

Hawaii 2050: Focus is on sustainability

THE CHAMBER VIEW

by Pamela Tumpap



The Hawaii 2050 Sustainability Task Force invited residents throughout the state to share, this month and last, their ideas

about sustainability and the long-term future of Hawaii. This community-driven process is one of the cornerstones of the Hawaii 2050 Sustainability Plan that the task force will present to the state Legislature in December.

Attendees at the community meetings were shown a brief video to provide an overview of what the Hawaii 2050 Sustainability Plan is about.

They then were asked to review and comment on the working definition of sustainability, as well as the following draft versions of the vision and guiding principles of sustainability for the state developed by the Hawaii

2050 Sustainability Task Force from earlier statewide community meetings and an online survey.

VISION OF SUSTAINABILITY

In 2050, Hawaii is a sustainable community. Living responsibly and within our own means is top-of-mind for all individuals and organizations. We learn about the virtues and values of a sustainable Hawaii. As a result, our goals of economic prosperity, social and community well-being, and environmental stewardship are met. Our Native Hawaiian and island values and culture are perpetuated. We have a vibrant, clean, locally based and diversified economy that supports a living wage for island residents and affords economic and career opportunities for our children. Our land, water and natural resources are used responsibly, and are replenished and preserved for future generations. In 2050, we also have embraced and achieved island self-sufficiency. The energy we use is clean, renewable and produced in Hawaii. Most of the food we consume is grown locally. We minimize waste by recycling and waste-to-energy processes. We are a strong and healthy community with access to affordable housing, transportation and health care. Our public

education system prepares our people for productive, meaningful and fulfilled lives. Hawaii is where our hopes and aspirations as individuals, families and a community are realized now and in the future.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Our sustainability goals, actions and measurements are guided by balancing economic prosperity, community and social well-being and environmental stewardship. Sustainability cannot occur without a strong, diversified and dynamic economy. We respect and live within the natural resources and limits of our islands. Our cultural traditions, history and sense of place are honored. We make decisions based on meeting the present needs without compromising the needs of future generations. The traditional Native Hawaiian practice of the ahupuaa system guides how we manage our resources and behaviors. Everyone — individuals, families, communities, businesses and government — has a responsibility for achieving a sustainable Hawaii.

KEY POINTS from sustainability issue papers prepared by the University of Hawaii-Manoa were shared with participants to

stimulate thinking and help begin serious, reasoned deliberations about the future of our state. The issue papers include those on: Aloha 'Aina, Quality of Life, Economy, Population, Environmental Quality, Water, Energy, Agriculture, Land Use, Holomua Kakou, Paradise Index, and The Future: A Call to Action — all of which are available to the public on the Hawaii 2050 Web site.

In addition, the facilitated meetings garnered ideas from participants statewide about long-term goals for sustainability, strategies to achieve those goals, and measurements to keep Hawaii on track for a more sustainable future.

In Maui County, these public meetings were held this month.

On Lanai, the May 2 meeting was coordinated by Alberta deJedley, a woman who made it her mission to engage as many residents as possible in this important discussion. She wanted to attract 100 people and far exceeded that goal. Residents were stunned when the crowd reached nearly 150 at the Lanai Elementary and High School cafeteria that night, with at least half of the participants being youths.

Maui held two meetings, coordinated by the Maui Economic Development Board. The first, an evening session, was May 3 at the J. Walter Cameron Center

with a crowd of approximately 60. The second, a Saturday-morning session, was held May 5, with approximately the same size crowd.

The Molokai meeting, coordinated by Glen Teves, was held May 9 at Kaunakakai School cafeteria and also received a great response, with approximately 60 participants.

What's been most exciting is to see participation by youth, the levels of participation around the state, new faces coming forward, and a growing recognition of the importance of this process. People are acknowledging our individual and our collective responsibility to create a sustainable Hawaii that achieves economic, environmental and social success.

These community meetings are the latest in a series of comprehensive community-engagement activities about creating a more sustainable future for Hawaii. The inclusive process began in August 2006 and will continue through the fall of this year. Hawaii's future is in our hands. Be informed, get involved, and let's chart a course for our desired future. Please visit www.hawaii2050.org.

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