

To: West Maui CPAC

From: Karen Comcowich

RE: Action #10 on Goal 2.5: Safe, healthy, livable communities for all

Affordable and Workforce housing is for the people who work and live on Maui full time. As we are making decision about language regarding these developments, we need to think about who these communities will serve. Two examples I would like to discuss are young families and older people.

As a young family one of the easiest ways to cut expenses is to have 1 car (1 maintenance bill, 1 insurance bill, 1 gas tank). Often the parent who goes to work takes the car, leaving the other parent at home with small children and no car. I have two friends in this situation. Janelle lives at Front Street Apartments with her husband and two boys. Both work and trade off staying home with the kids. When her husband is at work, if Janelle needs to go to the store, she puts both boys in a stroller and walks comfortably to the store on the sidewalk. Same for going to the beach, doctor or town.

My other friend, Holly, also has two young boys, but she lives in an apartment in Kahana where there are no sidewalks. If she wants to go to the beach, store or bus stop, she loads the two kids in a double stroller and *must walk on the shoulder of the lower road pushing a stroller*. She is often honked at to get out of the way and yelled at for being a “bad irresponsible mother”.

On the other end, as people get older, they are likely to get injured or need operations like knee replacements. It is more common now to rehabilitate at home. Often part of the rehabilitation is gentle walking, preferably on an even surface. I am picturing my Mom, last summer she was hiking mountains, then she broke her hip, right now she needs a walker to get around. She would get horribly depressed if she was stuck inside until her hip heals. Luckily, she lives in a walkable neighborhood.

When we are discussing affordable and work-force housing, we are not just talking about someone’s primary residence, rather their only residence. Therefore, these developments need to be the most livable, walkable communities developed.

We must “Require” affordable housing projects, *especially* projects using the State 201H or County 2.97 process, **to be near transit to jobs, schools, and services**, and include sidewalks, parks, bus stops and other infrastructure and pedestrian-oriented design elements that create walkable and livable communities for all.”