

October 1, 2019  
Wayne N. Hedani Address to  
West Maui Community Plan Advisory Committee  
County of Maui  
200 S. High Street  
Wailuku, HI 96793

Subject: Economic Prosperity through Innovation and Collaboration

Aloha to the Honorable Members of the West Maui Community Plan Advisory Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to present my perspectives on this subject to you. I am sure by now you are overwhelmed by public testimony and the amount of information which has been given to you, so I will try to be brief and to the point.

Once we stood on a three legged stool. Sugar, pineapple and tourism were our primary industries. Our landscape was manicured and green and beautiful. We became the Best Island in the World.

The stool was built by people in government with vision and courage doing just what you are doing today, planning for the future. Our population which had been declining with young people moving away, grew from 40,000 to 160,000.

Now we are in trouble.

Two of those three legs of the stool are gone. Sugar and Pineapple are dead. Green fields of agriculture are replaced by dry, dust and weed filled abandoned fields which are prone to massive fires and without cultivation send runoff into our oceans and despoil our reefs.

“Agricultural lots” built by millionaires grow nothing of agricultural significance. They only drive up the price of real estate. Fields are bought for \$1500 an acre and sold for \$1M or more per lot. 2 acre agricultural lots are a bad joke.

If the state laws are not amended, and 2 acre lots are not outlawed, whatever you do in the community plans will not matter because it will be outside of your control. Anything zoned agriculture will become millionaire’s estate lands.

We now cling to tourism, like a pole dancer clings to a pole. How long can one industry hold on? We are collectively in trouble in West Maui and do not even know it. TVR’s are invading residential neighborhoods creating animosity against

visitors. Carthaginian is gone. LK&P Railroad is gone. Pioneer Mill is gone. The things that made West Maui special are disappearing and we do not seem to care.

Tourism is also now threatened by a new activism. Protests are aimed to stop the tourists dead in their tracks. With noisy marches and traffic jams intentionally created merely to generate publicity. Hear us or no aloha for you. Can you see and feel the problem?

It's like being underwater and looking for air. How long can you hold your breath?

Envision economic prosperity.

What does it look like?

The ability to do what you want when you want to do it on your terms?

What would maintain and bring prosperity to West Maui?

Colin Cameron and the Maui Economic Development Board convened a conference on Maui's preferred economic future back in the 1990s, High Technology emerged as the preferred vision to supplement tourism, sugar and pineapple as they could foresee the decline of sugar and pineapple.

Their vision was correct. High Technology now generates over 900 jobs paying good wages over \$60K per year per employee at the high tech park which was their baby. But it is still a fledgling industry. Competing in a worldwide market.

High Tech is also now being challenged on Mauna Kea and on Haleakala to which the high tech park and its supercomputers are connected for national defense. We are now throwing out the high tech baby with the protest bathwater.

Back in the 1950s people of vision took sugar cane and fallow lands and created the Kaanapali Beach Resort. What used to employ 3 field workers now employs over 6000 employees and generates over \$3Billion in economic contribution to the County of Maui and State of Hawaii. Each of those employees earns close to \$50,000 per year in earnings and benefits.

Kaanapali Beach Resort is recognized as one of the foremost master planned destination resorts in the world. We were the first and I maintain that we are still the best, in the best island in the world. But we cannot be complacent.

Our beaches are eroding. Our sea levels are rising. If nothing is done sea level rise alone will cause all of the topsoil along all of our shores to end up in the ocean suffocating our coral reefs.

A minimum of three feet of sea level rise is predicted in the near future. It could be as high as 30 feet. We are just not sure. If all of the ice that exists on earth disappears, sea levels would rise by 224 feet. That is the height of a 23 story building. Plan for it.

I do not wish to alarm you but you should be alarmed.

Greta Thunberg is right. We need to do something to address these problems of the future. It is in your hands.

I recently dove an area in Kihei where my family has harvested seaweed for 60 years. Japanese call it ogo, Hawaiians called it limu. It's now only available from hydroponic farms. Natural wild ogo is gone. Disappeared. Like a nuclear blast under water. All of the 300 species of seaweeds the Hawaiians named are gone or disappearing.

Rising ocean temperatures, I believe, have killed it off.

Here is the problem, if rising ocean temperatures killed off seaweed along the shore, could it kill off phytoplankton in the oceans which produce 50% of the oxygen we breathe? If the seaweed is gone, are the crabs which feed on it gone, and the fish which feed on the crabs along the reef gone? If the phytoplankton is gone will the krill which feed on them disappear and the whales which feed on the krill also disappear? The answer unfortunately more and more seems to be yes to all of the above.

It is said that great problems are in fact great opportunities for solutions.

Here is a list of baby steps I have outlined to help with solving all of the above which you may want to consider including in your deliberations and discussions:

- Provide employee housing, 6000 homes for 6000 employees 5 minutes from work reduces traffic on Honapiilani Highway coming from the other side by 12,000 vehicle trips per day.
- Move Honoapiilani Highway outside of the future inundation zone of sea level rise.
- Invest in the infrastructure of beach restoration.
- Allow for the transfer of development rights to allow properties in danger to move back and provide open space in front of them which can be used to restore dunes which help to protect the shoreline.

- Stop the development of 2 acre gentlemen's estates. Allow the coupling of Ag lots with an ag plan like the coffee farms which actually produces agricultural products with marketable viability and economies of scale.
- Expand the coffee farms to all of West Maui fields. Provide water infrastructure to do so.
- Abolish TVR's in residential districts in favor of B&B's which must be owner occupied and limited to one per owner. (B&Bs can match TVR economic performance with someone living on site who will be invested in the neighborhood).
- Recognize that we are in global competition for the largest industry on the planet yet we dismantled our national office of tourism and our council is considering cutting back on marketing. (See attached on economic value of beaches dated 2013).
- Allow for innovative solutions to wastewater disposal (ala Disney World) (Racetrack of water hyacinths produces clean water free of nitrogen which can be returned to stream).
- Move away from fossil fuels to a hydrogen based economy. Use excess solar energy which is now being dumped to split water by electrolysis to produce hydrogen and oxygen. Use hydrogen in fuel cells as storable backup energy unlike solar and wind which are variable. Advocate for hydrogen fuel cell cars.
- Require beautification of highways, plant 1,000,000 trees along our roadways and water them with treated effluent.
- Punish those who uglify the landscape with litter and abandoned cars. Offer \$2,500 reward for arrest of litterers and a fine of \$5,000 for those who abandon cars along our roadways (last registered owner).
- Finish the road around Kahakuloa (two lane blacktop ala road to Hana with bypass of Kahakuloa Village to protect kids). This provides an additional two lanes of traffic flow to central Maui and will also revitalize Wailuku Town with visitors. Also an emergency escape route when major fires and floods occur.
- Harden selected shorelines to protect reefs from topsoil invasion. You actually help the coral by hardening the shoreline.
- Consider moving the SMA boundary to the 2000 foot elevation to prevent desecration of the mountains. Planning Commission can do this with revised map.
- Address homelessness with adequate facilities (think tiny homes).

- Establish marine protected areas along all shorelines (think 5 miles closed with 5 miles open all around the island). Will increase fish stocks which also helps reefs.
- Stop unsustainable fishing practices. (California has take limits on most species).
- Seawalls are not a dirty word. (harbors could not exist without them they have their time and place for use).
- Require street trees in all future subdivisions.
- Allow Hawaiians to live on Hawaiian Homestead Lands. Waive rules.
- Encourage real agriculture (coffee, cocoa, tea, spirulina).
- Invest in mass transportation. (two hours to get to work by bus is unacceptable, make it free).
- Control urban sprawl in favor of infill development with grid roadway networks which allow for multiple ways to get from one place to another, not turning highways into linear parking lots with traffic jams.
- Remove bike lanes from the pali and provide alternate bike route (over the pali along the old road or higher or around the pali on cantilevered bike paths on the ocean side). Use former bike lanes with a little widening for additional two lanes of traffic for four lanes through the pali. Double the tunnel.
- Regrade the embankments of the pali and remove the chain link uglification.
- Finish the bypass to Honokowai and to the Pali.
- Create a 600 acre beach park by relocating Honoapiilani Highway inland and up away from sea level rise (use 30 feet elevation for alignment) at Ukumehame.
- Work to preserve coral reefs (a new disease is wiping out coral in Caribbean called stony coral tissue loss disease SCTLTD).
- Zone lands in accordance with new community plan designation automatically. Speeds process for development of affordable housing. Not zoning it makes community plan process meaningless.
- Allow automatic approval for 100% affordable housing projects.

Peter Drucker once said something along the lines of “business cannot exist in a community that does not permit it”. Collaboration and prosperity through innovation happens only when people learn to work together harmoniously.

Okay, once you have accomplished all of the above done we can both retire.

Aloha,

Wayne N. Hedani

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