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County of Hawai‘i
KONA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN ACTION COMMITTEE
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April 16, 2025

Hawai‘i County Council
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Hawaii County Building
25 Aupuni Street
Hilo, Hawaii 96720

Re: Testimony Bill 032 Draft 1 2025-2026 CIP

Dear Chair Kāneali‘i-Kleinfelder Chair and Members of the Committee on Finance,

During the April 8, 2024, meeting of the Kona Community Development Plan Action Committee, the AC Members voted to forward to you our initial recommendations related to **Bill 032 Draft 1**. The Action Committee has been very active in its role within the Kona Community Development Plan (KCDP). The AC notes that our County has been for sometime under tremendous scrutiny, predating the election of the present Administration. In Kona, the issues have been largely associated with infrastructure and the environment. In making our recommendations as priorities for the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) budget, the AC agreed on the following priorities. We would like to add emphasis to the legal deadlines imposed by the County’s Consent Decree regarding cesspools and the Kealakehe Waste Water Treatment Plant upgrade. The AC greatly appreciates the opportunity to comment and lend its support for the CIP.

- The Committee strongly recommends that the 2025-2026 budget include funding for the **KEALAKEHE WWTP R-1 UPGRADE PROJECT** to comply with the April 4, 2025 SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT (Case No. CV 23-00393 JMS-KJM) between **Plaintiff Hui Mālama Honokōhau and Defendant County of Hawai‘i**. The settlement includes the following conditions: Defendant will upgrade the Kealakehe WWTP so that its treated wastewater satisfies the water quality standards applicable to R-1 Recycled Water as set forth in “Reuse Guidelines, Volume 1: Recycled Water Facilities,” prepared by the Wastewater Branch, Hawai‘i Department of Health dated January 2016,

attached hereto as Attachment “A” (“R-1 Project”). Defendant shall complete the R-1 according to the following schedule:

- a) No later than September 1, 2025, Defendant will issue an invitation for bid for the construction proposal for the R-1 Project.
 - b) No later than March 1, 2026, Defendant will begin construction of the R-1 Project.
 - c) No later than June 30, 2029, Defendant will complete the R-1 Project.
- The Committee is in strong support of the funding request by the Department of Parks and Recreation for item **#202510 Kealakehe Regional Park Phase 1**. The long overdue **Kealakehe Regional Park** has been identified within the Kona CDP Ordinance as: **“Policy PUB–6.2: (a) Regional park —New regional park at Kealakehe as shown on the Public Facilities Plan to include playfields, multi-purpose building.”**
 - The Committee is in strong support of the funding request by the Department of Planning for item **# 202575 County of Hawai’i Island Wide Trail Plan**. The Kona CDP states the following goal: **“Provide connectivity and transportation choices. Future growth should connect communities with movement alternatives such as sidewalks, trails, and bike lanes.”** These funds will also serve the implementation of **Policy ENV-2.1: Open Space Network Program**. The goal of this Program is to create a comprehensive “hubs” and “links” system.
 - The Committee notes the request by the Mass Transit Agency for **item #202553 Islandwide Bus Shelter**. The Committee would like to point out the need for a shelter behind Target, which is a transfer point for several bus routes.
 - The Committee recommends the **allocation of funding for Transportation Planning** to update past studies to evaluate current conditions and make recommendations that would serve to expand transportation infrastructure capacity between North and South Kona. See below:

“Traffic congestion in Kona is bad and grows worse with time. The congestion is fueled by the rapid growth and exacerbated by the road network, land use patterns and dependence on the automobile. Road improvements have not kept pace with development. Poor management of past development has eliminated or compromised future roadway corridor options. Major road improvements take a long time to complete and limited financial resources have to be prioritized and supplemented by innovative funding sources. **Two major north/south roadways, Queen Ka’ahumanu/Kuakini (Highway 19) and Māmalahoa Highway (Highway 190), are well beyond capacity and carry the majority of the north/south traffic through and within Kona.** (COH Planning Department, August 14, 2006).”
 - In addition, the Committee recommends that funding be allocated for the construction of the **Lako Street Extension to Ali’i Drive**. In the **KCDP Policy Trans–6.2: Prioritized Road Improvements**, the Lako Street Extension was identified to help rectify existing deficiencies and influence the pattern of future growth and new roads.

- The Committee recommends that funds be allocated for the installation of **the one-mile sewer line extension of Ali'i Drive north of Kahalu'u to Queen Kalama.**
 "Policy PUB-4.4: Sewer Priorities. In order to protect the nearshore water quality, the requirement to hookup to the County sewer system (HCC Section 21-5) shall be strictly enforced. The highest priority in expanding the sewer system within the Kona Urban Area shall be to service any shoreline properties that do not have access to a public sewer system and then to service lots within approximately 1 mile of the shoreline."

Sincerely,

Nancy Pisicchio

Nancy Pisicchio, Vice Chair

Kona Community Development Plan Action Committee

Draft 3 letter re County Budget from KCDP AC

Final Audit Report

2025-04-16

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