

Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee (2025-2027) on 2025-04-24 9:00 AM

Meeting Time: 04-24-25 09:00

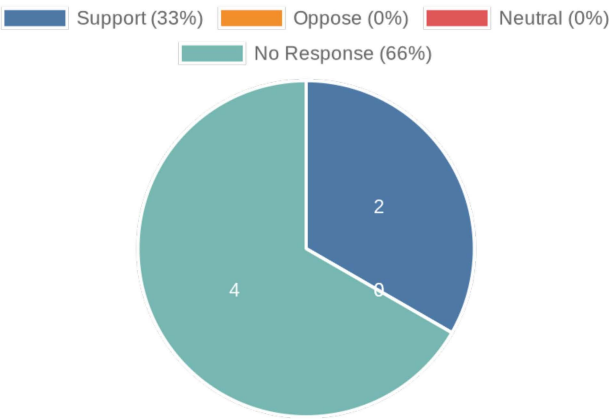
eComments Report

Meetings	Meeting Time	Agenda Items	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee (2025-2027) on 2025-04-24 9:00 AM	04-24-25 09:00	2	6	2	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



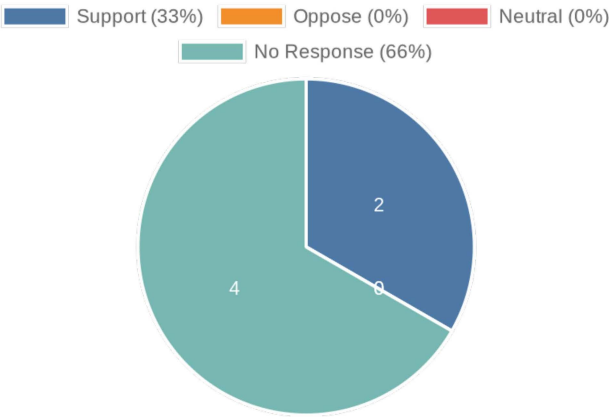
Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee (2025-2027) on 2025-04-24 9:00 AM
04-24-25 09:00

Agenda Name	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
A G E N D A	1	0	0	0
BFED-1 Bill 41 (2025) PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2026 BUDGET FOR THE COUNTY OF MAUI (BFED-1)	5	2	0	0

Sentiments for All Agenda Items

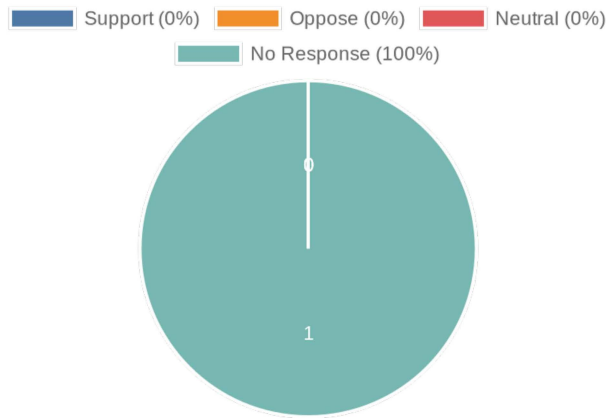
The following graphs display sentiments for comments that have location data. Only locations of users who have commented will be shown.

Overall Sentiment



Agenda Item: eComments for A G E N D A

Overall Sentiment



Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 11:40am 04-24-25

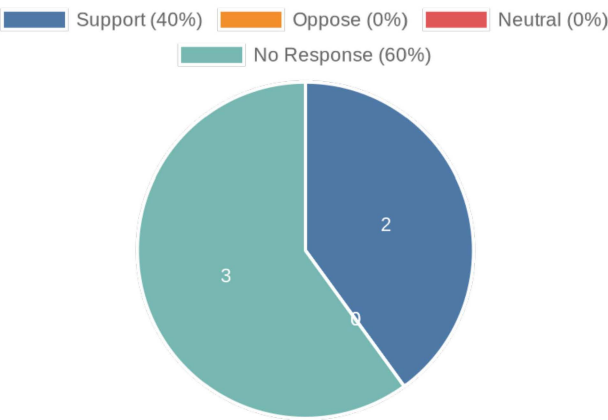
Aloha Kakou,

I apologize, I did not make it to the testimony. I just found out about it, moments ago and am currently on Hawai'i Island working the Merrie Monarch.

I am writing to ask support for an ocean stewardship program for young women. The young high school to early 20s women will learn maritime skills, Hawaiian protocol, and traditional navigational knowledge while being stewards of the ocean. They will be doing water testing throughout the waters of Maui Nui and will organize community shoreline and ocean cleanups. Currently Maui County only has a handful of Women Captains. It is our goal to empower our young women to be stewards of our ocean. Ocean stewardship is much needed for the health of our ocean, earth, and our people of the ocean. Please consider funding the crossing of the Cutty Sark from Washington State to Maui so that Hawaiian Outrigger Canoe Voyaging Society can start this program for our young women of Maui, starting this fall.

Mahalo nui for your consideration,
'_nelaokahiau Gutierrez

Overall Sentiment



Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 7:59pm 04-24-25

As a partner Agency with Maui Food Bank, I support Farm to Family Grant. We service 160 families and over 1,000 individuals including homeless. Our clients look forward to fresh produce and appreciate having fresh Produce. Fresh produce is asked more out our distribution. Our homeless would take more fresh produce as staple. Our distribution depends on having Fresh produce from our Farmers. Farm to Family is a beneficial benefit to our program
Yolanda PauLynn Caniaveral <yolanda_maui@hotmail.com>

BFED Committee

Location:
Submitted At: 7:56pm 04-24-25

Testimonies received from BFED Committee 04-24-2025

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 4:03pm 04-24-25

Aloha!

My name is Shawn Wallen, and I am the Program Director at Hale Kau Kau. Hale Kau Kau is Maui's only daily feeding program. As a ministry of St. Theresa Church, Hale Kau Kau aims to serve our community's hungry, homeless, homebound, frail, sick, disabled and elderly by improving their lives with a daily nutritious dinner, no questions asked. The number of meals we've served since 1991 surpasses 1.6 million.

I am writing with an urgent request for your support of the "Farm to Families" bill, a pivotal piece of legislation that has the potential to transform our Maui's food security landscape. This bill will allow food distributing

organizations to strengthen their partnerships with local farmers and food producers, ensuring that fresh, locally grown produce reaches families facing food insecurity.

This partnership between local farms and food organizations benefits our economy and families in our communities in the following vital ways:

By Enhancing Nutritional Access: Fresh, local produce provides essential nutrients to individuals and families who may otherwise lack access to healthy food options. This not only fights hunger but also promotes long-term health and wellness in our communities.

By Strengthening Maui's Food Supply Chain: By investing in Maui agriculture, we reduce our dependence on imported goods, creating a more resilient and sustainable food system for Maui.

By Supporting Local Farmers: The bill offers a direct benefit to Maui's agricultural sector, providing a steady and fair market for local produce. Farmers can plan for future growth knowing their products will feed their neighbors in need. This bill will help Hale Kau Kau with our mission to alleviate hunger by providing nutritious meals to the hungry and homebound in a safe, loving, and supportive environment.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to our shared vision of a thriving, food-secure Maui. I am deeply grateful for your consideration of this important legislation and stand ready to collaborate with you in any way that may be helpful.

Mahalo!
In His amazing grace,

Shawn Michelle Wallen
Program Director

Hale Kau Kau
25 W. Lipoa Street
Kihei, HI 96753
(808) 875-8754 Office
(808) 875-4674 Fax
swallen@rcchawaii.org
On the web at www.halekaukau.org

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 10:11am 04-24-25

Aloha Council Members,
RE: Support of Proposed Budget to Promote the Wedding & Event Industry

You've heard from many in the Wedding & Event Industry by now, echoing what I've shared about the positive impact of our work on Maui. I want to offer a brief personal story to highlight the deeper connections we create. Our work is rooted in relationship. Couples come here not just for the beauty, but because Maui touches something sacred in them. They entrust us with life's most meaningful moments, and in doing so, form a lasting bond with this island.

After the 2023 fires, my past clients reached out in force—offering help, donating thousands, connecting with displaced families, and supporting local efforts with no tax incentive, just love. One couple even gave up their vacation so a local family could stay in the condo they rented. This kind of care is the result of real connection—something few industries create.

We also showed up ourselves. Friends like Darren Keala organized volunteers and supply runs funded by his past and future clients who did not hesitate to act. Sugar Beach Events opened their kitchen and provided food for weeks. Many, many of us showed up to help. We didn't wait—we acted. That's aloha in motion.

This is who we are. This is what we do. We're not just vendors or service providers—we're stewards, connectors, and part of Maui's fabric. I hope you'll keep this in mind as you consider the role our industry plays in the life of our island.

With aloha,
Rev Julianne Givot

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 8:17am 04-24-25

Aloha Maui County Council,

There are many examples around the world of targeted investments in local wedding industries yielding clear returns. Returns not only from immediate revenue, but from the quality of visitor engagement and from the resulting small business growth.

Our community is full of hardworking entrepreneurs, eager to grow our economy together. Bolstering our wedding industry will support all of us—not just by bringing in more high-spending visitor groups at a time, but through a groundswell of emotional connection with Maui itself. Destination weddings are different. People travel with their loved ones to mark one of life's most meaningful moments. And when that moment happens here, amidst our natural beauty, our hospitality, our aloha—it stays with them forever. In startup terms, these are our “power users”. They don’t just visit, they evangelize. Wedding guests become lifetime advocates. They return. They refer. They share Maui as an experience, not just a destination. It’s organic, high-trust marketing at scale, and weddings generate that intrinsically .

Few economic sectors create this kind of emotional gravity, and few places in the world are so naturally positioned to nurture it.

The world has seen what targeted investment can do. Clark County, Nevada reversed a 20-year decline in weddings by creating a \$1 million/year marketing fund. Their wedding industry now generates over \$2.2 billion per year and supports 18,000 jobs. Ras Al Khaimah in the UAE introduced free visas and a certification program—within one year, they saw wedding revenue from Indian visitors double. Italy created a national wedding tourism strategy, and foreign weddings there jumped 11% in a single season, with revenue projected to hit €1 billion. And in the Mexican Caribbean, investments in venue development helped generate a record 130,000 weddings in 2024 (40% of them from Indian couples, many staying 7–10 days with full guest parties.)

Investing in our wedding industry means supporting local musicians, photographers, chefs, drivers, officiants, event organizers, marketers, and many more. It means more year-round jobs. It means more people falling in love with Maui. I personally believe that weddings are one of the most powerful ways to share the rich spirit of our community, the depth of our culture, and the strength and kindness of our people.

Maui is already one of the most romantic destinations on Earth. We don't need to build that, we just need to support the people who can share it.

Mahalo for your time and leadership,

Jacob van Almelo

Software Engineer,

Pukalani

BFED Committee

From: Mary Cummins <mcummins@waipoligreens.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 24, 2025 7:47 AM
To: BFED Committee
Cc: Rob Cummins
Subject: Support for Maui County's Farm to Family Grant – Pacific Produce, Inc.

You don't often get email from mcummins@waipoligreens.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Aloha Council Members,

I am writing in strong support of the “Local Food Purchasing Incentive: Farm to Family Grant” (Bill for \$2,000,000) to strengthen Maui County’s efforts to connect local farmers with families in need. As a representative of Pacific Produce, Inc., also known as Waipoli Hydroponic Greens, I see firsthand the importance of ensuring fresh, locally grown produce reaches our community, especially those facing food insecurity.

The “Farm to Family” Grant will enable organizations like the Maui Food Bank, which we proudly do business with and donate to, to forge stronger partnerships with local farmers like us. This program’s focus on paying market value to producers and prioritizing kupuna crops and underserved populations aligns with our mission to support both our agricultural community and Maui’s most vulnerable residents. This grant would allow us to expand our contributions, ensuring more families have access to healthy, local produce.

As federal programs face cuts, initiatives like this are essential to bridge the gap and keep our community fed. By supporting locally grown and processed foods, the grant will also bolster Maui’s economy, benefiting farmers and families alike.

I urge you to support the “Farm to Family” Grant to foster a resilient, food-secure Maui. Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Rob and Mary Cummins
Owners

Pacific Produce, Inc. / Waipoli Hydroponic Greens
808-868-4363

BFED Committee

From: Ryan Sakuda <ryan@gcahawaii.org>
Sent: Thursday, April 24, 2025 10:17 AM
To: BFED Committee
Subject: Testimony for Bill 54
Attachments: Bill 54 GCA Oppose Maui County Council 4.22.25.docx

You don't often get email from ryan@gcahawaii.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

Aloha,

Please find attached testimony on Bill 54 for the Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee meeting on Friday, April 25, 2025.

Mahalo,

Ryan Sakuda

Government Relations Director

General Contractors Association of Hawaii

D: (808) 207-5082

M: (808) 286-9338

E: ryan@gcahawaii.org

gcahawaii.org | [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#)



**GENERAL
CONTRACTORS
ASSOCIATION
OF HAWAII**

Quality People. Quality Projects.

April 25, 2025

TO: HONORABLE YUKI LEI SUGIMURA, CHAIR, HONORABLE TASHA KAMA, VICE CHAIR, BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: **OPPOSITION TO BILL 54.** A BILL FOR AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 3.12.070, MAUI COUNTY CODE, TO REQUIRE COMMUNITY WORKFORCE AGREEMENTS FOR LARGE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS OF MORE THAN \$500,000.

HEARING

DATE: Friday, April 25, 2025
TIME: 9:00 a.m.
PLACE: Council Chamber

Dear Chair Sugimura, Vice Chair Kama and Members of the Council,

The General Contractors Association of Hawaii (GCA) is an organization comprised of approximately five hundred (500) general contractors, subcontractors, and construction related firms. The GCA was established in 1932 and is the largest construction association in the State of Hawaii. Our mission is to elevate Hawaii's construction industry and strengthen the foundation of our community.

GCA is in **opposition** to Bill 54, which requires responsive bidders be signatories to the community workforce agreement for all capital improvement project contracts of more than \$500,000.

The GCA and our national organization, the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC) oppose any government mandated community workforce agreements (CWA).

General Contractors Association of Hawaii's Position

Government mandated CWAs will discriminate against local open-shop (nonunion) contractors and workers; while such mandates may not appear on their face to exclude nonunion contractors and workers, they are the functional equivalent of "union only" policies. They discriminate against construction contractors and workers simply for exercising rights that our nation has seen fit to protect. Such mandates require contractors to make fundamental changes in the way they do business. Many local firms, particularly those not historically signatory to a labor agreement, will be unwilling or unable to make those changes. Therefore, the effect of a government mandate for project labor agreements could reduce potential bidders and competition. This, in turn, results in higher prices.

Secondly, a government mandated CWA will make it easier for out-of-state union and nonunion companies alike to infiltrate the local construction market by using the existing locally trained workforce without ever having shared in the cost of training the workforce and without having to



pay for relocation of its own workforce. As a result, this will have a detrimental impact on those contractors who have been doing business in Hawaii for significant periods of time and have paid for a trained and reliable workforce. Local contractors are part of the fabric of the community and their profits are reinvested back into the community. A CWA will allow profits to flow out of state on essentially all capital improvement projects on Maui.

Additionally, entering into terms of a collective bargaining agreement is a private matter and should not be mandated by the government, but instead should be left to the bargaining parties to negotiate. The decision to use a unionized workforce should be based upon mutually accepted terms and conditions that are known to the bidder and used as the basis for bidding and performing the work. However, with the introduction of Bill 54, a CWA will not be optional. General contractors have collective bargaining history, knowledge, expertise, project risk and responsibility, and a big picture view of construction labor terms and conditions.

Associated General Contractors of America's Policy

The GCA is a local chapter of the Associated General Contractors of America. AGC's policy position on CWA's or project labor agreements for publicly funded construction projects is as follows:

The AGC does not oppose traditional voluntary CWAs or project labor agreements (PLA) even though they have had some negative effects on local area collective bargaining. AGC supports open competition and the traditional agreements have tended to encourage such competition. Without hindering any firms or dictating labor policy for other firms, traditional non-PLA mandated agreements have enabled some union contractors to be more competitive. AGC is committed to free and open competition in all public construction markets. Fundamental to this principle is the philosophy that publicly financed contracts are to be awarded without regard to the labor relations policy of the contractor.

AGC opposes the imposition of CWAs or PLAs by public owners or their representatives on any publicly funded construction project. A public owner or its representative should not mandate the use of a CWA or PLA that would compel any firm to change its labor policy or practice in order to compete for or to perform work on a publicly financed project.

AGC believes that the proper parties to negotiate any labor agreement are the employers that employ workers covered by the agreement and the labor organization representing workers covered by the agreement, since those are the parties which form the basis for the employer-employee relationship, have a vested interest in forging a fair and stable employment relationship, and are authorized to enter into such an agreement under the National Labor Relations Act. AGC believes that the appropriate mechanism for public owners to ensure that employees are paid fair wages and benefits and that all contractors compete on an equal basis is through the requirement that the contractor pay prevailing wages, and not through the imposition



of a CWA or PLA.

AGC's policy against preferential procurement based on labor policy is pursued in an even-handed manner. AGC does not favor union or open-shop contracting, but instead believes that the choice should be left to the employers and employees, and that the choice should not be imposed as a condition to competing for, or performing on, a publicly funded project.

AGC believes that CWAs or PLAs on publicly funded construction are a solution in search of a problem.

AGC is not aware of any documentation that indicates that the terms and conditions allegedly ameliorated by CWAs or PLAs (work stoppages and labor unrest, uniform work rules and providing labor through union hiring halls) have materially impacted the costs or schedules of public construction or that free and open competition without the impediments created by CWAs or PLAs are not equally effective. Likewise, there is no evidence that public resources are used in a more productive fashion by imposing the same one-size-fits-all agreement on all competitors for public works. To the extent that CWAs or PLAs remove the free market economic forces that underlie both the competitive bidding laws and the collective bargaining process, they subvert the objectives of those laws and that process and make it difficult, if not impossible, for the public to benefit from the full competition that it is entitled to expect. AGC does not believe that this is a proper role for government at any level or a proper use of public funds.

This measure at first glance does not seem to discriminate against open shop contractors. However, language in sections 5f,g,h,i, and j indicate otherwise. CWAs will negatively impact non-union small business subcontractors that would normally compete on projects exceeding the \$500,000 threshold. Signing a CWA for one project is too costly for these small business firms. A CWA will reduce the opportunity to utilize small business subcontractors for similar reason.

Thank you for considering out testimony in opposition.

BFED Committee

From: Nettie Aquino <nettie@nakiaiomauui.org>
Sent: Thursday, April 24, 2025 11:44 AM
To: BFED Committee
Subject: testimony for farm to family bill

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Aloha Kakou, Honorable Committee Members,

My name is Nettie Aquino, Executive Director/ Founder of Na Kia'i O Maui (Guardian of Maui) - Lahaina Resource and Recovery Center. I write to you today on behalf of Na Kia'i O Maui (NKOM) to express our wholehearted support for the Farm to Family Bill. As stewards of Maui's land and community, we have witnessed firsthand both the struggles and the resilience of our island families, particularly in times of hardship.

Our organization has been privileged to work closely with the Maui Food Bank to provide fresh, locally grown produce directly to displaced families across our island. This partnership has shown us something powerful: when food travels directly from our farmers' fields to our families' tables, we create more than just a meal—we nurture connection, dignity, and hope.

The Farm to Family Bill represents a critical opportunity to strengthen Maui's food security at a time when it is most needed. By supporting local agricultural production and creating systematic pathways to connect farmers with families in need, this legislation addresses multiple challenges simultaneously:

First, it enhances food security by ensuring our most vulnerable community members have access to nutritious, locally grown food. Second, it promotes agricultural sustainability by providing reliable markets for Maui's farmers. And third, it creates and preserves meaningful jobs in our agricultural sector, allowing more of our people to make a living while feeding their community.

The work we do at NKOM has taught us that the most sustainable solutions are those that honor the interconnectedness of our community's needs. When our farmers thrive, our families eat well. When our families eat well, our community grows stronger. The Farm to Family Bill recognizes and reinforces these connections.

We respectfully ask for your support of this important legislation. Your vote in favor of the Farm to Family Bill is a vote for Maui's food independence, for our agricultural heritage, and for the health and well-being of all our island families.

With deep appreciation and aloha,

Nettie Aquino

Na Kia'i O Maui -

Lahaina Resource and Recovery Center
150 Hana Hwy
Kahului, Hi, 96732
(808) 298-8915
nakiaimaui.org



BFED Committee

From: Tapani Vuori <tvuori@mauiocenter.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 24, 2025 1:55 PM
To: BFED Committee
Cc: Peter Cannon (peter@hawaiianresources.net); Dave Whitney
Subject: Follow up Answers to Questions on my Maui County 2026 Budget Ma'alaea Wastewater Reclamation System on Tuesday 04/15/25 --- PLEASE EXPEDITE TO COUNCIL MEMBERS
Attachments: County Council Reconsideration 2025 0423_2 042325.pdf

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PLEASE EXPEDITE TO COUNCIL MEMBERS

Subject: Mā'alaea Regional Wastewater Reuse System (MRWRS) Budget Request for FY 2026

Dear Council Members,

We are disappointed to learn that our \$1.25mil budget was not approved for the Ma'alaea Regional Wastewater Reuse System yesterday 04/22/25. We respectfully ask that you reconsider this decision and hold a revote. The lack of County support at this stage in the project risks current EPA grant funding for \$1.25mil, and jeopardizes the work that has been done over the past 5 years, as well as the Mayor's commitment to this project.

Our current budget request covers design and permitting so that we will have a shovel-ready project. Construction funding for this project will be addressed separately. MVA will be responsible for conducting the work and hiring necessary professionals complete the design and permitting for this project. A permitted and shovel-ready project will benefit the entire Maui Community by protecting Ma'alaea Bay from continued pollution and die-off. This project will help to bring the bay back into compliance with federal and state regulations (it is currently on the EPA's 303.d list of impaired water bodies).

Please see attached for detailed responses to the questions and comments that have been raised surrounding this budget request. We would appreciate the opportunity to meet in person to provide additional testimony and answer questions. Thank you for your consideration.

Attachments: 1. Summary of Responses to Council Comments
2. Table of Mā'alaea Community Concerns

Aloha,

TAPANI VUORI

GENERAL MANAGER

📞 c/txt: 808.561.2022

✉️ tvuori@mauiocceancenter.com

🌐 mauiocceancenter.com

📍 192 Mā'alaea Rd. Wailuku, Hawai'i 96793



From: Tapani Vuori <tvuori@mauiocceancenter.com>

Sent: Tuesday, April 22, 2025 4:14 PM

To: Yukilei Sugimura <Yukilei.Sugimura@mauicounty.us>; County Clerk <County.Clerk@mauicounty.us>

Cc: Alice L. Lee <Alice.Lee@mauicounty.us>; Tasha A. Kama <Tasha.Kama@mauicounty.us>; Thomas M. Cook <Thomas.Cook@mauicounty.us>; Gabe Johnson <Gabe.Johnson@mauicounty.us>; Tamara A. Paltin <Tamara.Paltin@mauicounty.us>; Keani N. Rawlins <Keani.Rawlins@mauicounty.us>; Shane M. Sinenci <Shane.Sinenci@mauicounty.us>; Nohe M. Uu-Hodgins <Nohe.Uu-Hodgins@mauicounty.us>

Subject: RE: Follow up Answers to Questions on my Maui County 2026 Budget Ma'alaea Wastewater Reclamation System on Tuesday 04/15/25

Dear Vice-Chair,

Thank you for your question.

- Brown & Caldwell wastewater engineering feasibility study concluded that the Central Maui WWTF conveyance option as the most expensive option and that the regional Ma'alaea WWTF was the most cost effective. In addition crossing the Kuihelani Highway may present logistical challenges.
- Pumping effluent uphill for the distance required will be expensive
- Our concern was also about the timing of the Central WWTF operational readiness as it has been in the planning stage for over a decade.
- We also believe that we can deliver the Ma'alaea regional WWTF at a much lower cost per user compared to Central WWTF.
- We are also expecting to replace 6.5mil gallons of potable water currently used for irrigation at the condominiums with R1; we do not believe the current plans for the Central WWTF will provide this for the community.
- Having a 501c12, a community benefit non-profit operate and maintain the facility with community ratepayers supporting it will not provide operational nor financial burden for Maui County.

Aloha,

TAPANI VUORI

GENERAL MANAGER

📞 c/txt: 808.561.2022

✉️ tvuori@mauiocceancenter.com

🌐 mauiocceancenter.com

📍 192 Mā'alaea Rd. Wailuku, Hawai'i 96793



From: Yukilei Sugimura <Yukilei.Sugimura@mauicounty.us>

Sent: Tuesday, April 22, 2025 6:06 AM

To: Tapani Vuori <tvuori@mauiocceancenter.com>; County Clerk <County.Clerk@mauicounty.us>

Cc: Alice L. Lee <Alice.Lee@mauicounty.us>; Tasha A. Kama <Tasha.Kama@mauicounty.us>; Thomas M. Cook <Thomas.Cook@mauicounty.us>; Gabe Johnson <Gabe.Johnson@mauicounty.us>; Tamara A. Paltin <Tamara.Paltin@mauicounty.us>; Keani N. Rawlins <Keani.Rawlins@mauicounty.us>; Shane M. Sinenci <Shane.Sinenci@mauicounty.us>; Nohe M. Uu-Hodgins <Nohe.Uu-Hodgins@mauicounty.us>

Subject: Re: Follow up Answers to Questions on my Maui County 2026 Budget Ma'alaea Wastewater Reclamation System on Tuesday 04/15/25

Why are you not connecting to the County Central Maui wastewater system? You ou have changed your mind.
Yuki Lei Sugimura

From: Tapani Vuori <tvuori@mauiocenter.com>

Date: Monday, April 21, 2025 at 8:23 PM

To: County Clerk <County.Clerk@mauicounty.us>

Cc: Alice L. Lee <Alice.Lee@mauicounty.us>, Yukilei Sugimura <Yukilei.Sugimura@mauicounty.us>, Tasha A. Kama <Tasha.Kama@mauicounty.us>, Thomas M. Cook <Thomas.Cook@mauicounty.us>, Gabe Johnson <Gabe.Johnson@mauicounty.us>, Tamara A. Paltin <Tamara.Paltin@mauicounty.us>, Keani N. Rawlins <Keani.Rawlins@mauicounty.us>, Shane M. Sinenci <Shane.Sinenci@mauicounty.us>, Nohe M. Uu-Hodgins <Nohe.Uu-Hodgins@mauicounty.us>

Subject: Follow up Answers to Questions on my Maui County 2026 Budget Ma'alaea Wastewater Reclamation System on Tuesday 04/15/25

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Honorable Maui County Council Chair, Vice Chair and the Members,

Thank you for allowing me to testify in support for Maui County Administration 2026 Budget line item for Ma'alaea Regional Wastewater Reclamation System on Tuesday 04/15/25. As requested, please find attached my responses to several questions and concerns that were brought forward. Also attached please find additional supporting documentation in effort to provide more clarity on the issues raised. I am available for any further questions, any time. Thank you for your consideration.

Aloha,

TAPANI VUORI
GENERAL MANAGER

☎ c/txt: 808.561.2022

✉ tvuori@mauiocenter.com

🌐 mauiocenter.com

📍 192 Mā'alaea Rd. Wailuku, Hawai'i 96793



Summary of Responses to Council Comments

Overview of the Ma'alaea Community

- Maui draws over 2 million visitors annually and Mā'alaea is the top commercial harbor on the island;
- Ma'alaea consists of 10 condos, with a total of 567 living units, which is equivalent to between 1,100 and 2,200 people depending on occupancy
 - 352 units (62%) are short-term rentals
 - 215 units (38%) are long-term rentals
- The Ma'alaea Triangle Association (MTA) comprises 9 commercial properties that includes Harbor Shops, Maui Ocean Center, Starbucks, Gas Station and Golf and Sports Park. These businesses have a wide reaching positive impact in our community by employing many community members, a significant economic driver and supporting a multitude of community services;
- Haycraft Beach Park currently does not have public restroom facilities. If there are public restroom facilities in the future, they can connect to the proposed community sewer system and treatment plant.
- **Phasing out short term rentals:** Bill SB2919 and Maui County Code 19.12.020
 - Minatoya List and Mayor Richard Bissen Legislation;
 - <https://www.mauirealestate.com/the-end-of-the-minatoya-list/>
 - ***January 1, 2026 is the date that has been set for the conversion of all short term units to Long Term Rentals.***
 - This would increase the total annual volume of wastewater discharged into the injection wells (and therefore increase the impact on the water quality in Ma'alaea Bay). Currently the total annual volume of wastewater that is discharged from the injection wells depends on the occupancy, which can range depending on tourist visits.

Wastewater issue & root cause

- ***ISSUE: Mā'alaea Bay is on the USEPA's 303d list of impaired water bodies due to nutrients and sedimentation.***
 - In 20 years the amount of living coral has fallen from better than 80% to less than 5%. This is the precipice of collapse for a significant marine resource for both the Maui Community, as well as the greater environment (humpback whale sanctuary)
- ***CAUSE: Every condo and the MTA has existing UIC permits from the State's DOH.*** These permits allow their wastewater to be discharged into injection wells. All of the users are in compliance with their current permits.
 - The UIC permits allow partially treated wastewater to be discharged into groundwater that is hydrologically connected to the ocean (as close as 50 yards away from the shoreline). The permit water quality requirements do not adequately protect the environment in that location.

- The UIC permits have a condition that states that if a community sewer system is available the users shall connect to it, and decommission their injection wells in accordance with DOH rules.
- No injection well permits will be renewed once the community sewer is in place.
- UIC permits are valid for 5 years;
- There is no current legislation or mandate to discontinue the use of existing injection wells.

What funding options and alternatives have been considered & evaluated?

- **SRF Funding**
 - \$9.5mil approved from EPA/DOH in 2024;
 - This would have been a reimbursable loan to the County;
 - This budget item was previously approved by the County Council for FY 2025;
 - The mayor's office elected to apply the funds elsewhere and offered the grant for this project instead.
- **Community Facilities District (<https://www.mauicounty.us/cfd/>)**
 - The Mā'alaea community would repay the County through an adjusted tax structure;
 - Maui County would pay for the improvements upfront and own it;
 - Maui County would be responsible for the payment of operation and maintenance for the system;
 - Only 1 CFD has been successfully established in the State of Hawai'i. It is on Kaua'i Island.
 - None have been created on Maui;
 - The timeline is unsure.
 - Considerations for alternative management strategies such as CFD can occur concurrently with the design and permitting.
 - Final design and permitting is required for any improvement to occur.
- **Connection to the Central Maui WWTP**
 - The facility has not been either permitted or built yet;
 - The timeline is unclear;
 - The feasibility study conducted by Brown and Caldwell for Mā'alaea considered this option in their report in 2017;
 - The cost of the construction of the transmission line alone from Mā'alaea to the Central Maui facility was comparable to the cost of the current proposed MRWRS. That estimate has not been adjusted for inflation;
 - Maui County would be responsible for the cost of the sewer line and required pump stations from the Central Maui facility to the users in Mā'alaea. The users would only be responsible for monthly user fees;
 - The Central Maui plant would need to be sized to accommodate the wastewater volume from Mā'alaea, and once again these costs would be paid by the County;

- No R1 water is planned to be provided to Mā‘alaea from the Central Maui plant and therefore the community would still use County potable water to irrigate their landscapes;
 - There would not be any R1 water available for habitat restoration, native plants, agriculture, or greenbelt for wildfire protection.
- **How about the Mā‘alaea Property Owners pay for WWTP?**
 - Each user (10 condos and 1 commercial triangle) is currently responsible to pay for their own connection to the proposed sewer system, as well as the decommissioning of their injections wells per DOH guidelines;
 - Payment for the construction of the proposed sewer system and wastewater treatment plant would be subject to financing approval, which is challenging across 11 different entities (10 condos, 1 commercial triangle and potentially the State Owned Harbor and Federally Owned Coast Guard Facility)
 - Owners are not compelled to pay the current estimated cost of \$12.5 million for the MRWRS when the UIC permits are valid, and therefore there is no urgency to upgrade existing wastewater infrastructure that is polluting the Bay.
 - When the MRWRS is permitted, it will establish urgency with the UIC permit condition that requires users to connect to a community sewer and wastewater treatment system.
- **Mayor Bissen Grant for \$1.25mil (current ask)**
 - Funding has been provided in the form of a grant from the Mayor’s Office to support the design and permitting of this project.
 - The feasibility study, basis of design report and preliminary engineering reports have already been completed;
 - The EA has also been completed.
 - The source of construction funding has not been determined. An offer was made from the Mayor’s Office to provide an additional amount of \$8.25mil, however it would be subject to the same approval process as the current \$1.25mil amount.
 - The current wastewater working group is committed to sourcing alternative funding mechanisms, which will be much easier if there is a permitted, shovel-ready project.
 - The MRWRS users will be responsible for the ongoing Operations and Maintenance costs of the system, at no additional cost to Maui County.
 - Maui County has the right to take over the system in the future, if desired.

What results would Ma‘alaea Regional Wastewater Reuse System (MRWRS) achieve?

- A community wastewater treatment facility will treat all of Mā‘alaea’s wastewater and eliminate all sewage pollution from entering surface water, groundwater or the ocean.
 - This prevents the discharge of nutrients & emerging contaminants into Mā‘alaea Bay which is the most significant contributing factor to the loss of coral and limu in the near shore marine environment.
- Fire mitigation with an irrigated greenbelt that will function as a fire break for the community which is ranked highest risk in the State.

- The reuse of the R1 quality recycled water can also be used for the following:
 - Habitat restoration with native plants;
 - Landscape irrigation;
 - Accessible recycled water resource for ongoing land restoration projects in Mā'alaea.
- More than 6 million gallons of potable county water will be saved annually.
- Provide demonstration of Maui County's commitment to sustainable water management and environmental stewardship;
- This can also serve as demonstration strategies for community cesspool replacement;
- Serve as a hub for wastewater & fire mitigation research, education and workforce training; and
- Encourage increased collaboration & with state, county, private & public entities to proactively address wastewater issues throughout Hawai'i.

Why is the current funding request for \$1.25mil beneficial and so important?

- Save Mā'alaea Bay from serious decline which is on the verge of total ecosystem collapse (URGENT).
 - Completing the final design and securing permits is necessary to ensure that progress continues toward the common goal of eliminating the primary source of pollution to the nearshore marine ecosystem in a timely manner so that the bay can recover;
 - The permitting process is time-consuming, and any delay in starting will push back the ultimate completion of the project by a year or more risking our ability to recover at all.
- A permitted and shovel-ready project will enable:
 - Increase the opportunities for diverse & committed funding sources for construction;
 - Will compel injection well users to connect to the new system and decommission their existing injection wells in accordance with existing DOH permit conditions and requirements;
- Cost savings for the County for implementation (enables diverse funding sources with shovel ready design) & operations and maintenance (operated by MWA); and
- Establish wastewater system for potential long-term residency (currently in legislation - Bill SB2919 and Maui County Code 19.12.020).

Table of Mā‘alaea Community Concerns

MRWRS MĀ‘ALAEA COMMUNITY CONCERNS 2025					
ISSUE	ROOT CAUSE OF ISSUE	CORRECTIVE ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES TO CORRECT	CORRECTION STATUS	PRIORITY
Wastewater Pollution	UIC permit & active use	<i>Discontinue UIC with WWTP</i>	County - future landowner, DOH - regulator, Maalaea property owners, general public (sponsors), WWTP	In progress - needs funding for design, permitting & construction	Urgent
Fire Risk	Diverged streams, imbalance of water resources & vegetation type	<i>Upland restoration, R1 reuse water supply, greenbelt firebreak</i>	County - future landowner, WWTP, Community restoration projects	In progress - needs restoration plan, WWTP with greenbelt needs design for permitting & construction	High
Sediment	Dry environment, vegetation type, stormwater management	<i>Upland restoration, R1 reuse water, improved stormwater management</i>	County - future landowner, WWTP, Community restoration projects	In progress - community & county projects are working on restoration plans, WWTP can support water supply	Medium - high
Shore Erosion	Rising sea level, condos too close to shore	<i>Retreat plan & implementation & Coastal Restoration</i>	County - future landowner, codo property owners	Not started - needs retreat plan. *Required for county to obtain land (NOAA grant)	High
Public Access	Condos too close to shore, coastal armoring issues & other barriers	<i>No coastal armoring, coastal restoration, plan & implement condos retreat</i>	County - future landowner, codo property owners	Not started - needs retreat plan. *Required for county to obtain land (NOAA grant)	medium - high
Short Term Rentals	Permitted short-term rentals, revenue incentive to property owners	<i>Legislation - phase out shortterm rentals, provide incentives for long term rentals</i>	Legislation & condos	In progress - Bill SB2919 and Maui County Code 19.12.020 bill in legislation	High

BFED Committee

From: Anissa Lucero <anissa@ecosoldesigns.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 24, 2025 6:00 PM
To: BFED Committee
Subject: Ma'alaea Wastewater Project
Attachments: Clarifications Regarding the Ma'alaea Regional Wastewater Reclamation System (MRWRS) (1).pdf

You don't often get email from anissa@ecosoldesigns.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Aloha e Budget Committee,

I am writing with deep respect and concern to humbly request a revote on the recent county council budget decision to eliminate the Mā'alaea Wastewater Reclamation System item. After reviewing the proceedings, I believe that some of the testimony and council members' discussions were based on incomplete and unclear information. There appeared to be confusion and important details missing from the conversation, which may have led to decisions made under mistaken assumptions.

This budget directly affects our community, and it is important that decisions are made with full clarity and accuracy in context. I am asking for the opportunity to clarify the points that were misunderstood and respectfully request that a revote be considered once that clarity has been provided. Could your team please help ensure this message is shared with council members?

I have attached a brief document clarifying the points that were unclear or missing during the discussion, in hope that it helps support more informed decision-making.

Mahalo for your time, understanding and commitment to transparent governance.

Me ke aloha,
Anissa Lucero
808 365 3515
Ma'alaea Wastewater Working Group

Clarifications Regarding the Ma‘alaea Regional Wastewater Reclamation System (MRWRS)

Submitted by Ma‘alaea Village Association

What is DEM’s involvement?

This is not a Department of Environmental Management (DEM) project. DEM’s role is advisory only. The utility is being developed independently as a non-profit initiative. However, Maui County retains the right and option to assume control of the utility at any point in the future.

Have Community Facilities Districts (CFDs) been considered?

Yes. A CFD remains an option for funding construction. However, due to time-sensitive federal grants and the need to maintain project momentum, the focus at this stage is on permitting and design. A CFD would be more relevant during the construction funding phase.

Who will develop and operate the MRWRS?

The Ma‘alaea Village Association (MVA) will develop and manage the system through a 501(c)(12) nonprofit entity, the Ma‘alaea Wastewater Association. This organization is structured as a mutual or cooperative utility, similar in model to Kaua‘i’s electric cooperative. MVA also plans to recruit and train a capable local workforce to operate and maintain the utility.

How could the MRWRS model support cesspool conversions statewide?

This project can serve as a replicable model for other communities by demonstrating how locally driven solutions can address wastewater challenges. It also contributes to workforce development and aims to share findings and best practices for broader application.

What is the current status of the project?

To date, the project has raised \$1.25 million in private donations and federal grant funding. However, without matching funds from Maui County to

support site preparation and permitting, the project cannot advance to shovel-ready status. At this stage, there is no request for construction funding from the County. MVA is confident it can secure additional funding once permits are in place.

Is this project a bailout?

No. Existing injection wells in Ma‘alaea are fully permitted and operational. This initiative is not mandated but voluntarily pursued by the community to improve environmental outcomes. Property owners, including those with short-term rentals, will contribute to the decommissioning of existing systems through private investment.

How will the Ma‘alaea community contribute financially?

Ma‘alaea contributes significant revenue to Maui County through General Excise Tax (GET) and Transient Accommodations Tax (TAT). Despite these contributions, the community lacks public infrastructure such as fire, police, and educational facilities. Reinvesting a portion of these revenues to support this project would address a critical need without additional burden on County services.

About MVA

The Ma‘alaea Village Association represents a diverse community including long-term residents, owner-occupants, non-renting second homeowners, short-term rental owners, and visitors. For over seven years, MVA has been actively exploring alternatives to injection wells, investing thousands of volunteer hours alongside County, State, and private support.

From: Susan King <susanking421@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 24, 2025 6:53 PM
To: BFED Committee <BFED.Committee@mauicounty.us>
Subject: Farm to Families in need

You don't often get email from susanking421@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

As a Maui resident for 60 years, I have witnessed so much change but that change has cost our land dearly I remember the sustainability seen across Maui County there were dairies, cattle and rich farmland. The dairies are gone, raising cattle is becoming a viable resource and our farmers struggle. The population on Maui has continued to grow and grow fast because we truly do live in Paradise except for one not so small detail. HUNGER! We have focused so much on our tourist industry that we fail to address our residents who continually struggle to put healthy food on their tables.

My church operates a food pantry one day each week and thank to the Maui Food Bank we always have something to share with everyone and each week the same question is asked. "Are there fresh vegetables today?" But the fresh, good fruit and vegetables seldom last.

Our farmers are generous but often struggle to make a decent living and their generosity towards the less fortunate in our community (and there are plenty). It's truly a "feel good" moment when you watch a mother reach in to her bag or box of groceries and hand her child a piece of fresh fruit!



There never seems to be enough fresh good to share with others.
Susan C King