

COUNCIL OF THE COUNTY OF MAUI

# BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

March 21, 2025

**Committee  
Report No.** \_\_\_\_\_

Honorable Chair and Members  
of the County Council  
County of Maui  
Wailuku, Maui, Hawaii

Chair and Members:

Your Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee, having met on March 11, 2025, makes reference to Bill 34 (2025), entitled “A BILL FOR AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2025 BUDGET FOR THE COUNTY OF MAUI, OFFICE OF THE MAYOR, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, GRANTS AND DISBURSEMENTS FOR CULTURE, ARTS, AND TOURISM, WAILUKU FILM FESTIVAL.”

Bill 34’s purpose is to amend the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget to amend Section 3.B.12.c.(3)(viii), Office of the Mayor, Economic Development Program, by changing the appropriation’s name from “Maui Film Festival” to “Maui Economic Development Board, Inc. for the Wailuku Film Festival.”

Your Committee recognized that the retirement of the Maui Film Festival leaves a gap in Maui’s film industry. The Wailuku Film Festival will differ from its predecessor by hosting multiple events, instead of a single event, throughout the year, with a specific focus on student filmmakers, local productions, and Hawaiian storytelling.

Your Committee noted the significant contributions of Barry and Stella Rivers, who dedicated years of service to fostering Maui’s film industry through the Maui Film Festival. Their leadership and vision not only elevated the festival to international recognition but also provided a platform for filmmakers, actors, and industry professionals to showcase their work in a uniquely Hawaiian setting.

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The Wailuku Film Festival will serve as an economic driver by attracting residents and visitors, providing business opportunities, and strengthening Maui's reputation as a hub for creative arts. Additionally, the event will preserve and promote Hawaiian storytelling, supporting the County's commitment to cultural enrichment.

The Film Commissioner said that box office revenue could go directly to filmmakers, reinforcing the festival's role as a community service, rather than a profit-driven, event. Your Committee noted that establishing the festival as a nonprofit organization may be a long-term goal to secure grant funding and ensure financial stability.

Your Committee discussed the possibility of subsidizing ticket costs to encourage broader community participation.

Your Committee discussed the need for a venue in Wailuku, noting that the 'Āao Theater requires significant renovations. Given the extent of necessary improvements, the theater may not be available for the 2026 Wailuku Film Festival but could serve as a future home for the event once restored.

Your Committee further discussed that investing in the Wailuku Film Festival ensures that the County continues to foster a thriving film industry while supporting local artists, students, and independent filmmakers.

Your Committee voted 7-0 to recommend passage of Bill 34 (2025), on first reading. Committee Chair Sugimura, Vice-Chair Kama, and members Johnson, Paltin, Rawlins-Fernandez, Sinenci, and U'u-Hodgins voted "aye." Committee members Cook and Lee were excused.

Your Committee is in receipt of Bill 34, CD1 (2025), approved as to form and legality by the Department of the Corporation Counsel, incorporating nonsubstantive revisions.

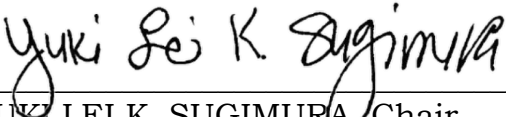
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Your Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee RECOMMENDS that Bill 34, CD1 (2025), attached, entitled “A BILL FOR AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2025 BUDGET FOR THE COUNTY OF MAUI, OFFICE OF THE MAYOR, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, GRANTS AND DISBURSEMENTS FOR CULTURE, ARTS, AND TOURISM, WAILUKU FILM FESTIVAL,” be PASSED ON FIRST READING and be ORDERED TO PRINT.

This report is submitted in accordance with Rule 3 of the Rules of the Council.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
YUKI LEI K. SUGIMURA, Chair

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ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

BILL NO. 34, CD1 (2025)

A BILL FOR AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2025  
BUDGET FOR THE COUNTY OF MAUI,  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM,  
GRANTS AND DISBURSEMENTS FOR CULTURE, ARTS,  
AND TOURISM, WAILUKU FILM FESTIVAL

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE COUNTY OF MAUI:

SECTION 1. Ordinance No. 5657, Bill No. 60, CD1, FD2 (2024), as amended "Fiscal Year 2025 Budget", Section 3.B.12.c.(3)(viii), Office of the Mayor, Economic Development Program, Grants and disbursements for culture, arts, and tourism, Maui Film Festival is amended to change the appropriation title to "Maui Economic Development Board, Inc. for the Wailuku Film Festival", to read as follows:

<u>"FUNCTION AND PROGRAMS</u>	<u>A - Salaries</u>	<u>B – Operations &amp; Equipment</u>	<u>Total</u>
12. Office of the Mayor			
c. Economic Development Program			
(3) Grants and disbursements for culture, arts, and tourism			
(viii) Maui <u>Economic Development                     Board, Inc. for the Wailuku Film                     Festival</u>	0	90,250	90,250"

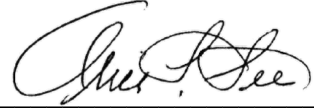
SECTION 2. New material is underscored.

SECTION 3. This Ordinance takes effect on approval.

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
KRISTINA C. TOSHIKIYO  
Deputy Corporation Counsel

INTRODUCED BY:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Alice L. Lee".

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ALICE L. LEE

Upon the request of the Mayor.