

Water and Infrastructure Committee (2023-2025) on 2024-07-25 9:00 AM

Meeting Time: 07-25-24 09:00

eComments Report

Meetings	Meeting Time	Agenda Items	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
Water and Infrastructure Committee (2023-2025) on 2024-07-25 9:00 AM	07-25-24 09:00	2	2	0	0	0

Sentiments for All Meetings

The following graphs display sentiments for comments that have location data. Only locations of users who have commented will be shown.

Overall Sentiment

Support (0%) Oppose (0%) Neutral (0%)
No Response (100%)



Water and Infrastructure Committee (2023-2025) on 2024-07-25 9:00 AM

07-25-24 09:00

Agenda Name	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
WAI-1(16) COUNTY PERMIT PROCESSING EFFICIENCIES (WAI-1(16))	2	0	0	0

Sentiments for All Agenda Items

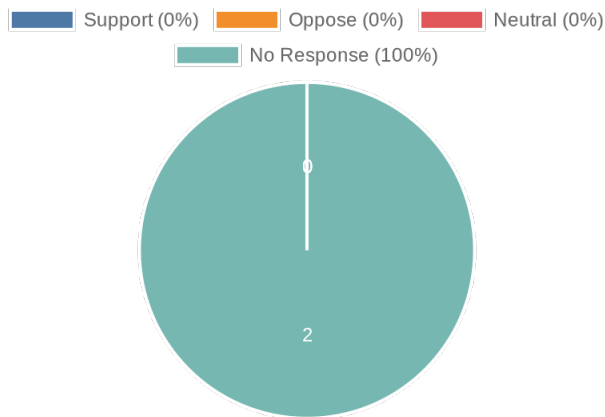
The following graphs display sentiments for comments that have location data. Only locations of users who have commented will be shown.

Overall Sentiment

Support (0%) Oppose (0%) Neutral (0%)
No Response (100%)



Overall Sentiment



Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 3:43pm 07-25-24

GENERAL

Problems

- **Measurable Accountability:** The timelines on MAPPS are not accurate.
- **Unresponsiveness:** There is a lack of timely correspondence with reviewers.
- **Chronological Review:** It appears that permit applications are reviewed in their assigned order, regardless of project complexity, leading to unnecessarily long timelines for simple projects.
- **Staff Shortage:** All departments are understaffed.
- **Having to wait to upload revisions until all agencies review lengthens the process.**

Opportunities

- **General Duration/Timeline:** Implement a portal providing real-time status of departmental review queues (e.g., the Water Department is currently reviewing applications submitted between 2/16/2024 and 3/25/2024).
- **Department Clerks:** Designate clerks to answer questions about review comments or timelines.
- **Triage:** During intake, determine the complexity of the project and assign dedicated reviewers to less complex projects. Provide multiple paths to permitting
- **Outsource Permit Review:** Hire third-party agencies to manage permit reviews for heavily understaffed departments until they are adequately staffed.
- **Revisions to submittals:** Allow revision as needed per comments regardless if water or another agency has looked at it. (Without putting submission at the bottom of the stack)

DSA BUILDING PERMIT SECTION

Problems

- **Department Assignments:** Some departments that are not applicable to the review are being assigned to it.

Opportunities

- **Triage:** During intake, clerks should decide which departmental reviews are necessary.

BUILDING PLANS REVIEW SECTION

Problem

- **Staff Shortage:** initial review takes 6+ months to complete.

Opportunities

- Type 5 Construction: Pre-Approved details
- Prescriptive Notes and Structural Systems (Type V Sheet)
- Triage: Implement over-the-counter review for select small-scale projects to receive in-person approval. (e.g. retaining wall permits, swimming pools)

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Problems

- SHPD: No way of determining during planning and due diligence if a project will fall under SHPD review. Difficult to manage Owner expectations. SHPD is so understaffed that it is not functioning and is holding up
- FDP: Requirement for No Rise Certificates for existing structures in floodways (recently requested for interior renovations and roof replacements)
- SMA: New staff are requiring over the top compliance contradicting years of department standards and yet supervisors are not responsive do not answer emails or phone calls.

Opportunities

- GIS Map: Make a map available to the public of locations requiring SHPD review
- SMA: Enact new SMA and Shoreline rules to cut the SMA submissions by 50%
- SHPD: if SHPD review is needed then it should happen immediately not 6 months later. SHPD also needs to change the Archeological dig component and allow that to happen during construction with a monitor not excavate all of a projects proposed excavation and then back fill only for it to be dug months later after permit approved.

WATER DEPARTMENT

Problems

- Staff Shortage: Immensely impacts review timelines.
- Initial Review: Takes 6+ months for residential, and 10+ months for non-residential projects.

Opportunities

- Outsource Review: Hire external agencies to handle the review process.
- Defer Water System Improvements: Defer water system improvements for 12-24 months.
- Review Exemptions: Water department should not review projects with "no water scenario" or "no fixture change."

In general if an agency is 50% staffed they should only be required to enforce / implement the highest 50% of their mission.

Staff moral and goal. It needs to be clear to the county employees that the primary need for the community is to approve housing. Empower them to make the change... Helping the community is not above anyones pay grade....

David E. Sellers AIA

Principal

Hawaii Off Grid Architecture & Engineering

p: 808.495.8639

david@hawaiioffgrid.com

www.hawaiioffgrid.com

AIA Maui

President 2024

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 10:43am 07-25-24

To: Maui County Council WAI Committee

RE: Testimony - Permitting - Thursday 25, 20

Members of the WAI Committee,

I am writing to address the significant issues and delays we are experiencing with the permit processing system

in Maui County. As the owner and senior project manager at Pili Design Build, I have firsthand experience with how these delays adversely affect all aspects of design and construction.

The current backlog and slow processing times hinder progress on projects of all scales. This inefficiency not only escalates costs and prolongs timelines for residents and contractors but also exacerbates the existing housing crisis in our community. When residents and builders cannot permit new dwellings, additions, and ADUs in an efficient timeline, they lose funding, lose labor force, and suffer material price increases, often leading to complete abandonment of the project.

Currently, we have commercial tenant improvements, residential renovations, and residential reconstruction projects that have been under review for over 12 months. The loss of revenue, loss of job opportunities, loss of housing are compounded under these timelines. We can only speculate on the number of small businesses and homeowners who simply cannot afford to wait that long, and many resort to forgoing the permit process altogether. This creates a significant risk that the permit process is intended to mitigate, compromising safety and compliance with codes and standards.

There is a lack of a streamlined approach to permit triage, where minor projects could possibly be expedited. Having all permits go through the same process diverts resources from larger, more impactful developments. We are requesting that implementation of a variety of building permit applications and paths be created, each with its own posted timeline for how long each application should take to be reviewed and processed. Currently, there is ZERO accountability from the County with regards to processing times. There are no posted timeline estimates, no accurate real-time tracking, and no way to know where you even are in "line." When an application is submitted, there is ZERO understanding of how long it will take regardless of project scale.

This insufficiency of communication and transparency creates a need to then inquire for status updates. We can only imagine the number of calls and emails that are received by each reviewing department simply to get a status update. This exhausts time and resources from our already overwhelmed reviewers and engineers. They deserve better. They deserve tools and support that will allow them to do their job effectively. These are our colleagues, we appreciate that they are doing the best they can, we respect them and their efforts, but also see that they are not being supported.

I urge the Council to consider reforms that prioritize the efficient processing of permits. Implementing a system that differentiates between minor and major projects, creating multiple paths to permitting, posting timelines and meeting them, and providing much-needed support to the reviewers and engineers.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I am confident that with your support, we can improve the permit processing system to better serve our community and address the urgent housing needs of Maui County. I am available to discuss further and provide additional feedback.

Me ka ha_aha_a,

Brenda Braun
PILI Design Build
Wailuku Maui