

**Name: Brandi Corpuz**

**Agenda Item: C. 1. Section 2.2 Safe Livable Communities for All - Housing**

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**Testimony for December 7, 2022 CPAC Meeting**

Aloha CPAC members,

My name is Brandi Corpuz. I am a community advocate and member of Kula Kai. I am also the Executive Director of Rooted Kekahi Me Ka Aina. We are the same nonprofit that is named in the South Maui Community action plan 2.2.08 and policy 2.2.32. We are referred to as the Waipuilani Beach Reserve Project (G5522) and we are working on the Government/Waipuilani Beach Reserve.

I would like to plead to all of you to use very strong language in this action plan and all of the policies I will mention in this testimony. It has taken 22 years in the making and now it sits before each of you to make it a reality. You have the power to make this change happen through your careful evaluation and understanding of the importance of our wetlands and Government Beach Reserve.

I am very concerned as I mentioned in my last testimony about several of the Policies in 2.2 and action plan 2.2.08 of our South Maui Community Plan;

2.2.1- I am concerned about all the infrastructure in Kihei. Infrastructure for housing development, infrastructure for current communities, infrastructure for flooding and drainage and infrastructure in our Beach Reserve, parks, recreation and beaches.

One of the main infrastructure tools that we have at this present moment is our last remaining wetlands. We have only 30% of them left in Kihei. Backfill, structures and concrete have replaced many of them so we must protect and work with the remaining wetlands that we have left. I believe that no new construction of hardscaping should happen right now as we work our way through protecting what little wetlands we have left in Kihei.

The ahupuaa system that was created hundreds of years ago for the Hawaiian people to follow still exists today and it must be considered in all aspects of planning moving forward. What is above us in Kula will come down if there are no wetlands to protect us near the shore. We all have seen it happen time and time again. Protect our wetland infrastructure and you protect our communities, beach reserves, beaches, parks and recreation areas as well.

2.2.2 There is an imbalance when it comes to parks in South Maui. Most of the open areas have been built on except for very few. Please refer to the 1998 plan again. Open spaces and green ways were talked about frequently. We still want those today. When I think of parks in Kula Kai, I also think of open spaces and cultural gathering areas. We have a unique opportunity to create a cultural corridor through the Waipuilani/government Beach Reserve and with all the wetlands that feed and protect our ocean. Our South Maui parks and corridor should have more attention as many of the areas are not very well taken care of at this time. Our wetlands and Gulches should be primary possibilities for a balanced culturally significant part of any South Maui parks plans.

2.2.3 The acquisition of the Waipuilani Gulch and Waipuilani Beach/Government Reserve should be of a high level of importance for Maui County and South Maui. These natural resources can be used for the purposes of creating a connection to our "place" that no other

park can possibly accomplish. Development of these county park areas is not required or suggested because we would prefer to have the beach reserve area remain a natural path and connection to our natural resources. A clear marker of the beach reserve path would be best practices to preserve the natural environment.

I would like to suggest an addition to 2.2.3 to be considered. I would like to take out the part that says "are consistent with Maui County Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) guidelines (Park Classification Matrix)." The reason for that change is because Parks and Rec may not have guidelines that will create the vision that myself and others in this community envision? They have rules that may go against the protection of our wetlands and new protections of Bill 91.

For instance, sidewalks don't make sense on our beach reserve as erosion is happening at an alarming rate. If we go by certain government department standards at this present moment, our precious gulches are not even considered as wetlands. I don't have suggestions of how this should be written at the moment but I could get you that information if needed and requested by any of the members of this commission.

2.2.6 I support public campgrounds in areas such as sugar beach and Wailea. However, I have witnessed people living in these areas. Campgrounds should include public bathrooms or portables and it should be a limited stay, with priority given to residents of Maui County, residents of Hawaii and then "visitors' ". So many of our permit spots get filled with "visitors" before locals have a chance to "visit" the areas.

2.2.7 The government beach reserve corridor was created in the 1998 South Maui Community plan and it should be put at the top of the list for support and consideration. It is proposed to go from Maalea to Keawakapu (that is a bit unclear because of various reasons). It should also become a historic and native restoration corridor.

The Waipuilani Gulch should also be considered as a greenway for the South Maui district and a corridor from mauka to makai. Our community is working to protect this gulch through Bill 91. We are requesting that the County of Maui acquire this land by purchase or eminent domain. Greenways can help to restore this area of great importance and will fulfill the 1998 and 2022 South Maui community plan for greenways and corridors.

2.2.10 Kiawe trees are a problem in many of our beach and park areas. They cause hazards to our environment, native plants and our people. They should be replaced by native edible trees and plants wherever possible. In the past 10 years almost all of the Kiawe in the Waipuilani area have fallen in the beach/reserve area. This area of Waipuilani/Uluniu Road should have many niu (coconut) trees as its name indicates. All areas should be populated with indigenous, climate specific trees and plants. These trees/plants can help to provide restoration efforts to all of our wetland and beach areas.

2.2.13 Tree canopies sound beautiful but why is the county paying so much money to implement this project when there is no money to take care of the trees that are already in place? Trees are falling all over the place in the Waipuilani/government Beach reserve. I was told by county and state that there is no money or manpower to take care of these trees which are mostly kiawe. They pose a huge threat and have become homes for the houseless in the area.

2.2.14 I support the acquisition of the parcel Hoonani “cul-desac” and all of the Savio properties in the Waipuilani gulch, including Puahi place, Aina Place and all cul-desacs along Namauu place. The Wailani Village project has proposed to construct 81 plus houses in the Waipuilani Gulch/Fong Gulch property. This area is vitally important to the surrounding communities, the North/south collector road, the Kulanihakoi High School pedestrian corridor and the interconnected public greenways talked about in this South Maui Community Vision Plan. Allowing anyone to build in this gulch would be detrimental to our wetlands, beaches and way of life. Savio said in a statement to me and other community members that he does not build infrastructure. Therefore his project being built in the Waipuilani Gulch would further disconnect all the surrounding communities in the area.

2.2.15 Namauu place and Hoonanai Place in Kihei still have no exit from our street other than South Kihei Road. The North/South collector road has not been built and there is no bike path or walking path for our community even on south Kihei road. I would like to see at least a bike path or walking path created where the north south collector is supposed to be? Our children walk on that back dirt road and it is very dusty, trashy and not very user friendly. I can't even walk my dog back there because the dirt is so hot at times.

This is another example of the importance and actuality of the Waipuilani Gulch being more productive as a County property to be used for parks, recreation, walking, biking and transit options.

In the past year and a half, 2 of my friends have been hit by cars while walking in South Kihei! Thankfully both of them survived but the fact that our main source of exit and entrance to our communities has no sidewalks or pathways is a very major problem for all of us who live off of South Kihei Road.

2.2.17 The Savio project and other developments in South Kihei claim to be affordable but are not. The ones that may be considered affordable by some are substandard at only 400 sq ft per home. These developments should not be allowed to happen when we don't even have enough homes for our local community. Affordable housing should only be considered affordable when our community can afford what is offered. The 3 month standard for affordable applicants should be revised to have no time limit. Local residents should be the only people considered in this process.

2.2.21 I do not support infill development that will crowd our current residence and congest South Kihei Road even more than it is. Residents who buy homes here in Kihei should be able to drive to where they need to go or a bus stop can be made in the area. Again the Savio Wailani Village project is proposed to be built in the middle of several of our oldest neighborhoods, using our one way in and out streets and on top of our Waipuilani gulch. Please make it clear in our new plan that this type of infill is not acceptable. Especially when infrastructure is not in place.

2.2.23 All housing including affordable housing should only be built in appropriate areas. Not in our wetlands or overcrowded south Kihei road areas. If a developer wants to build affordable housing for credits then those credits should also be built in the same area and at the same time as the “unaffordable housing” that is connected to it.

Stop allowing the exploitation of Wailea and other significant areas of Kihei to create a have and have not mentality in our communities. If developers want to build in Kula Kai then they have to be inclusive with our local community or they can not build here.

2.2.25 I believe this should be required instead of Promote. "Promote the use of sustainable green building and development practices, such as the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standard and the use of rooftop photovoltaic systems in all new construction."

2.2.28 Agricultural land should never be allowed to be converted. "Agricultural land within the growth boundaries should only be converted to urban or rural designations when conversion is required to accommodate the population or employment projections for the region, or conversion will facilitate shoreline retreat by directly replacing an existing development of similar size and character. Public facilities developed under this policy do not need to be of comparable size to the public facilities that they are replacing."

2.2.30 | There should be no more visitor-related development in South Kihei. We have triple the amount of visitors than local residents most of the time. Simply by the overpopulation of humans in our relatively small areas of South Maui, visitors are having a huge impact on our residents, infrastructure, parks, environment and cultural resources. The County of Maui and the visitor industry must focus on stopping over-tourism in order to protect our way of life. "Visitor-related development and businesses must minimize the impact of tourism on South Maui residents, infrastructure, parks, environment, and cultural resources. The visitor industry shall focus on the quality of the visitor experience rather than quantity."

2.2.31 I would like to see that it is required for new and existing shoreline development to maintain public access to the shorelines but I would add to this that these access areas be maintained in a culturally sensitive and wetlands protective way. "Require that new and existing shoreline development maintain public shoreline access. When new development is proposed it requires public access to shoreline areas currently privatized by gates and walls. Maintain and expand public shoreline access by requiring the establishment of both perpendicular and lateral access paths as a condition of any SMA permit for properties that abut the shoreline to the extent permitted by law."

2.2.32 There are currently no signs and not much of a public path on our entire government beach reserve. I have been informed that some homeowners that abut the reserve do not want this path because it will disrupt their homes or businesses. Many areas appear to be private property and this will all change when and if the beach corridor actually is created and maintained. This "support" directly affects our project on the Waipuilani Beach Reserve. The Beach Reserve has been in limbo since the last 20 year plan was created. Please "require" that this transfer and all of the 1998 Community plans concerning our wetlands, beaches and parks be completed by a certain time so that they can actually become a reality before its too late.

Our wetlands and beach reserve should play a vital role in every decision concerning development of any kind in Kula Kai. Especially in the areas from CVS all the way to Suda beach on South Kihei Road.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my testimony,  
Sincerely, Brandi Corpuz  
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