

From: [Claire Cea](#)
To: [Sur, Peter](#)
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Regarding agenda item VII – 1

It is imperative the county submit a proposal for the EPA Recycling Infrastructure Grant to help supplement the lack of funding for recycling programs we have in Hawaii County. The fact that there is no county wide plastic recycling program is disgraceful. The fact that the e-waste program gets suspended year after year is a shame. Living on an island, our first priority should be minimizing how much waste goes into the landfill. I believe recycling is a community based effort where individuals encourage other members of the community to reduce, reuse and recycle. The community should also have programs where they can actually drop off the items that they wish to recycle. That is where this grant will play a vital role in providing those programs to the community and promote sustainability on Hawaii Island. I believe it is just as important that the EMC recommends to the county council that they fund a facilitator to organize meetings with stakeholders ahead of the release of the Request for Applications. I sympathize with the understaffed DEM who is trying their hardest to coordinate recycling programs despite the challenges of not having enough funding or enough staff. That is why it is also essential for the EMC to recommend to the county council that they fund a grant writer for this opportunity because it is an opportunity that we cannot afford to miss.

Thank you for your time,

Claire Cea