Costa/Planning Director, Planning Department

Imaikalani Aiu/Deputy Planning Director, Planning Department

Keith Nitta/Former Project Manager, Planning Department

Myles Hironaka/Long Range Planner, Planning Department

Marie Williams/Long-Range Planner, Planning Department

Leanora Kaiaokamalie/Long-Range Planner, Planning Department Barbara Pendragon/Former Planner, Planning Department PBR Hawai'i SMS Research & Marketing Services, Inc. Philip Rowell & Associates

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