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Deputy Director of Council Services  
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## COUNTY COUNCIL

COUNTY OF MAUI  
200 S. HIGH STREET  
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793  
[www.MauiCounty.us](http://www.MauiCounty.us)

March 19, 2024

Ms. Kate Blystone, Director  
Department of Planning  
County of Maui  
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

Dear Ms. Blystone:

SUBJECT: **FISCAL YEAR ("FY") 2025 BUDGET** (BFED-1) (PL-1)

May I please request you submit your response to the following questions by **March 28, 2024**. This will enable the Committee to comprehensively review the FY 2025 Budget.

1. Please outline the major changes in your Department's budget from FY 2024 to FY 2025.
  - a. Explain any budget changes made because of the August 2023 wildfires.
  - b. If your budget will decrease, how will this impact your Department's operations and ability to serve the public?
2. How many vacant positions currently exist within your Department?
  - a. Please include the job titles for the vacancies and indicate how long the positions have been vacant.
  - b. What is the anticipated timeline for filling these vacancies?
  - c. What are the consequences, if any, for removing funding for these vacant positions from the FY 2025 Budget?

3. If your Department had expansion positions in the FY 2024 Budget, how many of those positions were filled? If they have not been filled, are they included in the FY 2025 Budget? How many months of funding are being requested?
4. If your Department is proposing expansion positions in the FY 2025 Budget, how do you plan to fill those positions?
5. How many positions were filled in FY 2024 that were not expansion positions?
6. How did your Department recruit to fill vacancies and what were the most effective methods for attracting candidates?
7. The following questions are related to overtime payments:
  - a. How much in overtime has been paid to date in FY 2024 and what was the reason for the overtime?
  - b. Were any of these overtime costs attributed to the number of vacant positions in your Department?
  - c. Do you anticipate that overtime costs in FY 2025 will increase or decrease and what are the reasons for your assumption?
8. The following questions are related to your Department's program and activities:
  - a. Identify the programs and activities conducted by your Department because of a Federal or State mandate. Indicate the amount of Federal or State funding the County receives for each program or activity, including how much for each the County expends.
  - b. Identify the programs and activities conducted solely because of a Maui County Code mandate and indicate the amount for each the County expends.
9. If your Department had Capital Improvement Projects ("CIPs") in FY 2024:

- a. Provide the current status of each CIP project, if different from the information provided in the Fiscal Year 2024 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter CIP Report.
  - b. Provide information on how much funding has been encumbered or expended to date for each project.
10. If your Department has proposed CIPs for FY 2025:
  - a. Rank your proposed CIPs, by priority.
  - b. Will CIP funding included in the FY 2025 Budget be encumbered by June 30, 2025? If not, how much do you anticipate will be encumbered by that date?
11. If your Department manages a revolving fund:
  - a. Explain whether the revolving fund is still needed and why.
  - b. Provide the current balance.
12. If your Department manages grants:
  - a. For each grant line item not designated for a specific recipient (e.g., Small Business Promotion; Youth Programs), provide a breakdown of the grants that will be funded by the line item.
  - b. Provide a breakdown of all grants that will be funded by your Department under Subobject Code 6317, County grant subsidy.
13. Provide details on your Department's Carryover/Savings that were included in the FY 2025 Budget.
14. What are your top three Department priorities for FY 2025 and how does your Department's budget reflect that?
15. Did your Department apply for any grant funding in FY 2024? If yes, how much in funding was received?
16. How much has your Department spent on Professional Services in FY 2024, and what projects and consultants were funded under this line item?

Ms. Kate Blystone

March 19, 2024

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17. How much of your Department's expenditures in FY 2024 will be reimbursed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in relation to the wildfires? What amount of FY 2025 expenditures are expected to be reimbursed?
18. Provide a list of equipment, locations, and structures used or managed by your Department that was destroyed in the wildfires. Explain for each whether your Department plans to repair or replace it. If it will be repaired or replaced, provide the estimated cost and timeline for the repair or replacement.

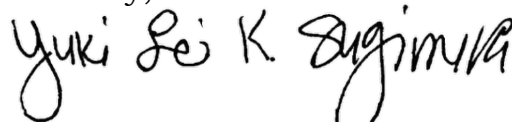
The Department is scheduled to present before the Committee on April 8, 2024. The schedule is subject to change and Committee staff will reach out if there are any changes to the schedule.

Please be prepared to provide a ten-minute presentation on the changes in your Department's budget from FY 2024 to FY 2025, addressing the following:

- Operations
- CIPs
- Grants awarded by the Department, if any
- Grants received by the Department, if any
- Revolving funds
- Rates and fees, including any estimated increase or decrease in revenue as a result of the changes

Thank you for your attention to this request. Should you have any questions, please contact me or the Committee staff (James Krueger at ext. 7761, Kasie Apo Takayama at ext. 7665, or Yvette Bouthillier at ext. 7758).

Sincerely,



YUKI LEI K. SUGIMURA, Chair  
Budget, Finance, and Economic  
Development Committee

bfed:2025bgt:240315altr01:jgk

cc: Mayor Richard T. Bissen, Jr.  
Budget Director

## BFED Committee

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**From:** BFED Committee  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 19, 2024 6:07 PM  
**To:** Kate Blystone  
**Cc:** BFED Committee; joy.paredes@co.maui.hi.us; Michelle Santos; Zeke Kalua; Maria Zielinski; Lesley Milner; Kristina Cabbat  
**Subject:** PLEASE READ attached letter re: FISCAL YEAR ("FY") 2025 BUDGET (BFED 1) (PL-1); reply by 03/28/2024  
**Attachments:** 240319apl01.pdf

**Ms. Blystone:** Please refer to the attached letter from the Budget, Finance, and Economic Development (BFED) Committee Chair, dated March 19, 2024. Please respond by **March 28, 2024**.

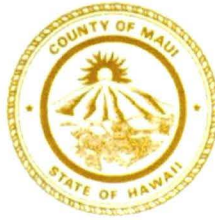
**Mayor's Office (attention: Michelle Santos and Zeke Kalua):** Please forward the attached letter to Mayor Bissen for his information.

**Ms. Zielinski:** FYI

Thank you,  
Yvette Bouthillier, Secretary  
BFED Committee


RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.  
Mayor

KATE L. K. BLYSTONE  
Director




**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING**  
COUNTY OF MAUI  
ONE MAIN PLAZA  
2200 MAIN STREET, SUITE 315  
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793

March 28, 2024

Lesley Milner   
Acting Budget Director, County of Maui  
200 South High Street  
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

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

APPROVED FOR TRANSMITTAL

  
Mayor Date 3-28-24

For Transmittal to:

Honorable Yuki Lei Sugimura, Chair  
Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee  
Maui County Council  
200 South High Street  
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

Dear Chair Sugimura:

**SUBJECT: FISCAL YEAR (“FY”) 2025 BUDGET (BFED-1) (PL-1)**

Thank for your March 19, 2024 letter. We offer the following responses to your questions.

- 1. *Please outline the major changes in your Department’s budget from FY 2024 to FY 2025.***

The Planning Department (the Department) made very few changes to the way we intend to expend funds in our FY 2025 budget. Our FY 2025 budget reflects a 3.6% (\$318,519) increase over last year’s budget. This increase is largely as a result of bargaining unit salary adjustments and an increase in professional services to engage in a process to entitle County lands for housing.

- a. *Explain any budget changes made because of the August 2023 wildfires.***

Honorable Richard T. Bissen Jr  
 For Transmittal to:  
 Honorable Yuki Lei Sugimura  
 March 28, 2024  
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There were no budget adjustments made in direct response to the wildfires. We are reorganizing staff responsibilities to meet the needs of those Recovery Support Functions (RSFs) within which we are participating. Any funding needed to support recovery work is within the Office of Recovery’s budget.

**b. *If your budget will decrease, how will this impact your Department’s operations and ability to serve the public?***

The Department is not proposing a budget decrease.

**2. *How many vacant positions currently exist within your Department?***

**a. *Please include the job titles for the vacancies and indicate how long the positions have been vacant.***

As of this letter, the Department has 22 vacancies. They are distributed across the Department and duration of each vacancy is listed in the table below.

<b>Position</b>	<b>Number of Vacancies</b>	<b>Duration of Vacancy</b>
Planner VI	2	Less than six months
Planner V	5	Less than six months (3) More than six months (2)
Planner IV	1	More than six months
Planner III	1	More than six months
Planner II	1	Less than six months
Planner I	3	Less than six months
Zoning Inspector II	1	Less than six months
Land Use and Building Plan Technician	1	More than six months
Account Clerk III	1	Less than six months
Secretary to Boards and Commissions I	1	Less than six months
Secretary to Boards and Commissions II	1	Less than six months
Office Ops Assistant II	2	Less than six months (1) More than six months (1)
APO	1	Expansion
GIS Analyst V	1	Less than six months
<b>TOTAL VACANCIES</b>	<b>22</b>	

**b. *What is the anticipated timeline for filling these vacancies?***

We are aiming to fill more than half of these vacancies within the next six months. We are attempting to fill the remaining vacancies within 12 months.

**c. *What are the consequences, if any, for removing funding for these vacant positions from the FY 2025 Budget?***

Our Department already has several staff working overtime to meet the needs of our community. We are working to fill vacancies to lighten the load and we need every position that is currently within our budget to reduce the burden on current staff and process projects in a timely fashion. Furthermore, reducing our budget would prevent us from participating fully in Lāhainā's recovery and lead to staff burnout and additional vacancies. Our budget is modest and we hope that the Council will approve it as proposed.

**3. *If your Department had expansion positions in the FY 2024 Budget, how many of those positions were filled? If they have not been filled, are they included in the FY 2025 Budget? How many months of funding are being requested?***

The Department had one expansion position in FY 2023 that we ran into issues allocating in FY 2024. We are discussing the departmental placement of the position and setting the position description as a Planner V. We intend to have this position set and filled before the end of 2024. This position is included in our FY 2025 budget.

**4. *If your Department is proposing expansion positions in the FY 2025 Budget, how do you plan to fill those positions?***

The Department is not proposing any expansion positions.

**5. *How many positions were filled in FY 2024 that were not expansion positions?***

Sixteen positions were filled in FY 2024 that were not expansion positions.

**6. *How did your Department recruit to fill vacancies and what were the most***



*effective methods for attracting candidates?*

We recruited to fill vacancies in conjunction with Department of Personnel Services (DPS) online postings as well as participating in virtual and in-person job fairs. We worked with DPS to remove the testing portion from our Planner series and some of our clerical positions, opting for examining training and experience instead. This has significantly increased the number of candidates who apply for vacant positions.

**7. *The following questions are related to overtime payments:***

**a. *How much in overtime has been paid to date in FY 2024 and what was the reason for the overtime?***

Approximately \$56,500 has been paid in overtime through March 15. Overtime hours were directed at community meetings, off-hours commission meetings, the emergency permitting process, and addressing the backlog of permits and meetings minutes.

**b. *Were any of these overtime costs attributed to the number of vacant positions in your Department?***

Yes. Some overtime costs are related to clearing our permit backlog. This backlog is due largely to high turnover and vacant positions within the Department.

**c. *Do you anticipate that overtime costs in FY 2025 will increase or decrease and what are the reasons for your assumption?***

Our hope is to decrease overtime costs in FY 2025 by filling vacant positions, but it is likely the overtime amounts will remain the same or increase in this fiscal year. We are actively recruiting for our open positions and have already filled three vacant positions since January.

Overtime costs related to evening meetings and assisting with wildfire recovery will continue.

**8. *The following questions are related to your Department's program and activities:***

**a. *Identify the programs and activities conducted by your Department because of a Federal or State mandate. Indicate the amount of Federal or State funding the County receives for each program or***

*activity, including how much for each the County expends.*

Much of the work that the Department does is as a result of Federal or State mandates. It is not possible to quantify how much the Department receives (in the form of tax revenue) or expends to meet all of these mandates. Hawai'i Revised Statutes 205A is derived from the Coastal Zone Management Act, for example. It is not possible to quantify how much staff time or resources are devoted to enforcement and administration of this act.

**b. *Identify the programs and activities conducted solely because of a Maui County Code mandate and indicate the amount for each the County expends.***

Title 19, our zoning code, is a County code mandate that consumes a significant portion of our staff time. Like federal and state mandates, it is not possible to quantify the cost for this item. Below, we have indicated some costs that we can identify explicitly, but these types of costs are rare. As we are responsible for administering the code, it could be argued that nearly every cost to operate the Department is the result of a mandate of some kind.

- 2.80B.030.H.1
  - Requirement for a socio-economic report including growth rate forecasts is estimated to cost at least \$10,000.
- 2.80.B.070 community plan updates.
  - Central Maui's 18-month contract is \$357,000. Costs for commission meetings for the South Maui Community Plan will be \$30,000 for Akakū's services.
- 19.47 wetlands overlay
  - The contract to produce the wetlands overlay map was \$247,000.

**9. *If your Department had Capital Improvement Projects ("CIPs") in FY 2024:***

**a. *Provide the current status of each CIP project, if different from the information provided in the Fiscal Year 2024 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter CIP Report.***

Not applicable.

- b.** *Provide information on how much funding has been encumbered or expended to date for each project.*

Not applicable.

**10.** *If your Department has proposed CIPs for FY 2025:*

- a.** *Rank your proposed CIPs, by priority.*

Not applicable.

- b.** *Will CIP funding included in the FY 2025 Budget be encumbered by June 30, 2025? If not, how much do you anticipate will be encumbered by that date?*

Not applicable.

**11.** *If your Department manages a revolving fund:*

- a.** *Explain whether the revolving fund is still needed and why.*

The Department does not manage a revolving fund.

- b.** *Provide the current balance.*

Not applicable.

**12.** *If your Department manages grants:*

- a.** *For each grant line item not designated for a specific recipient (e.g., Small Business Promotion; Youth Programs), provide a breakdown of the grants that will be funded by the line item.*

Not applicable

- b.** *Provide a breakdown of all grants that will be funded by your Department under Subobject Code 6317, County grant subsidy.*

Not applicable.

**13.** *Provide details on your Department's Carryover/Savings that were included in the FY 2025 Budget.*

The carryover savings included in the FY 2025 budget are from the unrestricted fund balance for FY 2023 reflected in the County's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR). Any carryover savings from FY 2024 will be recognized in the FY 2026 budget.

**14. *What are your top three Department priorities for FY 2025 and how does your Department's budget reflect that?***

Our top three priorities are: filling vacant positions and addressing related morale/burnout issues within our Department, building a strong and cohesive leadership team, and making significant progress on long-term projects (e.g. the Title 19 rewrite and Central and South Maui Community Plan updates). This is a rebuilding year for the Department. Many of our leaders are new to their roles and we have a nearly 25 percent vacancy rate. We also have many new staff who are learning their positions. This is all in the face of rebuilding after a major disaster and a significant permit backlog.

Our budget addresses this by fully funding our vacant positions. The budget also includes an increase in funding over previous years for training. Professional growth and development is key to retention. Our budget includes opportunities for staff to travel to the continent for conferences and to travel to our local Hawai'i Congress of Planning Officials conference.

Our budget also includes additional funding for the Central Maui Community Plan update process. This additional funding will ensure extra hands for our long-range division as they continue to play a significant role in the Community Planning RSF.

**15. *Did your Department apply for any grant funding in FY 2024? If yes, how much in funding was received?***

In FY 2024 the Department received the following funding from grant sources:

- UH Maui Sea Grant: \$143,296
  - Cost-share agreement with UH Sea Grant to pay for Maui's Shoreline Access and Dune Management Coordinator
- Dune and Shoreline Management: \$117,593
  - Cost-share agreement with UH Sea Grant to pay for Maui's Coastal Hazards Specialist

**16. *How much has your Department spent on Professional Services in FY 2024, and what projects and consultants were funded under this line item?***

Our adopted budget for FY 2024 in this line item was \$1,050,000. The

Honorable Richard T. Bissen Jr  
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Department has expended \$341,743 as of the end of February. Akakū provided services for the South Maui Community Plan Advisory Committee Meetings. Idepo provided transcriptions services for boards and commissions. We contracted with a contested case hearings officer. Raimi & Associates was hired to assist with the Central Maui Community Plan. We contracted with Dispute Preventions Mediation for mediation services for contested cases. Finally, we continue our contract with Orion for the Title 19 rewrite project.

- 17. *How much of your Department's expenditures in FY 2024 will be reimbursed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in relation to the wildfires? What amount of FY 2025 expenditures are expected to be reimbursed?***

The amount of funding to reimbursed by FEMA will be minimal for the Department in both fiscal years. We will likely have overtime related to recovery work that could be reimbursed, but it will not be a significant portion of our FY 2025 budget.

- 18. *Provide a list of equipment, locations, and structures used or managed by your Department that was destroyed in the wildfires. Explain for each whether your Department plans to repair or replace it. If it will be repaired or replaced, provide the estimated cost and timeline for the repair or replacement.***

Not applicable.

Mahalo for allowing us to respond to your requests.

Sincerely,



KATE L. K. BLYSTONE  
Director of Planning

xc: Connie Gouveia, Administrative Officer (pdf)  
KLKB:jl  
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## BFED Committee

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**From:** Janina Agapay <Janina.E.Agapay@co.maui.hi.us>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 28, 2024 4:59 PM  
**To:** BFED Committee  
**Cc:** Lesley Milner  
**Subject:** (BFED-1)(PL-1)  
**Attachments:** (BFED-1)(PL-1).pdf

Hello,

Please see attached correspondence from Planning.

Thank you,

**Janina Agapay**

County of Maui

Budget Office

(808) 270-7836

[Janina.E.Agapay@co.maui.hi.us](mailto:Janina.E.Agapay@co.maui.hi.us)