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Press Release by:

Councilmember Councilmember Michael J. Molina 

Council approves Molina's request to conduct an assessment of the Department of Planning's Zoning Administration and Enforcement Division

WAILUKU – Today the Maui County Council approved a proposed resolution entitled “Authorizing the Council Chair or County Auditor to Execute a Contract for an Assessment of the Department of Planning’s Zoning Administration and Enforcement Division (ZAED)”.

The purpose of the proposed resolution is to authorize the Council Chair or County Auditor to contract for an assessment on ZAED to include the following:

- a. application and permit processing times to expedite review,
- b. maintaining and retention of staff levels;
- c. Assess staff morale;
- d. Evaluate pending permit applications and backlogs;
- e. Evaluate customer service;
- f. Evaluate options for expediting the processing of minor permits; and
- g. Assess staff knowledge and proficiency for permit review consistency.

Councilmember Michael J. Molina transmitted the proposed resolution to the Council and its Planning and Sustainable Land Use Committee in an effort to address concerns from individuals and businesses that process planning applications.

“Over the past six months I have received numerous concerns relating to the lack of staff response, inconsistency in processing permits, significant delays in processing permits and absence of customer service,” said Molina.

In March 2006 the Council initiated a study called “A Review and Assessment of the Department of Planning. (Assessment)”

The objectives of the Assessment were in part to "recommend a plan of action, including goals, measures of effectiveness, and timelines, to improve the operations of the Department of Planning . . . including changes to the Department's table of organization."

“I realize the Council initiated an Assessment in 2006, but my concern is that we are still receiving complaints that were raised in the previous Assessment,” said Molina.

“If Planning had addressed the concerns and recommendations in the Assessment, we wouldn’t still be receiving complaints from the public, said Molina.”

“My intention for this initiative is to create an air of cooperation, improved customer service, build morale in the department and increase confidence in the processing of planning permits”, said Molina.

The resolution will be directed to the Council Chair and the County Auditor for review to determine the next steps in relating to funding, scope of the assessment and whether the Council Chair or County Auditor will take the lead on the assessment.

** Mike Molina is Chair of the Council’s Governance, Ethics, and Transparency Committee. He holds the council seat for the Makawao-Haiku-Paia residency area. Go to mike.molina@mauicounty.us for more information or call 270-5507.*

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