



KAUA'I PLANNING & ACTION ALLIANCE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AIA FOCUSES ON LIHU'E DISTRICT PLANNING

Lihu'e, Kaua'i, HI – 8/25/08 The American Institute of Architects (AIA) has selected Kaua'i as one of ten communities nationwide to receive the volunteer services of a Sustainable Development Assessment Team (SDAT). A preliminary site visit was conducted July 29-31 in preparation for the team visit in November.

Through a partnership of the County of Kaua'i, Lihu'e Business Association and the Kaua'i Planning & Action Alliance, a proposal was submitted to the AIA requesting assistance in the design of an improved process and framework for district development plans to incorporate the philosophy and principles of sustainability and smart growth. Ideas for new technologies and processes that facilitate expanded community participation were also requested.

The Lihu'e district will be used as the focus of the project and the outcomes will be useful in preparing for the upcoming update of the Lihu'e Development Plan, as well as to other districts updating their development plans.

The SDAT Team Leader Peter Arsenaault, an architect and National Vice President of the AIA, and Erin Simmons, Director of the AIA's Center for Communities by Design, were on Kaua'i in late July to meet with government, business and community leaders for a preliminary look at the most important issues for the Lihu'e district. Over three days they took two tours of the district and held 17 meetings with almost sixty people representing different sectors of the community.

BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER TO CREATE A BETTER FUTURE FOR KAUA'I

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Based on the findings of a preliminary visit in July, six areas were identified for more in depth exploration by the full Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) at events on Kaua'i in mid-November. The sustainability topics to be explored are anticipated to include:

1. Land use (including agriculture and smart growth)
2. Housing and affordability
3. Energy efficiency and alternative energy
4. Transportation and transit
5. Economic development (including education, employment, workforce, retirees, and solid waste)
6. Water.

Team leader Peter Arsenault and Erin Simmons of the AIA are selecting the national SDAT team members, who are professionals with expertise in at least one of these six areas. The experts are purposely selected to be out-of-state and they receive no pay for their work. *"To ensure the objectivity of the experts selected for SDAT projects, they agree to provide their expertise without pay and further not to seek consulting work in the community in which they volunteer for at least a three-year period,"* states Arsenault.

When the SDAT team returns to Kaua'i November 12 -14, it will meet with stakeholders, gather community input, share information, and formulate recommendations for the new community planning model. Graduate students, under the director of Dean Clark Llewellyn of the University of Hawai'i School of Architecture, will assist the team during the meetings.

The visit will include a town hall meeting on November 12 to inform the community of the project, 1 ½ days of stakeholder meetings to offer input to the SDAT experts, concluding with and a final town hall meeting the evening of November 14 to present the SDAT report recommendations. A written report will be prepared and submitted by the first quarter 2009.

The project is supported by funding from the American Institute of Architects to cover the SDAT travel costs. In addition, KPAA has secured grants from the County of Kaua'i and the Group 70 Foundation.

A Steering Committee is planning the November meetings and Kaua'i Planning & Action Alliance is coordinating the project. Steering Committee members include:

Imai Aiu, Deputy Director, County of Kaua'i Planning Department

Neil Clendennin, MD and Lihu'e Business Association member
Pat Griffin, President, Lihu'e Business Association
Palmer Hafdahl, Palm's Hawaii and member, AIA and Lihue Business Assn.
Karen Ono, Director, Kaua'i Board of Realtors
Shawn Shimabukuro, Project Manager, Grove Farm
Diane Zachary, President & CEO, Kaua'i Planning & Action Alliance

"I am grateful to former Honolulu Mayor Jeremy Harris and Dean Clark Llewellyn, both AIA National Board members, who contacted then Chair Asing and me to ask if Kaua'i might be interested," said Councilmember JoAnn Yukimura. "It seemed a perfect fit to match our community's growing interest in sustainability with our desire for more effective long-range planning."

KPAA will provide additional information on the November meetings within a few weeks. KPAA is a non-profit membership organization that serves as a neutral convener, providing a forum to the community to develop and implement effective solutions to issues that matter to Kaua'i.

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PHOTO ATTACHED

Caption:

SDAT Team Leader Peter Arsenault and AIA's Erin Simmons (on the left) meet with community members Sabra Kauka, Winnie Yulo, Neil Clendennin, Rev. Midori Kondo, Pat Griffin, Cesar Portugal and Clark Llewellyn at Grove Farm Museum to discuss the arts and cultures in the Lihu'e district.

