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OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL  
QUALITY CONTROL

October 9, 2001

Ms Genevieve Salmonson, Director  
Office of Environmental Quality Control  
State of Hawaii  
235 South Beretania St., Suite 702  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Subject: Final Environmental Assessment/Finding of No Significant Impact  
O'okala Community Center and Plantation Market Place Project  
Tax Map Key: (3) 3-9-01:11

Dear Ms Salmonson:

The County of Hawaii Department of Parks and Recreation has reviewed the comments received during the 30-day comment period, which began on August 23, 2001, and has determined that the subject project will not have a significant environmental effect. As such, the Department of Parks and Recreation has issued a "Finding of No Significant Impact" for the O'okala Community Center and Plantation Market Place project.

Please publish a notice of this finding in your next edition of The Environmental Notice.

Enclosed is a completed OEQC Bulletin Publication Form and four copies of the Final EA. The required summary of the proposed action was e-mailed to your office for the Draft Environmental Assessment and has not been changed.

Should you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact staff planner Glenn Miyao at (808) 961-8313.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Pat Engelhard".

Patricia G. Engelhard  
Director

encls

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**FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND  
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

**OOKALA COMMUNITY CENTER AND PLANTATION  
MARKET PLACE PROJECT**

Ookala, North Hilo, Hawaii

October 2001

PREPARED FOR:  
HAMAKUA DIVERSIFIED AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION

P.O. BOX 369  
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PREPARED BY:  
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Purpose.....	1
1.2 Identification of Applicant.....	1
1.3 Identification of Approving Agency and Responsible Entity .....	1
1.4 Technical Description .....	1
1.5 Project Background.....	7
1.5.1 Need for the Project .....	7
1.5.2 Land Use Designations.....	8
1.5.3 Listing of Permits and Approvals .....	8
1.6 Agency and Public Consultation.....	8
<b>2. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING.....</b>	<b>10</b>
2.1 Physical Environment .....	10
2.1.1 Geology and Hazards.....	10
2.1.2 Soils .....	10
2.1.3 Climate.....	11
2.1.4 Hydrology and Drainage .....	11
2.1.5 Flora and Fauna.....	12
2.1.6 Air Quality.....	13
2.1.7 Noise .....	13
2.1.8 Scenic and Open Space Resources .....	14
2.1.9 Aquifers and Wetlands.....	14
2.2 Social, Cultural and Economic Setting .....	15
2.2.1 Socio-Economic Characteristics .....	15
2.2.2 Adjacent Land Uses .....	16
2.3 Public Facilities and Services.....	17
2.3.1 Roads and Traffic Circulation .....	17
2.3.2 Water Supply.....	17
2.3.3 Wastewater.....	17
2.3.4 Electricity and Telephone Service .....	18
2.3.5 Solid Waste .....	18
2.3.6 Protective and Social Services .....	18
2.3.7 Recreation Facilities.....	19
2.4 Archaeology, Historic and Cultural Resources .....	20
<b>3. SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND PROPOSED MITIGATION MEASURES .....</b>	<b>22</b>
3.1 Short Term Impacts .....	22
3.2 Long Term Impacts.....	22
<b>4. ALTERNATIVES .....</b>	<b>24</b>
4.1 No Action .....	24
4.2 Alternative Solutions .....	24
<b>5. DETERMINATION, FINDINGS AND REASONS FOR SUPPORTING DETERMINATION .....</b>	<b>25</b>
5.1 Significance Criteria .....	25
5.2 Findings .....	27
5.3 Reasons Supporting Determination .....	28

### REFERENCES

APPENDIX A - REPRODUCTION OF COMMENTS MADE DURING THE PRE-ASSESSMENT  
CONSULTATION PERIOD

APPENDIX B - REPRODUCTION OF COMMENTS AND RESPONSES MADE DURING THE 30-DAY  
COMMENT PERIOD

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Purpose**

The Hamakua Diversified Agricultural Association (HDAA), is proposing to lease the former Ookala Gym and Annex Parcel (Gym Parcel) from the County of Hawaii to develop the Ookala Community Center and Plantation Market Place. The Gym Parcel consists of approximately 16.123 acres at Ookala, North Hilo, Hawaii. The HDAA will utilize funding from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program to repair one of the Annex buildings for the proposed project. The use of federal funds triggers the environmental review process in accordance with Federal Regulations 24 CFR Part 58. In addition, the use of County property triggers the state environmental review process required by Chapter 343, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

### **1.2 Identification of Applicant**

Ms. Valerie T. Poindexter is the Executive Director of the Hamakua Diversified Agricultural Association, a Hawaii nonprofit, community land trust organization, whose mailing address is P.O. Box 369, Paauilo, Hawaii 96776.

### **1.3 Identification of Approving Agency and Responsible Entity**

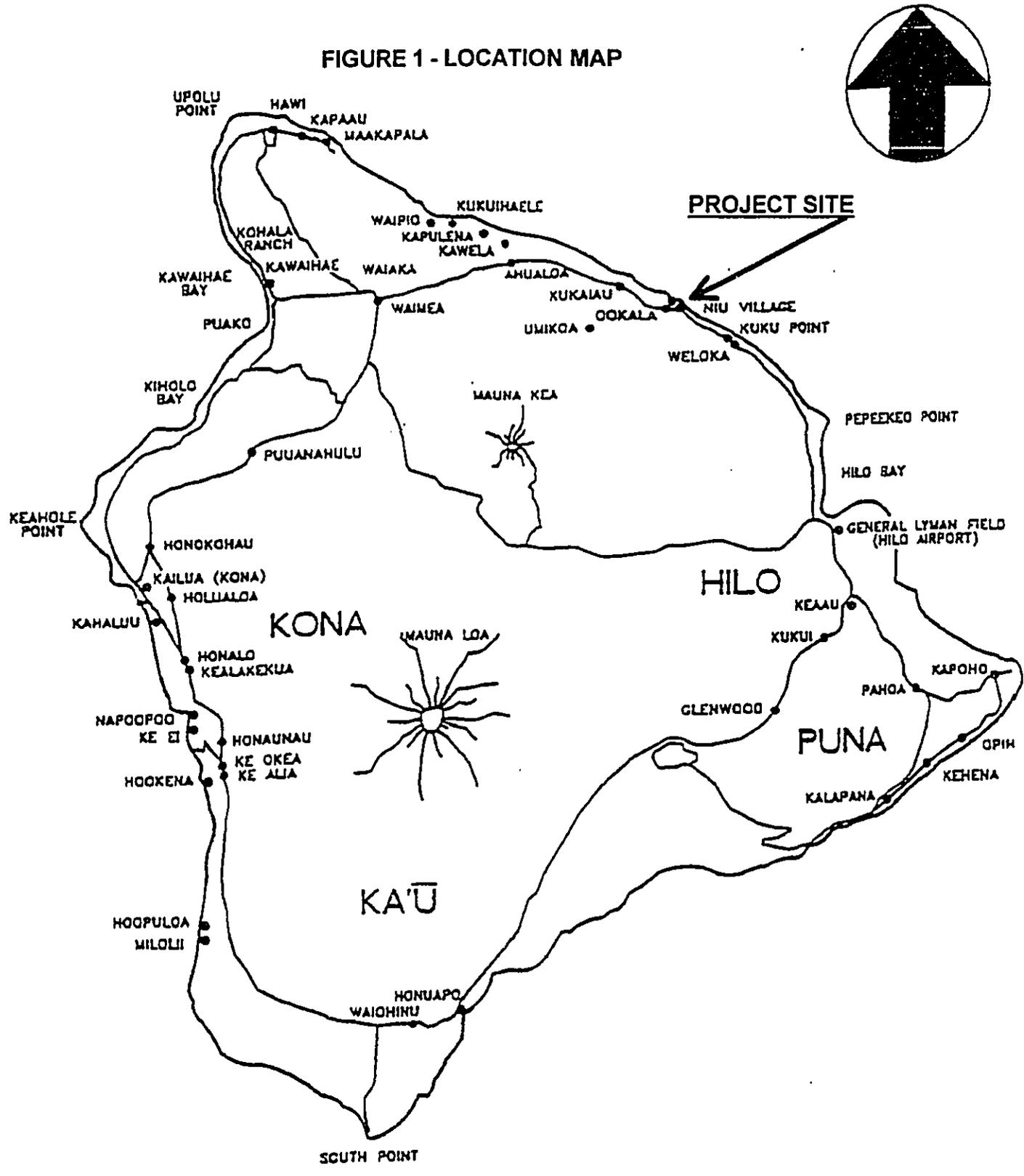
In accordance with Chapter 343, HRS, the Mayor of the County of Hawaii, or an authorized representative, is the appropriate accepting authority of the Environmental Assessment. In addition, the County of Hawaii is the "Responsible Entity" that will carry out the federal environmental review requirements of CFR 24 Part 58.

### **1.4 Technical Description**

The Hamakua Diversified Agricultural Association (HDAA) is proposing to develop the Ookala Community Center and Plantation Market Place on approximately 16.123 acres of land in Ookala, North Hilo, Hawaii, Tax Map Key (3) 3-9-01: 11. The subject property is situated adjacent to the former Hamakua Sugar Plantation Camp of Niu Village and to the north of Kaohaoha Gulch. (Please see Figure 1 - Location Map, Figure 2 - Tax Key Plat Map and Figure 3 - Site Plan and Topographic Map of the Project Area) The Gym Parcel includes the former Ookala Gym and Annex buildings, a garage, a playfield, former sugarcane fields and a portion of the Kaohaoha Gulch. The Gym and Annex buildings are in need of renovation and repair and needs to be retrofitted to be compliant with Americans with Disability Act (ADA) requirements prior to occupancy. The play field is being maintained on a regular basis while the remaining portions of the Gym Parcel are overgrown with shrubs grasses and trees.

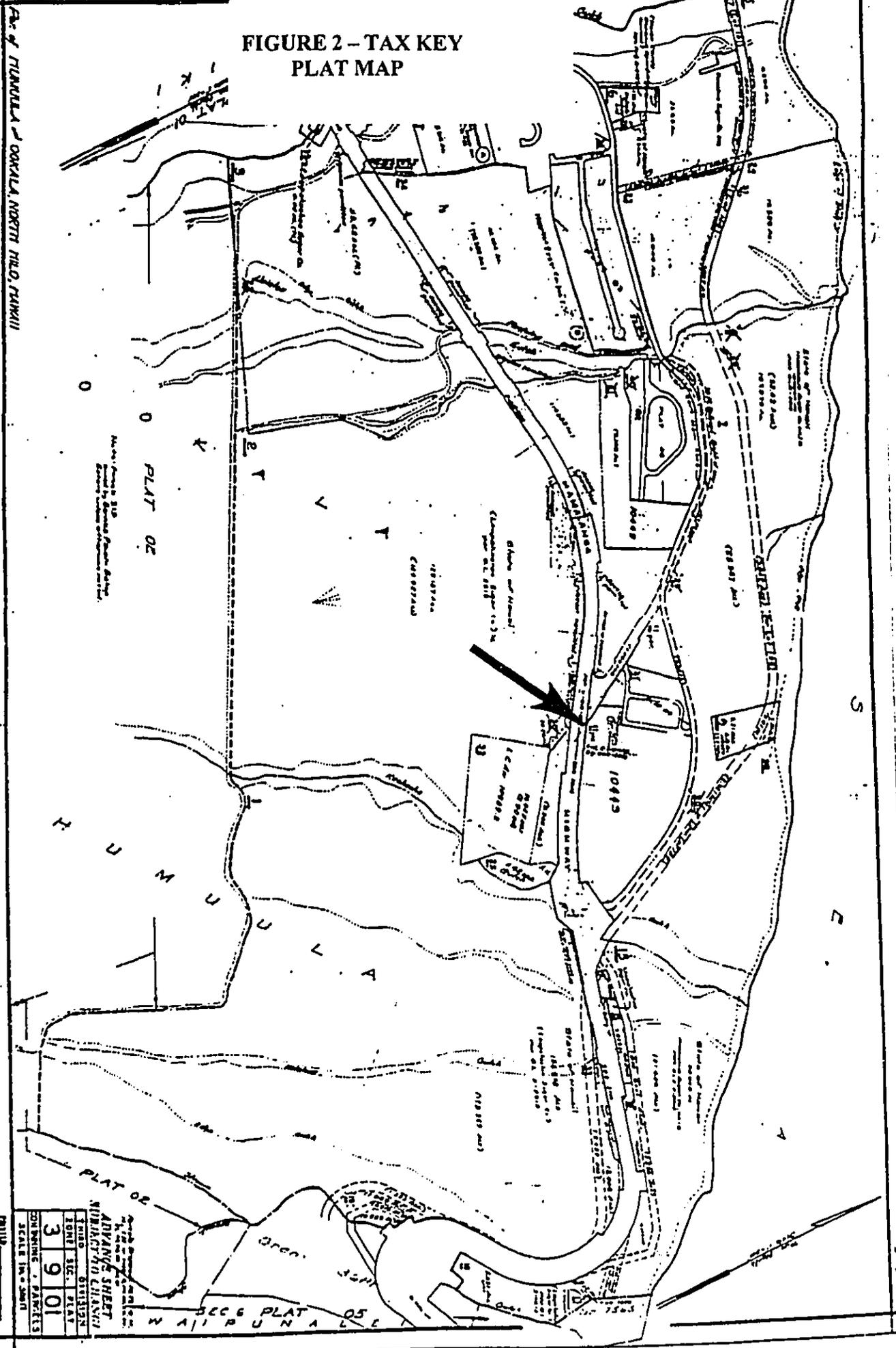
The Ookala Community Center and Plantation Market Place is being proposed as a multi-purpose center for the Ookala community that will include a community center, post office, multi-use production facility for farmers, local artist, crafts people and others

FIGURE 1 - LOCATION MAP



Dep. H. L. K. B. L. ...  
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 O. B. L. ...

**FIGURE 2 - TAX KEY  
 PLAT MAP**



ADVANCE SHEET  
 N. H. L. ...  
 3 9 01  
 SCALE IN ...

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**FIGURE 3 – SITE PLAN  
AND TOPOGRAPHIC MAP**

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FIGURE 4 – PHOTOGRAPH OF THE OKKALA GYM AND ANNEX BUILDINGS



who produce local products. The facility will assist displaced sugar workers and low income community residents to become self-sufficient through self-employment by providing the infrastructure for cooperative marketing, cooperative purchasing, business training, technical support and opportunities for shared resources.

The proposed project will be developed in several phases. The first phase will involve the renovation of the annex building on the south side of the gym. The existing structure, with an area of approximately 1,450 square feet, was last utilized as a dormitory to house single Hamakua Sugar employees and contains nine bedrooms and a bathroom and restroom facility. The renovation will convert the dormitory rooms into a post office (approximately 272 square feet), a conference room with a small certified kitchen (459 square feet) and men and women restrooms (663 square feet). The first phase improvements will also include two paved parking stalls, one handicapped parking stall and a accessible walkway.

Funding for the first phase improvements have been secured from the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) in the amount of \$250,000 as well as private foundation grants in the amount of \$45,000. Construction of the first phase is scheduled to begin in November 2001 and be completed in March 2002.

Additional phases of the project will involve renovating the former gym, development of a new community center building and the development of the remainder of the parcel for recreational and educational programs as well as youth and elderly activities. These facilities will provide opportunities for community meetings, recreational events, family parties and reunions, space for kupuna to gather, talk story and pass on the oral history of the district, a polling place for elections, space for cultural events, swap meets, and a health fair. The timetable for implementing the additional phases of the proposed project has not been determined due to the uncertainty of funding availability.

## **1.5 Project Background**

### **1.5.1 Need for the Project**

The Ookala Gym complex was constructed by the Kaiwiki Sugar Company in 1936 and served as the centerpiece for recreation and social interaction among and between the sugar plantation camp residents for over fifty years. Upon the closure of the Hamakua Sugar Company in 1994, the Ookala Gym property was conveyed to the County of Hawaii as part of the settlement for payment of real property taxes owed by the sugar company. The Ookala Gym property has not been utilized since the closure of the sugar company and the County does not have any current plans for utilizing the facility.

The Ookala community along with all of the residents of the Hamakua Coast have been traumatized by the closure of the sugar company and are going through a tough economic transition after the loss of the major employer in the district. Unemployment figures remain high and approximately 72% of the

residents are either in the low or moderate income categories. The Ookala Community Center and Plantation Market Place project will preserve an important asset within the community while providing a focal point for rebuilding morale and cohesion among area residents.

### 1.5.2 Land Use Designations

The subject property is situated within the State Land Use Agricultural District. The County General Plan Land Use Pattern Allocation Guide Map (LUPAG) designates this area as "Low Density Urban" and "Intensive Agriculture". The county zoning designation for the project site is Agricultural twenty acres (A-20a).

The proposed project is not situated within the Special Management Area designated by the County of Hawaii. The project does not involve the placement erection or removal of materials, nor increase the intensity of use in the Coastal Zone. The proposed project is consistent with all State and County land use designations and regulations.

### 1.5.3 Listing of Permits and Approvals

The following list of permits and approvals may be required for the proposed project:

State of Hawaii	
Department of Health	Underground Injection Control
County of Hawaii	
Department of Water Supply	Approval-Project Construction Plans
Department of Public Works	Approval-Project Construction Plans
Planning Department	Approval-Project Construction Plans
Office of Housing and Comm. Dev.	Approval-Project Construction Plans
Department of Parks & Recreation	Approval-Project Construction Plans

### 1.6 Agency and Public Consultation

Several community meetings have been held to discuss the proposed Ookala Community Center and Plantation Market Place project. These included preliminary planning sessions which began in 1997 and have continued with periodic updates. The last community meeting was held on June 10, 2001 to discuss the current status of the project.

The following public and private organizations and individuals were consulted during the preparation of this environmental assessment:

United States Fish and Wildlife Service  
United States Army Engineer Division, Pacific Ocean

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Federal Aviation Administration  
State of Hawaii, Department of Health  
State of Hawaii, Department of Agriculture  
State of Hawaii, Department of Transportation, Highways Division  
State of Hawaii, Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism  
State of Hawaii, Department of Land and Natural Resources  
    Division of Water Resource Management  
    State Historic Preservation Division  
    Land Division-Hawaii District Land Office  
State of Hawaii, Department of Hawaiian Home Lands  
State of Hawaii, Office of Hawaiian Affairs – Honolulu and East Hawaii  
County of Hawaii, Planning Department  
County of Hawaii, Department of Public Works  
County of Hawaii, Department of Research and Development  
County of Hawaii, Department of Water Supply  
County of Hawaii, Police Department  
County of Hawaii, Fire Department  
County of Hawaii, Civil Defense Agency  
Ookala Community Association  
Mrs. Elizabeth Eugenio, Ookala resident  
Mr. Walter Victor, President, Hawaiian Civic Club of Laupahoehoe

## 2. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

### 2.1 Physical Environment

#### 2.1.1 Geology and Hazards

##### *Environmental Setting*

The project area is located on the lower northeastern slopes of Mauna Kea and consists of the Hamakua volcanic series (Sterns and Macdonald, 1946). The Hamakua volcanic series consists mainly of basaltic lava flows.

The volcanic hazard as assessed by the United States Geological Survey for the project area is "8" on a scale of ascending risk 9 to 1 (Heliker 1990). Zone "8" includes the lower slopes of Mauna Kea, most of which has not been affected by lava flows for the past 10,000 years.

The entire island of Hawaii is in earthquake zone 4 of the Uniform Building Code, which establishes structural design standards for earthquake resistance for certain, types of buildings. This zone is prone to major damages from potential earthquake activity.

##### *Impacts and Mitigation Measures*

The proposed project will not expose the residents or the general public to any additional hazard risk that does not already exist. The volcanic hazard risk is relatively low and the same as any other alternative site that could be utilized for the same purpose in the general vicinity. All construction activity will be in compliance with current code requirements.

All proposed improvements will be constructed to current Building Code standards which includes measures to reduce seismic damage.

#### 2.1.2 Soils

##### *Environmental Setting*

The soils of the project area are classified as Ookala silty clay loam which are well drained silty clay loams formed in volcanic ash. This soil was previously utilized for sugarcane with capability subclass ratings of IIIe and IVe, depending on the slope. (U. S. Soil Conservation Service 1973). The Land Study Bureau's overall master productivity rating of the subject area for agricultural use is class "B" or "good" (Land Study Bureau 1965).

### *Impacts*

Given the historical use of the property for social and recreational uses as well as the availability of other similar agricultural parcels in the area, no adverse impact on agricultural soils or uses are anticipated as a result of the proposed project.

### **2.1.3 Climate**

#### *Environmental Setting*

Hawaii's climate is generally characterized as mild with uniform temperatures, moderate humidity, and two identifiable seasons. The "summer" season, between May and October is generally warmer and drier. The "winter" season, between October and April is cooler and wetter. The project area is situated in what is considered the "windward" side of the Island of Hawaii which is exposed to northeasterly trade winds that causes relatively high rainfall (approximately 100 inches/year). The elevation of the project area is approximately 400 feet above sea level. The average monthly minimum temperatures along the Hamakua Coast ranges from the mid 60's to 70 degrees Fahrenheit while the average monthly maximum temperature ranges from the mid 70's to the mid 80's. (University of Hawaii Press, 1983)

### *Impacts*

The climatic conditions of the project area will not have a significant impact on the proposed project.

### **2.1.4 Hydrology and Drainage**

#### *Environmental Setting*

The project site is designated Zone X (Areas determined to be outside the 500-year flood plain) on the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

#### *Impacts and Mitigation Measures*

Development of the proposed project has the potential to increase surface runoff and flooding in the area. The proposed project will adhere to County and State requirements for disposing of runoff and addressing drainage concerns including requirements to contain all development generated runoff on-site. As such, no adverse drainage impacts are anticipated as a result of the proposed project.

The proposed project is not located within one mile of a listed Wild and Scenic River and will not have an effect on the natural, free flowing or scenic qualities of

a river in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers system.

### 2.1.5 Flora and Fauna

#### *Environmental Setting*

The Ookala Gym Parcel has previously been mechanically altered and cleared. The area around the gym and annex buildings are landscaped with lawn grasses and various plants found in the yards of area residents. These include Dracena Janet Craigii and Dracena Warnecki, Ti (*Cordyline terminalis*), Tree fern or Hapu'u (*Cibotium splendens*), coconut trees (*cocos nucifera*) and Dwarf Poinciana (*Caesalpinia pulcherrima*). In addition embankment areas are planted in wedelia ground cover (*Wedelia trilobata*). Guinea grass (*Panicum maximum*) and other weed species such as sleeping grass (*mimosa pudica*) and Kaliko (*Euphorbia heterophylla*) are also found around the gym and annex buildings.

The playfield area has a variety of lawn grasses and has been well maintained by the Department of Parks and Recreation. A variety of trees planted for landscape and windbreak purposes together with several volunteer growth trees line the perimeter of the playfield. The various trees include a row of tall ironwoods (*Casurina equisetifolia*), an Indian Banyan (*Ficus benghalensis*), shower trees (*Cassia* Spp.) a young Mango tree (*Mangifera* spp.) and Papaya (*Carica papaya*).

The balance of the parcel is former sugarcane fields which is predominantly overgrown with Guinea grass (*Panicum maximum*) with a scattering of young Ironwood trees (*Casurina equisetifolia*), and gunpowder trees (*Trema orientalis*).

No rare, threatened or endangered species as listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are present on the project site. The history of continuous disturbance as a recreation center and for sugar cultivation indicates that the property will have very little value in terms of conserving native species or their habitats.

#### *Impacts*

No listed, candidate or proposed endangered animal or plant species are found on the subject property. In terms of conservation value, no botanical or zoological resources requiring special protection are present. No impact on native species or habitat is expected to result from the proposed Ookala Community Center and Plantation Marketplace Project.

## 2.1.6 Air Quality

### *Environmental Setting*

Pollutants derived from the volcanic emissions from the ongoing Kilauea eruption affect the subject area. Other sources of air pollutants to a limited degree include vehicle emissions and dust from vehicles traveling along the Hawaii Belt Road. In general, however, the ambient air quality of the project area meets all federal and state standards as evidenced by its designation as an "attainment" area by the State Department of Health, Clean Air Branch.

As a demolition and renovation activity, the State Department of Health has noted that the owner/operator is required to inspect the affected area to determine whether asbestos is present. In addition, lead-based paint is another hazardous material that may be disturbed during the renovation activity.

### *Impacts and Mitigation Measures*

An environmental consultant will be retained to conduct a hazard assessment for lead based paint and asbestos in the structure proposed for renovation. The hazard assessment will determine whether these hazardous materials are present and the options for mitigation that may be considered. If any hazardous materials are present and require mitigation, the design consultant will be responsible for addressing these mitigation measures in the plans and specifications developed for the proposed renovation project. The results of the hazard assessment will be attached as an addendum to the environmental assessment once it is completed.

Short term impacts resulting from construction activity include dust and exhaust from machinery involved in the installation of the project improvements. Given the relative short construction time period, the potential impacts of these construction activities should be minimal. In addition, the contractor will be instructed to utilize best management practices to minimize dust impact.

## 2.1.7 Noise

### *Environmental Setting*

Existing noise levels are typical of a rural residential setting, which is affected primarily by traffic on the Hawaii Belt Road. The project site is not situated in close proximity to any significant noise generators such as airports or industrial activity. The closest airport is situated approximately twenty-eight miles southeast of the project site.

### *Impacts and Mitigation Measures*

Temporary noise impacts will occur from construction activities of the project and are unavoidable. Mitigation measures can be taken, however, to minimize noise impacts including the use of mufflers and implementing construction curfew periods. State Department of Health regulations must be adhered to during construction.

#### **2.1.8 Scenic and Open Space Resources**

##### *Environmental Setting*

The North Hilo district is blessed with open space and scenic vistas in a rural-agricultural setting. The Ookala Gym Parcel and Kaohaohao Gulch are not listed as significant scenic resources in the Natural Beauty section of the Hawaii County General Plan.

##### *Impacts*

The open space and scenic vistas of the North Hilo district and the project area in particular will not be adversely affected by the Ookala Community Center and Plantation Marketplace project.

#### **2.1.9 Aquifers and Wetlands**

##### *Environmental Setting*

The project area is within the Paauilo aquifer system which has a sustainable yield of approximately 60 million gallons per day. Daily water withdrawals from the Paauilo aquifer system are minimal at this time.

The project area is not situated within or adjacent to a wetland identified by or delineated on maps issued by the U.S. Department of Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service. In addition, the proposed project is not located in an area designated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as being supported by a sole source aquifer.

##### *Impacts*

The proposed project will not have any adverse impact on any wetland or aquifer resource.

## **2.2 Social, Cultural and Economic Setting**

### **2.2.1 Socio-Economic Characteristics**

#### *Setting*

Hawaii County's population increased by more than 56,000 persons between 1980 and 2000. Between 1980 and 1990, Hawaii Island's population increased by 30.7 percent and increased by 23.6 percent between 1990 and 2000. The April 1, 2000 population figure for Hawaii County was 148,677 according to census figures compiled by the County of Hawaii, Department of Research and Development.

The population of the North Hilo district increased slightly from 1,679 in 1980 to 1,720 in 2000. In fact, population in the district actually decreased between 1980 and 1990 (-8.2%) before rebounding between 1990 and 2000 with an increase of 11.6%.

The low population growth levels reflect the lack of employment opportunities in the region. The North Hilo and Hamakua districts lost the primary employer in the region when Hamakua Sugar Company shut down in 1994. A total of 700 direct jobs were lost and approximately 20,000 acres of land were removed from production with the close of the sugar company. Although a substantial portion of the acreage has been planted with eucalyptus trees, the number of jobs that were lost have yet to be replaced. Agricultural activities that continue in the district include ranching, macadamia nuts and other diversified agricultural crops. In addition to agriculture, many North Hilo residents are employed in the neighboring districts of South Hilo, Hamakua or South Kohala.

#### *Impacts*

The Ookala Community Center and Plantation Market Place is being proposed as a multi-purpose center for the Ookala community that will have a positive socio-economic impact on the community. The proposed project will include programs and facilities to address the recreational, educational and social needs of the community. These facilities will provide opportunities for community meetings, recreational events, family parties and reunions, space for kupuna to gather, talk story and pass on the oral history of the district, a polling place for elections, space for special events such as swap meets, health fairs and cultural presentations. The facility will also assist displaced sugar workers and low income community residents by providing a multi-use production facility for farmers, local artist, crafts people and others producing locally made products. Technical assistance will also be provided to those interested in becoming self-

sufficient through self-employment by providing the infrastructure for cooperative marketing, cooperative purchasing, business training, technical support and opportunities for shared resources.

Although the proposed project is situated in a neighborhood that is predominantly low-income, the proposed project will not have a disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effect. In fact, the proposed project is specifically intended to improve the social and economic conditions of this community. As such the proposed project is consistent with the objectives of Executive Order 12898, "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations".

### **2.2.2 Adjacent Land Uses**

#### *Existing Setting*

The project area is situated in Ookala, North Hilo, Hawaii, a former plantation community established in support of the now departed sugar industry. Surrounding land uses include Niu Village (a former plantation camp with 14 residences) to the northeast, farm land leased by the HDAA to the north, State owned agricultural land to the south and east, and State Highway 19 to the west.

The general character of the surrounding community is a mixture of residential, and agricultural activities in a rural setting. Laupahoehoe, situated approximately four miles to the southeast, is the civic center for the North Hilo District. All of the major government services are provided in Laupahoehoe including Laupahoehoe High and Elementary School (grades K-12), school and community library, police station, fire station and refuse transfer station.

The proposed project is not situated within an FAA-designated civilian airport Runway Clear Zone (RCZ), within a military airfield Clear Zone (CZ) or Accident Potential Zone (APZ). The closest airport is the Hilo Airport situated approximately twenty-eight miles southeast of the project site.

The proposed project is not situated within one mile of a NPL ("Superfund") site, nor within 2,000 feet of a CERCLIS site, nor adjacent to any other known or suspected sites contaminated with toxic chemicals or radioactive materials. The proposed project is situated within a rural-residential setting without any nearby explosive or flammable operations.

#### *Impacts*

The proposed project will be consistent with the existing residential-agricultural character of the surrounding community. The proposed project will have little or no impact on the existing land use pattern of the surrounding properties and will

be consistent with the historical use of the subject property. The proposed project will not expose either people or buildings to hazards from aircraft, explosive or flammable operations, toxic chemicals or radioactive materials.

## **2.3 Public Facilities and Services**

### **2.3.1 Roads and Traffic Circulation**

#### *Setting*

Access to the Gym Parcel is provided from the Old Government Main Road by a 12-foot wide paved private roadway providing access to Niu Village. The distance from the Old Government Main Road to the Gym Parcel is approximately 200 feet.

#### *Impacts and Mitigation Measures*

The additional traffic to be generated by the proposed Ookala Community Center and Plantation Market Place is potentially significant. The traffic expected from the first phase of improvements, however, will not exceed levels experienced during the historical use of the facility. Alternative access routes and improvements will be developed prior to any further development of the property.

### **2.3.2 Water Supply**

#### *Existing Setting*

The Gym Parcel is currently connected to the county water system from an existing 6-inch waterline which is also serving Niu Village.

#### *Impacts*

The proposed Ookala Community Center and Plantation Market Place will not have a significant adverse impact on the existing Department of Water Supply system serving the subject location.

### **2.3.3 Wastewater**

#### *Existing Setting*

The Ookala community is not served by a municipal wastewater treatment facility. The south annex being renovated in the first phase of the proposed project is connected to an existing cesspool. The State Department of Health has indicated that the existing cesspool will need to be checked and certified to be in good condition before it can be utilized. Sewage effluent generated by subsequent phases of the proposed project will be handled by on-site septic

systems meeting with the approval of the State Department of Health.

#### *Impacts and Mitigation Measures*

In the event that the existing cesspool cannot be certified to be in good condition, a septic system will need to be provided to accommodate the sewage effluent generated by the first phase of the proposed project. Subsequent phases of the proposed project will be developed in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Health.

#### **2.3.4 Electricity and Telephone Service**

##### *Setting*

Electricity and telephone service are available to the subject property from existing service lines serving Niu Village.

##### *Impacts*

The proposed project will not have any significant adverse impact on the existing capacity of these services.

#### **2.3.5 Solid Waste**

##### *Existing Setting*

The County does not provide any municipal waste pick up services in the area. The nearest county solid waste transfer station to the subject property is approximately four miles away in Laupahoehoe.

##### *Impacts and Mitigation Measures*

A private waste pick up service will be utilized for the proposed project. In addition, recycling bins can be accommodated on site to encourage the recycling of cans, bottles and paper.

#### **2.3.6 Protective and Social Services**

##### *Existing Setting*

Protective services including fire and police are located in Laupahoehoe, approximately four miles from the project site. These facilities and services adequately meet the needs that would be generated by the proposed project.

A variety of social service agencies have expressed interest in utilizing the Gym Parcel to provide their services. These include agencies serving the elderly,

children and the low-income population in the community. These agencies are looking for a site within the community to provide their services.

*Impacts*

The proposed project will not have any adverse impact on the protective services being provided to the Ookala community. In addition, the proposed project will have a positive impact on service providers and the community by establishing a suitable location for their services.

**2.3.7 Recreation Facilities**

*Existing Setting*

There are no recreational facilities in Ookala other than the large grassed field on the Gym Parcel. The North Hilo community utilizes the school facilities at Laupahoehoe which include a 6-acre play field, a gymnasium, two tennis courts and a County swimming pool. The County has another recreational facility in Papaaloa which includes a gymnasium, community center, ball field and tennis courts. In addition, the Laupahoehoe peninsula area is the location of an old gymnasium and a beach park that includes a play field, boat ramp, picnic shelters and a large pavilion. The beach park accommodates camping, picnicking and fishing.

*Impacts*

The proposed project will not create any additional burden on the existing recreational facilities serving the district. In fact, the proposed project will provide an additional facility to be utilized for recreational and social activities that will reduce the impact on some of the existing facilities.

## 2.4 Archaeology, Historic and Cultural Resources

### *Setting*

The Gym Parcel was previously owned by the Hamakua Sugar Company which shut down operations in 1994. The Ookala area was subject to cultivation practices which included mechanical site preparation and mechanized harvesting. Such practices would have destroyed any evidence of archaeological features, if any existed. There are no known pre-1850 historically significant sites adjacent to the Gym Parcel which are listed on the national and/or Hawaii Register of Historic Sites.

The Ookala Gym and Annex was built by the Kaiwiki Sugar Company's carpentry crew in 1936-1937. Commenting on the proposed lease of the Gym Parcel, the State Department of Land and Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division stated, in part, the following:

"The gym appears to meet the criteria for placement on the Hawaii and National Registers of Historic Places as a very intact example of a County gym established in a plantation community. We are glad to see the proposed use of this building and support the lease of the property.

Enclosed is a preservation brief, 'Making Historic Properties Accessible,' which offers recommended methods of keeping the historic character of a property while making it accessible. We would like to review the proposed ramps and renovations to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, as we understand the need for accessibility, but would like to ensure that historic character is maintained. Please forward any sketches or schematic plans as they are developed.

Also, since a post office will be installed on the property and there may be CDBG funds involved, compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act is required, which is basically consultation with our office."

In an effort to comply with Section 106, National Historic Preservation Act, consultation with Native Hawaiian organizations was initiated with the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) and the Honolulu and East Hawaii offices of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) by requesting their comments on a pre-assessment document prepared for the proposed project. No comments were received from these agencies which indicates that further consultation was determined to be unnecessary.

In addition, interviews were conducted with long-time area residents Mrs. Elizabeth Eugenio, and Mr. Walter Victor, President of the Hawaiian Civic Club of Laupahoehoe who are familiar with native Hawaiian and other cultural practices

of the area. Members of the Ookala Community Association have also participated in discussions regarding the issues and concerns involving the proposed project. These discussions indicated that there are no native Hawaiian or other cultural practices dependent on the specific project site either as a resource or for access purposes. Area residents utilize higher elevations in the region for pig hunting and coastal areas for fishing and these activities will not be affected in any way by the proposed project. Area residents utilize a portion of the project site for family gardens and these uses will be allowed to continue.

*Impacts and Mitigation Measures*

The HDAA recognizes the historic significance of the Ookala Gym and will comply with the request of the State Historic Preservation Division to include them in the consultation process as plans are developed. The HDAA will strive to retain the character of the Gym and Annex buildings as they proceed with the renovation plans and further development of the project site.

In addition, the HDAA will allow area residents to utilize a portion of the project site for family gardens as they have done over the years.

### **3. SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND PROPOSED MITIGATION MEASURES**

#### **3.1 Short Term Impacts**

##### *Construction Activity:*

Impacts: Short term impacts will result from the proposed construction activity including increased noise levels, dust and exhaust from machinery involved in the installation of the project improvements. Given the relative short construction time period the potential impacts of these construction activities should be minimal.

Mitigation: The contractor will be instructed to utilize best management practices to minimize all impacts including the use of mufflers and implementing construction curfew periods. State Department of Health regulations must be adhered to during construction.

#### **3.2 Long Term Impacts**

##### *Geologic Hazard:*

Impacts: The proposed project will be exposed to damages from potential earthquake activity.

Mitigation: The proposed renovation of the gym annex will be constructed to current Building Code standards which includes measures to reduce seismic damage.

##### *Drainage and Erosion:*

Impacts: Development of the proposed project has the potential to increase surface runoff and flooding in the area.

Mitigation: The proposed project will adhere to County and State requirements for disposing of runoff and addressing drainage concerns including requirements to contain all development generated runoff on-site.

##### *Wastewater:*

Impacts: Sewage effluent generated by the proposed project will have to be addressed.

Mitigation: The existing cesspool will be examined to determine if it can be certified to be in good condition before it is utilized. In the event that the existing

cesspool cannot be certified to be in good condition, a septic system will need to be provided to handle the sewage effluent generated from the renovation of the south annex. Sewage generated from subsequent phases of the proposed project will be handled by an on-site septic system meeting with the approval of the State Department of Health.

*Solid Waste:*

Impacts: Solid waste generated by the proposed project will have to be addressed.

Mitigation: A private waste pick up service will be utilized for the proposed project. In addition, recycling bins can be accommodated on site to encourage the recycling of cans, bottles and paper.

*Historic Sites:*

Impacts: The Ookala gym appears to meet the criteria for placement on the Hawaii and National Registers of Historic Places as a very intact example of a County gym established in a plantation community.

Mitigation: The HDAA will comply with the request from the State Historic Preservation Division to submit the renovation plans for review and to include their office in the consultation process.

*Cultural Practices:*

Impacts: Area residents have raised concerns about being able to continue their practice of utilizing portions of the project site for their family gardens.

Mitigation: The HDAA has assured area residents that they would be able to continue the practice of utilizing portions of the project site for their family gardens.

## **4. ALTERNATIVES**

### **4.1 No Action**

If the Ookala Gym Parcel is not leased to the HDAA, the gym and annex structures will remain closed and will continue to deteriorate. The County does not have any plans for utilizing the subject property and the existing facilities.

### **4.2 Alternative Solutions**

The proposed Ookala Community Center and Plantation Market Place project could be located on alternative sites within the Ookala region. Although other feasible sites may be available, the Gym Parcel is probably the best suited for the intended purpose based on its historical use as a center for recreation and social interaction among and between the plantation camp residents of the sugar company. Furthermore, it is unlikely that the impacts generated for this site will be significantly less at any other site in the region.

## 5. DETERMINATION, FINDINGS AND REASONS FOR SUPPORTING DETERMINATION

### 5.1 Significance Criteria

According to the Department of Health Rules (11-200-12), an applicant or agency must determine whether an action may have a significant impact on the environment, including all phases of the project, its expected consequences both primary and secondary, its cumulative impact with other projects, and its short and long-term effects. In making the determination, the Rules establish "Significance Criteria" to be used as a basis for identifying whether significant environmental impact on the environment if it meets any one of the following thirteen criteria.

**1. Involves an irrevocable commitment to loss or destruction of any natural or cultural resources.**

The proposed project involves the lease of a 16.123 acre County owned parcel previously owned by the Hamakua Sugar Company. The parcel was previously utilized for sugarcane production and social and recreational facility for the plantation camp community. The subject property and facilities has not been utilized since the closure of the Hamakua Sugar Company in 1994. The project site does not contain any significant natural or cultural resources.

**2. Curtails the range of beneficial uses of the environment.**

The proposed Ookala Community Center and Plantation Market Place project will likely curtail the agricultural use of the property which ceased with the closure of the sugar company in 1994. However, there is an abundance of similar property in the region that are available for agricultural use.

**3. Conflicts with the State's long-term environmental policies or goals and guidelines as expressed in Chapter 344, HRS; and any revisions thereof and amendments thereto, court decisions, or executive orders.**

The proposed development is consistent with the Environmental Policies established in Chapter 344, HRS, and the National Environmental Policy Act.

**4. Substantially affects the economic or social welfare of the community or state.**

The Ookala Community Center and Plantation Market Place project will have a positive socio-economic impact on the community. The proposed project will include programs and facilities to address the recreational, educational and social needs of the community. These facilities will provide opportunities for community meetings, recreational events, family parties and reunions,

space for kupuna to gather, talk story and pass on the oral history of the district, a polling place for elections, space for special events such as swap meets, health fairs and cultural presentations. The facility will also assist displaced sugar workers and low income community residents by providing a multi-use production facility for farmers, local artist, crafts people and others producing locally made products. Technical assistance will also be provided to those interested in becoming self-sufficient through self-employment by providing the infrastructure for cooperative marketing, cooperative purchasing, business training, technical support and opportunities for shared resources.

**5. Substantially affects public health**

The proposed project does not substantially affect public health. Any construction related impacts of noise, dust and emissions will be mitigated by compliance with the State Department of Health Administrative Rules.

**6. Involves substantial secondary impacts, such as population changes or effects on public facilities.**

The proposed project will not have any substantial secondary impacts. The proposed project will address an existing demand for social, recreational and educational programs in the community. In fact, the proposed project will provide an additional facility to be utilized for recreational and social activities that will reduce the impact on some of the existing facilities.

**7. Involves a substantial degradation of environmental quality.**

The project area is situated in Ookala, North Hilo, Hawaii, a former plantation community established in support of the now departed sugar industry. The gym and annex facilities have been a part of the community since 1936. As such, the continued use of these facilities for the social, cultural and economic benefit of the community will not result in a substantial degradation of environmental quality.

**8. Is individually limited but cumulatively has considerable effect on the environment, or involves a commitment for larger actions.**

The proposed project will not have any substantial secondary impacts because it is not a generator of growth. The proposed project does not involve a commitment for larger actions and will not induce other actions having a cumulative effect on the environment.

**9. Substantially affects a rare, threatened or endangered species or its habitat.**

The proposed project will not have any substantial adverse effect on any rare, threatened or endangered species or its habitat.

**10. Detrimently affects air or water quality or ambient noise levels.**

Short term impacts will result from the proposed construction activity including increased noise levels, dust and exhaust from machinery involved in the construction activity. The contractor will be instructed to utilize best management practices to minimize all impacts including the use of mufflers and implementing construction curfew periods. State Department of Health regulations must be adhered to during construction. Given the relative short construction time period, the potential impacts of these construction activities should be minimal.

**11. Affects or is likely to suffer damage by being located in an environmentally sensitive area, such as a flood plain, tsunami zone, beach, erosion-prone area, geologically hazardous land, estuary, freshwater, or coastal waters.**

The project site is not located in an environmentally sensitive area. The flood designation is Zone X (Areas determined to be outside the 500-year flood plain) and the volcanic hazard risk is relatively low compared to other districts on the island. All construction activity will be in compliance with current code requirements.

**12. Substantially affects scenic vistas and view planes identified in county or state plans or studies.**

The open space and scenic vistas of the North Hilo district and the project area in particular, will not be adversely affected by the Ookala Community Center and Plantation Marketplace project. The first phase of the project involves the renovation of an existing annex building. The topography of the subject property will allow subsequent phases to be designed and constructed without adversely affecting the scenic vistas and view planes of the area.

**13. Requires substantial energy consumption.**

The proposed project will not require substantial energy consumption.

**5.2 Findings**

Based on the foregoing information presented, it is determined that the proposed Ookala Community Center and Plantation Marketplace project will not have a significant effect. As such, a determination of a Finding of No Significant Impact for the proposed action is appropriate.

### **5.3 Reasons Supporting Determination**

The nature and scale of the proposed action within the former plantation community of Ookala is such that no significant environmental effects are anticipated. Potential impacts, if any, can be mitigated through sensitive design and careful construction management practices and compliance with all governmental requirements including those of the Department of Public Works and State Department of Health.

## REFERENCES

- County of Hawaii. 1989. *The General Plan Hawaii County*. Hilo, Hawaii.
- County of Hawaii, Department of Research and Development. 2001. "Resident Population, By Districts, Hawaii County: 1980, 1990, and 2000". Hilo, Hawaii.
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- Land Study Bureau. 1965. *Detailed Land Classification - Island of Hawaii*. University of Hawaii. Honolulu
- U.S. Soil Conservation Service. 1973. *Soil Survey of the Island of Hawaii, State of Hawaii*. Washington: USDA
- University of Hawaii at Manoa, Dept. of Geography. 1983. *Atlas of Hawaii*. 2nd ed. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

**APPENDIX A - REPRODUCTION OF COMMENTS MADE DURING THE  
PRE-ASSESSMENT CONSULTATION PERIOD**

1. State of Hawaii, Department of Health, from Aaron Ueno, District Environmental Health Program Chief, dated March 14, 2000.
2. County of Hawaii, Department of Public Works, Building Division, from Stanley Takemura, Division Chief, dated March 15, 2000.
3. County of Hawaii, Department of Water Supply, from Milton D. Pavao, P.E., Manager, dated March 16, 2000.
4. State of Hawaii, Department of Land and Natural Resources, Land Division, from Harry Yada, District Land Agent, dated March 21, 2000.
5. County of Hawaii, Police Department, from Wayne G. Carvalho, Police Chief, dated March 31, 2000.
6. U.S. Department of the Army, U.S. Army Engineer District, Honolulu, from Milton Yoshimoto, Acting Chief, Civil Works Technical Branch, dated April 3, 2000.
7. County of Hawaii, Office of Housing and Community Development, from Edwin S. Taira, Assistant Housing Administrator, dated April 7, 2000.
8. County of Hawaii, Planning Department, from Virginia Goldstein, Planning Director, dated November 3, 2000.
9. State of Hawaii, Department of Land and Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division, from Don Hibbard, Administrator, dated December 14, 2000.

BENJAMIN J. CAYETANO  
GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

P.O. BOX 916  
HILO, HAWAII 96721-0916

*glenn?*  
BRUCE S. ANDERSON, Ph.D., M.P.H.  
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

March 14, 2000

Honorable Stephen K. Yamashiro  
Mayor, County of Hawaii  
25 Aupuni Street, Room 215  
Hilo, Hawaii 96720-4252

Mayor Yamashiro:

Subject: Pre-Assessment Consultation for the Proposed Direct Leave of  
All or a Portion of the Ookala Gym and annex Parcel situate at  
Ookala, North Hilo, Hawaii, Tax Map Key: 3rd/3-9-01:11

As a demolition and renovation activity, the Federal Register, 40 CFR Part 61, National Emission Standard for Hazardous Air Pollutants, Asbestos NESHAP Revision; Final Rule, November 20, 1990, requires the owner/operator to inspect the affected areas to determine whether asbestos is present.

Under the Asbestos School Hazard Abatement Response Act (ASHARA), all persons who conduct inspections (i.e. perform sampling and assessment of suspected asbestos-containing material) in schools or public and commercial buildings must have an active Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response (AHERA) certificate-of-training from an accredited training provider.

Under NESHAP's regulation, the owner/operator would be required to file with the Department of Health, Noise, Radiation, and Indoor Air Quality Branch, an Asbestos Demolition/Renovation notification 10 working days prior to demolition of each building or the disturbance of regulated asbestos-containing material. All regulated quantities and types of asbestos-containing materials would be subject to emission controls, proper collection, containerizing, and disposal at a permitted landfill.

Under a renovation project, if the amount of friable or non-friable material rendered friable is less than 160 square feet, the project would not be subject to the NESHAP requirements. However, the persons who conduct activities related to abatement and/or disturbances to friable material

RECEIVED  
00 MAR 15 AM 10 31  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
COUNTY OF HAWAII  
BY  
MAYOR M.D. D.M.D.

Honorable Stephen K. Yamashiro  
March 14, 2000  
Page 2

greater than three square feet or three linear feet, must have an active AHERA certificate of training from an accredited provider for that specific discipline (i.e., project designer, abatement supervisor and worker).

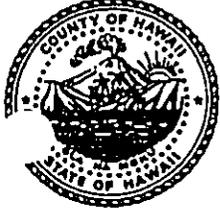
If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact Mr. Robert H. Lopes at (808) 586-5800.

The proposed certified kitchen and the distribution of processed food products needs to meet the requirements of Chapter 12, Food Establishment Sanitation. Please call our office (Ph. 933-0917) for consultation and additional information.

Sincerely,



AARON UENO  
District Environmental Health Program Chief  
Hawaii District



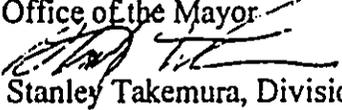
## BUILDING DIVISION - DPW

COUNTY OF HAWAII - 25 AUPUNI STREET - HILO, HAWAII 96720  
HILO OFFICE (808) 961-8331

KONA OFFICE (808) 327-3520

March 15, 2000

To: Glenn Y. Taguchi, Executive Assistant  
Office of the Mayor

From:   
Stanley Takemura, Division Chief

Subject: Pre-Assessment Consultation of Ookala Gym and Annex Parcel  
TMK: 3 - 9 - 01: 11

RECEIVED  
00 MAR 15 PM 12 59  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
COUNTY OF HAWAII  
BY  
MAYOR M.D. D.M.D.

We have reviewed the proposed development and have the following comments:

1. All new building construction shall comply to current codes and standards.
2. Accommodations for handicap accessibility shall be reviewed and approved by the State Commission on Persons with Disabilities.
3. All renovation plans shall be stamped by the appropriate licensed professional.
4. Building permits are required for all new and repair/ renovation work including permits for plumbing and electrical work. Permits should also be obtained for demolition of existing structures.

Should you have any questions please give me a call at extension 8331.

cc: Jai Ho Cheng, Plan Reviewer  
Brian Kajikawa, Building Deputy



DEPARTMENT OF WATER SUPPLY • COUNTY OF HAWAII

25 AUPUNI STREET • HILO, HAWAII  
TELEPHONE (808) 961-8660 • FAX (808) 961-8660

March 16, 2000

RECEIVED  
MAR 20 AM 7 58  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
COUNTY OF HAWAII  
MAYOR M.D. D.M.D.

TO: Mayor Stephen K. Yamashiro, County of Hawaii  
ATTENTION: MR. GLENN Y. TAGUCHI, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

FROM: Milton D. Pavao, Manager

SUBJECT: OOKALA COMMUNITY CENTER AND PLANTATION MARKET PLACE

The Department of Water Supply sees no adverse impact for our system at the above-subject location.

Sincerely yours,

Milton D. Pavao, P.E.  
Manager

KI:gms

*... Water brings progress...*



STATE OF HAWAII  
 DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
 LAND DIVISION  
 P.O. BOX 936  
 HILO, HAWAII 96721-0936  
 PHONE: (808) 974-6203  
 FAX: (808) 974-6222

AQUACULTURE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM  
 AQUATIC RESOURCES  
 BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
 CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT  
 CONVEYANCES  
 FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
 HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
 LAND DIVISION  
 STATE PARKS  
 WATER AND LAND DEVELOPMENT

March 21, 2000

TO: Stephen K. Yamashiro, Mayor  
 County of Hawaii

FROM: Harry Yada, District Land Agent 

SUBJECT: Pre-Assessment Consultation for the Proposed Direct Lease of All or a Portion of the Ookala Gym and Annex Parcel situate at Ookala, North Hilo, Hawaii, Tax Map Key:3<sup>rd</sup>/3-9-01:11

The DLNR Land Division, Hawaii District Branch Office, has no comments to offer regarding this request.

cc: Central File

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 .00 PMR 22 PM 2 32  
 OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
 COUNTY OF HAWAII  
 BY  
 MAYOR M. O. O.M.D.

Stephen K. Yamashiro  
Mayor



Wayne G. Carvalho  
Police Chief

James S. Correa  
Deputy Police Chief

March 31, 2000

County of Hawaii

POLICE DEPARTMENT

349 Kapiolani Street • Hilo, Hawaii 96720-3998  
(808) 935-3711 • Fax (808) 961-2702

BY  
MAYOR M.D. D.M.D.

OFFICE OF THE MAJOR  
COUNTY OF HAWAII

RECEIVED  
00 APR 3 PM 2 48

TO : MAYOR  
ATTN : EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT GLENN Y. TAGUCHI  
FROM : ~~Wayne~~ WAYNE G. CARVALHO, POLICE CHIEF  
SUBJECT: PRE-ASSESSMENT CONSULTATION FOR THE PROPOSED DIRECT  
LEASE OF ALL OR A PORTION OF THE OOKALA GYM AND ANNEX  
PARCEL SITUATED AT OOKALA, NORTH HILO, HAWAII,  
TAX MAP KEY: 3<sup>RD</sup> /3-9-01:11

We have received the request for the pre-assessment consultation regarding the use of the Ookala Gym and offer the following comments:

We would recommend a more direct route from Route 19, Hawaii Belt Road be established to the gym. The present route runs through Ookala Camp and is a single lane roadway that curves to the gym. Given the many uses planned for the gym, the present route may not be sufficient to handle the traffic. There is also a very narrow bridge when first entering the camp that may pose a problem. We feel that this area should be considered during the planning stages.

We have spoken with residents of Ookala Camp and they are in favor of the requested uses and recommend that the request be granted.

Should you require further assistance or information, please contact Assistant Chief Thomas Hickcox at (808)961-2342.



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
U. S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT, HONOLULU  
FT. SHAFTER, HAWAII 96858-5440

April 3, 2000

Civil Works Technical Branch

RECEIVED  
00 APR 6 AM 11 04  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
COUNTY OF HAWAII  
BY  
MAYOR M.D. D.M.D.

Mr. Glenn Y. Taguchi  
County of Hawaii  
Office of the Mayor  
25 Aupuni Street, Room 215  
Hilo, Hawaii 96720

Dear Mr. Taguchi:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Pre-Assessment Consultation for the Proposed Lease of Lands of Ookala Gym, North Hilo, Hawaii (TMK 3-9-1: 11). The following comments are provided in accordance with Corps of Engineers authorities to provide flood hazard information and to issue Department of the Army (DA) permits.

a. A DA permit will not be required for the project unless work occurs in Kaohaoha Gulch. For further information, please contact Mr. William Lennan of our Regulatory Branch staff at 438-6986.

b. The flood hazard information provided on page 11 of the information package is correct.

Sincerely,

Milton Yoshimoto  
Acting Chief, Civil Works  
Technical Branch

Stephen K. Yamashiro  
Mayor



*maurice*

**County of Hawaii**  
**OFFICE OF HOUSING AND**  
**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

50 Wailuku Drive • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720-2484  
V/TT (808) 961-8379 • FAX (808) 961-8685

April 7, 2000

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Stephen K. Yamashiro, Mayor  
County of Hawai'i

From: Edwin S. Taira *Edwin S. Taira*  
Assistant Housing Administrator

Subject: **Pre-Assessment Consultation for the Proposed  
Direct Lease of All or a Portion of the O'okala Gym  
And Annex Parcel, O'okala, North Hilo, Hawai'i  
Tax Map Key: 3rd/3-9-01-11**

As you indicated in your memo of March 10, 2000, Hamakua Diversified Agricultural Association (HDAA) has applied for U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant funds. Therefore, compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, and HUD rules relating to environmental review (24 CFR Part 58) is required.

The Office of Housing and Community Development (OHCD) has reviewed the draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the project. We have attached the (HUD recommended format per 24 CFR 58.36, revised 1/99) for your information and use.

If you have any questions or need additional information please call Clyde M. Yoshida at ext. 8379.

Enclosure

8348ccmy



EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY  
"AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER"

Stephen K. Yamashiro  
Mayor



Virginia Goldstein  
Director

Russell Kokubun  
Deputy Director

## County of Hawaii

### PLANNING DEPARTMENT

25 Aupuni Street, Room 109 • Hilo, Hawaii 96720-1252  
(808) 961-8288 • Fax (808) 961-8742

November 3, 2000

Mr. Brian T. Nishimura  
101 Aupuni Street, Suite 217  
Hilo, HI 96720

Dear Mr. Nishimura:

Pre-Assessment Consultation regarding Preparation of Draft Environmental Assessment  
Project: Ookala Community Center and Plantation Market Place  
TMK: 3-9-1: 11

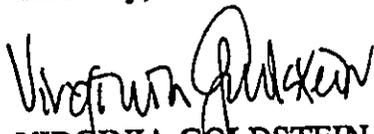
Thank you for your memo dated October 19, 2000, requesting comments regarding the proposed Ookala Community Center and Plantation Market Place project in preparation of a draft environmental assessment as required by Chapter 343, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) relating to Environmental Impact Statements. We have the following comments to offer:

1. The Ookala Community Center and Plantation Market Place project is located on lands designated Agricultural by the State Land Use Commission.
2. The project is situated within the County's Agricultural-20 acres (A-20a) zoned district and is designated Low Density Urban by the Hawaii County General Plan LUPAG Map.
3. The project is not located within the County's Special Management Area (SMA).

Mr. Brian T. Nishimura  
Page 2  
November 3, 2000

We will reserve further comment on the proposal pending receipt of a copy of the draft environmental assessment. In the meantime, please call Phyllis Fujimoto of this office should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

  
VIRGINIA GOLDSTEIN  
Planning Director

PF:cps  
p:\wpwin60\phyllis\LOokala01.doc

BENJAMIN J. CAYETANO  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



TIMOTHY E. JOHNS, CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

DEPUTIES  
JANET E. KAWALO  
LINNÉL NISHIOKA

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

HISTORIC PRESERVATION DIVISION  
Kakuhikawa Building, Room 555  
601 Kamokila Boulevard  
Kapolei, Hawaii 96707

AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES  
ENFORCEMENT  
CONVEYANCES  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS  
WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

December 14, 2000

Mr. Brian T. Nishimura  
101 Aupuni Street  
Suite 217  
Hilo, Hawaii 96720

LOG NO: 26681  
DOC NO: 0012tm05  
Architecture

Dear Mr. Nishimura:

SUBJECT: O'okala Gym and Annex Parcel  
Lease and Renovation  
TMK: 3-9-01:11, O'okala, Island of Hawai'i

Thank you for the transmittal on the above proposal to issue a direct lease for the former O'okala Gym parcel to the Hamakua Diversified Agricultural Association. The gym appears to meet the criteria for placement on the Hawaii and National Registers of Historic Places as a very intact example of a County gym established in a plantation community. We are glad to see the proposed use of this building and support the lease of the property.

Enclosed is a preservation brief, "Making Historic Properties Accessible," which offers recommended methods of keeping the historic character of a property while making it accessible. We would like to review the proposed ramps and renovations to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, as we understand the need for accessibility, but would like to ensure that historic character is maintained. Please forward any sketches or schematic plans as they are developed.

Also, since a post office will be installed on the property and there may be CDBG funds involved, compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act is required, which is basically consultation with our office. Please feel free to call Tonia Moy at (808)692-8030 with any questions.

Aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Don Hibbard".

DON HIBBARD, Administrator  
State Historic Preservation Division

TM:jk

**APPENDIX B – REPRODUCTION OF COMMENTS AND RESPONSES MADE  
DURING THE 30-DAY COMMENT PERIOD**

1. State of Hawaii, Office of Environmental Quality Control, September 21, 2001.  
RESPONSE: Brian T. Nishimura, October 9, 2001.

BENJAMIN J. CAYETANO  
GOVERNOR



GENEVIEVE SALMONSON  
DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENT QUALITY CONTROL

235 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET  
SUITE 702  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
TELEPHONE (808) 586-4186  
FACSIMILE (808) 586-4186

September 21, 2001

Ms. Valerie Poindexter  
Hamakua Diversified Agricultural Association  
P.O. Box 369  
Pa'auilo, Hawai'i 96776

Mr. Glenn Miyao  
Department of Parks and Recreation, County of Hawai'i  
25 Aupuni Street, Room 210  
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

Mr. Brian T. Nishimura  
101 Aupuni Street, No. 217  
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

Dear Ms. Poindexter, and Messrs. Nishimura and Miyao:

Thank you for your submittal of a draft environmental assessment for 'O'okala Community Center and Plantation Market Place Project, TMK 3-9-1: 11 in the district of Hamakua. We have reviewed the documents and submit the following comments for your consideration and response in the final environmental assessment.

1. **CULTURAL IMPACTS.** The DEA does not assess cultural impacts from the project. What impacts (if any) will the proposed action have on cultural practices and resources in the region? Chapter 343, Hawai'i Revised Statutes now requires that cultural impacts be assessed (see enclosed copy of Act 50, SLH 2000). A copy of the Environmental Council's guidelines for assessing cultural impacts is enclosed for your use.
2. **CESSPOOL WASTE EFFLUENT AND GROUNDWATER QUALITY:** The first phase of the project will include men's and women's toilet facilities. We are concerned that the numbers of persons attracted to the first phase of the project may cause adverse impacts to groundwater quality due to the use of a cesspool and not a septic system with leach field. Please consult the Department of Health Wastewater Branch.
3. **GUIDELINES FOR SUSTAINABLE BUILDING DESIGN IN HAWAII:** We ask that you consider implementing some of the techniques discussed in the enclosed guidelines for sustainable building design.
4. **USE OF RECYCLED GLASS IN CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS.** To promote the use of recycled materials in-state, section 103D-407, Hawai'i Revised Statutes recommends that State/county agencies purchase materials with minimum recycled glass content. We ask that you consider this in the design of your station.
5. **INDIGENOUS AND POLYNESIAN INTRODUCED PLANTS FOR USE IN PUBLIC LANDSCAPING:** We ask that you consider the use of native, indigenous and polynesian introduced plants in your landscaping.
6. **PHOTOGRAPHS OF SITE:** Please include photographs of the building and the site.
7. **DEVELOPMENT TIMETABLE:** Please include a timetable for development of the project.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If there are any questions, please call Leslie Segundo, Environmental Health Specialist, at (808) 586-4185.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Genevieve Salmonson".

GENEVIEVE SALMONSON  
Director

Enclosures

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**BRIAN T. NISHIMURA, PLANNING CONSULTANT**  
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Hilo, Hawaii 96720  
Phone: (808) 935-7692 Fax: (808) 935-6126 e-mail: btnishi@interpac.net

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October 9, 2001

Ms. Genevieve Salmonson, Director  
State of Hawaii  
Office of Environmental Quality Control  
235 S. Beretania St., Suite 702  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

**Subject:** Draft Environmental Assessment-Ookala Community Center and Plantation  
Market Place Project  
Hamakua Diversified Agricultural Association  
TMK: 3-9-1: 11

Dear Ms. Salmonson:

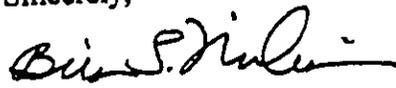
This is in response to your letter dated September 21, 2001, providing comments on the subject Draft Environmental Assessment. Responses to your comments are provided as follows:

1. **CULTURAL IMPACTS.** Additional discussions of cultural practices and resources are provided in Section 2.4 Archaeology, Historic and Cultural Resources of the Final Environmental Assessment. Additional interviews were conducted with long-time area residents who are familiar with native Hawaiian and other cultural practices of the area. These interviews indicated that there are no native Hawaiian or other cultural practices dependent on the specific project site either as a resource or for access purposes. Area residents utilize higher elevations in the region for pig hunting and coastal areas for fishing and these activities will not be affected in any way by the proposed project. Area residents utilize a portion of the project site for family gardens and these uses will be allowed to continue. As such, the proposed project is not anticipated to have a negative impact on cultural practices or resources of the region.
2. **CESSPOOL WASTE EFFLUENT AND GROUNDWATER QUALITY.** The project architect has consulted with Mr. Jerry Nunogawa of the Wastewater Branch, State Department of Health and was informed that the existing cesspool will need to be checked and certified to be in good condition before it can be utilized. The applicant is in the process of having the cesspool certified. In the event that the existing cesspool cannot be certified to be in good condition, a septic system will need to be provided.

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3. **GUIDELINES FOR SUSTAINABLE BUILDING DESIGN IN HAWAII.** Many of the techniques discussed in the subject guidelines are being implemented in the proposed project. The first phase of the project involves the renovation of an existing structure that will minimize the use of new material and will replace all unsafe and hazardous material. In addition, plumbing and electrical fixtures will be replaced for better efficiency.
  4. **USE OF RECYCLED GLASS IN CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS.** The use of recycled glass will be considered for use in the proposed project.
  5. **INDIGENOUS AND POLYNESIAN INTRODUCED PLANTS FOR USE IN PUBLIC LANDSCAPING.** The use of indigenous and Polynesian introduced plants will be considered for project landscaping.
  6. **PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE SITE.** A photograph of the Ookala Gym and annex buildings has been added in the Final Environmental Assessment as figure 4.
  7. **DEVELOPMENT TIMETABLE.** The development timetable for the first phase renovation project is provided in Section 1.4 Technical description. The timetable for implementing the additional phases of the proposed project has not been determined due to the uncertainty of funding availability.

Thank you for taking the time to comment on the proposed project.

Sincerely,



Brian T. Nishimura  
Planning Consultant

- c. Ms. Valerie Poindexter, HDAA  
Mr. Glenn Miyao, Department of Parks & Recreation