

Proposal No. 3 – Elected Community Boards: Changing Planning & Variance Process to Include Elected Community Boards for Every Community Plan Area on Maui, Molokai and Lanai
Planning Commissions Become Directly Elected

Rationale. Elected Community Boards would allow greater community participation in the planning and government processes and would allow community plan areas to have better direct relationship to the composition of the Planning Commissions and the Variances and Appeals Board.

In 1991 and 1992, the Fifth Charter Commission heard significant public testimony and received correspondences on implementing neighborhood boards or townships especially from voters on Lanai and Molokai. However, no proposals were forth coming.

In 1996, the Cost of Government Commission in its annual report recommended the creation of a system of neighborhood boards similar to the system in existence in the Honolulu. At the time, Mayor Linda Lingle and Planning Director David Blaine opposed the proposal as being too costly for county government and inimical to development. The Cost of Government Commission argued, in support, that first, neighborhood boards would more directly represent local communities better than community associations or temporary “citizen advisory committees.” Second, the elected boards would be able to provide timely feedback to developers on proposed projects and allow greater community involvement in the development process with locally elected individuals who represent the particular interests of the local communities. The concept was deferred until after Lingle's administration and then, in 2000, the Council's Committee of the Whole referred it to the upcoming 2001-2002 Sixth Charter Commission.

The Sixth Charter Commission extensively considered the concept of neighborhood boards and the planning process in general but ultimately added powers and responsibilities to the temporary citizen advisory committees.