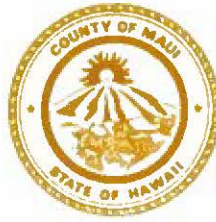


RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.
Mayor

KATE L. K. BLYSTONE
Director

ANA LILLIS
Deputy Director



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
COUNTY OF MAUI
ONE MAIN PLAZA
2200 MAIN STREET, SUITE 315
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAI'I 96793

September 24, 2024

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

APPROVED FOR TRANSMITTAL

9-25-24
Mayor Date

For Transmittal to:

Honorable Yuki Lei K. Sugimura, Chair
Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee
200 South High Street
Wailuku, Hawai'i 96793
via: bfed.committee@mauicounty.us

Dear Chair Sugimura:

SUBJECT: BILL 125 (2024), AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2025 BUDGET: ESTIMATED REVENUES AND OFFICE OF THE MAYOR (ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, GRANTS AND DISBURSEMENTS FOR WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE PROTECTION) (BFED-101)

Thank you for your September 18, 2024 letter requesting information pertaining to Bill 101. The following identifies your request (in *italics*) and the Department's response:

1. *A copy of the NOAA grant. If not included in the grant, also provide information on alternate projects that could be funded with the grant, including timelines, other than the proposed Mā'alaea property purchase.*

Department's Response: The grant is funded through the NOAA Climate Resilience Regional Challenge (CRRC) Program. The CRRC website includes a [summary of the project](#) entitled "Āina Restoration through Community Governance to Advance Climate Resilience in the Hawaiian Islands". This is a statewide project, and the work at Mā'alaea is only one part of the overall project scope under the action area of "Enhancing Regional Community-Based Coastal Stewardship."

Honorable Richard T. Bissen, Jr
For Transmittal to:
Honorable Yuki Lei K. Sugimura, Chair
Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee
September 24, 2024
Page 2

Pertaining to the grant proposal, the excerpt below from the larger statewide scope of work, is focused on the relevant action area and the Mā‘alaea-specific activity:

***Action 2: Enhancing Regional Community-Based Coastal Stewardship:** Critical infrastructure, population centers, and economic activity in the Hawaiian Islands are concentrated on low-lying coastal plains. This has been the case for centuries, and many important cultural, archeological, and burial sites are also located in coastal areas. The impacts of sea level rise will be catastrophic for our communities: projected late-21st century sea level rise of 3.2 feet would displace more than 20,000 residents and flood 38 miles of major roads across the state.¹⁹ The impacts of these climate threats are already evident today. Seventy percent of Hawai‘i beaches are chronically eroding. Record water levels have increased tidal flooding, threatening Native Hawaiian ancestral burial sites, damaging Hawaiian fishponds and other cultural sites, and impeding access for subsistence and cultural practices. With this resilience action, we will restore natural infrastructure, including wetlands and dune systems, that buffers against climate and weather hazards. We will also invest in community-centered proactive management strategies that address escalating threats to coastal communities, cultural resources, and ancestral burial sites.*

***Activity: Mā‘alaea Regional Resiliency Laboratory:** In Pū‘ali Komohana, Maui, the County of Maui will take advantage of a rare opportunity to acquire a large swath of undeveloped land within the Mā‘alaea community. The Mā‘alaea community is centrally located in an ecologically-sensitive area and includes the Keālia Pond National Wildlife Refuge, the largest wetland reserve in the state. This land will serve as a regional “resiliency laboratory” to implement shoreline restoration and conservation projects and to co-develop sea level rise adaptation pathways with community, providing a model for communities state-wide facing potential relocation with sea level rise. This will be accomplished by: 1) land acquisition, 2) regional shoreline management and adaptation planning and 3) stream, wetland, and dune restoration. For the land acquisition, 423 acres of coastal land will be purchased by the County of Maui to support both immediate and future resilience-focused land uses. The current property owner, Mahi Pono, LLC, wishes to facilitate a coordinated use of this land for public benefit with a particular focus on community resilience. These collective activities aim to implement recommendations and next steps identified by agency and community partners in numerous planning processes.⁴⁰ This activity was proposed by the County of Maui in a letter of intent to the NOAA Climate Resilience Regional Challenge (CRRC) funding opportunity, which was subsequently invited for a full proposal. Rather than submitting a separate full proposal the County of Maui opted*

Honorable Richard T. Bissen, Jr
For Transmittal to:
Honorable Yuki Lei K. Sugimura, Chair
Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee
September 24, 2024
Page 3

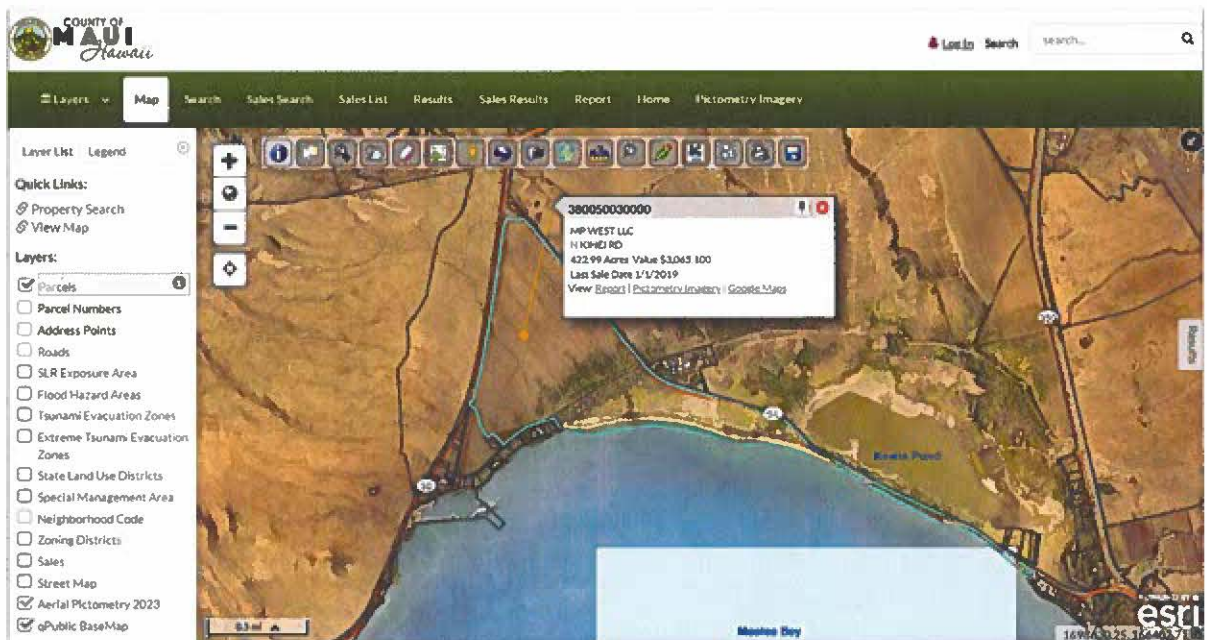
to build on a long-standing collaboration with HISG and integrate elements of the County's original letter of intent into this collaborative proposal.

Pertaining to timeline, the grant period of performance is 5 years, and the Mā'ālaea land purchase is targeted to occur within the first year as the basis for long-term land use planning and restoration activities.

Pertaining to other alternatives, the project was funded by NOAA based on a specified scope of work, so the funding is not transferable to other properties or work sites.

2. *A copy of the Mā'ālaea property map that was shared during the Committee's meeting.*

Department's Response: The map below from the County of Maui tax records, and shared in the Committee's meeting, highlights the 423-acre land parcel that is currently owned by Mahi Pono.



3. *The plan for maintenance and management of the Mā'ālaea property proposed for purchase.*

Department's Response: While many options are available and several organizations have reached out for consideration, it would be premature to determine the long-term maintenance and management plan until the County acquires the property and conducts public outreach.

Honorable Richard T. Bissen, Jr
For Transmittal to:
Honorable Yuki Lei K. Sugimura, Chair
Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee
September 24, 2024
Page 4

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this information. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



KATE L. K. BLYSTONE
Planning Director

xc: Ana Lillis, Deputy Director (pdf)
Danny Dias, Planning Program Administrator (pdf)
Candace Thackerson, Administrative Planning Officer (pdf)
KLKB:jhp
S:\ADMIN\Correspondence\09232024 BFED-101_PL01.docx

BFED Committee

From: Michelle Santos <Michelle.Santos@co.maui.hi.us>
Sent: Wednesday, September 25, 2024 10:13 AM
To: BFED Committee
Cc: Ana Lillis; Candace Thackerson; Cynthia Sasada; Danny Dias; Josiah Nishita; joy.paredes@co.maui.hi.us; Kate Blystone; Pili Nahooikaika
Subject: MT#10772 Bill 125
Attachments: MT#10772-BFED Committee.pdf

NOTE: PLEASE DO NOT FORWARD MY EMAIL TO ANYONE OUTSIDE OF THE COUNTY OF MAUI. YOU MAY CLICK ON THE ATTACHMENT ITSELF AND CREATE YOUR OWN EMAIL TO FORWARD THE DOCUMENT TO ANOTHER PERSON OUTSIDE OF THE COUNTY.

Michelle L. Santos

Office Operations Assistant

Office of the Mayor

County of Maui

200 S. High Street 9th Floor

Wailuku, HI 96793

phone: (808) 270-7855

fax: (808) 270-7870