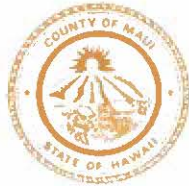


**RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.**  
Mayor

**JOSIAH K. NISHITA**  
Managing Director



**DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT**  
COUNTY OF MAUI  
200 SOUTH HIGH STREET  
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793  
[www.maui-county.gov](http://www.maui-county.gov)

August 30, 2024

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

**APPROVED FOR TRANSMITTAL**

*Richard T. Bissen, Jr.* 9-3-24  
Mayor Date

For Transmittal to:

Honorable Tamara Paltin, Chair  
Disaster, Resilience, International Affairs, and Planning Committee  
County of Maui  
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

Dear Chair Paltin:

**SUBJECT: FIRE PREVENTION (DRIP-2(10))**

Please see the Department of Management's response to the Disaster, Resilience, International Affairs, and Planning Committee's letter of August 26, 2024, requesting a response to the following:

Has the Office of Recovery applied for Federal Emergency Management Agency grants relating to brush abatement and fire prevention, such as the Fire Management Assistance Grant Program?

The Department of Fire and Public Safety (MFD) routinely includes \$700,000 as potential grant revenue from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG). The Fire Management Assistance declaration process is initiated when the Maui Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) contacts the State of Hawaii to submit a request for assistance to the FEMA Regional Director when a "threat of major disaster" exists. MEMA submitted such a request on August 8, 2023, and it was approved. The August 10, 2023, Presidential declaration of a major disaster for the State of Hawaii superseded the FMAG

application as this declaration authorized a much higher level of federal disaster assistance funding, primarily through the FEMA Public Assistance (PA) grant program. As you may know, the Office of Recovery is working with Tetra Tech to submit FEMA PA grant applications for the County of Maui.

In addition to the FEMA PA program, post fire FEMA assistance is available through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). There are related brush abatement and fire prevention projects in the Notice of Intent for the HMGP which was filed with the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency on August 1, 2024:

1. **Statewide Wildfire Mitigation Brochures and Video Production** targets high-risk wildfire areas and provides crucial education on fire prevention and safety, and involves community collaboration to reduce life and property risks while building long-term resilience.
2. **Maui County Defensible Space/Hazardous Fuels Reduction** references expected benefit-cost analysis for both hazardous fuels reduction and creation of defensible space using native and/or fire-resistant vegetation.

We anticipate receipt of the list of State prioritized projects meeting FEMA eligibility requirements in late September. Upon receipt of the eligible project list, we continue the process with an 89-page, detailed sub application for each project. The state will require submission of sub applications in February 2025. We hope to start working on approved HMGP projects by mid-year 2025. As is the case with most FEMA funding, the HMGP funds are generally based on a cost share and 75% reimbursement. We anticipate being responsible for 25% of eligible project expenses.

We are receiving additional support from the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance Grant team as they are providing the MEMA Emergency Operations Center with open communication and support to provide the foundation and framework for Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) Programs. This FEMA team is helping MEMA demonstrate cost-effectiveness of hazard mitigation projects by reviewing notices of intent and program support materials. They will also assist MEMA in the development and submission of sub applications as well as streamlining benefit-cost analysis requirements to address long-standing barrier communities, particularly those that are underserved.

*Chair Tamara Paltin*

*August 30, 2024*

*Page 3*

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Should you have any questions, please contact me at ext. 7211.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Nishita', with a stylized flourish at the end.

JOSIAH K. NISHITA  
Managing Director

## DRIP Committee

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**From:** Michelle Santos <Michelle.Santos@co.maui.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 4, 2024 9:23 AM  
**To:** DRIP Committee  
**Cc:** Cynthia Sasada; Josiah Nishita; Pili Nahooikaika  
**Subject:** MT#10735 Fire Prevention  
**Attachments:** MT#10735-DRIP 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*

Office Operations Assistant

Office of the Mayor

County of Maui

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