

COUNCIL OF THE COUNTY OF MAUI

# BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

September 19, 2003

Committee  
Report No.

03-97

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

Chair and Members:

Your Budget and Finance Committee, having met on September 2, 2003, makes reference to County Communication No. 03-14, from former Mayor James "Kimo" Apana, transmitting a proposed bill entitled "A BILL FOR AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 3066, BILL NO. 34 (2002), AS AMENDED BY ORDINANCE NO. 3076, BILL NO. 44 (2002), RELATING TO THE ISSUANCE OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS OF THE COUNTY OF MAUI".

The purpose of the proposed bill is to authorize the issuance of general obligation bonds to fund the Central Maui Youth Center and the Boundless Playgrounds.

By correspondence dated January 13, 2003, the Department of the Corporation Counsel transmitted a revised proposed bill entitled "A BILL FOR AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 3066, BILL NO. 34 (2002), AS AMENDED, RELATING TO THE ISSUANCE OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS OF THE COUNTY OF MAUI". The revised proposed bill revises the title to delete extraneous information, and makes other nonsubstantive revisions.

By correspondence dated July 11, 2003, the Director of Parks and Recreation transmitted a set of preliminary plans for the Keopuolani Park Boundless Playground (Playground) and requested an opportunity to discuss the proposed improvements.

By correspondence dated July 18, 2003, the Council Chair transmitted correspondence dated July 10, 2003, from the Chair of the Cost of Government Commission, providing the Commission's comments opposing the "excessive" estimated costs for the Playground.

By correspondence dated July 31, 2003, the Council Chair transmitted correspondence dated July 28, 2003 from Masaru Yokouchi, President of the

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Boundless Opportunity, providing comments regarding the Cost of Government Commission's opposition to the Playground.

By correspondence dated August 21, 2003, the Director of Parks and Recreation transmitted copies of the "Proposed Central Clubhouse for the Boys and Girls Club of Maui", including various plans, location map and topographic map.

By correspondence dated August 28, 2003, the Council Chair transmitted correspondence dated June 27, 2003 from Carol Arai and Sandra Yoshimori, expressing support for the Playground.

At its meeting, your Committee met with the Budget Director; the Chief of Planning and Development of the Department of Planning; Carl Takumi and Fiona Van Ammers of C. Takumi Engineering, Inc., consultants for the Playgrounds; and the Corporation Counsel.

Your Committee received testimony from four members of the public. Two testifiers, former Mayor James Apana and Mr. Yokouchi, expressed support for the Playground.

Two testifiers, Buck Joiner and Douglas Halbert, expressed concern about the cost of the Playground and stated that the funds should be used to improve existing playgrounds.

Your Committee received the following documents:

1. Copy of a Conceptual Plan of the Keopuolani Park Playground and "Values and Outcomes Matrix" submitted by the Department of Parks and Recreation;
2. Copy of an April 2001 newsletter from Good Beginnings Alliance; and
3. Correspondence dated September 2, 2003, from Lori Gomez, expressing support for the Playground.

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Your Committee notes that its discussion was limited to the Playground as a result of unresolved questions raised during the Council's Committee of the Whole meeting regarding a lease versus license agreement for the Boys and Girls Club of Maui to run the Central Maui Youth Center. Your Committee will consider the bond authorization for the Central Maui Youth Center at a later date, after the concerns are resolved.

Your Committee requested that the Department of the Corporation Counsel separate the proposed bill into two bills, one for the Central Maui Youth Center and one for the Playground.

Your Committee received a computer-generated slide show, entitled "Keopuolani Park: A Playground for All Children", presented by Mr. Takumi. The slide show presented photographs of the Playground site, preliminary plans, design of play areas and equipment, the estimated budget, and an estimate of children, by age group and district, for the island of Maui. Mr. Takumi explained that the boundless concept requires that 70 percent of the apparatus be accessible to all children, while the American Disabilities Act (ADA) requires accessibility at 50 percent.

Mr. Takumi informed your Committee that the proposed site consists of five acres of undeveloped land located between the YMCA and the Maui Nui Botanical Gardens. He stated that the major portion of the work involves site development, which is estimated at \$550,000 for a parking lot, pathways, grading, drainage, and landscaping. The play structure area is estimated at \$360,000, and there is an additional \$340,000 for amenities (restrooms, telephone, entry court).

Your Committee noted that it must not only consider whether the Playground should be developed, but also whether it supports the development of another five acres at Keopuolani Park. Your Committee further noted that other playgrounds did not require such extensive site work, and that this five-acre site was intended to be developed, provided it did not encroach on the dunes area.

Your Committee further noted that Keopuolani Park is the County's flagship facility that is used not only by the neighboring community, but also by visitors and residents Countywide. The construction of the Playground should be

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considered a park development, and the timing of the project needs to be weighed against the financial outlook of the County.

One member of your Committee expressed concerns regarding: (1) the need to improve existing parks and playgrounds; (2) unknown requirements relating to legal challenges regarding ADA accessibility within our parks; and (3) limitations on the County's financial resources.

Your Committee expressed the need for the Department to consider ways to reduce the Playground's costs and increase the number of dedicated ADA stalls within the proposed adjacent parking lot. Your Committee noted that ample general parking is available across the street at the War Memorial Stadium. In addition, your Committee requested the Department to pursue the establishment of an endowment fund for the maintenance of the park as suggested by the Boundless Opportunity representative.

Your Committee voted to recommend: (1) passage of a revised proposed bill relating to the Playground; and (2) deferral of the matter relating to the Central Maui Youth Center pending further discussion.

Your Committee is in receipt of a revised proposed bill, entitled "A BILL FOR AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 3066, BILL NO. 34 (2002), AS AMENDED, RELATING TO THE ISSUANCE OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS OF THE COUNTY OF MAUI", approved as to form and legality, by the Department of the Corporation Counsel. The revised proposed bill incorporates the changes requested by your Committee, separating the bond authorization into two bills.

Your Budget and Finance Committee **RECOMMENDS** that Bill No. \_\_\_\_\_ (2003), as revised herein and attached hereto, entitled "A BILL FOR AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 3066, BILL NO. 34 (2002), AS AMENDED, RELATING TO THE ISSUANCE OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS OF THE COUNTY OF MAUI", be **PASSED ON FIRST READING** and be **ORDERED TO PRINT**.

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Adoption of this report is respectfully requested.

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**G. RIKI HOKAMA** **Chair**

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**DANNY A. MATEO** **Member**

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**WAYNE K. NISHIKI** **Vice-Chair**

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**MICHAEL J. MOLINA** **Member**

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**ROBERT CARROLL** **Member**

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**JOSEPH PONTANILLA** **Member**

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**JO ANNE JOHNSON** **Member**

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**CHARMAINE TAVARES** **Member**

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**DAIN P. KANE** **Member**