

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

**KATE L. K. BLYSTONE**  
Director

**ANA LILLIS**  
Deputy Director



**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING**  
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August 7, 2024

Honorable Richard T. Bissen Jr.  
Mayor, County of Maui  
200 South High Street  
Wailuku, Hawai'i 96793

**APPROVED FOR TRANSMITTAL**

 8-12-24  
Mayor Date

For Transmittal to:

Honorable Tasha Kama, Chair  
Housing and Land Use Committee  
Maui County Council  
200 South High Street  
Wailuku, Hawai'i 96793

Dear Chair Kama:

**SUBJECT: ADVISORY COMMITTEES TO THE MAUI PLANNING COMMISSION (HLU-3(19))**

Thank you for your July 26, 2024, letter regarding Advisory Committees to the Maui Planning Commission. Our responses are as follows:

1. *Please provide the estimated average total cost to conduct an advisory committee meeting.*

Advisory committee meetings involve items such as agenda preparation and posting, certified mailing, contacting members for quorum, creating webex meeting links, physical site preparation, transportation, presentation preparation, verbatim minute writing, and preparing a post-meeting report to the Maui Planning Commission (MPC) summarizing the meeting and recommendation(s) provided by the Advisory Committee.

The Department staff required to conduct an advisory committee meeting include a Secretary to Boards and Commissions, a Staff Planner assigned to the project, and a Supervising Planner or Planning Program Administrator to represent the Department. The Planning Director and Deputy Planning Director are also involved in the report writing process along with providing guidance and direction to staff.

Lastly, advisory committee meetings usually occur after normal working hours, and last approximately four hours. Factoring in the numerous staff members involved with meeting preparation, the meeting itself, and post meeting requirements, the estimated average total cost

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for the Department to conduct a single advisory committee meeting is approximately \$2,400.00. This does not include the costs associated for applicants, other Departments, including the Department of the Corporation Counsel, to additionally participate.

Please note that although a Department report and recommendation must be written for the advisory committee, this cost was excluded since a similar report must also be written for the MPC, regardless of advisory committee review.

2. *Please explain whether you support the dissolution of advisory committees. In no, please describe why.*

The Department does not support the dissolution of the Hāna Advisory Committee (HAC). The MPC has deferred all public hearing items for projects that occur in the Hāna district to the HAC. In addition, the MPC has historically supported and adopted the recommendations of the HAC. Due to the uniqueness and remoteness of the Hāna district, the MPC appears to recognize the value in obtaining the input of members of the HAC.

With respect to the Pā'ia-Ha'ikū and South Maui Advisory Committees, the Department supports their dissolution. Currently, there have been no items referred by the MPC to the Pā'ia-Ha'ikū Advisory Committee. There have been two items referred to the South Maui Advisory Committee, however the second item has not been heard due to a lack of quorum. Further, neither Pā'ia-Ha'ikū nor South Maui are remote and it is not difficult for these communities to participate directly in MPC.

3. *Please provide suggestions for improving the advisory committees' function.*

In general, the advisory committees to the MPC, with the exception of the HAC, add another layer to the development process that does not improve the quality of the projects they are reviewing. It is an inefficiency in the system that does not lead to better results.

The three advisory committees at issue are not equal. The HAC was formed in 1989 to acknowledge the remoteness of Hāna and ensure that residents of that community had a voice in decisions being made more than two hours away. It was created at the same time as Moloka'i Planning Commission for the same reason: both areas are remote and unique.

The same cannot be said for Pā'ia-Ha'ikū and South Maui advisory committees. Residents of these communities already frequently participate in MPC meetings and neither are more than a 45 minute drive from where the MPC meets in Wailuku. Because internet services are more reliable in these areas, residents often do not even need to leave their homes to participate in the MPC.

The Department suggests that the Council retain the HAC as it is and dissolve the Pā'ia-Ha'ikū and South Maui advisory committees.

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Thank you for the opportunity to provide our responses. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



KATE L. K. BLYSTONE  
Planning Director

xc: Ana Lillis, Deputy Planning Director (PDF)  
Danny A. Dias, Planning Program Administrator (PDF)  
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## HLU Committee

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**From:** Michelle Santos <Michelle.Santos@co.maui.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 12, 2024 3:54 PM  
**To:** HLU Committee  
**Cc:** Ana Lillis; Cynthia Sasada; Josiah Nishita; joy.paredes@co.maui.hi.us; Kate Blystone; Pili Nahooikaika  
**Subject:** MT#10709 Advisory Committees to the Maui Planning Commission  
**Attachments:** MT#10709-HLU 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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