

**Name:** D. Austin

**Agenda Item:** B.1 Section 3.4 | Areas of Change

**Date Received:** 9/12/23 via email

Aloha, members of the South Maui CPAC,

I am extremely disappointed that I am hearing reports of the potential return of the "Mega Mall", and development of Kihei Mauka, both of which will only further increase traffic and dangerous, life-threatening flooding in Kihei.

Kihei cannot handle the traffic it already has, which anybody who lives here would know. The Pi'ilani highway leading into and out of Kihei can have serious, bumper to bumper traffic. If that is not concerning enough, the invasive grasses and the traffic issues leave Kihei open to destructive, inescapable wildfires.

The "Small Town Center" designation of the possible "Mega Mall" site is a misnomer, and practically a wildly servile euphemism to perceive that this development is just a tiny, cute shop and dine area on a corner of a street in Kihei. It's the wording of the designation which leaves that area open to commercial exploitation of the kind that would permanently negatively change the actual small coastal town character the Kihei currently has.

We have dining areas. We have shopping areas. Creating a centralized shopping and dining area has no benefit for residents except to create a familiar habitat for tourism, which, although tourism is an important part of our economy, is also absolutely not necessary. Tourists come to Kihei to experience Kihei, not to visit The Galleria Shopping Center in California. There is a point, you know, where there should not be any more development on an island, with its limited land.

The development of Kihei Mauka is the wrong approach, especially when wildfire experts say that agricultural use helps prevent explosive wildfires, like that seen recently on Maui. This has been reported on, by several different media outlets, and cannot be ignored.

UHERO, a research and analysis division of the University of Hawaii agrees. There are definite "benefits of transitioning away from unmanaged non native grasslands to more native land cover and agricultural land uses that can decrease fire risk, as well as provide other ecological benefits, such as groundwater recharge, native species protection, food production, and Indigenous and cultural benefits".

Protect Kihei and the surrounding areas against exploitative development.

Return the former Mega Mall site to the "Residential" designation. Return the Kihei Mauka area to "Open Space" and "Agriculture".

Respectfully,

D. Austin  
Kihei