

Name: Mark Deakos

Agenda Item: B.1 Goal 2.4 | Mauka to makai watershed management

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Dear South Maui CPAC,

I apologize for the informal format of my comments below...

Goal 2.4

p. 46 Definitions

"Low-impact Development" - I find this term gets overused and is primarily associated with basic construction practices like silt fences to prevent runoff that rarely have any meaningful impact. So whenever a document needs to give credence to a concern for the environment, they often refer to "low-impact development practices will be adhered to" and that seems to satisfy addressing environmental concerns. Since our current negative impacts are more than our environment can handle, it never made sense to me that we would encourage more negative impacts, just at a "lower" level. I would prefer to see the term "positive impact development" or "regenerative impact development" that suggest design features that restore rather than take away. The definition in the policy document does refer to some regenerative implementations (rain gardens, bioswales, increased vegetation) but I would suggest getting away from LID and use a different term.

2.4.1 - "allow for migration, and incorporate future sea level rise scenarios" needs more explanation, not clear what this refers to.

2.4.2 - may want to define "nature-based solutions" since I often see "beach nourishment" referred to as such, which it is far from. I would remove "low-impact design" and replace with another term that reflects improvement/restoration such as "regenerative design" if you decide to adopt this.

2.4.4 - again replace "low-impact" development techniques with "positive-impact". Simple swales on contour throughout a property (somewhat related to bioswales) with emergency spillways to prevent flooding, can dramatically slow, spread and soak stormwater as it passes over a property. These swales can be populated with native, drought tolerant trees or even fruit trees that require little to no maintenance. Adding ponds and other water storage means can also help store water with many other added benefits (carbon sequestering, food bearing, cooling). These types of landscaping designs should be encouraged over traditional lawns and manicured ornamental landscaping.

2.4.6 - Native plants are important but I would not restrict it to natives. Many non-native plant species can provide important ecological functions (soil stabilization, nitrogen fixing, water filtration, soil remediation, shade, fire-proofing, food) and have little impact on native species while those are taking time to get established. Some species such as vetiver, pigeon pea, sweet potato, ulu, just to name a few can be established quickly and easily and help stabilize while more native systems are developing.

2.4.9 b - "native" - see above, I think limiting to just natives can be prohibitive to some very good nature-based solutions of non-native species.

2.4.9 d - "beach management" should be defined, many will attribute this to beach nourishment (perhaps that is the intent)

2.4.10 - again, many non-native plants can be used while native species are being established. Non-natives can act as catalysts towards succession into more native ecosystems.

2.4.13 - change "low-impact development" to "positive-impact" development practices and "low-impact design" to "regenerative design"

2.4.14 - composting toilets can be a game changer for water conservation and creating nutrients instead of wastewater. Proper composting toilets are much cleaner and more appealing to use than wet toilets, although the mental hurdle for most people seems insurmountable but I'm confident with education and exposure, that will change.

Action No. 4.16 - once again, "beach management" needs to be defined and "coastal adaptation plans" seems to me a way to avoid saying "managed retreat." I think managed retreat needs to be called out explicitly and prioritized or South Maui could end up like West Maui in 10 - 20 years.

I hope these comments are somewhat useful.

Mahalo,

Mark Deakos