

COUNCIL OF THE COUNTY OF MAUI
PLANNING COMMITTEE

September 5, 2014

**Committee
Report No. _____**

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

Chair and Members:

Your Planning Committee, having met on June 19, 2014, and August 14, 2014, makes reference to a Miscellaneous Communication, dated May 28, 2014, from the Deputy County Clerk, referring the matter relating to requirements imposed on the County for compliance with Federal Metropolitan Planning Organization ("MPO") obligations.

Your Committee noted this matter was referred during the Council's consideration of the Fiscal Year 2015 Budget.

Your Committee notes an MPO is a transportation policy-making organization with members who are local government representatives. The purpose of an MPO is to conduct transportation planning for an "urbanized area." An urbanized area is defined by the United States Census Bureau as "an area consisting of a densely developed territory that contains a minimum residential population of at least 50,000 people." The boundaries of an urbanized area are determined by the United States Census Bureau, using a complex calculation. All urbanized areas are required by Federal law to have an MPO.

Your Committee notes the County was informed by the Federal government that an urbanized area exists on Maui, based on 2010 Census data. The Kahului Urbanized Area has been defined, and is comprised of Kahului and other areas, including Paia.

The County Director of Transportation informed your Committee a major benefit of an MPO is the organization's development of a formal plan identifying desired transportation projects, funding amounts, and prioritization. The State Department of Transportation incorporates input from the County in the current planning process, but with an MPO, it is expected the County will have more control over the identification of projects.

The Director further informed your Committee a key part of an MPO is extensive community engagement regarding transportation plans and projects.

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Your Committee expressed concerns about financial aspects of establishing an MPO, including anticipated administration costs and possible impacts on Federal funding received by the County.

Regarding anticipated administration costs, the Director stated the County would receive Federal and State funding to cover most of the costs. The County's share is expected to be 10 per cent of the total administration cost. Regarding possible impacts on Federal funding received by the County, the Director stated the formation of an MPO will provide a significant financial benefit for the Department of Transportation.

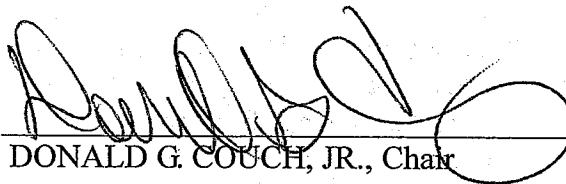
The Deputy Director of Public Works informed your Committee the Department does not expect to lose any Federal funding as a result of the County's establishment of an MPO. She further explained the County's understanding is it is now required to form an MPO, and if it decides not to do so, a significant amount of anticipated Federal funding for projects and planning would be lost.

Your Committee noted the potential increase in Federal funding and in community engagement opportunities are important benefits the County could realize through the formation of an MPO.

Your Committee voted 5-0 to recommend filing of the communication. Committee Chair Couch, Vice-Chair Victorino, and members Baisa, Cochran, and White voted "aye". Committee members Crivello and Guzman were excused.

Your Planning Committee **RECOMMENDS** the Miscellaneous Communication be FILED.

This report is submitted in accordance with Rule 8 of the Rules of the Council.



DONALD G. COUCH, JR., Chair