

Economic Development and Budget Committee:

Written Testimony by Joseph Blackburn, owner of Maui Land Broker and Property Management, 104 N. Market Street, Wailuku, HI 96793. Email: [mlb@mlb808.com](mailto:mlb@mlb808.com). Ph. 442.3063 Wailuku Civic Complex: (EDB-76)

The Blackburn Ohana's roots are in Wailuku. Our children went to Wailuku Hongwanji, Wailuku Elementary, Iao and our boys to Baldwin. As a police officer I remember responding to the county parking lot as my beat partner was surrounded by unsavory character due to an arrest in his vehicle. Not much has changed in the parking lot area since then. As a Fire fighter at Wailuku Fire Station, I fell through the ceiling of old elks club.

It's very Difficult to do business in Wailuku: Recent moves or failures: Arias, Juan Kitchen, Maui Thing and If the Shoe Fits. Being a small business on Maui is extremely difficult. Without business, no taxes and government suffers.

Small business needs help to survive. We have been 10 years at the old Gilberts right on the corner of Market and Vineyards Streets. We are one of the very few local small businesses left that does homeowner association management. The world is becoming more corporate, in our business small companies are closing or being bought out. Only FHB left as an anchor tenant in our area.

The Wailuku Civic Center will help our area revitalize. Funding only \$17,232,000.00 effectively kills this project. Rule of thumb for a government project is plans are 10% of construction costs. Before you shelve the current plans, which are in a line of previous proposed plans, I estimate we have conservatively spent 10 million on plans and probably as much as the proposed funding cut on a general estimate. The current plan is the best I have reviewed and was well vetted to our community. What will be the total cost of rescinding contracts and doing more plans?

We should be not changing budgets and plans at this juncture in the process.

Our main concern should be parking during construction and small business survival. **Here is where our attention should be, helping the existing small businesses survive during the construction of the Civic Center.**

I have four employees including myself who work hard every day and it is difficult to take time off to testify. Our front door looks at the public parking lot and we see a lot of what goes on in Wailuku Town.

I Love our area, but we need to move forward. Change and development on Maui will always have detractors, but this change will prove to be the first step to making Wailuku a place to visit, shop, dine and enjoy the arts. Helping small business survive in Wailuku and widening our tax base.

If the council has time please call me at 870.2123. How I helped Hoolehua Fire Station. Thanks Joe Blackburn, Owner of Maui Land Broker and Property Management, Inc.