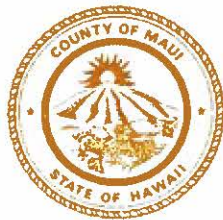


RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.
Mayor

LORI TSUHAKE
Director

JESSICA CROUSE
Deputy Director



DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN CONCERNS
COUNTY OF MAUI
2200 MAIN STREET, SUITE 546
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
PHONE: (808) 270-7805

October 7, 2024

Honorable Richard T. Bissen, Jr.
Mayor, County of Maui
200 South High Street
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

APPROVED FOR TRANSMITTAL

Richard T. Bissen, Jr.
Mayor Date 10-8-24

For Transmittal to:

Honorable Shane M. Sinenci, Chair
Water Authority, Social Services,
and Parks Committee
Maui County Council
200 South High Street
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

Dear Chair Sinenci:

**SUBJECT: COMMISSION ON HEALING SOLUTIONS FOR HOMELESSNESS
ANNUAL REPORT (WASSP-1(18))**

The Department is in receipt of your correspondence dated October 1, 2024, and offers the following information in response.

- 1. As defined in Section 2.31.030, Maui County Code, the purpose of the Commission on Healing Solutions for Homelessness is to "provide recommendations to the Council and the administration on funding and policies to help combat and eliminate homelessness and poverty in Maui County." To date, the Council has not received recommendations from the Commission. What assistance does your Department need to help the Commission fulfill their purpose?**

The Commission on Healing Solutions for Homelessness was established via Ordinance No. 5117 in September, 3, 2020. With support from Corporation Counsel and the (then) Department of Housing and Human Concerns, the Commission began their work.

TO SUPPORT AND EMPOWER OUR COMMUNITY TO REACH ITS FULLEST
POTENTIAL FOR PERSONAL WELL-BEING AND SELF-RELIANCE

One of the first Temporary Investigative Groups (TIG) established by the Commission was led by Vice Chair (the late) George Kaimiola, and also included Commissioners Joyce Kawakami, Faith Chase, Scott Hansen, and Mary Trotto. This TIG researched medical outreach models from across the nation and the state. In February, 2022, the Commission forwarded a formal recommendation to DHHC to further pursue the possibility of creating a medical street outreach program on Maui. The Department followed through to perform its due diligence by developing service models and securing partnerships. Eventually the Commission's recommendation came to fruition via the Department's receipt of a \$195,000 (over three years) grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development to fund a street outreach program to more efficiently house the unsheltered.

The above-referenced program is the only recommendation forwarded by the Commission to the Department. We followed through appropriately with program design and furthered the implementation of the suggestion by submitting an application through HUD's Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). The quality of the Department's proposal was validated by HUD's award of funding.

The Commission has not met since February, 2024, due largely to quorum issues. If new members can be nominated and confirmed in a timely manner, it is more likely that the work of the Commission can be re-started after this long hiatus. It may also be helpful if the fully staffed Commission can re-examine their mission to evaluate the need (if any) to make changes in its focus and process.

The Department of Human Concerns does not exercise any control over the business of the Commission; however, we maintain our commitment to support the convening of the Commission with County resources, including Department staffing and clerical and organizational support. As Director, I have also attended almost all of the Commission's meetings.

2. Please explain how the Department could work in conjunction with the Commission to address homelessness.

The role of the Commission, as is noted in Question 1 above, is to provide recommendations to the Council and the administration. The Department's role is to provide the Commission with requested information specific to the Department or to other County departments, provide the County's policy guidelines about homelessness, programmatic information and data, and to engage with the community and Commission in discussions about current circumstances, historical data, etc. The Department's position is that we have worked in conjunction with the Commission, and have in fact, operationalized the one recommendation made to us.

Honorable Shane M. Sinenci, Chair
October 7, 2024
Page 3 of 3

The Department remains open to further discussion with the Commission and to receiving additional recommendations for consideration.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this information. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at Ext. 7805.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lori Tsuhako", written in a cursive style.

LORI TSUHAKO, LSW, ACSW
Director of Human Concerns

WASSP Committee

From: Michelle Santos <Michelle.Santos@co.maui.hi.us>
Sent: Tuesday, October 8, 2024 10:22 AM
To: WASSP Committee
Cc: Charleen Crozier; Cory Lynn Vicens; Cynthia Sasada; Josiah Nishita;
kimberly.ferguson@co.maui.hi.us; loriann.tsuhako@co.maui.hi.us; Kelii Nahooikaika
Subject: MT#10800 Commission On Healing Solution For Homelessness Annual Report
Attachments: MT#10800-WASSP Committee.pdf

NOTE: PLEASE DO NOT FORWARD MY EMAIL TO ANYONE OUTSIDE OF THE COUNTY OF MAUI. YOU MAY CLICK ON THE ATTACHMENT ITSELF AND CREATE YOUR OWN EMAIL TO FORWARD THE DOCUMENT TO ANOTHER PERSON OUTSIDE OF THE COUNTY.

Michelle L. Santos

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