

To: Housing and Land Use Committee
Re: Resolution 26-84 – EC Pā‘ia Town Project
May 20, 2026

Aloha Chair U‘u-Hodgins and Committee Members,

My position on Resolution 26-84 and the proposed EC Pā‘ia Town Project is one of conditional support with significant safeguards, enforceable protections, and long-term accountability requirements.

I recognize this proposal did not emerge in isolation. The project area has already been identified within the Maui Island Plan as part of the Pā‘ia Expansion Planned Growth Area and is described as a location intended for compact mixed-use growth adjacent to existing town infrastructure and employment opportunities.

I also recognize the project attempts to address several legitimate community needs, including:

- additional housing inventory,
- income-restricted housing,
- mixed-use development,
- neighborhood-serving commercial space,
- healthcare access,
- walkability,
- and more efficient land use patterns within an existing growth boundary rather than continued outward rural sprawl.

However, the fact that growth was conceptually anticipated years ago does not automatically mean the County should approve implementation without serious scrutiny regarding infrastructure, environmental impacts, operational realities, and long-term community consequences.

The County must be honest with residents:
this is not simply a housing project.

This proposal represents a significant land use transition involving the conversion of portions of agricultural, open space, and heavy industrial land into multifamily, single-family, commercial, and quasi-public uses across more than 40 acres in Pā‘ia.

Projects of this scale permanently shape communities.

From both a resident and real estate perspective, this project will likely influence:

- surrounding land values,
- redevelopment expectations,
- traffic patterns,
- future rezoning pressure,

- highest-and-best-use assumptions,
- and long-term growth patterns for Pā‘ia and the surrounding region.

That reality should be openly acknowledged rather than minimized.

The proposal may provide approximately 170 residential units, including roughly 100 income-restricted units, along with commercial and public-serving uses.

Those are meaningful benefits.

But residents also deserve clear answers regarding:

- water availability,
- drainage impacts,
- runoff management,
- wastewater capacity,
- roadway congestion,
- emergency access,
- school impacts,
- parking,
- environmental impacts,
- and preservation of Pā‘ia’s long-term character and functionality.

Maui County has a history of approving ambitious projects conceptually while infrastructure, enforcement, and operational oversight lag behind actual development pressure.

That pattern creates public distrust.

Housing policy and growth policy cannot continue operating independently from infrastructure policy.

If this project proceeds, safeguards and enforceable conditions matter just as much as the project vision itself.

For that reason, I respectfully request the following safeguards and conditions be incorporated into any future approvals:

1. Infrastructure Phasing Requirements
Require that critical infrastructure improvements occur prior to or concurrently with development phases, not years afterward.
2. Water Availability Certification
Require verified long-term water availability before final approvals or permit issuance.
3. Drainage and Runoff Protections
Require independent drainage analysis, runoff mitigation standards, and long-term monitoring to protect surrounding properties and nearshore environments.

4. Traffic and Transportation Accountability
Require updated traffic studies and measurable mitigation obligations tied to actual project buildout phases, including impacts involving the Pā‘ia Bypass realignment proposal.
5. Permanent Affordable Housing Protections
Require enforceable long-term deed restrictions and affordability protections for income-restricted housing units so affordability is preserved beyond initial project marketing.
6. Community-Serving Use Requirements
Require binding timelines for delivery of promised community-serving uses such as:
 - healthcare facilities,
 - grocery services,
 - open space,
 - and pedestrian connectivity improvements.
7. Agricultural and Community Buffers
Require meaningful visual, environmental, and operational buffers between new development and surrounding agricultural or existing residential uses.
8. Parking and Density Management
Require realistic parking standards and neighborhood overflow mitigation planning.
9. Periodic Compliance Review
Require periodic County review of compliance with project conditions, infrastructure obligations, and affordability commitments after project approval and during buildout.
10. Limits on Future Expansion Pressure
Clarify that approval of this project does not automatically justify future incremental expansion beyond the currently identified growth boundaries.

I believe many residents understand Maui needs housing solutions and more responsible planning for future growth.

But residents also expect growth to occur honestly, responsibly, transparently, and in a manner that does not overwhelm infrastructure, erode community character, or create long-term operational burdens the County cannot adequately manage.

The public should not be forced to choose between “no growth” and “approve everything.”

The better path is responsible growth with enforceable accountability.

For those reasons, I respectfully offer conditional support for Resolution 26-84 provided meaningful safeguards, measurable infrastructure protections, environmental protections, and enforceable community benefit requirements are incorporated into the project moving forward.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.