BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Council of the County of Maui

MINUTES

April 16, 2024

Online Only via Teams

RECONVENE: 1:07 p.m.

PRESENT: Councilmember Yuki Lei K. Sugimura, Chair
Councilmember Tasha Kama, Vice-Chair
Councilmember Tom Cook, Member
Councilmember Gabe Johnson, Member
Councilmember Alice L. Lee, Member
Councilmember Tamara Paltin, Member
Councilmember Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez, Member
Councilmember Shane M. Sinenci, Member
Councilmember Nohelani Uʻu-Hodgins, Member

STAFF: James Krueger, Senior Legislative Analyst
Kasie Apo Takayama, Senior Legislative Analyst
Jarret Pascual, Legislative Analyst
Clarissa MacDonald, Legislative Analyst
Carla Nakata, Legislative Attorney
Megan Moniz, Legislative Attorney
Yvette Bouthillier, Senior Committee Secretary

Additional staff
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Jared Agtunong
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Residency Area Office (RAO):
Mavis Oliveira-Medeiros, Council Aide, East Maui Residency Area Office
Jade Rojas-Letisi, Council Aide, Makawao-Haʻikū-Pāʻia Residency Area Office

ADMIN.: Lesley Milner, Acting Budget Director, Office of the Mayor
Josiah Nishita, Managing Director, Department of Management
Keanu Lau Hee, Deputy Managing Director, Department of Management
Erin Wade, Chief of Planning and Development, Department of Management
Karen Sherman, Chief Information Security Officer, IT Services Division
Leecia Viela, Administration and Staff Supervisor, IT Services Division
Dan Shupack, County Capital Improvement Program Coordinator, Department of Management
Jordan Molina, Director, Department of Public Works
Kristina Toshikiyo, Deputy Corporation Counsel, Department of the Corporation Counsel

OTHERS: Others (20)

Resource Personnel
Kathleen Chu, Vice President, Bowers and Kubota

PRESS: *Akakū*: Maui Community Television, Inc.

ITEM 1: (BILL 60 (2024), BILL 61 (2024), BILL 62 (2024), BILL 63 (2024), BILL 64 (2024), BILL 65 (2024), RESOLUTION 24-66, RESOLUTION 24-67, and RESOLUTION 24-68)

CHAIR SUGIMURA: . . .*(gavel)*. . . Good afternoon, everybody. It's been a long time since I've seen you. Welcome back to the Budget, Finance, Economic Development Committee. This is a recessed meeting from last week Friday, and we're so glad to have Office of Management here, Josiah Nishita, Keanu Lau Hee, in person. We thought you were going to be online, Direct…Managing Director. So, welcome, everybody. This meeting is being conducted in accordance with the Sunshine Law. As a reminder for the Councilmembers, when your name is called, if you are not in the 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. Chair Lee, good afternoon.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: . . .*(inaudible)*. . .

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, okay. We can handle that.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. Good afternoon and…

CHAIR SUGIMURA: I think your speaker, something funny. . . .*(laughing)*. . . Oh, good thing we have IT here. All right. Good afternoon, Vice-Chair Kama.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Aloha ʻauinalā, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Aloha ʻauinalā. Good afternoon, Member Paltin.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Aloha ʻauinalā, and la orana.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: La orana. It sounds like you want to sing, right, when you say that. Good afternoon, Member Johnson.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Good afternoon, Chair, Councilmembers, community members. There's no testifiers at the Lānaʻi District Office, and I'm here and ready to work. Mahalo.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Great. Good afternoon, Member Rawlins-Fernandez.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Aloha awakea kākou, mai Molokai Nui a Hina. I'm at the Molokai District Office, alone on my side of the office.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you for…

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: And there are no…oh, no, recessed meeting.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: That's right. Member…Member Cook. Going down the line.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Good afternoon, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Good afternoon. Member Uʻu-Hodgins.

COUNCILMEMBER UʻU-HODGINS: Good afternoon, everyone.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Good afternoon. And Member Sinenci.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Aloha, and good afternoon, Chair. Here at my home office by myself.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. So, as you know, this is a recessed meeting. And so, here with…with us from the Office of the Mayor is Acting Budget Director Lesley Milner. From the Department of Management we have in-person Josiah Nishita. Thank you very much, Josiah, I know you've been super, super busy. Deputy Managing Director is Keanu Lau Hee. Thank you for coming back to be with us. And at the appropriate time, Directors, you can introduce who's with you. Director of…Department of Corporation Kristina Toshikiyo. And Committee Staff, thank you very much, always working hard. Yvette Bouthillier, thank you very much for being here, Senior Committee Secretary. James Krueger, Kasie Apo Takayama, Senior Legislative Analysts. Good afternoon and thank you. Jarret Pascual and Clarissa MacDonald, Legislative Analysts. And Carla Nakata and Megan Moniz, Legislative Attorney. Please refer…please see the last page of the agenda for information on meeting connectivity. Thank you, Members, for attending today's BFED Committee meeting. We have one item on the agenda. And before we start into that, Member Rawlins-Fernandez, did you want to talk about the residency meeting last night?

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Sure.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. Last night at the Molokai residency area Budget Hearing, we had 35 testifiers. Topics that were testified on included Youth in Motion, Molokai Holokai event for youth workshops, multiple testifiers spoke to the value of MEDB's STEMworks and robotics, MEO's Head Start program and transportation with a request for bus stops, and Molokai Rural Health funding to mālama kūpuna and senior citizens. Testifiers asked for support for maintenance on the tennis courts for the…what they call here pukaball, and a testifier urged the players to meet with Molokai Ranch

on…regarding the…the land that the tennis court's on. A request was made for a right-of-way entry to Pūko'o. The Molokai Middle School representative from farming and science competitions, our teacher, and the 'Ainapa'a Wrestling Team, which is dominated by female wrestlers with some from…also from Lahaina, expressed their gratitude for the new student travel funding and requested continued support for that program. There's support for Ho'aka Mana, Malu I Ka 'Ulu, and the Molokai DMAP. Support for funding to restore 'Āina Momona, food sovereignty, renewable energy, community buyback of Molokai Ranch, and farmer training programs, and the food hub mobile market. And there were questions about the Molokai Veterans Caring for Veterans grant…so, perfect timing, we have the Department of Management here. I can ask some of those questions and clarifications on their behalf. Mahalo again to everyone who made it to the meeting…made it to the second-to-the-last Budget Hearing…residency area Budget Hearings last night. And mahalo to all the Councilmembers who flew over to Molokai to be there in person. And to the two that didn't make it, we missed you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah, we did.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you very much. And thank you very much for the beautiful leis that your Staff made. That was a nice aloha touch. And…and yeah, it was a nice crowd of people. And I think the…I was equally surprised at hearing so much pickleball, you know, you call it pukaball, that's kind of funny, but they seem to be very organized Countywide. All right. So, thank you very much for that recap. And it is also…was filmed for *Akakū*, so that can be viewed by the…you know, the…the community. So, we'll go into our agenda. We have one item, which is BFED-1, Proposed Fiscal Year 2025 Budget for the County of Maui, and we're going to continue with deliberations. Members, we'll do three rounds of questions. Four minutes for the first round, four minutes for the second, and three minutes for the third, and we can go further if you need. For your reference, for the Department's budget in Bill 60 is…on page 12 is operations, CIP is page 24. CIP-6 is…C, I'm sorry, C…Appendix C, page 5. Appendix A and the grants is page 40. Appendix A, Special Revenue Revolving Funds, Employee Parking Fund, Chapter 3.26, Maui County Code, page 49. Managed Retreat Revolving Fund, 3.97 Maui County Code, on page 50. So, at this time, we will begin our deliberations. So, I would like to call on Member U'u-Hodgins for the first three…four minutes.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you.

DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT
(including Office of Recovery)

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Hello, everybody. Thank you for being with us today. Managing Director, I understand you have been going back and forth to O'ahu to discuss our, I guess, request with the State Leg. Do you have any update on whether or not they're going to provide us with the funding we requested?

MR. NISHITA: Sorry. Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember U'u-Hodgins, for the question. Yes, there have been extensive discussions with State legislators, including the Finance Committee Chair and the Ways and Means Committee Chair, including with Senate and House leadership. We don't have clear confirmation yet on the total dollar funding amount, but their budgets are due by April 20th. It is kind of an…I don't want to say arbitrary rule that they put in place for themselves, but their final deadline is about April 26th or 28th. So, at the latest, we'll know what their overall funding provision will be by then. And of course, if I receive additional information in the meantime--which I will be going back to O'ahu tomorrow--I'll provide that to Council. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay. Thank you. Do you know if they're going to be providing all that we requested? Can you remind me, was it $150 million?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember U'u-Hodgins, for the question. Yes, it was 150.95 million. I…I think my anticipation at this time is there will be some mix of GO reimbursable bonds and cash as a part of the overall provision to Maui County. The overall funding amount that they'll provide remains to be seen.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay.

MR. NISHITA: Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Thank you. I appreciate that. I know I saw Erin in the stand, so my next question might be for her, but we can…if you can answer it, that's fine. I saw in your presentation you had the other day that Da Bee, Da Bus Bee, is finished now because the parking structure is open. So, what's going to happen to those buses? I know that they were painted specifically with the whole bee, everything, so are they going to be repurposed, or are they going to be repainted? What are we going to do with those buses now? They're really nice buses.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Welcome, Erin Wade. Yeah, they are.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Hi, Erin.

MS. WADE: Thank you. Aloha. Thanks for the question. The vehicles themselves are owned by Polynesian and…and…Adventure Tours, so all we were paying for was the service and operation and maintenance of the vehicles. We did fund the decals and the placements of those decals on the buses, but we don't own the rights to those vehicles.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay. Shucks. I was going to say, the County needs some party buses. Nah, just joking. They're really nice buses. Okay. Can you please provide a breakdown and some details on your one-year commemoration event? I'm assuming it's for the fire, but $500,000 is what you guys have budgeted, so I wonder if you could just provide some breakdown and details.

MR. NISHITA: Thank…thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember U'u-Hodgins, for the question. Yeah, that funding was requested for a one-year anniversary event to work with community organizations and, you know, nonprofits in the area, to do something, you know, respectful and commemorative to help with, you know, the overall healing process and remembrance and whatnot. The Office of the Mayor, through their public affairs side, will be managing that event. And so, in our Departmental request, we did indicate a request to transfer that money to Office of the Mayor, who will be managing that…that program. But it…it was just essentially a rough estimate of potential cost, and I think it included discussions with Archie Kalepa and his group regarding how much…you know, different expenses that were incurred for the…the march that took place and some other activities, just to get a…an idea about the size and scale and how much cost would be associated with that. *. . .(timer sounds). . .*

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay. I had one more question, but I heard the bell. I'll wait for next round. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Next round. All right. Member Sinenci, then Member Kama, Lee, Paltin, Johnson, Rawlins-Fernandez, Cook. Member Sinenci?

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Mahalo, Chair. And mahalo, Director Nishita. On page 541 of the Budget Proposal for professional services, there's 14 million allocated, 225,000, for such things as Tetra Tech, as well as the expedited permitting. Can you briefly kind of go over the Lahaina Historic District design, as well as the traditional cultural property study?

MS. LAU HEE: Thank you for that question…oh, question. My understanding is the Long-Range Planning Division is…and the Planning Department needs to update the Lahaina design guidelines. And so, this process…this funding is to expedite that development and the update, so…to allow for reconstruction. And the traditional, cultural properties is an inventory and survey of traditional and cultural properties in the area specified of Kula and Lahaina that comprise those

areas and make them unique and special.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Oh, okay. And then, Director, did you want to…to add any of the other professional service listed in that list?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Sinenci, for the question. Yeah. So, for the emergency permitting, thank you folks for…for your support in helping to pass an ordinance that allows us to kind of implement that program. The services are…are being kind of stood up as we speak in terms of getting ready to begin operations out there. And that would basically allow people to have essentially a one-stop shop for submitting their permit requests, and then getting review and assistance in a timely manner to not get bogged down by normal departmental review processes and/or time frames. The Tetra Tech contract, we did have our consultant here before you folks fairly recently. They are assisting on a whole variety of matters, but one of the main areas is on our public assistance and FEMA Federal reimbursements to make sure that we're getting the most money back possible and to be our advocate in that manner. And they are on the call today if there's any questions specific to them. And then on the community engagement piece, this entity will be assisting in the long-range…I'm sorry, the long-term recovery plan, as well as other engagement activities with our West Maui community for the rebuilding and recovery process. And there's some --

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Okay. Thank you.

MR. NISHITA: -- other side, you know, project management services and…and…and whatnot that are needed in the recovery process as we look to rebuild and recover Lahaina.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Okay. Thank you for that update. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Member Kama, then Lee, and Paltin.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you all for being here again. So…okay. So, my first question is…I'm on your salaries and wages PowerPoint presentation. So, I wanted to ask, you have your EA II, EA I, the PIO, the Grants Manager, Secretary. So, the ones that you say you already or currently have filled, are you just moving people over from other departments? Is that how you're filling this? Yes or no.

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Kama, for the question. It's…I mean basically, there's different recruiting types for the position. So, some may be moving from another department and some may be openly recruited from…external from the County.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: So, the ones that are not currently filled, which is your EA II and your EA I, you're going…so, what you're recruiting actually is for two EA IIs and one EA I; is that right, if I'm reading this right?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: . . .*(inaudible)*. . .

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Councilmember Kama, for the question. Yes. And --

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Okay.

MR. NISHITA: -- they…they actually are just finishing up interviews, I believe, for --

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Okay.

MR. NISHITA: -- for most of the positions.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: So, what is the difference between the EA II and the EA I? What are these three guys going to be doing that is different from the EA I?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Kama, for the questions. For the…the E…so, generally speaking, it's different levels…for like different levels of responsibility, capabilities, and/or independence in their work product. So, that's generally like for all positions and classifications, as you kind of move up the scale, it gets progressively more difficult and more responsibility placed on you. For the EA I, some of the primary duties will be assisting us in planning efforts, as well as on legislative proposals and affairs and other discussions. The three EA IIs are specific to covering two of the recovery support function areas. So, they'll help to be project leads and actually implement projects that are needed in the recovery process.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Okay. And then for Tetra check…Tetra Tech, so, they're the guys helping to do all the FEMA stuff, right? The…the granting, the monitoring, the reporting, and all of that stuff. So, are they only going to be doing this for just the fire and not…and then when it's all done, whenever that is, would they be retained to do other kinds of grants within the County itself, or you haven't gotten there yet?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Kama, for the question. If you're talking about like nonwildfire-related --

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Yes, yes.

MR. NISHITA: -- things, then –

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Yeah.

MR. NISHITA: -- that's not currently in the scope --

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Okay.

MR. NISHITA: -- of their agreement.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Okay.

MR. NISHITA: So, that's something that we would have to contract out separately if that was desired. And the Mayor's Office did recently hire a…I believe it's called a Countywide Grants Coordinator to help look into some of those issues that you're referencing.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Oh, okay. Thank you. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Chair Lee, then Member Paltin to follow.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Hello, Managing Director. So, you're on O'ahu a lot. So, about a month and a half ago, I went before, online, the WAM Committee asking…I was going to ask for 400 million because that's what you folks were asking for at the time. But…so, can you tell me, how many asks do we have in front of them right now?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Chair Lee, for the question. The $400 million request was over three fiscal years, 150.95 million in year one. We only have one pending request before the State Legislature, and that's our 150.95 million request. There are some side issues that have come up in discussions, many of which you folks are already aware of, other, you know, programs or funding challenges or housing projects or things like that that have all been included in discussions with State Legislature. But the official Maui County request has been for the 150.95 million.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. So, my understanding is that a month and a half ago the State legislators were reluctant to fund some of our requests, for instance, the Angel Fund. So, are they going to fund that now? The 'Ohana Fund?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Chair Lee, for the question. The One 'Ohana Fund is kind of separate and apart from our funding request that we're asking specifically for Maui County. That is a program that, in coordination with the Governor, has, you know, been stood up to assist some of the families that were impacted by the fire. I…I don't recall where the current funding mechanism for that is at the State Leg right now, but I believe that they're making progress

to funding the State component for that.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: And one of the concerns at that time, and probably still now is, they're questioning whether we're making an effort to be more prudent with our budget because they see all expansions, and these are big expansions. So, how do you explain that to them?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Chair Lee, for the question. Honestly, we…that would take hours and hours because they…they like to go into all different kinds of specifics. But generally speaking, all the departments were held flat other than the wildfire-related costs associated with a few different departments, such as like Fire and Police and whatnot.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: So, you're pretty much telling them that the budget is flat?

MR. NISHITA: Well, you know, I think…I think what their message has been is that nonfire…wildfire-related costs or departmental expenses, they wanted to see essentially like a flat budget, which I think our message to them has been the nonfire…wildfire-related departmental costs have been held flat.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: So, you know, the…the…could you explain that loan again, the 75 million?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Chair Lee, for the question. Yeah, we were pursuing a…so, I guess…take a step back. We had discussions with HUD early on regarding our potential allocation of CDBG-DR funding, and there was concerns that we had expressed over the amount of time that would elapse before we would have access to such funds if they were allocated by the Federal Government, and how the need is now for our community. And so, at their recommendation, we looked into the possibility of utilizing a bridge loan capacity to *. . .(timer sounds). . .* access funding from Hawai'i Community Foundation, which then could potentially be reimbursed through CDBG-DR funding when that came down as sort of like a bridge of the gap, so to say. Since we made the proposal in the budget, and since we've had further discussions with HUD nailing down exactly what the programs would look like, we've determined with HUD that it would not be eligible for us to pursue a bridge through HCF and be qualified for CDBG-DR funding. And I believe the mechanism that we've received from HUD has been essentially the…the transfer of money would need to occur directly between the nonprofit agency and meet all HUD eligible…eligibility guidelines as opposed to the County kind of facilitating the…the…the transaction or whatnot. So, we did put in our…I think it was in the Departmental request that we're not pursuing that $54 million through a bridge loan with HCF at this time.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Member Paltin.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: You're familiar with my disclaimer, right? So, I'll stop you if I have the answer. So, the first question is, you know, in the expansion positions, it's been told to us that you need to approve these before it can go back and forth with the Department of Personnel; is that correct?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Paltin, for the question. I think what you're referencing is just if it triggers some type of reorganization of the department, and in which case there is a policy that they would have to get reviewed by our Department before going to DPS.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Only if it triggers a reorg? Oh, okay. And then I mean, you know how all the departments come to us with these expansion position requests and, you know, we've been granting them, and then year after year, it still hasn't been described by DPS. So, would it be okay to approve all the positions everyone wants, but not fund any of them until they actually get described? Would that hinder your operations as a County?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Paltin. To stay within your disclaimer, the brief answer is, it…it varies completely by…each situation is so unique, so I can't answer that so broadly.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: So, who does the…like for example, let's just take Land Management Administrator. Who keeps allowing that into the budget and putting money towards it when for the past five years, it never even got to DPS? Like do you guys have any oversight of the budget in that way that says you know what? We're not going to put any money to this position until it at least gets to DPS.

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Paltin, for the question. Specifically to the Land Manager, we've already communicated to Department of Finance that we will be changing that request. We're planning to come in as…within FY '25 a proposal for you folks, an amendment because there's still information that needs to be gathered and…and to be worked out. But our…our goal is to create a facilities division within Department of Public Works for the care and maintenance, management of County assets and…and property. One of the challenges that they faced in the Land Management Program was…I mean to be completely honestly, part of it was just following up timely to request some responses for information, and part of it is because there's conflicting duties within the Department of Public Works with some…at least one other employee.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I'm glad it only took us five years to figure that out. But I mean also Tax Auditor, Tax Information Specialist, those haven't been described in the past few years either, so just saying, that's a lot. The other question I have

is when we asked Finance about the Lahaina parking lot concession, they said that the contract was put on hold and that you have more information about it. And so, I guess…and I know that the Park Maui has been put on hold as well. And so, I was wondering like in the reopening of Lahaina, do we envision that to be a Park Maui site at the reopen? Because if it ever would be, it seems like these things should be in place as we reopen.

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Paltin, for the question. I think to accurately answer that, I need to know specifically the…the parcel in question because there's a couple different parcels that you may be relating to. But if it's an EO parcel, we have gotten indications that possibly the Governor may opt to take back those properties.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: It's the one for the . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . Hawai'i Cultural Revolving Fund.

MR. NISHITA: Okay. That's the EO…yeah, that's the EO property --

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, he's going to take it back?

MR. NISHITA: -- from the State. So…well, I haven't had personal discussions with him, but there was a *Civil Beat* article that came out about Moku'ula and the State's intentions and whatnot, and it was stated in that article that…you know, that there would be desire to like I think work with some non…or like a community organization and whatnot, and maybe returning those assets to…to some other group of organization. So, it's…it's a point…

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: They'd go backwards to Friends of Moku'ula days kind of, but they don't exist anymore.

MR. NISHITA: Yeah. So, it's…it's a point that we have on our list to talk with Governor and Governor's team about, but just due to that…that recent article, I think it's at least unclear to us if we'll continue to control that…the…that property interest. Thanks.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Thank you. Member Johnson, then we'll go to Member Rawlins-Fernandez.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Director, Deputy Director, for joining us. I know you guys are super busy, so I really appreciate your time with us. The…the $150 million request from the State, I understand…right, to the State. So, on the back on page 150 . . .*(inaudible)*. . . 542, it says $130…or 130 million; is that different? Oh, okay.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Ms. Milner?

MS. MILNER: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Johnson. So, the 150 million is split between Office of Recovery and MEMA. So, 20 million --

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay.

MS. MILNER: -- is under MEMA for security services, and 130 million's under Office of Recovery.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay. All right. Thanks for that clarification. I just was wondering. All right. So, then I…I pulled up the Maui Wildfire Disaster Recovery Executive Summary. In…in one…on Table 4, it has a metric of number of MHU…FEMA-manufactured housing unit summary. There's N/As for them. We haven't…because if I'm reading this right, we haven't manufactured any housing, is that what that's saying right there?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Johnson, for the question. That…what that's relating to the FEMA build sites --

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay.

MR. NISHITA: -- and so, they haven't constructed any units for the FEMA builds yet.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: What is that site that's across from King's Chapel [*sic*] considered? And is that in your Department, are you guys taking care of that one?

MR. NISHITA: Thank…thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Johnson, for the question. I…I guess in terms of questioning do we take care of it, all we're involved is like in the permitting and…and regulatory approval process. It's a private project, kind of run through Maude and…and…and her folks.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: That wouldn't be on here then, of course.

MR. NISHITA: No, no.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Got it.

MR. NISHITA: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Because it's not . . .*(inaudible)*. . .

MR. NISHITA: It's…as well as other private projects that --

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Right.

MR. NISHITA: -- we're working with entities on.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay. So, my next question is in regards to the…okay. So, has the Department explored temporary or modular buildings on public land that can be repurposed to avoid the 250,000 rental cost while purchasing an asset to extend the value? So, we are renting…you know, if…when we're done, can we use these units for housing our people?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Johnson, for the question. Yes, the Council--thank you very much--had appropriated $8 million that we worked with CNHA on. I believe--is it probably ending of April, I think, or maybe into beginning of May, I think--CNHA will be ready to open the Fairways project. That includes kind of those ADU units that could be reused in the future. And…and our…our whole…our whole goal is like there's obviously this interim period of housing that's needed, but we want --

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Right.

MR. NISHITA: -- a path to permanency to be there, either to be able to reuse the units or that they could continue to be used onsite with some kind of permanent function. Otherwise, it seems to be a lot of waste of resources and…and funding.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Yeah, I agree. Is there…you remember Site Q *(phonetic)*, is there…how many…the units are on Site Q at this moment, and can we use them for the fire folks?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Johnson, for the question. Site Q, as it stood before, is currently empty. The County granted those units to Family Life Center . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . and those are being used for the unsheltered community. And we did have some additional kind of more…those are more temporary pop-up units, similar --

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Right.

MR. NISHITA: -- to what you saw at like Waiale Park --

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Right.

MR. NISHITA: -- and whatnot. And those were granted as well, but we still have physical control of those. I think there's probably about 40…40 units or so of those. But practically speaking, the units that like CNHA that we're working with them on that, some of the like design registration standard builds that are…are going through the process, as well as like the FEMA products and State products are frankly superior --

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Right.

MR. NISHITA: -- quality and whatnot.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Right.

MR. NISHITA: So, we'd rather kind of...better living arrangement for --

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay.

MR. NISHITA: -- community members.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you so much. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Great. Member Rawlins-Fernandez, then Cook.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Chair. Okay. Aloha, Managing Director, Deputy Managing Director, and team. Okay. So, I'll start with the first question that I spoke to that came up at last night's Budget Hearing. So, in the budget, there's 15,000 allocated for Molokai Veterans Caring for Veterans. There's the 20,000 for Maui County Veterans Council, and then 5,000 for West Maui Veterans Club. For...specifically for the Molokai Veterans Caring for Veterans, do you know what that 15,000 is for?

MS. LAU HEE: Typically, that's used for their operating expenses. They have like phone and other expenses that they...they ask for reimbursement, and I believe they have events occasionally. That's what we support as part of the grant agreement.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay, great. Do you know if...and you can...I can talk to you about this later if you don't have this information now. Do you know if the 15,000 that was allocated for FY '24 was applied for for the Molokai Veterans Caring for Veterans?

MS. LAU HEE: I believe they did apply, but we haven't expended funds yet. We were waiting for compliance.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Oh, got it. Okay. Mahalo for that information. And then for the Maui County Veterans Council and West Maui Veterans Club, are the funds for similar things like the Molokai Veterans Caring for Veterans?

MS. LAU HEE: Yes, that's correct. Very similar.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. Mahalo. Okay. So, under...for the information technology services registration and training fees, it has 250,400 for

the various things in the notes. One of the things is for Microsoft 360 [*sic*]. Are you folks planning to move from Webex to Teams?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Rawlins-Fernandez, for the question. Yes, we…we do plan to get out of the dark ages here at some point as quickly as possible and…and join the Legislative Branch. Thanks.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Managing Director. I think we might leave Teams and go to Zoom. I don't know. Less complaints about Teams recently…but still, BlueJeans, you know, it just set such a high bar that Teams just cannot, you know, meet. So, it's just unfortunate. I don't know if you're having the same experience, but I miss BlueJeans so much. Okay. I think for the next set of questions, I'll wait for round two. Chair, are you planning to give us the same amount of time in round two, or less time?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Four minutes again.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: I missed it. Sorry.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Is four minutes again in round two.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: I think I'm going to save my next couple of questions for…for round two so that I don't get interrupted. Mahalo, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: By the timer…interrupted by the timer.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. So, you're done for now? Okay. Member Cook?

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Thank you, Chair. My question for the Managing Director, I'm going to repeat a question and I'll tell you your answer, and I'll ask for clarification because it wasn't an answer. Currently, County Directors, Deputy Directors, division heads, are playing active roles in the Office of Recovery. Now that the Office has been established and work is being contracted out, when will these individuals be able to return to their regularly-assigned duties in their respective departments? And basically you said that County leadership will continue to be engaged and involved throughout the recovery which, if that means there's going to be communication and collaboration of the decisions and activities that were made to the new people, great. I'm just curious, who is slated to be the temporary housing person in the Department of

Discovery…Discovery…Recovery?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Cook, for the…the question. I…I think…generally, I think what we're just trying to say by that response is that the recovery and rebuilding efforts in Lahaina is our top priority, and so, it will involve all the departments. So, regardless of whether they're in a Office of Recovery slated function or whatnot, it's an all-hands-on-deck that we're going to need assistance with. So, whether they're formally in a role or not formally in that role, it doesn't matter because…

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Okay. I'm going to interrupt you because --

MR. NISHITA: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: -- I only got four minutes. I understand that, and I'm just…I'm striving and hoping for the structured transition. I understand what you're dealing with, and you've described it well, I mean like building the airplane while we're in the air or something similar to that. So, I have no criticism. Well, I have a critique. The temporary housing person who's doing it, we haven't really gotten much temporary housing built. And there's projects like Family Life Center, the 'Ohana Hope Village that's privately funded, that I'm involved with to some extent. I've been advocating and trying to help with it. And the…the general feeling is that the County has been obstructive and not helpful. I think there was $35,000 for building permits, never been inspections, not…you know, they're not in compliance. It is temporary, it isn't permanent. It's private funding, private on purpose so that they can give it all away so it's not a waste. I'm just hoping that whoever this entity at the…is doing that can get the message that people are ready to move out of the hotels, have a more wholesome place to be. It's not going to be perfect, but anyway. So, that's…is there hope?

MR. NISHITA: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Okay. Thanks. My second question for the Office of Recovery, this is a continuation of a question when you answered it. The Office of Recovery, what are the specific roles and areas of expertise for each of the assistant…Executive Assistant II and I positions? And you kind of gave a general deal, but what would be the…describe what the functionality of that is. I understand it'll be oversight, and I understand it would supervision, but there's a few of these.

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Cook, for the question. So, just trying to keep it brief for…for your time. Like for the three EA IIs, for example, they would each cover two different recovery support function areas. Yeah. So, like housing and infrastructure would be one group together. *. . .(timer sounds). . .* The…you know, I think the primary purpose is one, to…getting back

to your original question, to alleviate the burden on a lot of the people who are doubling, tripling up right now, but it's also to help carry things through to completion. So, we know that this whole recovery process will be many years in the making, and so, we want to make sure that that institutional knowledge and that project development will continue on administration to administration. And they will be able to help take on a lot of the day-to-day tasks and project implementation that will be needed to make these things a reality.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Thank you for that. I'll save further questions. Thank you very much.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. So, you know, I…could you introduce who else is here? I…I only can see Josiah and Keanu, and I think I just saw a head pop up here.

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Sorry, I…I apologize. I thought we were going to go like program by program, so I asked our IT folks to be up here. I think many of you know, we recently lost our CTO that we're recruiting…actively recruiting for right now. But we have Karen and Leecia here in person. They're some of our division heads within ITS. And then I think Kim might be online too. Oh, okay. Okay. So, yeah, we have Karen and Leecia here today. We have Erin, who came down already, you folks know, and then Dan Shupack from my office as well in case there's any questions. And then online we have Tetra Tech, our consultant, as well as we have the Department of Public Works, Department of Water, and Department of Environmental Management in case there's any questions on the recovery CIP. Thanks.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Thank you. So, I wanted to focus on what's in the CIP document, and on page 910 and 911. And here you have all your projects listed for the recovery, wildfire recovery. And so, my question to you is that…I guess you…you said earlier you have to wait to see what the Legislature does, but you want to do all these projects, right, that's listed here item by item? And what if we don't have enough funding to…to pay for it, what is your plan?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Yeah, so the…just to kind of give you some general background. Of course, you folks know that we have a lot of expenditures related to wildfire recovery and rebuilding activities, not just the $150 million request to the State. That…those specific projects were identified as a result of discussion specifically with the Ways and Means Committee about what the State might be willing to support. And they were looking for more of those projects that would lead to like permanency, especially reducing the State's obligations to the noncongregate sheltering as sort of like a double benefit to them. So, that's how these projects were specifically identified, as opposed to a lot of the other wildfire recovery costs that we have. So, I think less so for them, you know, it's…it's about like what the individual project is versus like the overall need that exists within Maui. Because we can fill that bucket with some other project or program

or expense that Maui County is facing, it's just this specific proposal was addressed…to address the desires and concerns of the Ways and Means Committee. And each of these projects will have to get done. I think the only one listed on there that…I mean I wouldn't classify it as a…as a nice to have, but one that I think at the State level, some may feel that there's more responsibility on the individual homeowner and whatnot would be the Wahikuli sewer project, but the…especially considering DOH's approval to connect to cesspools in the interim. But the whole repopulation effort will…will involve restoring infrastructure and other critical services to the area, which will involve all of these projects over time. Thanks.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: So, for Fiscal Year '25, 145,000…145 million, Fiscal Year '26 is 1595 [*sic*], that number. So, for whatever reason…but you are still asking for 150.99 [*sic*]?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. The costs are broken out by fiscal year --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Right.

MR. NISHITA: -- so that's why we only asked for the 150.95. I think there's some, you know…you know, ensuring that the…the County is demonstrating that we're providing our own finances and stuff to the recovery effort as well, so we're not asking the State to cover 100 percent of all costs related to recovery. Some of the projects that are…you could see are identified in future fiscal years may be so because there may be like design elements that have to take place or, you know, specific permitting, or maybe it's like a manpower or contractor issue that would push it out, or…or other different mechanisms that may be involved. But this is kind of our realistic time schedule of when these projects might occur.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: So, as the Budget Committee, I'm concerned that we have enough money to support these important projects. And I…at what point are going to find out will we need to provide more funding, or is the State going to come through with your big ask?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair, for the question. Kind of as I related earlier, I think the absolute last date you guys would find out will probably be the April 26th . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . to 28th time period. And of course, if I know something sooner, I'll let you folks know. Thanks.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. I'm…I'm very concerned, so I'll come back. So, next we have Member U'u-Hodgins.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Thank you, Chair. I want to kind of touch about…touch upon what you were talking to Chair Lee about, the HCF grant or bridge loan. Can you…so, I know that in our budget it says $54 million, and it

was even discussed, but then on page 541, it says $75 million. Can you explain the $21 million delta where that's coming from? And then how do we move forward if we don't get the grant or the bridge loan?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Ms. Milner?

MS. MILNER: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember U'u-Hodgins. So, the intent was--and I apologize if it wasn't clear--that 50…54.5 of that County grant subsidy would come from the bridge loan and the rest would be general funded. If you look at 137 in Granicus, that's the departmental requests for amendments, and the very first one is the request to remove the other revenue sources line item, which is the 54.5 million. And under Department of Management, we then also propose reducing that line item, County grant subsidy, by the same amount. So, that's the intent for if we don't…because we're not pursuing the bridge loan anymore, we would not grant as much because we won't have the funds.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay.

MR. NISHITA: And, Chair? Sorry, to get the second part of your question.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Yes.

MR. NISHITA: The…when we worked with Ways and Means Committee specifically about the concern over the NCS costs and rehousing people, part of the $400 million request over three fiscal years included $78 million we requested from the State to work with our community partners on rehousing efforts. And as a part of demonstrating our, you know, commitment to our own residents and assisting in that effort, we were trying to find a way to partner in that to provide an additional $75 million for rehousing efforts, and a piece of that would come from the…the bridge loan program. So, that's…that's how it kind of got shaped up over time.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay.

MR. NISHITA: And it…the total funding, you know, dollar amount, we did some rough estimates as to cost to fund different programs that could meet the overall housing need, and we did a presentation to you folks prior regarding the different projects and programs that could be funded to meet that. And that's how we came up with the total 75 from the County and 78 from the State. Thanks.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay. Thank you. So, I want to discuss too what Member Cook was asking you about, basically Management Department and Office of Recovery. So, are we going to assume however long we have Office of Recovery, it'll be the Managing Director and Deputy Director of Management who's going to be the Director and Deputy Director, or do we ever see that kind

of bifurcating out?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember U'u-Hodgins, for the question. I think for our own sanity, we're going to need . . .*(laughing)*. . . more assistance in the future. The proposal that Council granted us previously included a Recovery Manager, and unfortunately, that position does not exist throughout the State of Hawai'i. So, many of you are well aware, working with departments, it takes about a year. We're in that process already with them, but we don't anticipate being able to even actively starting to recruit for that position until probably later this year some time.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay. And then real quickly, on page 537 where it discuss [*sic*] your goals for the Office of Recovery, nearly every one of your goals says that percentage validated…and these are self-created goals. So, I'm always curious on how you folks evaluate yourself, but how are you going to validate all of these goals?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember U'u-Hodgins, for the questions. So, I mean each one is a little bit different, but to --

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Yeah.

MR. NISHITA: -- kind of broadly just talk about…I mean some of it will include assessments from different stakeholders, some of it will include from like internal counterparts and stakeholders, and then we do plan . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . to utilize one of our consultants to run some community sentiment and/or surveys related to whether we're meeting kind of the goals of the recovery functions. Thanks.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay. Good. I'll be interested to see next year's budget and see if you guys meet your 100 percent benchmark. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Member Sinenci, then Member Kama.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Thank you, Chair. Just following up on Member U'u-Hodgins' last question about the 75 million and the delta, 21 million, I think Deputy Lau Hee last time said that there would be 21 million funding for CNHA for housing?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Sinenci, for the question. Yeah, just kind of relating to the…the previous discussion. Without the bridge loan component of that 54 million, the remainder, 21 million, was still being slated for CNHA programs.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Oh, okay. That's where it could come. Okay. Thank

you. Thank you, Chair. That was all my questions for now. I…I…I'm sorry, I need to jump off real quick, but I'll…I'll stay on the meeting listening in. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Thank you. Vice-Chair Kama, then Chair Lee after.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Thank you, Chair. So, I just want to go back to the discussions that took place somewhere down here about the Land Manager position that I think happened when we all came on, right, when we all came first.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: . . .*(inaudible)*. . .

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Yeah. So…and now you talk about changing that into a facilities-type position? I mean the intent, I think, at the time was we have all this land, and yet we don't know what to do with it. Somebody should be able to sit, plan it out, and say so, when we want to use it for different things, people don't say oh, no, you can't do that, but it's already part of this plan that should have been in the community plans and sometimes are, sometimes aren't, and maybe that's not said. So…so, how does that factor into the discussion we had in 2019 and where you are in thinking about doing it today?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Kama, for the question. As I said, we plan to come in FY '25 for an amendment request once we get all the details ironed out. So, I won't have all the answers here for you today. But it…it's not envisioned that like oversight and/or management of County open space or lands would then go away. It's just a matter of developing this program so that it can be more functional and actually implemented where Council's not being requested to do this year after year after year and then no results. Thanks.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Okay. So, other entities and agencies have a land management division, or somebody that does this stuff with their lands. I think private landowner companies…I mean KSBE has one, DHHL has one, but we don't have one for ourselves, yeah?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Yeah, our…our open space is divvied up between a few different departments –

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Yeah.

MR. NISHITA: -- generally. We also have some nonprofit agencies or community groups that also help manage some of the open space. So, it's kind of a little mixed bag there.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Yeah.

MR. NISHITA: And so we do want to get that kind of more cohesive, especially in light of the wildfire events --

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Yeah.

MR. NISHITA: -- and making sure that we're properly managing and taking care of our lands.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Right. And everybody who owns lands is taking care of it the way it should be so that we don't have to go and trim this and…okay. Okay. So, you're coming in '25, that's coming real quick. Right? I mean the Mayor is going to come out with his budget in the next couple of months I guess, right? October, November of '24 for the '25 Budget.

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Yeah, he'll…he'll start discussions…actually, they'll probably start like right after you guys pass the budget. And actually may have sort of already talking about stuff, but it's kind of a never-ending process. But no, we…our…our…our goal is to come in with a FY '25 amendment before the FY '26 proposal. Thanks.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Okay. So, then I want you to talk about the…the…the Mokuʻula parking lot that was getting revenues to be able to take care of Mokuʻula, and the Governor wanting to probably draw back on that EO. Do we have any influence over the Governor as to whether or not we want him to take it back and what we want to do with it in terms of what the community would like to see done with that entire parcel as it is adjacent and connected to Mokuʻulu…Mokuʻula and Mokuhinia?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Kama, for the question. Obviously, of course, our legislators have influence and…and whatnot, and I…I know both from our Mayor and…and Governor I believe, you know, they do respect your guys' opinions. The…I think it was related in the article that--and as I…as I mentioned, we haven't had the chance to all touch base on this with all the different players--but that there was some . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . community individuals and/or organizations that had, I guess, indicated support for this plan. So, whether or not that's true, and whether or not there's full understanding about, you know, the implications of this or the ramifications, remains to be seen. But it's…it's a point that we plan to continue discussing further with, with all the different partners. Thanks.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Okay. Because I just want to make sure that when we're in this discussion that we don't forget the intent of what we're doing with Mokuʻula, and that doesn't get lost in the fray. Okay. Thank you. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Chair Lee?

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Thank you. Okay. So, Josiah, everybody's kind of been dancing around this subject because nobody wants to hurt anybody's feelings, but the fact of the matter is, we're…we're being asked to approve a whole bunch of positions when we know what the problem is. We need water and we need permits. It's really that simple. And to hire more people to stand around and say we need water and we need permits is not going to solve the problem. So, somebody, Stufflebean or whoever, has to take the bull by the horn and fix it, yeah? So, that, to us, is high priority. Because we have been in close contact with the people of Lahaina, and all they want is to have permanent homes in Lahaina, not in Central Maui. And so, we're willing to do whatever it takes to support you to get to that goal line, but it seems that you have a whole other…other goals before you get to that goal line. So, I'm hoping that there is a surge from your office and the Mayor's Office and…and all the departments to refocus on getting permanent housing in Lahaina. Because we're not going to support a whole bunch of housing someplace else…it doesn't make sense. They don't want to even leave. And then the other thing about Mokuʻula, I'm really surprised because Keʻeaumoku Kapu and his group has been sort of like the caretakers of Mokuʻula, and they have been the ones who have lobbied us for funding so that they can continue their work in that area. So, I'm surprised that the Governor all of a sudden is interested. Is…is there any particular reason why? I mean with all the problems we have, he wants to take over that section?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Chair Lee, for the question. I really can't speculate, you know, what the Governor's thoughts are or intentions. All we can…all we know at this time is what the article said, and that it's on our list to talk with the State about what the…what their plans are and what the, you know, proposed, I guess, project and/or ideas are.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. Thank you. Please, please, let's do permanent housing in Lahaina. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Next, Member Paltin, and then Johnson.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I'm going to try get through my three follow-up questions. Housing and Human Concerns and Parks said we should talk to you about these issues. 300,000 for the implementation of Ordinance 5315 (2022); the status of Lahaina Crossroads and Komohana Hale, if we're going to tear them down; and urban forest management grant, what the funds will be used for and who will lead this.

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Paltin, for the questions. The status of the Crossroads and Komo…Komohana Hale, I think is…yeah. So, we…there's some, I think, more broader range community decisions that have to be made, given their proximity to maybe the historic districts and/or SMA, you

know, areas.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: They said the testing for Crossroads did come back with asbestos and lead. So, who…I mean did we sign a ROE, and are they going to remove that off island?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. My…my understanding is all our County properties have been listed on the ROE. There's just some decision points to be made regarding like shoring up properties and the debris removal process, or whether the entire structure will come down. But --

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: So, we don't know…

MR. NISHITA: -- but our…our intention is to rebuild the affordable housing and/or rentals. In the master planning of all County properties, I think it's just important to note that there may be different types of uses, or maybe more infill development, or maybe partnerships with adjacent property owners to…to do something different. So, it may not look exactly the same, or may be located in a different location, but our intention is to bring back housing in that area.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: So, we don't know if we're going to completely tear down Crossroads, Komohana Hale, or even the Pioneer Mill office on Kaunoa property? We don't know if we're going to completely tear them down and start fresh or not yet?

MR. NISHITA: I'm not sure if any of our team knows offhand. If…if not, we can get back to you. But I…I don't know offhand whether those will be completely torn down or not. My…my anticipation is that we're going to have to essentially rebuild them from scratch, but I haven't heard a firm determination yet.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: James, you got that on follow-up, firm determination? And then Ordinance 5351, urban forest management grant.

MR. NISHITA: The urban forest management grant, we just got that taken over because of a transfer of an employee. So, I'll be 100 percent honest with you, I'm…other than signing for that to come over to us, I really don't know too much of it offhand as of yet. The employee just transferred recently.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: So, Ms. Maydan --

MR. NISHITA: But we can follow up in writing.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: -- going to lead that up?

MR. NISHITA: I'm sorry, what was that?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Ms. Maydan going to lead it up?

MR. NISHITA: Yeah, yeah. So, she…she leads that project.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay.
MR. NISHITA: We can…I can follow up with her and provide additional information.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And the 300,000 towards the implementation of Ordinance 5315?

MR. NISHITA: Is that the Bill 111? Okay. Yeah, apologies, I guess Kim was on vacation today and…and not on here. But I think following up a previous discussion where Councilmember Johnson asked a similar question, I did check in with our team, and apparently the costs that came back were over and above what was budgeted. The…I…

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay. That's enough for me.

MR. NISHITA: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I'll let him follow up.

MR. NISHITA: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: The next question I had was on ITSD. Would it be possible to contract that out, as it seems like the turnover is kind of ongoing? Like every year, there's choke ITSD Vs and like that . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . and we cannot keep them.

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Paltin, for the question. When you say contract out, there are a lot of services that they're contracting out in absence of physical personnel that we're able to hire. So, there…there is an offset there just due to higher operational costs because of that. If it's related to like whether that whole function can be contracted out, then I would say no. The County does need representatives and personnel specific and, you know, hired by and controlled by and under the supervision and authority of the County of Maui to manage such critical things as like our network infrastructure, cybersecurity efforts, things of that nature.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Chair, I seen Ms. Milner raise her hand, can we hear from her as well?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: I don't see it. Did she?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: . . .*(inaudible)*. . .

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh. Oh, I thought --

MS. MILNER: Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- I thought you said Jen Maydan. Sorry.

MS. MILNER: Just really quickly. I will add that as part of the FY '25 Budget discussion, we did elect to only put in one expansion position for ITSD in favor of increasing the professional services budget to try and help support that capacity, rather than adding more E/P for this year.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah. Okay. Member Johnson, then followed by Member Rawlins-Fernandez.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you, Chair. Director Nishita, if you can follow up on that Bill 111 conversation, I'd like to have you finish that thought.

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Johnson. Yeah, I mean I guess the short answer is that the…the project costs came in higher than what was budgeted and frankly, we should have just come in for a budget amendment. So, I don't really have a good answer for you, other than --

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay.

MR. NISHITA: -- that it just --

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Will you come…

MR. NISHITA: -- we should have come in for a budget amendment. Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: In the future, will you come in for a budget amendment?

MR. NISHITA: Thank…thank you, Chair. I think…I think the key to the second part of your question is anticipated, probably get to at some point is…and apologies, Kim isn't on, but I can follow up after.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay.

MR. NISHITA: My understanding is I don't believe the implementation costs were built into ITS' budget for this coming year because the cost came in higher and because it wasn't implemented.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: What is the costs?

MR. NISHITA: I'll…I'll…I'll get to you in writing --

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Sure.

MR. NISHITA: -- following the meeting. Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: And James, if you can follow up. All right. Great. Thank you so much. All right. Let's see. Okay. My next question is in regards to the…okay, the CDBG-DR, if I did that right, you said we're waiting on it. Is there a timeline on when it's coming?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Johnson, for the question. The…it…it relies heavily on Congress, so…I mean ultimately, your guess is as good as mine. But Senator Schatz has been advocating for a supplemental appropriation since it didn't get in the last cycle. So, that potentially could happen at any time, depending if they're successful in that. If not, then the next round would probably be in about August to December time period.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: So, I…I've already heard that CDBG-DR is like this thing that's going to come and save us when FEMA leaves, right, this big chunk of money is going to help us. The…the question I have, and I…I don't know if the strings are attached that would allow us to do this, but what if we bonded some of our projects and paid off our bonds with the CDBG-DR funds, is that a possible route?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Johnson, for the question. The three main categories that CDBG-DR covers is economic development, housing, and infrastructure.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Housing.

MR. NISHITA: So, depending, you know, on…on how that's structured, the different allocations could be made within those three buckets. The allocations have to be made according to the action plan that's developed, and if we're not able to establish the action plan, which includes community engagement and involvement about how the money should be spent, until we get listed in the Federal register as an approved essentially recipient of CDBG-DR funding. But I mean --

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay.

MR. NISHITA: -- all…all those conversations are happening, and it…and, you know, we'll…we'll continue to work with HUD about what's possible. But…

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: So, that action plan, how's it coming along? Is it…you…you're going to wait until you get it and then do the action plan, or are you doing the action plan in preparation for it?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Johnson, for the question. So, the CDBG-DR is being handled by Patience in the CDBG Office.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay.

MR. NISHITA: Of course, we all work closely in collaboration with each other. There's a variety of measures that they're getting stood up in anticipation of a DR allotment, but the actual action plan itself can't be developed until we become an eligible recipient.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay. I…I don't want the plan to be the barrier, right. If they say here's your money, like Congress is there, and it takes us eight months to get…come up with a plan, that's my concern, right. And I know these plans don't…aren't easy to make. And are we working with other communities that have created plan, Paradise? I don't know, but something that we can be…as soon as that money drops, we're ready with the ask, right?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Johnson, for the question. Yes, they've been . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . in coordination with a lot of different communities. I know like Lee County, Florida; Paradise, Sonoma; Hawai'i County; Kaua'i County; have all been recipients of DR funding. Generally, just so you know, when we get listed as a recipient, if Congress was to make that determination with HUD, generally funding wouldn't be available until about 18 months to 2 years following that. So, it's not you get listed and you get this windfall of money.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: That's a really important clarification.

MR. NISHITA: You get listed in the register, and then you can start the process of doing your action plan, and when that's approved, the funding gets released probably about 18 months or so after that.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: So, bonding would be a way? I mean we got to come up with some money for that window, 18 months to 2 years. Where's the…that's the bridge the gap that we're talking about in another, you know, category, so…

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. And thank you, Councilmember Johnson. The…there's all different buckets of money that are --

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay.

MR. NISHITA: -- are being leveraged, you know, so --

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay.

MR. NISHITA: -- there's like the public assistance program, and our consultant Tetra Tech is assisting us with like expedited project worksheets and…and other things to get funding into the door quickly to help bridge this gap. You know, we've been working with, of course, the State Legislature, Hawai'i Community Foundation, you know, we've been talking with other communities about --

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Yeah.

MR. NISHITA: -- what they've done in the process, and as well as our underwriters and…and other financial institutions.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you. I know my time's up, I just don't want us to be behind the eight-ball. Thank you. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you, Member Johnson. Member Rawlins-Fernandez, followed by Member Cook.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Chair. So, my first question is kind of related to Member Johnson's. I think the article that came out in *Civil Beat* yesterday, Maui County has been slow to come up with a plan to help people rebuild in Lahaina, that a State lawmaker is doing it instead, was…is kind of an unfair title because the County is looking at not just vertical construction on lots, we're looking at putting the infrastructure in for the whole town. And in comparing our plan to the…the plan for Paradise, there's so many differences, like substantial differences, in our…our rebuild plan to theirs. For…for Lahaina…for Paradise, it was primarily…primarily residential lots that were…that were burned. For Lahaina, as we all know, there…there's such a mix of uses, of…of buildings, of historic buildings, of cultural significance. Lahaina was the capitol of our Hawaiian Kingdom. So, these are differences that were just totally glazed over in that *Civil Beat* article, and it was really upsetting for me to read yesterday. So, I wanted to give you an opportunity to speak to that.

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Rawlins-Fernandez, for the question. The…yeah, the…I think one of the things mentioned there too was something we've been communicating to the public for some time now about our emergency permitting center and standing that up. And it sounded like, at least how the…the article read, that maybe there was no efforts in…in that realm or whatnot. I think we've talked to many communities, many different resources coming from all over the nation, and this is by far the most complex and difficult disaster that they've ever seen or responded to. So, I…I…I don't believe it's fair to compare to other communities. You know, Paradise itself was also like a more

retirement-age community, a lot of older folks. They're probably about six years in or so at this point, and only about 25 to 30 percent rebuilt. So, I mean they've been a great resource to us, but I mean, we've seen, just comparing what we've heard from all different communities across the nation that everybody has had their own challenges. But unequivocally, we have a melting pot of basically every hard situation that you can come across altogether in one area. And so, it…it just…people need to understand that to…to do this right and to do with the community involved and whatnot, it is going to take time, it's going to be complex, there's going to be hard decisions that are going to have to be made, it's going to be expensive. And so, you know, we appreciate everyone's support in that effort, and we're…we're trying to do our best to help meet this…the community's needs. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Managing Director, for…for speaking to all of that. And I think one quote when, you know, this first was happening, I think it was a FEMA representative that said, when you've seen one fire, you've seen exactly one fire, that every fire is so different. And for *Civil Beat*--and I hope they're listening--to have written an article like that, to upset our community in…in making them think that our County isn't working day and night to try to figure out this problem, as you said, is…that is so complex, that it…it's…it's such a disservice when we should be all working together. So, mahalo for that. The other thing that's really upsetting is the State Legislature. And I don't understand what it is that they want from us. We have kept a flat budget. Did you…and…and in listening to the discussion during that Finance Committee when they took up a resolution urging us to pass a prudent budget as if we weren't going to is so insulting because that is what we do every year. And I…the two legislators that spoke about our process--because none of them understand our County process--but they spoke like . . .*(inaudible)*. . . And the two that actually understand it, one was a former…is a former Councilmember, and the other worked in my Staff when I was Budget Chair, and so they understand our budget process. And none of them understand the special fund that we have, that…the revolving funds, the general funds, all the grant passthrough monies, and so they're just looking at the total and thinking we're not going to be prudent? Lahaina generates so much money every year in TAT, in GET, for the…all the State, for all the other representatives' districts, and now they want to turn their back on Lahaina? I hope they're listening. Watching them discuss that in the Finance Committee, we're supposed to be all together. That was not being supportive of Lahaina, and letting Lahaina lead. I'll…I'll let you . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . make any comments with my final time. I…I heard the timer, but Chair, if you would like to invite Managing Director to speak, he can. Sorry.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Josiah?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Rawlins-Fernandez. I

think the only thing, just given the…the timer went up that I would just mention as this point in regards to unity and unity of effort is…it is something in my discussions with State legislators that has been a concern regarding just making sure that even, you know, our…our own Maui County delegation, and…that includes Maui Councilmembers, our State reps, our State senators, our…our Mayor, and other, you know, prominent community organizations, that we're coming with the same voice and the same asks and whatnot. That it's…you know, in this age of social media and potential divisions and whatnot, that it's so…so important, more than ever, for us to be able to be unified for our community and to be speaking the same message to everyone. So, I appreciate the…the…the comments, and whatever we can do to kind of support your folks' efforts in the budget process, as well as your advocacy efforts, you know, please let us know, we'd be happy to help. Thanks.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Managing Director. Mahalo, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Member Cook?

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Thank you, Chair. Chair, my questions are for an update on the professional services, expedited permitting, the 6 million, and Tetra Tech was 3. Are they going to be…is that contract completed, and are they going to be…is that contract going to be extended with further work on their behalf or another RFP or what?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Cook, for the questions. Yeah, both entities. So, for the emergency permitting, an entity called 4LEAF was the selected vendor, and they've been contracted already. And then, as you know, Tetra Tech has been working with us for some time and they're under contract as well. Both include provisions for potential multiyear extensions if that's necessary, and then, of course, at the…subject to availability of funding and the discretion of the County to continue those services.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: So, how's it going with 4LEAF and the Department so far? I mean…and there again, we do…we are all on the same team and going the same direction. And my questioning isn't questioning, it's basically for an update so that we can be aware of how much support is necessary and how it's going.

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. I know our Director of Public Works is on. I don't know if…Director Molina, if you want to add anything to this, otherwise I can respond to Councilmember Cook's question. Okay.

MR. MOLINA: Oh, excuse me, Chair. I'm sorry, repeat…repeat the question?

MR. NISHITA: Thanks. Director Molina, Councilmember Cook was just specifically asking about the kind of status and where we are at with the 4LEAF contract. You know, what's…what's been going underway recently, and then ways in which they can assist or provide any help.

MR. MOLINA: Yeah, thank you for the question. So, they are under contract. The contract has been executed. They've been embedded with DSA, getting oriented with MAPPS, setting up our permit recovery center at the Service Center, working with the other review agencies to understand their processes. So, they're…they're well tied in at this point and gearing up, and we have, I'll announce it, tentative go-live date of April 29th at this point to open up the emergency permit process.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Wow.

MR. MOLINA: Thank you.

MR. NISHITA: And Chair, if I just might add to that. We're very close now on securing a space at Lahaina Gateway Center, and so I'm hopeful any day now we'll be getting the keys to that. And we are designating a portion of the space to include services provided by 4LEAF for our residents.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Great progress. That's…space has been a challenge all the…all the time, right, trying to find a place to set up shop to provide the services that we're asking you to provide. Okay. That's all. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: So, can you have an office for Member Paltin who lost her office?

MR. NISHITA: Yeah. Thank you, Chair. I think we made a commitment early on that if assistance was needed that we'd be happy to. I know…I think OCS Staff was looking at possibly renting a trailer or doing some other kinds of things, but if there's been any change in focus on that or something else more desirable, then we can talk offline and see what we can do. Of course, physical space is very limited, but we have made a commitment to help Councilmember Paltin if that's desired. Thanks.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Member Paltin? Are…are…is it desired?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Yeah. I spoke with Nāpili Noho, they're having a little trouble with the permitting because I guess they thought that they were going to help, but it feels like it's not special permitting to move from Nāpili Park to in back of Civic, it's like standard permitting. So, we're running into some snags. It's the same person that Member Cook's talking about that there's no housing, no water, no…I mean if we're going to follow the regular process, then I don't know, nothing's going to get built like how regularly nothing gets built, I guess.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, I…I thought we're asking you do you want to…your office space is what I…I was asking Managing Director.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Yeah. Because the plan was for a trailer to be behind the Civic, but apparently the site plan that was…was submitted is more than 170 feet from the nearest fire hydrant, so it didn't go through. So, that's in limbo. Like we were planning on buying a trailer to go in that compound --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: -- but if we can't even get the permits for our resiliency hub relocation from Nāpili Park, I don't know that we'll get the permits for anything moving forward.

MR. NISHITA: Chair, we'll follow up on that following this meeting. Thanks.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah, I would love for Member Paltin and her…you know, her Staff to find someplace to…to work from. So, I…I just wanted to talk about the CDBG-DR funds, and I know that CEDS report is part of what the economic development component uses. So, what is Office of Recovery doing to bring that together? I do have a copy of the CEDS report, and I was going to bring it up after budget to kind of bring focus to what we need to do in preparation for the CDBG-DR funds. Your comments?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Our Office of Economic Development, you know, leads that effort, and they…Luana is the head of our economic recovery support function as well. There is the Economic Recovery Commission that has been convened by the…the State and other partners to help map out different recovery areas economically that could be implemented, as well as they're working closely with the EDA on potential grant funding opportunities and/or projects that could be implemented as a part of some type of Federal funding measures that may be available. And…okay. Thanks, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. That's exciting. So, that's how you're going to pull it all together with the ERC?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Yeah, I think the…the ERC is made up of kind of like that broader group of impacted, you know, commercial and/or business stakeholders. But there's a variety of entities that will be involved in kind of formulating that overall plan. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: So, basically you're saying--if I get this right--because I really had planned to bring OED, and I think...is it Layne Silva who's also working on that?...and to bring them in. And then I think earlier I had gotten an email from

Luana saying did…did we want to get a report. But I wanted to finish budget first. But it might be timely because then I think the ERC was supposed to be completed in May; is that correct?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: . . .*(inaudible)*. . .

CHAIR SUGIMURA: You can't hear me? Okay. I'll stop looking at Josiah and speaking then. Okay. So, I think the ERC is supposed to be completed in May, if that's the time schedule or if it changed…May/June. And then…so, what we're going to do is…or what the plan is, is to bring the CEDS concept because that's what HUD . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . recognizes, and the ERC, and somehow bring it together for the CDBG-DR funds?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Yeah, I believe you're somewhat correct on the ending of the ERC, except that their report will be coming out sometime after that. I believe it's around August time period.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: August.

MR. NISHITA: Yeah. And then as a part of the…you know, the engagement efforts for like the long-term recovery plan, I'm sure there'll be a lot of information generated and provided from the community in terms of that that will help also feed into the action plan for the DR funding.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, exciting. That's…that's great. And just briefly, one of the letters that you sent in notified the body that we got requests from firefighters for possibly doing COVID funds. Do you have any comments on that?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Yes, we did receive correspondence, I want to say it was maybe a week or two ago, from the Firefighters Union. My understanding is that they haven't and aren't intending on filing a grievance related to the matter, but would like to hold discussions about it. And we have a meeting set up some time at the end of April, I believe it's maybe the 26th or so, where we're going to have some initial discussions with them, in addition to some other items, but what they're kind of looking at and/or asking for, and we'll have better information at that time.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, so, right now it's still in discussion and it's not necessarily in our budget?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Yeah, there's no funding proposal in here specific to…as you know, we turned in the budget March 25th, and the request didn't come into until --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: April 10th is your letter.

MR. NISHITA: -- some time in beginning of April. Yeah. Thanks.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Or April 3rd, I guess, but we got the letter on the 10th. So, very important. I…I like seeing Dan Shupack in the audience. He's sitting there as the overall CIP person. So, I wonder if he wants to come down, if he…maybe for my next round, if he would like to kind of give us his…his broad vision for how you are coordinating with everybody for recovery. Because I think we've seen the departments come up one by one by one, but you might be the…the magician that's going to pull this together.

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. And I…I just want to be fair to Dan because we've had a lot of vacancies in our Department, so he's been carrying the load for about like four different people --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh.

MR. NISHITA: -- for us right now. So, yeah, including managing a bunch of different projects that we have. We do have our, I don't know if you call them subconsultants too, as a part of the Tetra Tech contract with Bowers and Kubota, on…who are assisting us with the infrastructure projects related to recovery, and…and they're online right now as well. But just expressing appreciation to Dan, but also that we have him doing about three or four different duties other than what his current job description entails. I don't know, Dan, if you just want to highlight maybe some of the ways in which we talk and work with some of the departments on CIP?

MR. SHUPACK: Sure. Yeah, thank you, Chair. Yes, I've been more or less just following and keeping in contact with the various departments, attending the weekly…I guess now it's weekly…infrastructure RSF meetings to make sure that we're gathering any infrastructure needs, any projects that need to move forward. We're getting them on the CIP plan. We have…I think so far, a lot of the projects have been…have been listed under the Office of Recovery. Not too many, I don't believe, have been…in this fiscal year have been…I mean I guess have gone under the individual departments so far, but…yeah, it's just…it's just been a matter of keeping in close contact with the departments, making sure that they have what they need. And if they need additional funding that we try to, you know, hook them up, whether it be through PA grants or other avenues of opportunity, many which we're still learning about. Yeah, it's just kind of an ongoing…ongoing process.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. So, I guess any time anybody needs money, they'll point to Dan Shupack. Is that's what's going to happen? And the departments will implement it?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: . . .*(inaudible)*. . .

MR. NISHITA: And Dan has also been helping us with the Countywide cesspool audit program. Of course, we have, you know, some ongoing CIP projects. Kind of functioning as a civil engineer, a CIP manager, a Countywide CIP coordinator…a few different programs, but also on the General Excise Tax projects as well…you know, identifying potentially applicable and/or qualified projects for our six-year CIP plan that we can develop out on the General Excise Tax plan as well.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you.

MR. NISHITA: Thanks.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you very much. Okay. Member U'u-Hodgins for the next round of three minutes; is that all right?

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay. I guess to follow up on the building permit stuff, the former Managing Director was working with some people outside and some people inside to better regulate our building permit process. I know we now have 4LEAF, and they're going to be working on, I'm assuming, the burn zones. Are we going to take their recommendations and apply it to the other people who are not fire-affected, but who are also waiting for building permits? And for Member Paltin, can we ask if they can…if they can figure how many, if any, fire extinguishers if she's too far away from a hydrant?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. The Councilmember Paltin issue, we'll follow up after the meeting to find out what the…the holdups are. And regardless, we'll…we'll help assist you in finding office space. But the…getting to the first part, so, the provisions that are allowed, if my memory serves me correctly, what Council passed is for the wildfire-impacted area. I do anticipate that we're going to learn a significant amount from what can work given this, and as well just it's almost kind of like a pilot for the community too about what an expedited and/or emergency permitting process might look like and what they could be comfortable with. And we could be able to take those recommendations in real-life scenarios and work with the Council to see how that could be implemented elsewhere. Thanks.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay. Good. I hope so. Speaking about your space in the Gateway, are you going to have the…the emergency permitting space as well as the Office of Recovery in that space, or you're going to be in two separate locations?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember U'u-Hodgins, for the

question. It's one space. I believe it's roughly about 2,000 square feet and we do plan to have like some community engagement element there, the emergency permitting, a space there, as well as at least some representation from time to time from Office of Recovery Staff as well.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay. I'm looking at this document that you sent over a while ago--or I guess yesterday--that has the breakdown of the $18 million spent. I wonder if you could define for me, what's the difference between meals provided for EOC partners and just EOC meals? And this you can follow up with later because I really don't feel like doing the calculations. But can you please provide the breakdown of how much meals were spent for the people working in Wailuku, and then how much in Lahaina. And Lahaina, I think, gets a pass because there was no electricity, no meal service. It's really not the same for Wailuku, so if you could provide a breakdown. I do know that when we went out, I want to say the day after, to provide meals for the fire-affected, I was told to bring home lunch. Had I known I could just stay in Wailuku and lunch would have been provided--not that it would have changed the opportunity for . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . me to go out--but just to put that in perspective. But we can…I can get that from you later. But there's a significant amount of money spent on meals for a lot of people.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Managing Director?

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: But can you please define partners, and what that means?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. So, I mean ultimately, the question and/or information, we're going to have to get from Maui Emergency Management Agency because all those expenditures were borne by that agency. My…my guess is in terms of EOC partners, they're identifying when the EOC is activated, there's a significant amount of other organizations that come in that may help with response efforts outside of kind of maybe normal government employees and whatnot…which, as you can imagine, during the process we had a lot of other communities come to provide assistance, a lot of different agencies and organizations and whatnot. So, my guess is in relation to the…the partner piece, that's probably what it's referring to.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay.

MR. NISHITA: But we can get a further breakdown and/or definition to that from our Maui Emergency Management Agency if you need.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay. Can I ask just one real quick --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: -- follow-up question? I see that we spent nearly $100,000 in tables, chairs, tent rentals. And now, that's not surprising because I recently got married in the last few years, and I understand how expensive those are. Do you think it might be prudent for us to like buy a tent and have it in case we need of emergencies? I mean how often do we use a tent? It seems quite often.

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember U'u-Hodgins, for the question. Yeah, I think…I feel like before I got here, we never rented tents or had tents, and then since then we've had COVID, and then now we have the wildfires.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Yeah.

MR. NISHITA: The…the only thing I would say because obviously there's a cost-benefit analysis done on this and we can't ever predict what will happen in the future, but there is…like we do have equipment that gets stored for long periods of time without use, and there's deterioration and stuff that occurs with that, as well as like there's the manpower needed to set things up, and there's risks associated with that. Like if it's not hooked up properly and it blows away and it hits somebody, or…so there's all kinds of factors beyond just the cost of the rental and the price of owning it. But I think it's a fair question, given a lot of the things that we've experienced in the past few years.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Yeah. And then I was going through all the things obviously, and just FYI, one of my mini pet peeves in this whole world is when people say "Costcos" and "Rosses." There's only one, and you do have a couple of things in there that says "Costcos." You might want to take out that extra S. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: So, Members, we've been going at it for a while, from 1:00. Do you want to take a break? Yeah, let's take a break. Oh, Chair Lee already left, and she'll come back. So, I'm going to call a recess, and if we could come back at…let's come back at 3:05, or something like that. . . .*(gavel)*. . .

RECESS: 2:50 p.m.
RECONVENE: 3:15 p.m.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: . . .*(gavel)*. . . Welcome back to the Budget, Finance, Economic Development Committee. It is now 3:15, and our Managing Director, and our Deputy Managing Director, and I think Member Paltin…I don't know who else is…has to go off to West Maui for a meeting this evening. So, we're going to end this meeting close to 4:00 so everybody can go to West Maui. But at this time, Members, we'll go through another round of three minutes for Members who are interested. So, we did Member U'u-Hodgins. Next, we have Member Sinenci,

Kama, Lee, Paltin, Johnson, Rawlins-Fernandez, and Cook.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Mahalo, Chair. And my apologies if this question was already answered, but I was just wondering if there were, Director, any updates on the…the FEMA housing project?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Sinenci, for the question. We did have a meeting recently with the National Security Council from the White House specifically about our requests, and our delegation's request for 1,000 units to be built and constructed by FEMA. So, they had a bunch of clarifying questions and additional information that was needed. And so, we did that on a call recently, probably within the last two weeks or so. And my understanding is that FEMA is still moving forward with the Kilohana project, which is near the Villages of Leiali'i. But beyond that, for additional projects, we're still waiting for approval for that at this time.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Oh, okay. Thank you for that. Chair, my other questions were answered. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. So, when you say Kilohana, that's behind…in the back of the Civic complex, right? Where is Kilohana?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Yeah, there's two different projects up in that area. There's the one that the State is doing, and then one that FEMA is doing. They're basically…I mean in simplest terms, they're kind of like above that Leiali'i-Wahikuli area and by like the Kukuia side. So, I mean they're kind of generally in that area.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: One is more by Keawe Street and one is more by the post office. The State's one is called Ka La'i Ola, and it's supposed to be 450 modular units with permanent infrastructure. And I think the Kilohana is the FEMA one, it's supposed to be like 169 units, temporary.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: That's the one that you named?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: No, Ka La'i Ola is the one that Kumu Pueo Pata named.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: At…at our request.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. I'm sorry, I had to ask that question because I don't know the project. Okay. Next, we have Member Kama, then Chair Lee, Paltin, Johnson.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: . . .*(inaudible)*. . . again, Chair. So, you know, I was looking on your…this…your presentation, and you have the Lahaina Historic District designed, and you have the Lahaina traditional cultural property, and then the Kula traditional cultural property. What are the…what are cultural properties?

MS. LAU HEE: My understanding, it's artifacts or identifying, I guess, cultural significant locations or items that comprise of that space, so it requires an inventory. I…I can get you more detail on the scope via writing if that's helpful for you.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Yeah, I think it would. Because I'm thinking about the same thing that you're thinking about, but…and as you're starting to take a look at these artifacts, what…what are you going to determine about them? Are you going to keep them, you're going to store them, you're going to house them, you're going to put them in a museum? I don't…I…I don't know, that's why I'm asking about. Okay. That was my only question. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Chair Lee?

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Can you again say how many units FEMA's going to develop, and whether it's temporary and…or permanent, and all in Lahaina? And then…then the State, and then the County. Okay.

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Specific to FEMA, the request that was made by the Mayor, as well as then supported by the Governor and the Federal delegation, was for FEMA to construct 1,000 units. We have asked FEMA, and to my understanding, they're following along with our recommendations as to making sure that the units being provided are either like Maui County Code compliant and/or HUD-certified. So, making sure that there's a path to permanency for those units.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. And where are they going?

MR. NISHITA: Well, so, as we talked about, the Kilohana project, that would kind of be in that Leiali‘i and/or Kukuia area in Lahaina. And we identified a whole variety of other sites that are potential for FEMA, some that they've already kind of done some preliminary work and/or design elements too. And…

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. So, what is the goal to complete these homes?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Well, specific to the…the 1,000 homes, I mean we've been pressuring them for months to be constructing these.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: To have it done before February of next year?

MR. NISHITA: Yeah. And in fact, you know, ready earlier. The…we haven't gotten a commitment yet from FEMA for the construction *(audio interference)* for the construction --

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay.

MR. NISHITA: -- of those units --

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: So…

MR. NISHITA: -- other than for Kilohana at this time.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. What about the State?

MR. NISHITA: The State is doing that one project, Ka La'i Ola, adjacent to Kilohana, and they're looking at about 450 units at that site. I believe Phase I was probably 200 to 300 units, somewhere around there, that they're looking at. And I guess it remains to be seen too if they'll get additional funding from the Legislature for efforts in that area.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay.

MR. NISHITA: The…the whole housing…well, at least a proposal that we put forward in terms of the overall housing plan, it's available on mauirecovers.org, and…and we did present to the Committee previously on that in terms of a breakdown between private organizations, nonprofits, State, County, and…and Feds.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. I know, Josiah, but you have to forgive me because those numbers change every so often. So, I'm…I'm saying, now how many that…how many people will need housing, permanent housing or even temporary housing, in February of next year? How many people?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Chair Lee, for the question. So, the data that we've…have seen and compiled from partners at CNHA, Red Cross, FEMA, and whatnot, our best estimates is that there is about 5,400 . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . households displaced, about 1,400 households have likely relocated and/or not participatory in the program anymore, which leaves about 4,000 households remaining. Of those 4,000 households, about 1,100 households qualify for the direct lease program, which FEMA will continue to cover through them, and some areas have been, you know, six/seven years. As long as they remain eligible, they can continue to provide assistance for those households, which leaves about 2,900 households which is what we developed the…the plan and strategy off of. And how to fulfill those 2,900 units is what's listed on the…our presentation.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. And the County itself…the County itself?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Chair Lee, for the question. For the County program, that's why we're proposing to work hand in hand with CNHA regarding the Kākoʻo Maui Housing Program, which includes like the ADU loan forgiveness program, built off of…similarly to your proposal that…on the ʻOhana Assistance Program, except it would be specific to wildfire survivors.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. All right. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: That's good news. Member Paltin, then Member Johnson.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you, Chair. On this round, I wanted to focus on the CIP Maui wildfire disaster recovery. I see GF and ST, General Fund and State Fund. Would we be considering the GET monies as General Fund monies, or TAT revenue as General Fund monies for this purpose?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Paltin, for the question. We did come with a proposal to Council regarding the FY '24 allocations for some projects that are actually included on here, and then that proposal wasn't passed by the…the Committee. So, on one hand, we do have a little bit of unclear, I guess, direction on…on if the Council wants to head in a different direction related to that on use of GE funds. But there's also push at the State Legislature, which we've been kind of battling against, regarding essentially a proposal to kind of not provide…or potentially not provide any funding assistance to the County, but instead require the County to bond off of the…the GE funds to pay for all recovery costs as opposed to providing additional State assistance or other type of assistance. Because of the limited time frames involved that we have, essentially with the 20 percent allocation to DHHL, we have roughly about five years of collections left, which of course, all of you know, we haven't received a dime yet. And we have some very big projects coming down, including the Central Maui Wastewater Reclamation Facility and other programs. And it does make bonding of the funding extremely problematic, given the short time frames. And I think our…our rough estimates was if…you know, I think we budgeted 45 million in this…this fiscal year.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Even that, I mean why was the January estimate from DOTAX so low, like 12,000 or something?

MR. NISHITA: Sorry…sorry, Chair, I…I don't know where the 12,000 figure is coming from. I know…I know we budgeted $20 million in FY '24, and I believe the first payments to us for the quarter, I think, are coming at the end of this month roughly. So, we'll…we'll have a kind of better idea of…of what's impacted. But, you know, there was…I can't remember it was Carl Bonham or UHERO or some other economist that had projected about a 45 percent impact to GET collections

roughly, and so, that was factored into our assessment of how, you know, collections could be.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Is it possible of this whole list on page 910 that you could break down what are the priorities for each of the following fiscal years, Fiscal Year '25, '26, and '27, what department would be the lead on that . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . and what would be done in each year, and then approximate cost, or is…I mean because this isn't usually the format of our CIP, right?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Yeah, we…we have a whole breakdown that we can provide to you folks. And in fact, if it isn't published already online, we'll…we'll publish it as well. But it's what we provided to the Ways and Means Committee, as well as to the House Finance Chair and…and other legislators, breaking down the specific projects related to FY' 25, '26, and '27. And if…I don't know if Kathleen is on. Kathleen, are…are you able to share…maybe, Staff, if you could enable her to screen share? Kathleen, if you'd be able to bring up the disaster funding worksheet. It might take you a minute, so it…maybe, Chair, we can move on with questioning, but she might be able to provide that to…to talk through some of that at this time. Thanks.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Do you need James to still send that to you in writing to get the follow-up stuff? Or they were going to break it down and send it, or…

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: . . .*(inaudible)*. . .

MR. NISHITA: Yeah, here. Kathleen, do you mind zooming in a bit? It's a little small on our screen.

MS. CHU: Yeah. So, do you want to focus on a certain project, or…

MR. NISHITA: Yeah. So, Councilmember Paltin, do you…maybe on a certain fiscal year do you want to look at, or a certain project for FY '25?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Yeah. Well, I don't want to go too much into my time that overran, but I would love to see specifically what you're going to do in Fiscal Year '25, what the source of fund you anticipate it coming from, what would be the department overseeing that. And then if you have it projected for '26 and '27, that would be awesome, but I would understand that '26 and '27 is just a projection and not a promise.

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Maybe, Staff, if you don't mind maybe sending a message to Kathleen with an email address. And then, Kathleen, could you email it to Committee Staff so that they can print out for Councilmembers so they'll be able to see at this time? But it does list the projects by fiscal year, anticipated dollar amount, and breakdown between design and construction. I would just

note that this, we put together for the State Legislature. So, this is specific to our funding request that was made to them that's anticipated over three fiscal years. So, there are additional expenditures that the County will face and anticipate into the future, but this was specific to justify our request.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: So, everything you're sending is what we're requesting from State money, and then what is going to be paid for with County money isn't included in this…what you're going to send to us?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. So, generally speaking, you know, with…well, some of these projects are public assistance eligible, and some of them may be partially eligible, and some of them may not be eligible at all. But in general, for some of these costs we're asking the State to…to do essentially a 90/10 cost share. With that…with the commitment that we made is that if FEMA public assistance did come in for those eligible projects that we wouldn't essentially make money off of the State, we would reimburse them for the Federal reimbursement that we receive. But there's a…that breakdown should be provided, and so, maybe when Staff gets it, it can be printed out…and if there's further questions at that point, we can discuss.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay. And Chair, I trust that somebody along the way will make sure that it's not 6-point font and blurry, right? We just hit print and it'll be like 12-point font and crisp, right?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: I think we're going to have to get it on larger paper. It…it…

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: . . .*(inaudible)*. . .

CHAIR SUGIMURA: When…you can't read it, unless if you put it on your computer screen. It'll be worse than the examples you've been showing me. So…

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: . . .*(inaudible)*. . .

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Somebody laughed.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: It's still…it's still hard to read.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: But anyway, we'll wait to see what you produce then. You're going to send us a hardcopy, is that what you just said?

MS. CHU: Yes. We can send a hardcopy, and I can try to create another PDF at a larger size as well.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay. Thank you.

MR. KRUEGER: Chair?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yes?

MR. KRUEGER: We've…we've sent a direct message via Teams to…to Kathleen, if that's okay, with the information that you could transmit the document to…to Staff by. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Very good. Kathleen is super good, so thank you. Appreciate it. Oh, yes?

MR. KRUEGER: Oh, apologies.

MS. CHU: Thank you, Chair.

MR. KRUEGER: Oh. Actually we're having technical difficulties, so we'll send you an email instead.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh.

MR. KRUEGER: Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Not by Teams. All right. Go ahead.

MS. MILNER: Thank you, Chair. Councilmember Paltin, just really fast, I did want to say, TAT monies are considered part of the General Fund and are the General…part of the General Fund portion of the CIP. The GET is not considered as part of the CIP. Only projects that are added as conditional language under the GET in Appendix A, Part II, are part of the GET expenditures.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Thank you. Member Johnson?

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you, Chair. My questions have been answered.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Member Rawlins-Fernandez?

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Chair. I just have one last question, and it's regarding the…the bridge loan to CNHA from HCF. And I'm sorry if you, Managing Director, already explained this. So, if we're not going to do this now, is…is this project that CNHA was going to do still going to happen?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Rawlins-Fernandez. So, CNHA's program is based on scale basically, so I mean the less money that they get, the less that they can do, and the more money they get, the more that they can do. So…and the simplest terms, that's what it comes down to. And we actually have a meeting tomorrow, I believe, with CNHA and HCF to discuss this and other issues. So, I mean we'll get more information over time. But the…the HUD kind of determination, I think, was somewhat recent that we received that. Thanks.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Managing Director. I think with the removal of this $54.5 million or 75,000…75 million, it'll make Council Chair Lee happy because I think she just said 5…500,000, and now our…our…the budget that we'll be passing will be around like instead of 1,697,112,842, it'll be 1,642,000,000 instead of 97. There you go, Council Chair.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Way below.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Member Cook?

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Thank you, Chair. I have two questions, one's a…a fast one. In Office of Recovery program rental of building office space in West Maui, 250,000, was that the one that you were referring to in the Lahaina Gateway?

MR. NISHITA: Yes, Chair. Thanks.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: So, is that like a five-year lease or something?

MR. NISHITA: Yeah. Thank you, Chair. Yeah, the…the…I mean the lease is structured with like yearly options and things like that, but basically it's a…I think it's a five-year lease.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: So, basically this…we're funding it for a period of time, and this will be out of this…out of this funds, but it will be over the next expenditures?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Generally what the contractual agreement is, is…of course, it's subject to availability of funds and other things. So, you would just be appropriating funds like on a year-by-year basis.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Okay. So, I wanted to end my questions with asking you, and to ask the departments, how the Legislative Branch can assist. I'm always pushing and asking for flexibility and accommodation to be able to get permitting and land use to enable us to build homes, open restaurants, and facilitate our economic development. So, along with that comes how can I help. So, the

departments hopefully are…and you, through this expedited permit…permitting process, are identifying potential procedures that we have been historically doing, and are currently doing, that we discover possibly there's an alternate way. If you're keeping tracking of all of that and come with a package, you might find a very receptive group to help change the rules, change the policies to enable the people working in the departments to say yes and feel better about it instead of putting them in a bind. So, would you do that?

MR. NISHITA: Yes. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Thank you both for all your efforts and everybody on your team.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. So, Members, anybody else have any more questions for Managing Director? Member Paltin?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you. So, the Hālau O [*sic*] 'Ōiwi Arts still going forward?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Yeah, the…I don't believe there's anything in the budget related to it, but yes.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay. And then…so, we seen kind of a presentation and all this information about the resiliency hub network, and that it's, you know, like '24…Fiscal Year '24 West Maui's funded and like that. But MEMA, who, you know, transcends Administrations, really had no idea what was going on there. And so, you know, if the resiliency hub network is supposed to provide us with a resiliency hub network, and the Administration leaves in two years, then what is the continuity of that project?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. I mean I think your point's well taken. The resiliency hubs, I think maybe more than anything else, are to essentially serve our community in times of emergency needs. So…

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Isn't that the same charge as MEMA though?

MR. NISHITA: Well…yeah. I mean at…at the same token, that agency has a lot of things that need to be addressed and need to be followed up on that, you know, others can't really assist with, other than providing the…the support from their department as may be necessary. I…I think, you know, the Mayor's Office historically has assisted with the resiliency hubs, and I believe that they're getting kind of back on track related to that. But I think there does need to be an interconnection and information flow and, you know, partnership with MEMA, definitely.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And I think beyond just the resiliency hubs, is it within you folks' capacity to facilitate that, or would it be on the Office of the Mayor? Or like how…what is the relationship between Management and the Mayor's Office in Management overseeing all the rest of the departments and MEMA? Like I wouldn't think that you guys tell the Mayor's Office what to do, but then if they're going off on this tangent with resiliency hubs, and here's all the rest of the departments, and the MEMA not knowing what's going on over here, then what…what's going on?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. In terms of coordination, I mean the departments are included in the discussions with the Mayor's Office in terms of the resiliency hub project. Obviously more communication and better . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . coordination can always be done. Specifically to MEMA though, I'm not aware if they are or are not included, so I think that's a good point, to…to make sure that they're a very close partner in all these efforts.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And…and just a follow up on that, are you providing MEMA with like the support they need to navigate the whole system of like DPOs and things like that? Like we're…we're going to try and help them with their structure that they envision so that, you know, it's not going to you folks for a reorg every year, but just, you know, what is the vision and then what can we take bites of every year. But who from the Administration is assisting them?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Paltin, for the question. It kind of depends on, I guess, what the issue is. I just had, I don't know, last week or so, probably about a two-hour meeting with Chief Amos regarding a lot of personnel-related stuff, and dealing with a lot of matters before his agency. The Department of Personnel Services obviously plays a key role. Keanu has played an amazing role too in just helping to advise on a variety of different matters and measures. And of course, we're…we're always available to assist. And MEMA has Staff on…on their payroll that deals with their personnel issues and whatnot to…in terms of like hiring individuals and setting up the office.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I mean it's…it's concerning if our Emergency Management Administrator is locked out of all the County things because his contract didn't get renewed. Like I mean at the very most basic level, that's…it's not working, you know? If…if the head of the Emergency Management can't answer his emails because his contract expired, and…and what if a wildfire right when that occurred? Like, you know, I mean I hope that we're learning from these things occurring because it…it'll be on him if it goes down, just as it was on our previous person, and it really feels like he's not getting the support that he needs, you know. If his contract doesn't get renewed, and he can't send an email or read an email, lucky thing there's no emergency at the moment. So, I mean we see this happening, and it doesn't make me feel safe. We see no telephone or Internet connectivity last Monday, and nobody knew over here. Is that any different than

August 8th? Like what have we learned in the last eight months? And who is responsible? Like if nobody knows that we in West Maui cannot use the telephone, don't be telling us to evacuate by telephone, you know. And…and it's happened once, now it happened again where the County doesn't know that we don't have connectivity. How many more times does it have to happen?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. There's a lot of things stated there, so I'll…I'll try to remember them all. On one hand…I guess I'll…I'll follow up with our IT Staff on the distribution list for the notifications, if that includes…I'm not sure if it includes Council or not on the network notifications and whatnot about Internet and/or phone issues being down. So, if…if we're not, then that's something that can be rectified so that at least Council Staff can be aware.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I'm…I'm not talking about County IT, I'm talking about last Monday, after our residency area meeting, when I went home to Nāpili, there was no Internet connection for that region, there's no telephone connection for that region. It was eerily similar to August 8th. And so, you know, what…this is not the first time, it's not even the third time, you know. So, just how are we addressing those kind of things and…and making sure that the EOC, at the very least, knows that there's a systemwide outage in a geographic area? Because…

MR. NISHITA: Yeah. Well, thank you, Chair. I guess just plainly, I was not aware of some systemwide outage in West Maui like affecting individual residents or whatnot…not to say that others weren't. The actual carriers themselves are required to notify different agencies. So, we can definitely follow up to see if that occurred or not. And if that didn't occur, then that was one of the issues that is, I guess, being identified and/or being addressed as a part of litigation that's occurring.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Yeah, the only one that reported on it was Maui 24/7. So, eight months later, same problem, no solution.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Thank you. So, I'm going to close this by asking a question that many…many of us might be thinking of. But I wonder if what the Administration is doing with housing as it relates to Bigley, Kuop…Kuopu…Ku…Kuohu [*sic*] project, and where are we with that…because I think it's important.

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. So, we have had some discussions with Tom and Doug from Ikaika 'Ohana, and in our meetings with State legislators, we've also been talking with them about the project and whether they're going to support State funding for that. To…I guess, long story short, it remains to be seen whether the State will commit additional funding for it. I think there have been some maybe more public pronouncements that HHFDC may not support the additional funding and/or funding makeup of the request at this time. And

there's different State legislators that are considering other proposals and whatnot. So, as I mentioned earlier, their…their State budget will come out ending of April or so, and so we'll be able to see, at least by that time, whether they're proposing any additional funding for the Kupuohi project. But we are talking with the developer about potential options if the Council would like to consider what could be done related to this. Thanks.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Part of the wait game with what the Legislature may or may not do, is that what you're saying? So, we won't hear until the 26th of April? Okay. And in the meantime, I think I've said, and I think it would be really important for Doug Bigley and Tom Fischer to talk to Administration. Because he can talk to us, but the real…the real yes got to come from the Mayor. So, I hope that's happening. Is that happening?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Yes, we have talked with the developer, and anticipate additional discussions this week. Thanks.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, okay. Very good. Okay. So, that's my…my last question. Anybody else have any more before we say goodbye to the Managing Director and his team? No other questions. Okay. Great. So, thank you very much. Oh, here she is. One more.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: You know, some of the residents…everyone wants to see Kupuohi rebuilt, but part of it too is that, you know, that's the gap between what their insurance covers and what the rebuild price is. And pretty much every single homeowner has that same gap. Wondering about the potential for a program where homeowners can apply for a similar type of grant to finance that gap between what their insurance covers and what the rebuild price is to make them whole…or even another type of program for those who are not insured. You know, during the cleanup phase of things, Samaritan's Purse, All Hearts and Hands [*sic*], and these other organizations were willing to stay on and like pound some nails and things like that. So, I just was wondering…I mean maybe we're going to discuss it tonight in an hour or two, but being that we're talking about the budget right now, and tomorrow is our deadline for priorities at like 4:30?…like should I put 800 million in my priority, gap funding, homeowners rebuild or something?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Paltin, for the question. Yeah. So, specific to those like different types of programs that could be available, those are programs that I think other communities have actually historically funded through CDBG-DR funds. So, you know, when…when that allotment is available, that program could be built into the action plan as a program to fund and help bridge the gap for individual homeowners experiencing that.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: So, when we went to DC, the FEMA course that I went to,

they said CDBG-DR funds are not guaranteed, and they're not given annually. And so, in light of that, would we be able to stand up our own program for reimbursement by CDBG-DR if it happens?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Paltin, for the question. Yes, CDBG-DR funding is not guaranteed, that's why you have to wait until it's listed in the Federal Register as a recipient. And some communities…because it depends on Congressional allocation. So, basically you'll get a total funding amount, and then kind of a piece of that pie because there's…there's other DR recipients who still have yet to receive their full allocation. So, you know, if they…if they do allocate X amount to us, it might not be all at once, it might be over time because they have to continue to pay, you know, Florida and Texas and Washington and whoever else that has experienced that.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Have you been in contact with HCF, and is it true that they will not help build anything?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. Well, we have another meeting with HCF tomorrow. I believe they allocated about $40 million or so to the State project, which is actually building something, so I can't imagine that that's true. The…of course, you know, working with Mike and his team, we want to make sure that we're using all the funding as wisely as possible to make sure that we're not like using funds in one area that . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . another, like Federal allocation or other provision, could provide. Because when…when HUD identifies the unmet need in an area, part of that is determining what private philanthropy has…has already funded, and that gets taken off the books essentially for Federal funding to be provided to us. So, we want to make sure that we're utilizing all the pots as best as possible, and putting private philanthropy especially in areas that would be really difficult for Government to…to fund, or maybe ineligible for other Federal programs.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay. I got one question offline when you guys…when we're pau.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. So, I have…oh, yes, Chair Lee?

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: One clarifying question. You know, when you were talking about private funds and you were talking about HCF monies, did you say that a…a project would not be eligible to receive Government funds if you…if they receive private funds, like from HCF? Is that what you said?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. So, basically from…from what I understand from…from HUD at this point is, the only type of kind of loan arrangement that may possibly be reimbursable through DR funds would be directly with the recipient. So, in this case, it would have to be HCF working directly with CNHA.

And those programs, kind of getting back to Councilmember Paltin's last question too, eligible programs would still need to meet the DR guidelines. So, there may be like environmental types of reviews, like NEPA, that might be needed. There might be like community engagement or outreach activities in different languages that might be needed, things like that. So, just because it could be eligible, you still have to meet all the eligibility criteria in order to ultimately become possibly reimbursable through the DR funds.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: So, I have one last. We're all concerned about housing and, you know, how to get back, right, and how to repopulate those that have lost their homes. I worry about businesses, small businesses who are struggling. And with COVID it was different, right, the whole nation responded. But with the current situation with West Maui, when I went to Washington DC--well, it's been three months ago already--but...and we were talking to like Senator Schatz, and I said oh, what about helping...can you get rid of the COVID loans that the small businesses had to make because of the wildfire? And on a Federal level, the answer is no because whatever they do is for the whole nation, you know. And same thing with the State to a certain degree because...and we're unique. But we have all these businesses that are struggling, and there's a lot of things that we're doing trying to help homeowners, and is...is...is Administration focusing on some plans to help businesses with grants or other things that you haven't told us yet?

MR. NISHITA: Thank you, Chair. So, you know, as I mentioned earlier, you know, Luana and Layne head up the economic recovery support function, and they are working with DBEDT and others on kind of a more broader, longer range plan and implementation. The specific, you know, funding is I think what working with EDA and others on, on what could be funded more broadly and impactful at the Federal level. Obviously with County...County funds are, you know, somewhat limited in the amount and...and scope that we're able to provide. So, we're trying to utilize our other partners, especially our Federal partners, as much as possible to help fill in some of the gaps. Because we have heard from others too about...although the...the SBA has been, you know, really helpful to individuals, the idea of adding on, you know, additional burdens at this time is kind of not palatable for a lot of small business owners.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah. So, you are...you are looking at EDA funds that is over and beyond...or does that come under the CDBG-DR funds?

MR. NISHITA: So, EDA will have their own appropriations. DR funding can fund economic recovery efforts though.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: So, are we asking, are we waiting on EDA, or should we be doing something?

MR. NISHITA: Yeah, no, we're working directly with EDA. I haven't heard if they received their funding from…full funding from Congress yet. . . .*(timer sounds)*. . .

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, so, it's…it's separate.

MR. NISHITA: Yeah. So, there's…there's also an economic impact analysis that's…that's being done. But in our early discussions with EDA, they did have very limited resources right now because of waiting on Congressional action. And I haven't heard recently that they received their full allotment yet, in which case they would be able to fund more targeted projects and programs for Lahaina.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Okay. Thank you very much. It is 3:59, so all of you have to head out the door, including maybe Tamara, to go to West Maui for the…the home meeting, I guess. So, thank you very much, Managing Director and…and Deputy and your team that's sitting in the Chambers. Thank you very much for spending your day with us. And so, you can leave. You don't have to stick around. . . .*(laughing)*. . . All right. Very good. So, Members, this meeting will be adjourned. We're going to meet again tomorrow at 9:00, and the meeting will…we're going to hear from the Legislative Branch, which is going to be Auditors, Clerks, and the OCS…so, you know, our friends, they're going to meet with us. And then…as well as we're going to talk about revolving funds and any kind of legislative action bills that we can look forward to. So, this meeting is now adjourned, but we're going to again meet for our last residency meeting, Wailuku-Kahului, in the Chambers, and that'll be at 6:00. So, thank you very much, and look, it's exactly at 4:00. Perfect. This meeting is adjourned at…huh? Oh…oh, tonight is at 6:00 for Wailuku-Kahului. Okay. Thank you. This meeting is now adjourned. . . .*(gavel)*. . .

ACTION: **DEFER** pending further discussion.

ADJOURN: 4:00 p.m.

APPROVED:

Yuki Lei Sugimura

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

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CERTIFICATION

I, Daniel Schoenbeck, hereby certify that pages 1 through 55 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 20th day of May 2024, in Wailuku, Hawai'i

Daniel Schoenbeck

Daniel Schoenbeck