

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE**
Council of the County of Maui

MINUTES

June 3, 2026

Online Only via Teams

CONVENE: 1:33 p.m.

PRESENT: Councilmember Tamara Paltin, Chair
Councilmember Nohelani U'u-Hodgins, Vice-Chair
Councilmember Tom Cook, Member
Councilmember Gabe Johnson, Member
Councilmember Alice L. Lee, Member
Councilmember Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez, Member
Councilmember Shane M. Sinenci, Member
Councilmember Yuki Lei K. Sugimura, Member (arrived at 1:41 p.m.)
(left at 3:20 p.m.)

EXCUSED: Councilmember K. Kauanoe Batangan

STAFF: Jarret Pascual, Legislative Analyst
James Krueger, Senior Legislative Analyst (backup)
Ryan Ramirez, Legislative Analyst (trainee)
Carla Nakata, Legislative Attorney
Yvette Bouthillier, Senior Committee Secretary
Jean Pokipala, Assistant Clerk
Ryan Martins, Council Ambassador

Residency Area Office (RAO):

Mavis Oliveira-Medeiros, Council Aide, East Maui Residency Area Office
Roxanne Morita, Council Aide, Lanai Residency Area Office
Christian Balagso, Council Aide, West Maui Residency Area Office
Chaelin Ryu, Council Aide, South Maui Residency Area Office

ADMIN.: Jacky Takakura, Planning Director, Department of Planning
Michael Hopper, Deputy Corporation Counsel, Department of the Corporation
Counsel

OTHERS: Kai Nishiki
Jasee Law
Ke Aupuni Ko Hawai'i Pae Aina
Others (20)

Resource Personnel:

Tara Owens, Maui Nui Program Coordinator, Coastal Processes and
Hazards Specialists, University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

Dr. Charles "Chip" Fletcher, Dean, School of Ocean and Earth Science and
Technology, University of Hawai'i at Manoa

CHAIR PALTIN: . . .*(gavel)*. . . Will the Disaster Recovery, International Affairs, and Planning Committee meeting of June 3rd come to order. The time is now 1:33. If everyone could please silence their cellphones or any noise-making devices; that would help our cause. Members, in accordance with the Sunshine Law, if you are not in the Council Chambers, please identify by name who, if anyone, is in the room, vehicle, or workspace with you today. Minors do not need to be identified. Also, please see the last page of the agenda for information on meeting connectivity. My name is Tamara Paltin, I'll be your Chair for today's DRIP Committee meeting. And with us we also have Committee Vice-Chair Nohelani U'u-Hodgins. Aloha auinala.

VICE-CHAIR U'U-HODGINS: Aloha, Chair. Aloha, everyone. I'm...I...I'm at my private residence at my dining room table right now. And I also have three minors with me. My oldest son is an adult, legally, but he will be leaving soon. Thank you.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you. And Member Kauanoe Batangan may be excused. We also have Councilmember Tom Cook. Aloha auinala.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Aloha auinala, Chair and looking forward to today's meeting. There's [sic] no testifiers at our Kihei office because it's closed for the week. Thank you.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you. Next up, we have Committee Member Gabe Johnson. Aloha auinala.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Aloha, Chair, Councilmembers, community members. There's [sic] no testifiers at the Lāna'i District office. I'm alone here in my house, and I'm here and ready to work. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you. And next up, we have Council Chair Alice Lee. Aloha auinala and okey-dokey.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Hello. . . .*(laughing)*. . . Yeah. Okey [sic], and...aloha auinala. I'm home alone in my workspace; except I have one minor feline who's taking a nap.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you. And next up we have Committee Member Keani Rawlins-Fernandez. Aloha auinala.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Aloha auinala, Chair. Aloha auinala, kākou. Mai Molokai nui Ahina. I'm at my private residence. I do have my husband, Makena Fernandez, here and my two children under 18. And there are no testifiers at the Molokai District office. Mahalo, Chair.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you. And next up, we have Committee Member Shane Sinenci. Aloha

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

auinala.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Aloha auinala, Chair, and okey [sic]. Here at my private residence. The refrigeration specialist is here, so I'm not here by myself but happy to join from...from home.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you. And it looks like Member Sugimura might be coming because her computer is here, but she's not here yet. This meeting of the Disaster Recovery, International Affairs, and Planning Committee of the Maui County Council is located on the traditional 'āina of Kānaka 'Ōiwi who never ceded their sovereignty to the United States. We recognize that her Majesty Queen Lili'uokalani yielded the Hawaiian Kingdom to the U.S. in duress under threat of violence to avoid the bloodshed of her people. We further recognize that Hawai'i remains an illegally occupied nation state by the U.S., as documented in a 2021 scholarly article for the National Lawyers Guild Review by Andrew Reid, Adjunct Professor at Law at the University of Denver, Sturm College of Law. Generations of Kānaka Maoli and their knowledge systems have sustainably cared for Hawai'i and continue to do so. We're grateful to occupy this space and learn the ways in which we can contribute. As a Committee, we seek to support the varied strategies that the indigenous peoples of Hawai'i are using to protect their land and their communities and commit to dedicating time and resources to working in solidarity. From the Administration, Department of Planning, we have Planning Director Jacky Takakura. And our other resources that we have are Tara Owens, Maui Nui Program Coordinator, Coastal Processes and Hazards Specialist, University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program. We also have Dr. Charles, or Chip, Fletcher, Dean of the School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology, University of Hawai'i at Manoa. Members, without objection, I will designate these individuals as resource persons under Rule 18A of the Rules of the Council due to their knowledge and expertise in coastal hazards, beach processes, and shoreline change on a Statewide and local levels. We also have DRIP Committee Staff with us this afternoon. Ryan Ramirez is our newest Legislative Analyst. We have Jarret Pascual and Senior Legislative Analyst James Krueger. From Corporation Counsel, we have Deputy Corp. Counsel Mike Hopper. Our Senior Committee Secretary, Yvette Bouthillier, and our Legislative Attorney, Carla Nakata. I think we have Jean Pokipala as our Clerk and Council Ambassador of Aloha Ryan Martins. And we also have Marlene Rebugio in the house. We will take testimony today after opening remarks and presentations on the only item in today's agenda, which is DRIP-9(11), Shoreline Erosion Impacts on Coastal Properties.

SHORELINE EROSION IMPACTS ON COASTAL PROPERTIES (DRIP-9(11))

CHAIR PALTIN: And so, the reason that this was scheduled, in the discussion of Bill 9, as we were talking about shoreline properties and policies for upzoning, it came up that those policies are not exclusive to short-term rentals or apartment condos. It's pretty much across the board, whether you're a home, a condo, or short-term rental, hotel. Whatever you are, if you're on the shoreline, it's...it's pretty much facing the same problems and, potentially, solutions. So we kind of wanted to understand the issue and then focus in on policy discussions on mitigating climate change effects on coastal properties and sea-

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

level-rise impacts. So at this time with no further ado if Members want to view the presentation on their own computers, we have Dr. Chip Fletcher. His presentation is Granicus number 1. Welcome, Mr. Fletcher. And then we have Ms. Owens right after. Her presentation will be Granicus number 2. If Members could write down any questions they have, and we can get to them after testimony. Thank you, Dr. Fletcher. Take it away.

MR. FLETCHER: Thank you, Chair. Can you hear me all right, Chair? Can you just wave your hand if you hear me? Okay, great. Let me share screen. And this will just take a second. Can you see my first slide? And I can't see you, so if someone would say "yes".

CHAIR PALTIN: Yes. We sure can.

MR. FLETCHER: Okay. I'm going to --

CHAIR PALTIN: It looks perfect.

MR. FLETCHER: Thank you very much. I'm going to walk through an introduction to sea level rise because coastal erosion is one of a set of problems that are related to sea level rise. Most of our research has been focused here on Waikiki, but we are hoping to find the funding to do similar work on Maui. But first, let's just establish that global warming is alive and well despite what we hear out there from other venues. These are multiple data sets from 1880 up to present day showing the rise in surface temperature on Earth from...each color is a different scientific agency. And you can see they all almost perfectly overlap. You might also notice the bend in this red arrow indicating that the rate of global warming is actually accelerating. And in fact, a paper recently came out just a month ago that said there has been acceleration with over 98 percent confidence with the faster warming over the last ten years than during any previous decade. So global warming, despite decades of international negotiations on greenhouse gas emissions, global warming is actually accelerating. Now, NASA along with partners in the European Space Agency have set up a series of satellites that map the ocean's surface. And this is 30 years of ocean surface change. And red means that the ocean surface is rising. And blue means that the ocean surface, over 30 years, is falling. And you can see, obviously, the map of the planet is dominated by rising. And if you take that same data, we can show it here, and it shows that the rate of sea level rise has doubled in the last 30 years. Satellites began collecting this data in 1993, and for the first decade or so it was rising at a little over two millimeters per year. But now, the global rate of sea level rise is over four millimeters per year. We also have a set of satellites that measure gravity. And this is relevant if measuring the ice of our planet and also the density of the ocean water as it warms. And so, here is a gravity record of Greenland. You can see, since 2002, the amount...the gravitational field on Greenland has decreased, and this is due to melting of ice. In fact, you can see the summer snow...the winter snowfall, the summer melt, the winter snow, the summer melt, a very detailed record indicating that Greenland and the continental ice sheet on Greenland is indeed melting due to the warming air. And that melt water is flowing into the ocean. And Antarctica, down at the South Pole, is also experiencing net melting. You can see

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

the same satellite record shown here. And one area in particular, called West Antarctica with these deep red colors, is now in a status of irreversible retreat. And here you see Thwaites Glacier. Circled in red are fracture patterns as the glacier begins to separate from the main ice sheet. Over the last two decades, the rate of flow of Thwaites Glacier into the Southern Ocean has more than doubled, and this is also contributing to sea level rise. We also have ice around the world's mountains, and that same satellite that measures the gravity field tells us that every mountain glacier complex on the planet from Alaska, to Western Canada, to Iceland, North Asia, Central Europe, Southeast Asia, these are all also melting, and the amount of mass is decreasing. This is the overall change in glacier mass over the last 23 years. Glaciers being melt...and Alpine glaciers and, of course, continental ice sheets being what it is on Antarctica as well as what is on Greenland. So the world's glacier mass loss is 18 percent larger than loss from just the Greenland ice sheet and more than twice the Antarctic ice sheet. And since the year 2000, mountain glaciers, in total, have lost five percent of their mass globally. So the world's ice is melting and contributing to sea level rise. But also, the world's oceans, which are cooler than the air, are busy absorbing heat and therefore thermally expanding. And this represents the majority of sea level rise; 38 percent of sea level rise is due to the oceans absorbing heat from the air. Now the oceans are a vast body of water. And as surface currents, shown in red, move towards the North Atlantic, they actually circulate down into the deep ocean and travel along a path that is over 2,000 years long. And the entire time they're traveling through the deep ocean, they are causing thermal expansion. So this what's known as conveyor belt circulation; this three-dimensional circulation from the surface ocean to the abyss, to the deep ocean, is now committed to thermally expanding for millennia, which on a human time frame means that sea level rise is essentially unstoppable. And in fact, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report that came out in 2021 said that sea level is committed to rise for centuries to millennia due to continuing deep ocean warming and ice sheet melting, and it will remain elevated for thousands of years. The truth is you cannot unheat [sic] the ocean. And so, this is a permanent condition that we, in Hawai'i and every other coastal community in the world, is now dealing with as it accelerates and becomes worse and worse. It is an unstoppable reality as we attempt to change our policies to accommodate this fact. Now, there is a national task force that was set up of scientists at NASA, the U.S. Geological Survey, NOAA, and other science agencies. And they put together a set of planning scenarios for coastal communities around the country. And each blue dot here is a tide gauge. And you can see the set of tide gauges that we have in Hawai'i. And their scenarios are very simple. They are designed for policymakers and community managers, like yourselves, to make plans for sea level rise even as we are unsure how Antarctica and Greenland will behave. We know they will continue melting, but will they accelerate in ways that our models are not predicting, which is a very genuine fear. So there are these five scenarios. A low scenario of, basically, one foot by the end of the century; intermediate-low of about 1 1/2 or 1.6 feet; by the end of the century, half a meter. An intermediate scenario of one meter or 3.3 feet, an intermediate-high scenario and a high scenario. These two earlier scenarios, the low and intermediate-low, would actually require that the global rate of sea level rise slow down, which at this point is a physical impossibility. So the intermediate scenario of one meter is now the...the most optimistic scenario that we can

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

take. And the high scenario of two meters by the end of the century is based on rapid collapse of West Antarctica, which we cannot yet confidently predict, although we...we live in fear of that possibility. At our...at each of the tide gauges throughout the U.S. the vertical land motion was modeled, as well as changes in gravity around the planet, as ice melts and turns to water and moves into the ocean. Those two factors, vertical land motion and changes in Earth's gravity field, go into a set of design scenarios for each tide gauge. And here are the design scenarios for the Honolulu tide gauge. The low and intermediate-low scenarios are already exceeded by the rate of global sea level rise. The intermediate scenario for Honolulu is four feet by the end of the century and the intermediate-high is basically six feet by the end of the century. So these are the two numbers that the City and County of Honolulu are taking as sea-level-rise planning scenarios. And eight feet would be rapid collapse. Hawai'i, it turns out, will see 15 to 20 percent more sea level rise than the global mean. And this is because of the redistribution of mass; what used to be ice has now turned to water. Now, my research team at UH has formed a tool, an online visualization tool. And here you can see we have it turned on to Waikiki. On the left side is a slider bar where you can raise sea level at one-foot increments. And we also have these scenarios, the intermediate and the intermediate-high scenario. Now what these scenarios provide you with is timing. So the intermediate-high scenario is turned on, and that indicates 6 feet by the year 2100, 3.8 feet by the year 2080, about 2 feet by the year 2060. And if I were to click the intermediate button over here, these numbers would change, and we would see a different set of chronology. And over on the right side, these are all different types of impacts from sea level rise that I'm going to walk through with you next. It's easier to see the impacts on a grayscale map, so that's what I'll be showing. And here is our model community, a coastal community with a buried drainage network where storm water flows into the gutter and through a series of pipes into the ocean. And underneath this coastal community is a coastal aquifer, which is typically brackish, and here is the ocean. So let's simulate higher sea level, and we get marine flooding. And that simply is assuming that the ocean, now at four feet of sea level rise, flows and fills in areas at high tide that are lower than four feet of sea level rise. And in green are areas that are topographically lower than four feet of sea level rise at high tide but not connected to the ocean. So this is called hydrostatic or passive flooding. It's the simplest way of simulating flooding, but it's wrong in many different ways, and...and I'll show you. The next thing is we have waves. Everybody in Hawai'i is aware of waves. And as the ocean rises, of course waves are going to run up in our community. So we have modeled wave run-up around Oahu. And this is the community of Ewa Beach, which is just to the west of Pearl Harbor. And in the year 2050, with one foot of sea level rise under the intermediate scenario, you can see a typical southern...southern ocean summer swell event and how it runs up across the beach. However, at two to three feet of sea level rise, every summer a swell event is going to punch into this community and damage homes. And here we are at four feet of sea level rise under the intermediate scenario. By the end of the century, every summer, a typical swell will run into the community. This is not storm surge. This is just a typical surf, grab your board and go out. What we're modeling, statistically, is the average high wave of the year, from buoys which are located offshore that have been put there by NOAA, directional wave buoys. And so, back to our Waikiki test area. Everything in pink is a combination of passive flooding

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

with waves on top of that. So this is annual, wave-driven flooding. These are seasonal high waves, not storm surge. The next impact is shoreline erosion. We have an erosion model that is used by the U.S. Geological Survey. It is their national erosion model, and we are applying that here in Hawai'i. We're all very familiar with erosion as a problem, and Tara will be telling us more about that. I want to point out that erosion, as the shoreline retreats, also exposes cesspools, which are responsible for causing pretty serious coastal pollution. And here is our erosion model run on the North Shore of Oahu. This is the Sunset Beach area. Sunset Beach Park is right over here, where I'm circling with my cursor. So this is today's veg. [sic] line. There's one foot of sea level rise, two, three and four feet of sea level rise. We have hundreds of homes and miles of road that are threatened under this intermediate scenario by the end of the century. And, of course, coastal hardening as a response to coastal erosion means you're not going to have any beaches. And beaches are a public trust asset for the people of Hawai'i and they also are the backbone of our tourism economy. So this is our erosion model. We run a probabilistic model. This is the 80-percentile probability of erosion under four feet of sea level rise, which is the...by 2080...under the intermediate-high scenario it's 2080. Under the intermediate scenario, it would be the year 2100. The next thing is drainage failure. As sea level rises it flows into our storm drain system, and it can stop drainage. And it can even backflow out of the storm drain system and cause its own flooding. Here is Waikiki at a...during king tide. And also, Mapunapuna, which is behind the airport in Honolulu. So this is the failure of the storm drain system. And every red dot is an individual storm drain culvert which is blocked with saltwater at four feet of sea level rise. And the green is actually discharge out of the storm drains of saltwater at four feet of sea level rise. So this is a totally different type of flooding. And each of these flood styles requires their own mitigation step, in terms of architecture or...or engineering. This is a...at high tide, a storm drain. We've pulled the manhole cover in downtown Waikiki. In fact, 71 percent of storm drain outfalls in Waikiki are already submerged below water at high tide, and all we need is two feet of sea level rise and 100 percent of the drainage in Waikiki will be shut down. Basically, this is the end of gravity-based drainage, meaning that we need to turn to pumped drainage. We also have this aquifer that sits under our communities. As the ocean goes up, that aquifer will rise and lead to groundwater inundation. Here's Dr. Shellie Habel, of the Sea Grant Program, measuring the water table under...in the basement of a resort in Waikiki. You can see that they've already started to wrap their vertical columns, which have rebar in them, and which will rust. They've put this wrapping around the vertical columns using a cement wrap to attempt to protect the rebar from corrosion with the rising water table. And they've put this pump in there because they recognize that during king tides, they have a flood issue in their basement. And...and they have...it's pretty standard to be pumping water out of the basements across all of Waikiki. And here is our model result for groundwater inundation, again, at four feet of sea level rise. All of our modeling is for high tide in the future. And in orange is where the water table will be less than one foot below the ground. And in yellow is where the water table will be between one and five feet below the ground. And so, this is relevant to our buried infrastructure, buried freshwater pipes, buried sewer pipes. And also, this water table will damage roads by sapping or eroding the base, the gravel base of the roadbed, leading to persistent potholes and road collapse. We also in...in downtown Honolulu have a population

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

problem. Sitting on our water table is World War II diesel fuel and gasoline. And as the water table rises, these pollutants will surface as well. And so, this is our...all these problems. The one that we have not talked about yet is when it rains at high tide under higher sea level; that's called compound flooding. And this an example of compound flooding. On December 5th, 2021, in Waikiki, we had a Kona storm with the wind blowing onshore. There were large waves created by that wind, and there was a king tide at the same time. And this is the...this is Kalakaua Avenue, the third most valuable shopping block in the United States. And here is our compound flood model of that particular Kona storm. And so, our website allows you to determine the actual water depth, which is important as well. So rain plus high tide equals compound flooding, and it's already a problem. So there are all the...all the hazards, not just erosion. And I will stop at this point and turn...turn the...turn it back to you. Thank you.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you so much, Dr. Fletcher. As you stop sharing screen, we'll...we'll transition to --

MR. FLETCHER: Yes.

CHAIR PALTIN: -- Tara Owens' presentation.

MR. FLETCHER: There we go. That should work.

CHAIR PALTIN: Yup.

MS. OWENS: Okay. I'm up.

CHAIR PALTIN: Oh, Ms. Owens, before you start, I did want to recognize that Councilmember Sugimura has joined us right before the last presentation. Aloha auinala.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Aloha. Sorry for my tardiness. Nice seeing you, Tara.

MS. OWENS: Nice to see you as well.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: And, Dr. Fletcher, nice...nice seeing you too.

MR. FLETCHER: Aloha.

MS. OWENS: Aloha, everyone. This is Tara Owens. I am a coastal scientist with the University of Hawai'i, Sea Grant College Program. I live and work here on the Island of Maui, and I'm closely connected to the Planning Department. So we...we work very closely on all these coastal issues and...but...but I do not speak for the Department, and we have the Department here for the discussion as well. Thank you, Chip, so much for laying the scientific groundwork because that frees me up to show what...well, we'll take a tour of what's happening here on Maui in terms of impacts and some of the proposed or even some of the actually completed solutions. So I will jump right in. And I don't have a large group here in the audience, but when I do, sometimes when I talk to community

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

groups or school groups, I start off with this question, and we take a vote. So looking at this photo here, which future do we want? This is option A. This is actually a restored coastal dune at Charley Young Beach Park in South Maui. Or option B, this is a...a failing seawall at the Ma'alaea area on Maui, and the sign reads, "Danger, seawall is crumbling. Do not climb on it". So of course, when I pose this question, I always get...everybody, ubiquitously, unanimously votes for option A. We'd rather our shorelines look like this than this. And...and so, it's interesting because obviously we're going to choose A. Where it gets really difficult is how we...and where our perspectives diverge in our communities is how we address these issues, how we try to extract ourselves out of the decisions of the past, and how we make different or better decisions going forward, and it can be very complex. So this is that...that site in Ma'alaea in 2019, and this is a more recent photo of the same site. So this is one of those opportunities that are kind of rare where we were able to remove the hard infrastructure and renaturalize the shoreline, working with the Planning Department and the...the landowner. And so, sometimes this is possible; other times it's more challenging to accomplish this. You can see the...the property closest to me in the foreground still has a failure...failing seawalls, and we're still struggling with the same erosion properties...erosion issues at that property. This is a photo from last year, about this time, of the Waiakoa Bridge in North Kihei or North Kula Kai. This is interesting because this is flooding that is coming from the ocean. We're currently in the same king tide season right now and, even as of yesterday, I think, these same conditions were experienced at Waiakoa Bridge. So sometimes the water is coming from the ocean, like this. And then other times, the water is coming from the land. And so, we'll look at some of those issues as well. This is a photo that's been in my slide set. This is from 2017, nearby, along the stretch of North Kihei...or South Kihei Road. And you can see how close the high wash of the waves is to the road and the roadbed. And we've always been concerned about what we're going to do with this road and other segments of the road when it becomes really threatened. And this is coming to life right now, in real time. This is that same area, last August. You can almost decide what's happening in the photos by the dates. So then again, this one is August. This is our king tide season. May, June, July, August, we get the highest high tides of the year. And if you couple that...sometimes it's just high tide, or if you couple it with waves, as Chip mentioned earlier, then it can be a pretty destructive circumstance. And we've had repeat events where the roadbed is undermined, as you can see, or over-washed, as you can see in these photos. This is different area along South Kihei Road in front of the old Maui Lu or now Maui Bay Villas, Isana area. This photo actually represents damage to the roadbed coming from inland. So when we have these Kona storms with a lot of rain, the water washes down the roads, and then it waterfalls over the edge of the road and pushes the sediment away. And then we can have road undermining that way as well. So we have a situation where we are having double whammies. This is a condominium in North Kihei. Same story here, we have issues where we have water coming from the land and water coming from the ocean. Probably most of you have seen this or are aware of this, but there were floods in 2025 that undermined or washed away the soil from below the building, and a portion of the building collapsed. And then a few months later, during king tide season, you can see the...the ocean is coming up and trying to consume the same area. Then, this year, same thing, another inland flooding event

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

during a Kona storm weather event, and the building was further undermined and fully collapsed and is now actually slated to be demolished. It is unrepairable. This is, I know, a topic of discussion that has come up recently in...in, I think, the budget discussions. This is a really precious place on the North Shore of Maui, the Mantokuji Mission, 100-plus year historic structure, you know, culturally significant to the community. But erosion on the shoreline is...is threatening the...the...the historic mission building. Temporary erosion was placed there a couple of years ago in the form of the sandbags. You can see along the shoreline there, but it doesn't stop the erosion. So I want you to notice what is in the yellow circle there. This...this metal object is actually what...a gas line that used to feed into the crematorium. And you can see where the erosion scarp is relative that...to that. A year later, you can see the distance between that same...that same object and the shoreline. So what...what has actually happened here is the sandbags were installed. And when you install a hard structure, what happens is that it...it focuses the wave energy on the part of the shoreline that is not reinforced. And it's called flanking erosion or end scour. And so, the erosion is becoming more rapid at the end of that seawall structure. And you can see how it's leading to...to rapid erosion. This is an...an example in West Maui. This is a condo in Keonenui Bay. I'm sure many folks have seen this as it's been progressing as well. Most...I guess...I guess in the...in the recent past, the building you can see in the...in the background, there's...there's a 12-unit building that was undermined by the water as it gets underneath the structure and the lanai, the material liquifies, you get sinkholes. The building was reinforced three different times and failed again and again each time. So those 12 units have been vacant now for, I don't know, it might nearly four years because the building is slumping and it's not safe for habitation. And then as of this year, the other side of the property that you can see in the foreground with these sinkholes, same...same story there. The seawall is being undermined. Mostly, the conduit is here in this corner. The waves are running up under...under the seawall, expanding in each direction along the shoreline. And now the column of this building, this cantilevered building, has been fully exposed and undermined, so there's a...a large cavity underneath. This building is slumping and is also becoming unsafe for habitation. And these are difficult and complex issues to...to solve. A lot of...a lot of behind-the-scenes conversations on...on how to respond to these issues in the short term and the long term. And although...yeah. That's just a few of many examples around the island. You can see a few other examples here. We...again, we have issues with buildings, public infrastructure like the Baldwin pavilion there in...in the middle that has since had to be removed because it was swallowed up by the ocean. And now we're working on restoring dunes in its place. Again, South Kihei Road, resorts in West Maui, Kā'anapali, and of course the highway out to the West Side, which now is...is...you know, there is significant planning work underway to realign that highway because of these issues. Okay. So there...there are, you know, different contributions to these issues of coastal flooding and coastal erosion. One is the human impacts. That can be land uses. You know...you know, in...in the old days, in the '70s, '60s and '70s before coastal zone management law, buildings and infrastructure were built very close to the ocean. And now we're...we're...we're dealing with that existing infrastructure and the increasing and expanding impacts on them: seawalls leading to beach loss and exacerbating erosion on neighboring properties and...and a historic pattern of sand

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

mining. On top of that, we, of course, have seasonal wave condi...conditions. So Chip mentioned just regular, seasonal waves. And then in the South Shore we get the summertime waves. On the North Shore we get the wintertime waves. Over the long term, as sea level is rising, and our beaches narrow because, basically, they're starting to drown beneath sea level rise, then we no longer have the natural infrastructure or the natural buffers to ward off these seasonal wave conditions. And so, that's why we're starting to see more and more impacts along the shoreline. And then, of course, sea level rise, as Chip has already mentioned, and, of course I will emphasize, is magnifying the impacts we're seeing. I won't dwell on this too much. I think this is very well understood these days. Shoreline hardening was something we...we used in the past to respond to erosion issues but the consequences of that are now well known. You can protect development and infrastructure but it's always at the expense of the beach. And...and in the long run, almost always, seawalls end up failing. And then, of course, we have the seasonal beach adjustments. This is what beaches do. If you have healthy beaches and dunes, they adjust to these seasonal swells. But as they disappear in the face of sea level rise, and as the beaches get pinched out between the ocean and the land uses behind them, we no longer have that natural buffer, and...and we start to see...this is from Kā'anapali a couple of summers ago during a south swell event, and...and we had the...the...the public walkway collapse. Okay. Chip talked a lot about the modeling for sea level rise. And we're fortunate to have all of that data that has come out the University of Hawai'i and has given us the tangible information we need to develop the plans, and policies, and responses. And I think everybody is probably familiar with the Hawai'i Sea Level Rise Viewer. It models and maps the three ways that sea level rise affects us, which is passive flooding, or high tide flooding like we're seeing at the Waiakoa Bridge right now. We have annual highway flooding, you know, the combination of sea level rise plus seasonal waves. And then we have erosion, which is land loss. Now, from Maui, we still are working with the planning target of 3.2 feet of sea level rise. You heard Chip mention that the science has progressed and carbon emissions have not been curbed, so the projections of sea level rise are now higher, and we're expecting for...you know, an intermediate scenario for Maui, it's something like four feet of sea level rise. We do not yet have the mapping to support that. So some of the mapping Chip showed for Waikiki is not yet available for Maui. And he can speak to this if...if you want to ask him. But I...I think part of the problem is the Federal funding. A lot of the Federal funding that was going to support Statewide mapping updates collapsed under, you know, the Federal funding issues. We know a lot. We have good mapping. So a lot has happened in the last decade in the time that I've been around, which...which is heartening. People are paying attention. Our decision-makers, including all of you, are...are...are using that information to try to improve our situation. So a lot has happened at the State level. Some examples here, we have climate and sea level rise has to be included in environmental assessments. There's been updates to the Coastal Zone Management Act. Mainly that now, Statewide, seawalls are no longer allowed for private property on standard...on sandy beaches. Another big one was that for development on the shoreline, they now have to come in for major special management area permits with public hearings at the Maui Planning Commission. State agencies have assessed and planned for sea level rise for their assets. And then there are also, now, real estate disclosures. So when there's a real

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

estate sale, the maps from the sea level rise viewer and the information has to be included in those real estate disclosures. And a lot has happened at the County level as well. Every single department...so Parks [sic], DEM, Public Works, Water [sic] have undertaken vulnerability assessments, so looking at their assets in the context of sea level rise. The community plans, which are sort of the longer-term, you know, plans for development in our communities, are, of course, incorporating this information as well. Our Hazard Mitigation Plan under MEMA looks at the State as well. The Shoreline Setback Rules were updated in 2024, I'll come back to this, but to include projections of erosion with sea level rise. Lots of regional resilience projects, some of which were enabled by Maui County Council and have been discussed in Maui County Council. I have a list of just a few there. Kapukaulua Dune Restoration, the Wetlands Overlay Mapping, Environmentally Sensitive Areas Atlas, Ma'alaea Resilience Plan, West Maui Wave Impact modeling and a Molokai Resilience Plan are just a few. And then also the Council created the Managed Retreat Revolving Fund which was something very unique and...and progressive for our State. Okay. So that all leads to...we...we...we all see the impact. We all talk about the impacts. How are we responding to the impacts? So this is what we sometimes call the Coastal Resilience Toolbox. There aren't that many tools in the toolbox, but they range from the top end of the spectrum, which is, you know, to protect or resist sea level rise and erosion by armoring the shoreline, which is typically what we did in the past and, as we said, has a lot of impact, to the other end of the spectrum, which would be to do nothing and to let things fall into the ocean, which is, of course, also not very desirable. So the Coastal Planners that we...I work with at the County and the State really try to focus on these preferred strategies in the middle, things like, accommodating sea level rise and erosion, if we can, and flooding. Maybe we elevate structures, maybe we reconfigure them. There's ecosystem-based adaptation, and that takes on different forms. It could be dune restoration, beach restoration, wetland restoration, stream restoration, and reef preservation or restoration. And I've highlighted that one in blue because I'm going to show some examples after this. And then managed retreat, which can come in the form of setbacks, required...sort of required buffer between the ocean and the development, and it could be actual relocation of existing structures. And I'm going to show us some examples of those as well. So we'll end with some proposed...proposed examples and some actual implemented examples, including some happy stories. It's not all destruction. One thing, before I get into the examples, that can kind of make a complex decision environment, is that there are different jurisdictions on the shoreline. So you can see the picture in the right there shows that this red line sort of represents the high wash of waves. It's high as far as the waves go during the season of the year when the waves are highest. That is the jurisdictional boundary between County and State. So, landlord of that, the County, manages the Special Management Area and does permitting for that, for that sensitive area. Seaward of that, the State manages the Conservation District. What that can mean to both applicants and...and us, as planners and decision makers, is that the resources, like the dunes and the beaches, can be bifurcated. And so, decisions and permitting involve both the County and the State and it requires a lot of coordination. And then if you get below the high tide line, it can even involve the Federal agencies. And so, the picture on the left you can kind of see a good example of that. This is a...an undermined seawall on the North Shore. So the seawall, at some

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

point, was trying to hold the line, keep the ocean out. But, like as we mentioned earlier, nothing really stops the ocean. And so, the erosion continued landward of the seawall. So you can see where the...the erosion scarp is. Once, as...as this...as the shoreline moves landward, that becomes the State's jurisdiction. And then...and then landward of that is County's jurisdiction, just to give you a visual example. Okay. So in terms of those examples, I mentioned ecosystem restoration, that can take the form of beach restoration. And you may all know that there has been discussed, for many years, a proposed beach restoration project at Kā'anapali Beach. Beach restoration can be a useful tool in the toolbox, but it's not without its issues. There almost never is a perfect solution. Beach restoration can be expensive, it can be difficult to achieve, it can have environmental impacts of its own. But also, it can restore beach and public access and provide at least a short-term restoration of that natural buffer between the waves and the development. So that is still being explored and, I think, pursued at Kā'anapali. Another example of that, that's been discussed extensively here at County Council, is the Kahana Bay Project, which would involve, like Kā'anapali, putting sand back on the beach, but, unlike Kā'anapali, also building T-head groins to stabilize the beach and slow down the erosion. And this project got stuck at...well, really both of them, at the funding stage. Okay. Another example is retreat, so back to the Sea Level Rise Viewer. This is zooming in, this is the Keawakapu area in the Sea Level Rise Viewer, again, for 3.2 feet of sea level rise. You can see the red line is the erosion hazard line. Chip mentioned that's, you know, 80 percent confidence that property will be safe from erosion if, landward of that line, for the 3.2-foot scenario. So after an extensive seven or eight-year process, the Maui Planning Commission adopted the Erosion Hazard Line as the shoreline setback line. So a new development or redevelopment that comes in has to build landward of that line to try to be, you know, safe siting for the...for the property and the life of that property. You know life of a...a new structure on the shoreline is, like, 70 or 100 years. And I should mention that this is having a pretty strong influence on the...the rebuild in Lahaina on the shoreline. Another example of retreat, I think a really good one that's...it's...it's...it's proposed but the planning is ongoing and it...it is moving forward, is the Pā'ia Youth and Cultural Center on the North Shore. So we're looking at the Youth Center there, an iconic place for kids on our island with really unique programs that focus on, you know, recreational activities centered on the ocean. But what you can see is those trees in the foreground are showing how...how much beach erosion we are experiencing. And regularly, when we have high waves on the North Shore in the wintertime, the waves actually enter the Youth Center building and they have to, you know, ward off the sand over wash and the flooding. But they have been for the past, you know, five to ten years, very proactive in planning for this situation. So the existing building we were just looking at is right here, if you can see the cursor. I know it's kind of faint. And they are...they now have plans and designs to relocate the building here as landward as they can make it before you get to Hāna Highway. So that is moving forward. In the planning process, they just published their environmental assessment for that. Back to Mantokuji Mission. We showed pictures at...at the beginning about the...the threat to the 100-year old mission; definitely something we're all concerned about. There are different responses being considered for the Mission. But one I definitely did want to point out as possible is the relocation of the Mission building on site. So they actually have some site plans that looked at the

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

relocation of the Mission on site, so from its existing location to one that's more landward, wouldn't fully get the Mission building outside of the erosion hazard line but it certainly would buy it more time without it being...collapsing into the ocean. The conditions right now are getting very difficult because even this short-term sandbag protection is very difficult to maintain, has to be rebuilt every single year, if not multi...multiple times a year, and we're really concerned about getting to a solution that will save the building. Dune restoration, one of my favorite topics. I have a Sea Grant partner here on Maui, Wes Crile, who's our Dune Restoration Coordinator; that is also supported by the County of Maui Planning Department. Here's an example of degraded...decrate...degraded dunes versus healthy, restored dunes. This is one of the things...this is one of the tools in the toolbox that is a lot of bang for the buck because a lot of times it doesn't cost much, but it can make a big difference if it's...if it's a feasible solution at that particular location. And we have many examples around the island. Here's one I would like to show that is a really nice success story. This is Kapalua Bay. That's Merriman's in the background there, up on the...on the knoll. The seawall and the hard infrastructure that existed there was undermined. You can see these wooden slats in the seawall there. There is a sinkhole behind it. But the seawall itself wasn't really protecting any infrastructure, so we were able to work with the Kapalua Resort Association, the Planning Department, Sea Grant to remove the hard structure and renaturalize the shoreline. And this is just a picture from right now and just May 2026 of what that location looks like without the seawall, beautiful native plants. And...I'll turn this on while I'm talking. This is a video of...immediately after the seawall removal and the Dune Restoration Project, it opened up that space for a Hawksbill turtle to nest. There hadn't been a nest in there in 20 years. And they had a 98 percent success rate of the hatchlings. Tourists actually captured the hatchlings coming out and going into the ocean because that hard infrastructure was removed and the shoreline was softened to make way for a place where a turtle could nest. So it's a happy story for everyone. Another ongoing project is at Kapukaulua or Baldwin Beach. So the area where the pavilion was consumed, you can see here, we had a community planting day. I have...if...if...if you visit the site now, you will see beautiful plants that are thriving and starting to collect sand and starting to gain elevation. And that is the...that is...that is the natural process that can occur just by keeping the foot traffic off of the beach and allowing native plants to do the...the...what they do to stabilize the shoreline and collect sand. And we have funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundations [sic] to sort of repli...replicate what we're doing there in the footprint of the pavilion across all of Baldwin Beach from the Youth Center to Wawa'u Point. There's a whole story to tell behind all of these things. So I'll just stop there for now and not spend too much time on it. I want to mention something else that County Council has had a part in. As of a couple of years ago, the County Parks Department [sic] established what we lovingly call the Dune Crew. This is under the Beautification Division where they were able to establish new positions. There are three people in the Dune crew. You can see Jenna Spellman there, she's the lead. Willy Dutro is one of the staff. And there's another staff person. These folks are now dedicated to working with us on dune restoration and managing dunes in all of the County parks. There's a lot of work to do, and we're so thankful for these positions. It's making so much more possible. Another example is stream restoration. This is at Ma'alaea. So that area we were looking at, where the

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

condos are eroding...or the condos are experiencing erosion, there's another very long story behind this, including the fact that there's this 422-acre parcel here that the County is looking to potentially acquire to allow, eventually, maybe in 20 or 30 years, for the condos to relocate, if that becomes the only option and also allowing us to do conservation and restoration. But one of the cool things that I hope we can accomplish...and...and County Council funded this study that the Planning Department led with consultants to look at restoring Kanaio Stream. So right now, Kanaio Stream comes from the upper watershed lands that are managed by DOFAW because they were purchased a couple of years ago. And then the...the water comes down and gets diverted. From the ag days, the water was diverted along the highway in a channelized culvert and then through the condominiums and spews out into the ocean, pushing all the sediment out there with it, leading to massive decline of the coral reef here. You can...can see a picture of that channelized condition when there's water and sediment in it. What the County would like to do is remove the diversion and put the Kanaio Stream back into the wetland like it would have once done where the sediment can go and not...and not go...and get cleaned and not go into the ocean. And...and so, I will end with that and leave you with this other last picture of a dune restoration project at Kama'ole I Beach Park. You can see the County of Maui sewer pump station in the background there. This dune restoration project used sand from the Kihei boat ramp, was placed along the shoreline to...to restore the dunes and protect the pump station, and the road, and the other infrastructure. It looks different because we had a big erosion event a couple of years ago where a lot of this dune was sacrificed. But that's okay because that's what healthy dunes do; they sacrifice themselves to buffer the infrastructure. And...and so, we...we still consider that a success story, and the dunes are slowly starting to recover. Thank you very much for having me today and allowing me to...to tell these stories on everyone's behalf.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you. I'm sure we're going to have some public testimony. So we'll now move onto public testimony for DRIP-9(11). Written testimony is encouraged and can be submitted via the eComment link at mauicounty.us/agendas. Testifiers wanting to provide oral testimony should join the online meeting via the Microsoft Teams link printed on today's agenda or call into the phone number, which is also on today's agenda. For individuals wishing to testify via Teams, please raise your hand by clicking on the raise-your-hand button near the top right of your screen. For those calling in, please follow the prompts via phone. Staff will add names to the testifier list in the order testifiers sign up or raise their hands. For those on Teams, Staff will lower your hand once your name is added. Staff will then call the name you're logged in under or the last four digits of your phone number when it is your time to testify. At that time, Staff will also enable your microphone and video. Please ensure your name on Microsoft Teams appears as the name you prefer to be referred to as or as anonymous if you wish to testify anonymously. If you are in person, please notify Staff that you would like to testify anonymously. Otherwise, please state your name for the record at the beginning of your testimony. Oral testimony is limited to three minutes. If you are still testifying beyond that time, I will kindly ask you to complete your testimony. Once you are done testifying, or if you do not wish to testify, you can view the meeting on *Akakū* Channel 53, Facebook Live, or mauicounty.us/agendas. At this time, we will call on testifiers

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

wishing to testify on DRIP-9(11). Staff, can you please call the first testifier?

. . .OPEN PUBLIC TESTIMONY. . .

MR. RAMIREZ: Thank you, Chair. We currently have a few people signed up online. The first up is Kai Nishiki. Kai, if you could please unmute yourself and begin your testimony. Thank you.

MS. NISHIKI: Thank you, Committee Chair and Members. Thank you, also, to Tara and Dr. Chip Fletcher for helping to educate our community and policy makers. Lots of information to just...to digest there. Hopefully this body will be discussing policy choices that this body can...can make, especially in regards to land use, housing, and funding decisions. Talking about Bill 9 and H3, H4, I really don't believe...and I hope that this Council is...is asking if we should be encouraging local families to invest their life savings into coastal hazard areas simply because these units may become available. We also don't want to encourage investment or raise property values for offshore investors to falsely think that they are just going to come and suck all kinds of money out of Hawai'i and then leave...leave us with crumbling, failing buildings on the shoreline. So there really needs to be some discussion about protections being in place at the State Legislature this year. Surfrider intro...worked on a bill, Hawai'i Coastal Resilience Acquisition and Lease Back Program, which really discussed hazard-adjusted values for shoreline properties and them being acquired by the County, State or...or land trusts and being utilized for a limited-time occupancy that could be utilized for workforce housing. So that is an option. But I really want to also focus on funding policies and funding guardrails. We have, like the slides showed, a number of funds created to facilitate retreat. Yet at this time, right now, predatory companies are coming in and...and seeking funding, and they are utilizing it to put in temporar...temporarily...temporary shoreline hardening that has never gone through proper environmental review. So really think that there needs to be a intense look at all of these funds and making sure that we have guidelines and protections so that we are not...you know, there should be a prohibition of use of County adaptation funds for projects that interfere with the natural beach and ocean processes. We can't be prioritizing adaptation, and hazard mitigation, and long-term stewardship . . .(timer sounds). . . at the same time providing, you know, money that entrenches folks to stay in these coastal hazard areas. I'm not sure, was that the bell? And testifiers have no timer, or anything, online, so it's really hard to know if we are at time.

CHAIR PALTIN: Yeah. That was the bell. If you can --

MS. NISHIKI: It was? Okay.

CHAIR PALTIN: -- maybe wrap it up in a few sentences or, like, 30 seconds or something.

MS. NISHIKI: Okay. Thank you. So yeah, with these discussions about sea level rise, doing nothing is definitely the worst option that...that we can take at this time. Everything

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

only gets more expensive. You know, just within one year we've seen huge incre...increases in construction or relocation, so we got to get moving. Thank you very much.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you. Members, any questions for the testifier? Seeing none. Thank you for your testimony. Staff, can you call the next testifier?

MR. RAMIREZ: Thank you, Chair. The next testifier we have signed up is Christian Balagso. Christian, if you could please unmute your microphone and begin your testimony.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thanks. That's our Residency --

MR. BALAGSO: I'm just for the West Maui office.

CHAIR PALTIN: Yeah.

MR. BALAGSO: Going be somebody else.

CHAIR PALTIN: Okay. Go ahead.

MR. LAW: Thank you, Luna Ho'omalua Paltin, for letting me share your space and na lima hana. And thank you for the Committee Staff. And mahalo to all the presenters. And a special shaka for Corp. Counsel. I am a Upcountry resident, Jasee Law. And lame ducks might think that this agenda subject would not be a concern atop Haleakalā, but as the Hawaiians know, Waiakoa goes all the way from the top of the mountain to the bottom of the sea. It's called the ahupua'a system; what affects one with...affects us all. As I testified yesterday at the BFED Committee, red alert. All hands on deck. We're in an emergency situation and there's no time to waste. We're on the Titanic, and the experts are telling us there's an iceberg ahead. I been trying to do my part and keep paddling, but ignorant people keep trying to distract and divide. I'm only one person, so I need kokua from anybody that can hear my voice. Anybody in the Chamber, sitting in the back aisle back there. Help is on the way. Residency Kula...Bobby Pahia lives up there; he's a resident too. And for Kihei, vote for Kelly King. Aloha.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you. Members, any questions for the testifier? Seeing none. Thank you for your testimony. Staff, can you call the next testifier?

MR. RAMIREZ: Thank you, Chair. Our next testifier signed up is Ke Aupuni Ko Hawai'i Pae 'Āina.

KE AUPUNI KO HAWAII PAE 'ĀINA: Aloha. This the representative of...from the Ko...from Ko Hawai'i Pae 'Āina. This is...this country, yeah, Ke Aupuni. And I...it's...the restorations is [sic] cool, but if you guys really want to restore the land, you guys need to restore the true land title holders to that land because they truly know how to take care and restore that land because it even shows on all the paperwork, mapped out every...mapped out...mapped out everything. Even when you guys do developments, you guys know

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

that there's all iwis that are being built on from our Kingdom maps from even back in the day. That's just another concern on top of that. Like, if...because, like...yeah, restoration. But yeah, so please call the correct...and the descendants of the original title, which is the Royal Patents from Kamehameha III and restore the...if you really want to restore the land, you need to restore the people back to the land, period, point blank, because they should have the decision on their lands, on their...on their kupuna's lands. So yeah, and I...I request and demand you guys to do...you guys do due diligence to find the ohanas in that case, I mean, and restore them to the land, again, because it's their land. Royal Patent is already recognized in the TMK already. And...and that's why...and I hear you, braddah, the one that had...was talking right before me. That's why we have a archive, all of you guys in the chairs. You guys should know our laws from the Kingdom because it's still valid and legal today from...by Kamehameha III. Only in the Hawaiian language now, not the English one because the English one gives out the wrong one. Give out all the wrong rules. The...those fake rules, okay. And got to follow the law. We got to...yeah, we got to do it. You guys got to do your due diligence, follow the law, Kamehameha III's laws, restore all the people back to the lands that they own forever because it's the metes and bounds of this country and the titles of the metes and bounds, hello. And follow...follow the law, period, point blank, and restore the people again. How much I got to say? Restore the people, period. Restore the people if you really, like, restore the land. Yeah. We...if you, like, really...if you really, like, . . .(timer sounds). . . restore the land, restore the people.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you for your testimony. Members, any questions for the...clarifying questions for the testifier? Seeing none. Thank you. Can you call the next testifier?

MR. RAMIREZ: Thank you, Chair. That is all the individuals signed up to testify. But if anyone else would like to testify, please come up to the podium or use the raise-your-hand function on Teams, and we will unmute you. I'll provide a brief countdown. Three, two, one. Chair, seeing none, no one has indicated they wish to testify.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you. Members, without objection, I will now close public testimony.

COUNCILMEMBERS: No objections.

. . .CLOSE PUBLIC TESTIMONY. . .

CHAIR PALTIN: Okay. Members, I would like to open the floor for discussion. I propose as many rounds of questions as we need, although tonight is the Wednesday night community meeting at Lahaina Intermediate School. So if we could be out of here by, like, 4:50, that would be great. And I wanted to remind folks while Ms. Owens and Dr. Fletcher are a wealth of knowledge of all the things, and I definitely want you guys to have your questions answered, we want to kind of focus in on policies that we're...we're looking to implement in regards to...you know, if there is a change in zoning, or a permit entitlement, or anything like that, what kind of things we can do to try and mitigate the

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

sea level rise that is coming, the stacked events. So if we can kind of...I do want you guys to have questions answered, but that's kind of the reason for this education. When we did Bill 9, and we talked about potentially upzoning some of the shoreline properties, it was important to notif...notice that we're not trying to punish short-term rentals. It's a shoreline issue, not a short-term rental issue. So we can start out with four minutes per Member. And if that's too much or too little, we can adjust it. I'll start off with Committee Vice-Chair Nohe U'u-Hodgins and go around like that to...next to Member Cook, just go down the line and then end up with Member Sinenci, if that's okay with you folks. All right, four minutes. Go ahead, Committee Vice-Chair U'u-Hodgins.

VICE-CHAIR U'U-HODGINS: Thank you, Chair, and thank you very much to our presenters. That was a lot of information. I really appreciate it. If I could ask Mister...or, I'm sorry, Dr. Fletcher, I'll put some respect on that name, a question on one of his maps, and I'm trying to find it. It was where...okay. I found it. So it was where temperature change relative to a global average. And you had the red and the blue mapping. We have a lot of red at the...at the top of our globe. And yet we have one circle, I guess maybe right under Greenland next to Canada, and it's just blue and then it's super blue in the middle. Can you describe what...what's happening there? It seems like an anomaly [sic] right...it's odd right there.

MR. FLETCHER: . . .(inaudible). . . so . . .(inaudible). . . --

VICE CHAIR U'U HODGINS: Yes. You see that blue circle?

MR. FLETCHER: Yup. What you've recognized...you recognize two things. One is that the...the heating in the Arctic is four times faster than the rest of the planet. And this is because the Arctic Ocean is turning from white sea ice, which reflects sunlight, to dark ocean water, which absorbs sunlight and then reemits heat. And so, that's Arctic amplification. And the blue circle at the...in the North Atlantic is due to all the cold meltwater coming off of Greenland. And that meltwater is actually slowing down that overturning circulation that I spoke about. This is one of the consequences of...of global warming is that we see these huge systems around the planet changing in what...what we refer to as tipping points. And we're wondering if the conveyor belt...the overturning circulation, exactly where that white arrow is pointing, we're wondering if that's going to stop at some point in the future. But yeah, the...the blue bullseye is cold meltwater coming off of the Greenland ice sheet.

VICE CHAIR U'U HODGINS: How is that affecting, if you know, the surrounding ocean and land of that area? Because we can see what's happening in Hawai'i where we don't have that and things are warming and expanding, as you described. But I'm curious what's happening up there since it's odd --

MR. FLETCHER: Yeah.

VICE CHAIR U'U HODGINS: -- compared to the rest of the Earth.

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

MR. FLETCHER: Well, the North Atlantic is currently the coldest in the history of measurements. The...the earliest measurements were taken by Ben Franklin when he would sail back and forth to Europe from the colonies. And...and it's colder now than his measurements two and...two and a half centuries ago. And the current, the Gulf Stream and then the descending current that goes down to the deep ocean there has slowed 18 percent. And the Gulf Stream has slowed...the Gulf Stream plays an important role; it brings heat out of the Tropics up towards England and Europe. And so, the result is that heat is growing in the Tropics of the...the Atlantic Ocean tropical region, the heat is growing. And we're very fearful that that is going to power super...super hurricanes because hot ocean water is the source of fuel for hurricanes. We have not yet seen cooling take place in England and Europe, but we may start to see cooling taking place up there. It's a...it's a...it's a balance between global warming and decline of heat delivery by the Gulf Stream, which would lead to cooling. And our models are not quite sure which one . . .(timer sounds). . . is going to win. Is it going to get colder in Europe or not?

VICE CHAIR U'U HODGINS: Thank you. I appreciate that. I do have more questions later, Chair. And I know...thank you for giving us time to address the other panelists. But thank you very much, Dr. Fletcher. Thank you, Chair. I heard the bell.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you. Member Cook, your opportunity.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Thank you, Chair. And thank you, both, for being here and super comprehensive education and...and...so my question...anyway, so big, the challenges, roads and everything. Could you describe, are there offshore solutions? I was reading, like, the artificial reef program and other ones. Are there offshore solutions to assist mitigate storm surge and some of the things that aren't necessarily going to stop sea level rise but would potentially add some protection to the coastal area without hardening the beach?

MR. FLETCHER: So artificial reefs are...artificial reefs have been used around the world for decades. And they are effective at decreasing wave energy. They create a...an energy shadow area behind them. And so, that tends to trap sand. In fact, there are areas where, offshore, if you have a very small little islet, you very often have sand accreting (*phonetic*) out and connecting to that islet from the shoreline behind it. The problem is the sand that you trap was on its way someplace else on the shoreline. Sand is a zero-sum game. And so, if you build a structure designed to stop erosion in one area by trapping sand, you're very likely taking it away from some other area on the nearby shoreline. And so, it often ends up causing more problems than...than it solves.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Thank you. Thank you for that. I'm...I'm wondering. Like, there's such a variety in place of...places like in Pā'ia, and, I'm not pronouncing it right, the Mantukiji [*sic*] there. There doesn't seem...there used to be a beach. There's a little beach there. It seems like an offshore mitigation there what could potentially be beneficial. It seems like a...I don't...I don't know how a dune renovate...you know what we're doing in Kihei, which has demonstrated to be effective, how that potentially would

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

work over there. So I'm just asking about is there various solutions for various type of areas that are being considered?

MS. OWENS: Yeah. Thanks for the questions. There...there, of course, isn't a one-size-fits-all solution. Solution has to fit, so right solution, right place. Is dune restoration possible at Mantokuji? It is not. It...it's too late for that. You...you need a...you need enough of a...a stable beach to support a dune system. You can't build a dune system without a stable beach. So dune restoration alone would not be effective at Mantokuji. There...the consultants who have been working with the Mission have considered a small-scale beach restoration project where...whereby they'd be just placing sand back into the cove to, you know, kind of maybe re-establish a beach similar to what existed in the past before it eroded. That could...potentially could be done. It, though, has a lot of questions you would need to answer before you could pursue something like that. Namely, where would the sand come from? We...we could talk more about that for the North Shore if...if folks were interested. And beach restoration is a temporary solution because sea level rise and erosion doesn't stop. So once you put sand back on the beach, it's just going to continue to erode right away. So you would have to find a way to have a...a recurring management . . . *(timer sounds)*. . . program. You're...you...then you were asking about offshore structures as a third thing. From an engineering perspective, that could be studied and looked at, and modeled. Chip already described, maybe, some of the down sides to doing something like that. Also, building an artificial reef for erosion mitigation versus we have had artificial reef programs in Hawai'i that had been focused on ecosystem restoration, creating more coral, creating more fish habitat. Those are in deeper water. Those aren't for erosion mitigation. So those were a little bit of a...those are quite different projects. Doing it for erosion mitigation is from...and it's possible, from an engineering perspective but would have to be well studied and would...we haven't seen examples of that here in Hawai'i. And I don't know, I think the permitting pathway for that might be very difficult.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Yeah . . . *(inaudible)*. . . thank you. I'll...I'll follow up on my next question. Thank you very much for your answer. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you, Member Cook. We have reached the halfway mark of the meeting. Is anyone opposed to, like, a ten-minute recess, pause for the cause? I mean, I can hold it if you guys don't want to, but doctors say that's not good for you or something. Ten minutes? Okay. So we'll be back at 3:07. 3:07. Recess. . . *(gavel)*. . .

RECESS: 2:56 p.m.
RECONVENE: 3:11 p.m.

CHAIR PALTIN: . . . *(gavel)*. . . Will the Disaster Recovery, International Affairs, and Planning Commission...Committee meeting return to order. The time is now 3:11. And Member Sugimura needs to go. And it's been okayed by the Members that she goes next for her opportunity. Go ahead.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Thank you. So one of my favorite subjects, right? And

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

Kahana Bay...when I first started looking at this...when I first met Tara Owens and the good work that you do. And I met Dr. Fletcher with a meeting that I was holding on the Community...CFD, Community Facilities District. And I learned so much, and then we got stuck because who is going to...it became a policy question about who's going to accept liability for the problem that the...I think there are nine properties we're having. And then I heard this legislative session that this item...I don't know if it was with Kahana Bay, but it was basically taken up. And my basic premise for all of this is that we're an island state, so why do we not have solutions for this? And we should. And...and on our County perspective, through my Committee at that time, a lot of the Members were, I don't know, maybe not even in this seat yet. But we passed the Community Facilities District, and I think it's a solution. But the place that we got stuck and then somebody...the reason why I bring it up is because somebody told me that in this legislative session the Legislature took this item up. So I want to know...or maybe have found a solution or a path forward. But the area that we got stuck in for a body...the body, the County Council is because if we did the CFD process and...and went through the taxation, which is part of it, right, about getting this paid. Then the County would then own the infrastructure, which you mentioned, which is the T-groins. And the future liability of maintaining it then would become the County responsibility. There was another part of this that the State then would own base...basically, it would be a State infrastructure because it's going to be in the ocean and that's their kuleana. But it sounded like they would gladly give us the responsibility of maintaining it. It sounded like...the earlier discussion today about a hot potato or was it yesterday, a hot potato. That was --

CHAIR PALTIN: Yesterday.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: -- yesterday. And I just wondered if there was something that you or Dr. Fletcher may have known that help...could help Kahana Bay or any of, you know, the beach communities that you could share?

MS. OWENS: Chip, do you want to take that first or...or me? I see you're back. I don't know if he's there.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: I don't see him.

MR. FLETCHER: Yes. Can you hear me?

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Oh, okay. Yes.

CHAIR PALTIN: Yeah.

MR. FLETCHER: Yeah. Leaving structures behind that you have spent millions of dollars on is a very serious concern. And...and I'm glad you brought that up. The only solution to that, or the only management tool that I'm aware of, is to have money put in escrow to cover the cost of removal along with the...the original construction. That's about the only guarantee I can think of (*audio interference*) --

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: So Doctor, was something done at the Legislature that you can...I...I...I appreciate what you just shared. But was something else done at the Legislature that could help us with this situation?

MR. FLETCHER: I...I'm not aware of anything that was done at the Leg. [sic] A couple of years ago, as Tara mentioned in her talk, they did outlaw shoreline armory on beaches, which I think was a wonderful, wonderful move. But as far as T-head groins, they are planning on putting those in at Waikiki. So . . .(timer sounds). . . they are not (audio interference) they are permitting (audio interference) problem.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Okay.

MS. OWENS: I think I can clarify if...if, Chair, I'm allowed?

CHAIR PALTIN: Sure. That'd be great.

MS. OWENS: Okay. Thanks, Chip, for start...kicking us off. And, Councilmember, I think there were two questions in there. One was your question about the...the policy issues that came up with the CFD, the Community Facilities District. Those have not been resolved, as far as I understand, which is that the groins would have to be, technically, owned by either the County or State in order to be able to use the CFD.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Uh-huh.

MS. OWENS: And up to this point, neither the County or State have been willing to accept that role. So that's sort of at a standstill. There was money in the CFD, if it were created, for future maintenance. So it wasn't so much a financial issue, it was more, I think, yeah, a liability issue --

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Yeah, liability.

MS. OWENS: -- as you said. In terms of the Legislature, this year there was a bill that went through and...and passed. And as I understand, it was originally created by consultants on behalf of Kahana Bay, but it would be applicable Statewide. In the end, the bill allows...it...it's actually unclear what the bill was going to accomplish. But the bill allows property owners to develop "adaptation plans" or adaptation pathway plans that then can be reviewed by the Board [sic] of Land and Natural Resources, the State DLNR, and then the DLNR may approve the adaptation plans or whatever is...is identified in the adaptation plans. But it doesn't require approval, so it...it's a bit ambiguous on what it actually accomplishes.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: So do you mean them...then...could I ask this question?

CHAIR PALTIN: Sure.

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Do you mean, then, that the T-groins, if that's going to be the solution for Kahana Bay, the next step would be...I love the...what Dr. Fletcher suggested because that would then alleviate maybe some of our concerns from the County.

MS. OWENS: A removal bond.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Yeah, a removal --

MS. OWENS: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: -- bond. But are you saying, then, that if we were to go through the CFD process, then DLNR would have to approve this?

MS. OWENS: That's either way, with or without that legislation. The groins are in the water, so they would have to be authorized by the Board [sic] of Land and Natural Resources.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Uh-huh.

MS. OWENS: That's always been the case.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Oh, that's always been case.

MS. OWENS: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Okay. So nothing new, then . . .(inaudible). . . --

MS. OWENS: Nothing really new there.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Came out of the . . .(inaudible). . . --

MS. OWENS: And the removal bond is a good idea and isn't uncommon. The DLNR . . .(inaudible). . . does...or are starting to more often require removal bonds even for temporary structures like sandbags --

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Oh, okay.

MS. OWENS: -- so they don't become permanent when not intended to be.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Okay. Oh, very interesting. Thank you very much, Chair.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Thank you. Thank you, Tara.

CHAIR PALTIN: Let's back track to Member Rawlins-Fernandez for your four-minute

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

opportunity.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Chair. All right. Mahalo, Dr. Fletcher and Ms. Owens, for the excellent presentations reminding us that we live on islands. Just as it's not our kuleana to guarantee businesses make profit, it's not Government's responsibility to guarantee someone has shoreline in perpetuity by stopping the course of nature and the evolution of islands to atolls. Individual owners must take personal responsibility for this, the business decisions they make in building on the shoreline. Profits were made for decades, and we have a constitutional responsibility to protect the public trust. Okay. My question. So first, we had...well, I...okay. So someone had a brilliant idea to introduce invasive fish like Ta'ape and To'au and Roi that eat all the baby fishes such as Uhu that make the sand that helps protect our shoreline and restore the dune. Do...does anyone have any information on, like, doing a Uhu project to try to increase the number of Uhu so we can increase the amount of sand that we have?

MR. FLETCHER: That's...that's a very interesting question. I can tell you that we have radiocarbon-dated the beach sand on a number of beaches, and it is centuries to millennia old. Typically, it's 1,000 years old. And so, creating more sand from the reef is not...not going to be a natural, it's not going to be a natural solution here. When sand is...is 500 to 1,000 years old, it means that nature took that long to produce that sand. And we've radiocarbon-dated dozens of sand samples and never found a modern sand sample.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: *(Audio interference)* isn't sand...doesn't sand also include, like, the decaying of, like, the reef, the rocks, the shells? I mean, and that happens today?

MR. FLETCHER: Yes. All...all that happens, true, but not in quantities large enough to build our beaches. Our beaches are made of sand produced by the reef, through all the mechanisms you just mentioned, over the course of thousands of years. So replenishing the Uhu, while that is good for ecological reasons, it's not going to result in a new source of sand coming to our beaches.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Right. Not immediately, but --

MR. FLETCHER: Right.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: -- generations centuries from now would benefit. So is the answer to my question, no?

CHAIR PALTIN: I know you cannot catch Blue Uhu on Maui except for, like, Pana Uhu. And they're...I think it's slot. I'm not sure if it's slot size. Like, you cannot go too small or too big because the really big ones produce more, but I think that's the extent that I'm aware of of DLNR's protection of Uhu, which, I mean, the Pana Uhu looks like it has teeth, so maybe they should add the Pana Uhu to the Uhu, the Blue Uhu prohibition. But the people that I know catch Pana Uhu would not be happy with me suggesting it;

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

so you didn't hear that from me.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. But then...so...all right. So there's all this invasive limu or invasive seaweed smothering our coral. And I know that there was a project, I don't know who by, I don't know if it was UH doing, like, the spawning or propagation of hāwae, which is that sea urchin . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . that eats the invasive. So I was just wondering if, you know, there's any, like...of that kind of a project for Uhu. And...and then if that...if the answer is that you don't know, then okay.

CHAIR PALTIN: The only project I know of is at the Kahekili or --

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Oh, not you, Chair.

CHAIR PALTIN: Oh.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Like, our...our resource people.

CHAIR PALTIN: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: But, I mean --

CHAIR PALTIN: Go ahead.

MS. OWENS: Well, Councilmember Paltin was...was onto something. There is that one abiverous fisheries management area at Kahekili Beach Park area that is meant to try to protect those species that ultimately help manage invasive species which ultimately help protect...or keep a healthy reef. And, of course, healthy reefs are terribly important. If you think about it, we...we talk about the beach and the dunes being the...our line of defense. But the coral reef, and a healthy coral reef, is the first line of defense. Then the beaches are the second line of defense and then whatever...ever...other buffers we can maintain. So there's all kinds of reasons why to protect those species. And I guess just...just from, though, a beach, a narrow beach coastal processes perspective, it's a matter of time scale. They will produce sand or help produce sand but maybe not on a time scale under which we are making decisions about our shoreline management. Good question.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Yeah. It's way cheaper than building a T-groin and managing it. And it has more benefit. Okay. Thanks.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you. Member Johnson, for your opportunity.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you, Chair. And, you know, I want to take this time for . . .*(inaudible)*. . . thanks our...our amazing presenters that many Councilmembers has awful...also thanked. You know, it's...we're really lucky to have, you know, Dr. Fletcher and Ms. Owens here. If I think of...like, I should be reading Dr. Fletcher's books, but here he is presenting to us in our, you know, local issues which...how blessed

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

are we. So, thank you for your expertise, guys. The...the question I had, right off the bat, was that wonderful coastal viewer that Dr. Fletcher shared with us was, of course, Oahu specific. And he mentioned just...just in his statement he said we had the funding for this, so we did this. So us guys, as Councilmembers, is...is that something...how do we find folks to do that with...with our funding? Do we fund UH some...or someone? Or maybe you can lead us in the right direction. If we...if that's something this body would want to do, is find that coastal viewer for Maui County.

MR. FLETCHER: Hi, this is...this is Chip Fletcher again. Yes, absolutely. I've had past work funded by Maui County. And again, happy to...happy to continue do that, to do that research. Everything you saw me present, we can develop for Maui County as well. And it would be --

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Do you --

MR. FLETCHER: -- on the same *(audio interference)* in fact.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Do you have a ballpark figure of what that would be? We just got out of budget, so this would be...of course be later, but do you have a ballpark figure?

MR. FLETCHER: It would take probably two to three years, and it would be about a million dollars per year.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay. All right. Members, you heard it here first. Now, moving on . . . *(laughing)*. . . to the...my other questions. You know, like, I like the idea of overlay maps or zoning and community plans that address this kind of thing. That, I think, is in our wheelhouse. But I guess, for me, the immediate thing is we're facing El Niño this year, right? And how does that...like, we...Government is notorious slow but...notoriously slow, and then we have a...a...a summer/autumn season of just crazy weather . . . *(inaudible)*. . . Do you guys have any recommendations for us to do right now? Because you never know, we're going to have a lot more hurricanes this year, maybe, or flooding. I mean, all the things that are on the list of El Niño strike terror in my heart for...are we prepared? Are we ready? So what do you guys think? Any responses for right now?

MR. FLETCHER: Well, my response would be that El Niño years are characterized by weather on steroids. So, drought period, the dry period is going to be drier than normal, the wet period will be wetter than normal. Tropical cyclones, we're projected to have anywhere between five and . . . *(inaudible)*. . . tropical cyclones in our neck of the woods. And El Niño is not only going to be this summer and this hurricane season, but it may be even worse next summer and next hurricane season. So, you know, whatever you can do to clear drainage ways, to reduce fuel loads near fallow lands, these are important steps to take.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Yeah. Well, I just...I mean, we're getting so...there's been so

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

many disasters, natural disasters, one after the other, I would hope we have some kind of resiliency, some kind of stamina, some kind of, you know, knowledge-based responses. But again, Government moves so slow. I...I'm just trying to find the solutions for today when it's going to happen tomorrow, right? It's...it's really tricky because we're not so nimble. Those were...those...oh, go ahead.

MS. OWENS: Well, I just wanted to re...really reinforce that be...because most of the solutions we're looking at are years, . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . you know, take years to achieve. If we're relocating buildings, or we're designing and building new structures, things like that take years to achieve. But in addition to the things that Chip identified, one of the major concerns with the strong El Niño conditions are large waves, large and persistent waves. So the last El Niño...strong El Niño we had, which was 2015 and...and into '16, we had really persistent large-wave events that...that strongly affected West Maui. We lost a lot of beach. We had a lot of impacts. The Kahana Bay condos that County...Councilmember Sugimura was mentioning were...were...became in...imminently threatened that year. Those are big concerns. I guess one thing we can do is at least not be surprised by them because sometimes, when we're surprised, we respond in ways that are more destructive than just kind of taking a pause and allowing some sort of natural recovery, which can happen and...and...sometimes and some places. So that's one thing, be ready to not be surprised. Other than that, I don't...I don't know if I have any brilliant wisdom.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Well, that's...that's important. Thank you, Ms. Owens.

MR. FLETCHER: I have a...I have another *(audio interference)* --

MS. OWENS: What was that, Chip?

MR. FLETCHER: I have another comment.

MS. OWENS: Oh.

MR. FLETCHER: Yeah. Another thing that we can do is retrofit our homes. We have a large number of older homes. And Government subsidies or supplements for retrofitting *(audio interference)* programs like that have been shown to be very powerful in terms of preventing building loss during high winds.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Oh, that's a good suggestion. Thank you for that. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you. And...and to clarify, you mean like hurricane clips and things like that for retrofitting your home?

MR. FLETCHER: Yes, exactly. Yes.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you. Chair Lee, your opportunity. Four minutes.

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Again, thank you to all the...to both of the speakers. Great job. Ms. Owens, I wanted to ask you, is there a Tara Owens on every island, or are you unique to Maui?

MS. OWENS: Very good question.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: . . .*(laughing)*. . .

MS. OWENS: I have a counterpart, a Sea Grant counterpart on Kauai that works with Kauai County in a similar way that I do here. And I have a counterpart that...on Oahu that works within the Department of Land and Natural Resources, Office of Conservation and Coastal Lands. And then I have several other coastal-hazards-focused colleagues at the University that back us up. So we have a small network, and...and we do a lot of coordination among each other.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. Great. Sounds like a...like a good group, a solid resource base for all of us. So you're paid by the...by UH?

MS. OWENS: Yeah. My...my situation is unique and...and thanks to the County. The County of Maui actually was the...the County that spearheaded this. So I work for UH. I'm what's called extension faculty, and I get my paycheck from the University. But the County of Maui, Planning Department, funds via a grant that is in your budget, that you approve every year funds UH. It's around 75 percent so that my role is...is focused here on Maui.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. I liked...I don't know if it was you or Dr. Fletcher, but the...the scene where...but I know you were talking. The scene on the beach where all the...the greenery was covering the sand, and you said that's one solution. It...it's good to see, you know, practical, reachable, attainable solutions. I'm sure that we don't have the resources to stop the...the melting of the ice in Iceland, you know.

MS. OWENS: Greenland.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Although I'm surprised. I'm surprised somebody didn't come up with a solution to freeze more of that water, you know. But anyway, just for our neighborhood, it's...it's important to have those kinds of solutions that you mentioned that are practical and, within reason, you know, inexpensive, and what we can all work toward. And maybe when you get together with your other cohort...cohorts, you could come up with a...a guidebook for all of us so that we, as policy makers, stop, you know, making quick decisions, like you say, more thoughtful decisions and not decisions that...that are...what do you...what do you call that now? When you draw from the hip, okay. And this way, we...we can give more thought, and even the funding part of it would make more sense, and we can plan on those kinds of things if we had something more concrete to work with, rather than every day is a new day, you know.

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

MS. OWENS: Thank you for that comment. You...you...you reminded me of a few things that might be worth mentioning. It relates back to the...the previous questions from the other Councilmember. Dune restoration is...is fun, and it's easy in the sense that it...it doesn't cost as much, and it's easily permittable, and we can use it in many places. But for some of the more extensive issues where roads or buildings are imminently threatened, it's...it...it's not a tool, it's an . . . *(timer sounds)*. . . it's no longer applicable. So in addition to doing those types of things, which we would love to do more of, we are, from a policy perspective, I think, going to need to prioritize, you know, the harder solutions, the ones that are harder to achieve like realigning and relocating infrastructure. South Kihei Road is the one that's coming to mind right now because we have seen, just this winter, the repetitive losses along the road there. And that's becoming what used to be maybe something that would happen every ten years is now becoming an annual or sometimes many-times-a-year event. And so, it...it's very difficult for the County. You know, Public Works has to...you know, they have a mandate to, you know, maintain the road and maintain access to homes and businesses. At the same time, though, we know that the road is not sustainable for much longer. And so, there's money being spent on repairs multiple times a year. The finan...we have to look at the benefit cost of this going forward and finding materials to repair the road is becoming even more and more challenging. So while we can use some of the easier tools, we also need to be looking at the harder solutions. How are we going to prioritize an alternative to South Kihei Road? And if we don't get that started, if it isn't a priority or a policy mandate, we're going to be stuck repairing a road that might not be repairable going forward. That's just one example.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Thank you very much. Thank you. My time has expired. Thank you.

MS. OWENS: Thanks.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you. Member Sinenci, for your opportunity.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Mahalo, Chair. And mahalo, Dr. Fletcher and Ms. Owens, for the presentation this afternoon. You know, Dr. Fletcher, when you spoke about the Waikiki and the recent floodings, here in Kahului, we have the stormwater drainage system which kind of takes out all of those stormwaters out to Kanaha pond and out into the ocean. Does...is...does the Ala Wai on Oahu kind of do the same thing? Or is the Ala Wai also at those high levels?

MR. FLETCHER: The Ala Wai is where almost every storm drain in Waikiki empties into.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Oh.

MR. FLETCHER: And the Ala Wai is at high levels as well, so that's --

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Oh.

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

MR. FLETCHER: -- that's why it's a problem.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Oh, got it because it seems...I mean, the Ala Wai would come out all...and...and push all that water out into the ocean. For...I'm just thinking about here in Central Maui, there's a couple streets, after some heavy-rain events, it'll just flood down by Pu'unēnē near Christ the King Church, Maalo...Maalo Street below Lihikai School and some of the...the areas in there. And so, I don't know if those drainage systems...it takes...it takes a while for that sitting water to...to empty out, so the residents are constantly driving through all of those. So I don't know, does...I don't know if they're connected to the stormwater drainage canals.

MR. FLETCHER: Yeah. I imagine all of your larger streets are connected, that they do have a stormwater drainage system of some sort. You know, Miami Beach is leading the nation in management tools in this area. And they have put in pumps that...they have raised roads and raised sidewalks and then landscaped the cement so that it flows towards a pump. And then the pump will pump it out into Biscayne Bay, which is on the...similar to the Ala Wai, it's on the mauka side of Miami Beach. . . .*(inaudible)*. . . --

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Does New...does New Orleans have a similar type of system?

MR. FLETCHER: New Orleans is too far from the ocean. They don't have a similar type of system. And in fact, a paper was just published suggesting that the City of New Orleans be prepared to abandon, to abandon the city --

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Oh.

MR. FLETCHER: -- in the...yeah, over the course of the next 50 years.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Okay. All right. Some of us will be visiting the city. We'll...we'll take our floatation devices.

MR. FLETCHER: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Ms. Owens...Ms. Owens, what about the Kahului Wastewater Treatment *[sic]* at Kanaha that is...that is within the SLR-XA?

MS. OWENS: Yes, good question. If you...if you look at the projections of sea level rise, the wastewater treatment facility will become an island. It will be surrounded by water in...in the future. I know that, you know, DEM, Department of Environmental Management, has looked at that. They have done vulnerability assessments. My understanding...it would be better to speak to them directly, of course. My understanding is that there are intentions, I'm not sure what the time line, to phase that facility out.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Yeah.

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

MS. OWENS: It can't be completely phased out because there are sewer force mains that feed into there. So there...there...might be...have to be some kind of minimum...intra...infrastructure that remains. . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . But...but that has been something that's been...had some thought put to.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Thank you. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you. For...for my opportunity, I was looking...thinking of the slide that you showed of Keoneoio Bay, which is where Kahana Sunset is. And when they came to us for a change in zoning they...managed retreat was not their first option. They wanted to repair in place. And so, we're kind of talking about conditions in change in zoning for upzoning, whether it's short-term rentals or whatever the case may be, anything on the shoreline. And when we were talking during the break, it's not one-size-fits-all, which makes it hard to legislate a policy because you cannot say, oh, this is the policy unless whatever, whatever, you know? And so, like, my thought was, like, if we're going to upzone, no repairing of the seawall if the seawall needs to be repaired, that we should just tear it down and restore whatever it was. Is that a okay policy? Or is that not acceptable? Anyone who wants to answer.

MS. OWENS: I can take --

MR. FLETCHER: I --

MS. OWENS: Oh, go ahead. Go ahead, Chip.

MR. FLETCHER: I think that's a great policy. I think we can restore the shoreline. I want to point out that if we can get out of the way, beaches will migrate with the rising sea level. And so, sea level rise doesn't necess...isn't necessarily bad for beaches. But we...we need to get our roads and our houses out of the way so that the beaches can migrate with the rising water. And tearing down a seawall and removing a road or a house would restore the ecosystem.

MS. OWENS: I have a thought for the group because I don't know the answer entirely, but in terms of the policies, understand what...what you said, Councilmember Paltin, that policies can't be arbitrary and capricious. At the same time, we have different conditions along the shoreline and different land uses. Can there be policies that are centered around regions rather than islandwide? It...because if there can, then maybe you can develop regional policies that don't get down to the property level but do deal with the more site-specific conditions. I don't know if that can or cannot be done.

CHAIR PALTIN: I think, maybe, by community plan because community plan supersedes everything less...makai of the SMA. The community plan is the law, right, interpreted as law. Director Takakura?

MS. TAKAKURA: So even within a commu...a community plan area, there's going to be variations. So it's going to be very difficult to apply something across the board. Your

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

point about the Special Management Area permit, they do have to be consistent with the community plan, so that is true. But like I said, it really...we should be looking at the different parcels in the different areas specifically.

MS. OWENS: The...the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development, the State office, recently finished a study looking at how to develop regional beach management plans, regional shoreline management plans. So and they...you know, they've sort of identified a methodology for that. So maybe that's something worth exploring a little further and...and then how you would integrate that into a policy. And then back to the original question, in terms of removing seawalls, we...we love to find opportunities where we get to remove hard infrastructure. So I gave the example at Kapalua and one at Ma'alaea. . . .(timer sounds). . . . There's been one at Hāna Highway, North Shore. The...the opportunities existed in those cases because there was either...there was no imminently threatened infrastructure behind the wall. Or the infrastructure that was there, like a home, was already demolished and removed. So you could remove the wall without causing something to immediately fall into the ocean. It will be harder to remove seawalls in areas, and an example that always comes to mind for me is Honokowai. We have a mile of seawalls and condos that were built in the '60s and '70s before setbacks and many of those condos are within feet of the wall. So if you were to remove the wall, the building would immediately go into the ocean. So you can't remove the wall without thinking about, first, removing the building itself. And so, a policy solution would have to consider that.

CHAIR PALTIN: And then a lot of the buildings are within feet of the lower road. And then the lower road is above the water and sewer lines.

MS. OWENS: Yes.

CHAIR PALTIN: Okay. Round two, is four minutes sufficient? Or you want to go a little bit longer? Four minutes is good? Okay. And let's go by raise of hands. We see Member Cook and then Member U'u-Hodgins and then Member Rawlins-Fernandez. Go ahead, Member Cook, for your four minutes.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Thank you. So, Ms. Owens, circling back to my first...my question previously about offshore wasn't to protect the beaches, it was more mitigating and...and just...to me, mitigating and enhancing the marine environment. So it's not a coral reef, but you have fish and you have limu and you have...it's, in general, becoming a more prolific potential environment for...to compensate, some degree, for losing the reefs and all the other things. And also, as far as this time, this managed retreat for the infrastructure and buildings is hundreds of millions of dollars. And it's a social enigma to basically how to sort out public funds, private funds, private property, public rights. It's a...it's an opportunity and a challenge for our society to really address these issues and to address them...and I'm just...my proposal for this offshore type of mitigation is to basically strive to mitigate from [sic] things and give us some time. Acknowledge it isn't the solution. If it does no harm, and it does some potential benefit for fishing and et cetera, et cetera then maybe that's a path forward, and we can start collecting taxes,

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

and set them aside, and doing what we have to do. So that's just...so that's my thought about whether that type of mitigation has been thought of and if there's any positive aspects to putting rocks in the ocean.

MS. OWENS: Yeah. I mean, innovative solution [sic] for reef restoration is...it's a...it...it's a good topic to consider. And there's a...there is a lot of work going into that. So the University of Hawai'i HIMB, Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology, you probably know, they've been doing a lot of work on developing climate resistant super corals and developing new kinds of structures, not just rocks, but other types of 3-D printed structures that are inexpensive and could be deployed to develop a hybrid reef and...and then...and then plant climate-resistant corals. So there's a lot of effort going into that, and that's wonderful. From an ecosystem and a habitat restoration perspective, I hope we get to see some of those projects move forward. I think funding has been an issue on some of those, too, especially with the loss of Federal funding. Earlier, I was thinking the question was in the context of...of...of...of saving the Mission at Mantokuji. And I just would, again, love to see those tools used but would be hesitant to have them be interpreted as...as something that could save the Mission on any kind of time scale that would, you know, save the Mission.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Well, as...as, like, a builder guy --

MS. OWENS: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: -- using rocks that you don't have to create, and you're doing them and has...would have the potential to and an opportunity to kind of mitigate that. Part of the deal with . . .*(inaudible)*. . . Mission, it's a separate issue, historical structures and graves. Historical structures, in general, can take five or six years for a gym or anything because it's a historical structure. It's like it's sacred.

MS. OWENS: Uh-huh.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: You can't move it. Can't do anything with it.

MS. OWENS: Yup.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Over there where...and at that particular location, and the temple, and everything, it's like to me the quincidental [sic], if that's the word, definition of a historical structure as opposed to a termite-eaten gym and the issue with the graves. So it's like that...I'm having a challenge with the conflicting...this is like just give it up, just move back, you don't have a choice and some type of mitigation, not to renew to the beach but to do . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . that and see if that's an option. The more palatable options we come up with, hopefully the way society might be able to buy into it more. So, your thoughts?

MS. OWENS: Yeah. It...it's such a really interesting case study there. A...a...you know, a different kind of scenario than the resorts and the large condos. And I think that makes

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

it a good topic of discussion because people are going to feel differently about it. Maybe it doesn't have to be one or the other but both. I mean, if you're looking at, on a time line, to just save the Mission, there...the study they did indicated that for maybe \$2 million, costs have probably risen since then, you could actually realign the existing Mission and...and then it would buy it more time. And if you did that, and then also worked in parallel on some of those innovative solutions that might have ecosystem benefits, then...then you, maybe, slow down the erosion for the future. I think that would be wonderful if you...if you were having those things be complimentary. It's just that the offshore stuff is probably not going to be implementable on a time scale that's going to save the Mission.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: One more question, do you think that that's because of the regulatory aspects or because of some natural phenomenon?

MS. OWENS: It...it's the studies. The...the...the cost associated with that is going to be very high, and the regulatory environment certainly will make it a slow process.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Thank you very much.

MS. OWENS: Chip has his hand up too.

CHAIR PALTIN: Yeah. Can we also hear for...from Dr. Fletcher?

MR. FLETCHER: Yeah, just very quickly. The folks at UH who are doing these innovative artificial reefs, I'm sure would embrace the opportunity for an actual demonstration project. And everything...everything that Tara said is true. You still have permitting and cost related to it, but the Mission would make a...an excellent demonstration project.

CHAIR PALTIN: Follow-up, Member Cook?

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Thank you. Since you two haven't been around with me very long, the permitting challenge to me is one that...is one that is fundamentally indefensible with many of these things that we're dealing with. And I agree that we don't want to be doing things, especially along the shoreline, that are going to have negative consequences. But my striving to be objective, many of the permitting processes for our wastewater plants, for the things we're talking about, that doesn't necessarily add to the equation, it's more simply an expensive delay.

MS. OWENS: Can't say that I disagree with you in all cases. And my personal example is for our dune restoration project at Kapukaulua, we have to get permits as well to do that work, and it's for something that everybody is...gets behind. But it's been challenging. . . .*(laughing)* . . .

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Thank you, both, very much. Thank you, Chair.

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you. Member U'u-Hodgins

VICE-CHAIR U'U-HODGINS: Thank you, Chair. I really appreciate this discussion because it kind of highlights how much -- oh, the peacocks are agreeing with me -- how much Pā'ia Town has really tried to accommodate the beach while trying to preserve what little kind of town and historic buildings we have left, from Kapukaulua to the Boys and Girls Club over there, the Pā'ia Youth Center, to the Baldwin Beach. We just spoke about Mantokuji, and then you showed a picture, Tara, on your slide of Tavar...Tavares Bay where we just...you know the wall was removed; it's gone now. And we can see how we have to make decisions, you know, for...for the individual property while trying to make a decision, either regionally or islandwide. And again, in the...in the Mantokuji case, you know, we mined the sand. So had we not mined the sand, we probably wouldn't be having this conversation. And so, it's kind of like we put them in a situation, now, that we're not letting them solve. And when we're talking about hundreds of graves and then a historic building, as Member Cook said, we can't even figure out what to do with the gym in Pā'ia Town that's further away from the ocean. And SMA, it is like, oh, you can but we cannot and you can and you cannot. It's...I don't...I don't love it. But what I do love is trying to figure out how to, like, blend science with new technology and old knowledge, about how we're going to make this all make sense, not just for Pā'ia but for...for every place because, you know, I do understand the ocean is coming. It...it's coming, we know that it's coming. But we did put Mantokuji in a situation that we're not allowing them to solve right now, and I want to just say that for the record. For Planning Department, I wanted to kind of refocus some of the conversations to what Chair was kind of trying to do in the very beginning as it relates to maybe a zoning change and what would be allowable and not allowable. Right now, we use the 3.2-foot sea...sea level rise, correct? Right? And I kind of wanted you, because we're talking about how difficult it is to...to permit things, would you mind explaining what it would be like if one of those buildings needed to update their plumbing, their underground plumbing, what that would look like? I know beach restoration is difficult, dune restoration is difficult, removing a 120-year-old Mantokuji Mission is going to be absolutely difficult but as is attempting to fix plumbing in something like...like an apartment building close to the shoreline.

MS. TAKAKURA: Thank you, Vice-Chair. So if a...a building needed to update their plumbing, and they're on the shoreline area, they would probably have to apply for a Special Management Area assessment. And depending on the scale of the work, it could be a major or a minor, or it might even qualify for an exemption, but I can't say without knowing the scale of the work. And if it's a major...SMA major, like if they're doing something that meets that criteria, then it would be a public hearing before the Maui Planning Commission. Does that answer your question?

VICE-CHAIR U'U-HODGINS: Yeah. Thank you. And then if it's in the flood zone, they would have to do a Flood Zone Permit. And then they can't upgrade, what is it, 50 percent of your flood zone area within ten years. You guys keep track of what improvements . . .
.(timer sounds) . . are done on each property as well?

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

MS. TAKAKURA: That sounds familiar, but Flood got transferred to Public Works a couple years ago, so I'm not sure if things have changed. Sorry.

VICE CHAIR U'U HODGINS: That's right. No. Thank you. I appreciate that. I think, you know, when we were discussing the Bill 9 TIG, we were...a lot of the properties are on the shoreline and, as Ms. Nishiki said during her testimony, you know, we want our local people back in these units. And it's extremely...extremely expensive and difficult to maintain if that was the case. And I know that we wanted to just take that into consideration. But anyways, thank you so much. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you. Member Rawlins-Fernandez, followed by Member Sinenci.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Chair. Okay. I have just one question regarding Molokai. So when...I think this was before I was born, but there were culverts on the Kaunakakai Wharf Road. And then, I guess, like, they kept getting clogged by the sand. And so, my mom told me that they filled in the culverts. And so, growing up on Molokai I watched as the sand accumulated along the Wharf Road. And so, now there's, like, this huge...like, this wide beach along the road where there never used to be one. And so, it stopped the migration of sand from east to west on our island. I did speak with, like, Planning and Public Works at one point in the beginning, like maybe my first term, about like just scooping the sand and just putting it on the other side of the road because that would be cheaper than, like, you know, making the culverts and managing that again. . . .*(laughing)*. . . Anyway, so I'm sure that the Wharf Road is having, you know, even more of an impact on the ecology of, you know, the...the reef and just all that side west of the Wharf Road. And it's also not allowing it to clear out, like, the sediment and stuff. Have either...or any of you folks looked at this before?

MR. FLETCHER: Yeah. I've...I've seen that location, and I've always wondered why they don't just remove the culvert.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Oh. Oh, they did. Oh, you...you mean they filled it in so . . .*(inaudible)*. . . --

MR. FLETCHER: They filled it in, but it's still acting as a barrier, correct?

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Yeah.

MR. FLETCHER: Why not just take it out? Especially if it's filled in and no longer serving drainage purposes, can't they just restore the shoreline. Or is it the road itself you're talking about?

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Yeah, the road.

MR. FLETCHER: Oh, okay. I thought you were talking about just a drainage pipe. Well, in that case, you...you --

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: No, just the...the road that goes out to the pier.

MR. FLETCHER: Yeah. In that case, they have to --

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Yeah. That's the one.

MR. FLETCHER: -- not --

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: You see that beach? That wasn't there before.

MR. FLETCHER: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Yeah.

MR. FLETCHER: Yeah. And you probably have erosion over at Malama Cultural Park.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Yeah. All that area is all, --

MR. FLETCHER: And some buildings.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: -- like, substantially affected, and you see how dirty it is.

MR. FLETCHER: Yeah. Well, I don't know they filled it in. Perhaps they could --

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Oh, because it was getting clogged.

MR. FLETCHER: Well, then it...it means it wasn't big enough, and they could perhaps open it up again and make it larger.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. I'll tell them again.

MS. OWENS: And --

MR. FLETCHER: It's hard. It's...it's hard to estimate just off the cuff.

MS. OWENS: Well...and the...I say this knowing that this is not a simple solution, but many communities on the continent, you have coastal roads that are causeways. So they're roads --

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Uh-huh.

MS. OWENS: -- that are elevated above the water and open below. And it's just not a...it's not a...a style that we use here. Although I will say, the realignment of...of Honoapi'ilani Highway will include some causeway segments that go --

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Uh-huh.

MS. OWENS: -- over wetlands. So we will see that there as that project goes forward. I mean, that is a solution for some coastal roads that allow water and sand to do what they need to do . . . *(timer sounds)*. . . without affecting the road function.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Uh-huh. Yeah. Well, and that's all going to be under water with four feet sea level rise. So they should start planning that now. That...that's a State road. And then for the New Orleans, I know Member Sinenci...and I heard the timer, and I'll just finish this comment. I...and I think the...you know, one...one of the challenges here in Hawai'i...you know, so, like, in New Orleans where the scientists are saying that it's past the point of no return, and they're urging residents to relocate. And there's resistance to relocating because after Katrina they were told to relocate and then that area got heavily gentrified, properties were bought and flipped, and a lot of money was made. And then they...they made the necessary infrastructure improvements to...to save the...or to protect the properties, right? And so, that...that mentality of, you know, private properties are more important than, you know, public property, and we have a responsibility to maintain a public trust, which is...which are our beaches that...you know, that...that American mentality of, you know, like, just letting the...the beaches be eroded to save the private property or to, you know, build very invasive infrastructure in the oceans to save, you know, private property is just...like, that's not a ahupua'a management, responsible into the future style of, like, thinking. And...and so, you don't have to comment on this, but I know it's one of the challenges. . . *(laughing)*. . .

CHAIR PALTIN: Member Sinenci, your opportunity.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Thank you, Chair. Just for a follow-up question. You know, the Kona low storms particularly hit South Maui, and all those interminage...intermittent streams kind of under...undermined all underneath the...the...the highway under structure, and then all the roads just collapsed. Do you think we should be...and then, of course, all the silt that came down Haleakalā just rose to above Kulanihako'i Bridge. But do you think we should be purchasing more of the wetlands in North Kihei to...to allow for more water to...to make its way from mauka to makai?

MR. FLETCHER: That's an interesting question. Wetlands...I assume those wetlands cannot be developed. And so, do we really need to purchase them? Maybe what...what you should do is look at properties that are developed or could be developed and purchase those in order to improve drainage. Like, run...run a 100-year storm model at two feet of sea level rise and see what properties the flow goes through and do an analysis of which properties you need to purchase in order to allow that flow.

MS. OWENS: The future wetland.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: And...and I know that Member Cook has been working with

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

Haleakalā Ranch, up mauka, and trying to, you know, create more basins or reservoirs up mauka to kind of slow the water that comes down the mountain. But I think, right now, North Kihei by...is it Suda Store on the end, but there are...where those...those properties might be up for sale just so that --

MS. OWENS: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: -- we can allow water to...to flow freely down to the ocean.

MS. OWENS: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Chair.

MR. FLETCHER: Yeah. And...and...and doing that work up mauka, slowing the water, stilling the water, allowing it to recharge the aquifers, and also to just slow down, that's really critical work. We should be going all the way from the ridgeline when you control floodings. It's not all about just down at the coast.

MS. OWENS: I'll add, I am...I am in a...a small working group. And I'm not the expert in this area, in watershed management, but there are really smart people on Maui who do this. There is a South Maui mauka to makai working group. And that working group has been discussing exactly what you just identified. The...the Weinberg property at North Kihei near the Suda Store is up for sale. There is a undeveloped portion of that, like a triangular-shaped piece of land that could be turned into what our working group has been calling a storm water management park. And then you could combine that with upper...more upper or mid-level watershed plans, like you're saying, to slow the water down, check dams or sediment basins. And so, the working group that I'm part of includes Maui Emergency Management Agency because they're dealing with the flooding impacts, Public Works, some community members like Vernon Kalanikau, some of the other adjacent landowners like Mahi Pono to...and we're actually working right now on . . . *(timer sounds)*. . . a grant proposal to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to look at what we could just do with that immediate area, which, of course, wouldn't solve all the problems there, but it would be one step in that direction. So we want to work with the community in this grant proposal to look at, you know, planning scenarios and visualizations for how we might be able to tackle that right there.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Mahalo for that. Thank you. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR PALTIN: Chair Lee or Member Johnson, do you have need for second round? No? Okay. I...I had one last question round. In your Statewide Sea Level Rise Policy Integration slide, in 2022 it was Act 179 that mandated real estate disclosure of sea level rise risks. But, you know, people that are not familiar with the ocean will continue to think that they want an ocean view, and an ocean view is worth millions of dollars. And that's then how our County assesses these parcels. Like, oceanfront, add like 3 million, or something, to the cost. And then, obviously, we benefit from the tax revenue of that up until we don't. Like, up until a whole building in South Maui falls in, gets,

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

what do you call, condemned, or a couple buildings in West Maui are condemned. And policy-wise, do you think there's opportunity to mandate, if it's going to be assessed at such a high value, that a portion of the taxes go to dismantling it or, you know, like, assess it low, and if it sells high, then the difference? Like, is there any kind of financial path forward to not assess the shoreline parcel so high knowing that they're going to become a big liability in the next 30 to 50 years? Or, like, what do you think about the policy of oceanfront properties being assessed as multimillion-dollar properties when the liability of it is going to become millions of dollars in the near future? Because a disclosure without understanding of that, is it [sic] much?

MS. TAKAKURA: I think that's a bigger question than just the Planning Department can answer. I think that would be Department of Finance, the Administration, Corporation Counsel, and then, of course, the department and the scientists who know these things. So I...I'm not sure how you would answer that. I do know that with some of the rebuilds for Lahaina, on the shoreline properties, we are making them do some hold-harmless and unilateral agreements that have to be filed with the Bureau of Conveyances. So we are trying to protect ourselves from those reconstructions, but those were only as they're coming in as rebuilds. So to do something more comprehensively is a much bigger conversation.

CHAIR PALTIN: Wasn't there a State legislation that passed that applies only to Maui or only to Lahaina if government wants to do things that they don't need permits or something?

MS. TAKAKURA: Chair, I think you're talking about a Special Management Area exemption for infrastructure. Yeah. That's just for infrastructure, so it's limited to...and that could be considered an exemption. And I don't have the wording of the...the...the final law yet.

CHAIR PALTIN: Is that only for the burn zone?

MS. TAKAKURA: I think it's for Maui County and it's just for infrastructure. And I think there's an expiration date. I think it's only good until, like, 2030.

CHAIR PALTIN: Do you know the reason why only Maui County had an exemption for infrastructure?

MS. TAKAKURA: I'm not sure.

MS. OWENS: I mean, my understanding of that, it was, I think, meant to help with the Lahaina rebuild, and the Legislature just passed the bill for Maui County. One thing the...one of the Planners pointed out to me with that one is that it can be exempt. They still have to come in with the permit . . . *(timer sounds)* . . . application, and it will be assessed, and it doesn't necessarily mean that it will be exempt.

CHAIR PALTIN: Okay. Thank you for the rundown on that. Members, does anyone have any need for further questions? Okay. Thank you so much to our presenters, Dr. Fletcher

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

and Ms. Owens. It was a wealth of knowledge and obvious to all of us how lucky and blessed we are to have your undivided attention for almost three hours here. And hopefully people watch your presentations online, not to scare them but to prepare them. I did take some notes on how we can potentially prepare for the El Niño, about clearing drainage ways, and reducing fuel loads, retrofitting our homes. And I'll pass it on to the 9th floor. Thank you so much. Would you like to make any closing comments?

MR. FLETCHER: I just want to thank everybody for the opportunity to...to educate. And I love the way you characterized it, Councilmember, as we...we have to know the truth. There's no sense in hiding it. It's not meant to scare. There are...this is...I like to refer to...if you've ever had a bad neighbor, you...you can't solve the problem, but you...you learn how to manage it. And this is a problem where it's going to require management. And so, these thinking sessions where we can all just sit and...and brainstorm I think are very useful. Thank you again.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you so much. Director Takakura or Ms. Owens, any closing comments?

MS. OWENS: Oh, sorry. Thank you. Thank you for having us today. Thank you, Chip, for tag-teaming with me. And I wanted to reiterate what he said there at the very end, which is that there isn't a single one of us that has the solutions. So, agreed, these thinking sessions are helpful because it's going to take every single decision-maker, every single community member, and every single expert to come up with solutions that work for us here in Hawai'i and on Maui.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you so much. Committee Members, if there are no objections, the Chair will defer this item.

COUNCILMEMBERS: No objections.

CHAIR PALTIN: Thank you.

ACTION: DEFER pending further discussion.

CHAIR PALTIN: This concludes today's Disaster, Recovery, International Affairs, and Planning Committee meeting. Thank you very much, everyone. The time is now 4:18 and this meeting is adjourned. . . .*(gavel)*. . .

ADJOURN: 4:18 p.m.

**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

drip:min:260603:

Transcribed by: Tricia Higa

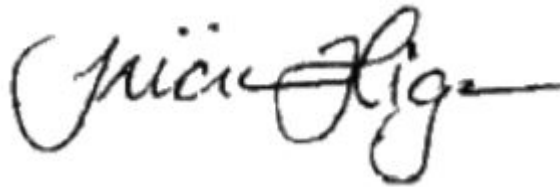
**DISASTER RECOVERY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui**

June 3, 2026

CERTIFICATION

I, Tricia Higa, hereby certify that pages 1 through 43 of the foregoing represents, to the best of my ability, a true and correct transcript of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not in any way concerned with the cause.

DATED the 17th day of June 2026, in Mililani, Hawaii

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tricia Higa", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tricia Higa