HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL

KE KANIHELA O KE KALANA O HONOLULU

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

No. 26-260

RESOLUTION

ESTABLISHING A LANDFILL COMMUNITY BENEFITS ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO ASSIST THE COUNCIL IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF A FAIR, TRANSPARENT, AND PREDICTABLE FRAMEWORK FOR DETERMINING APPROPRIATE COMMUNITY BENEFITS PACKAGES FOR COMMUNITIES THAT HOST EXISTING OR NEW CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU SOLID WASTE LANDFILLS.

WHEREAS, the City and County of Honolulu ("City") generates nearly 1.7 million tons of waste annually from residential, commercial, and industrial sources; and

WHEREAS, while the City has been extremely successful in diverting a significant portion of that tonnage from the waste stream each year through various recycling and waste-to-energy initiatives, a certain portion of that waste cannot—at least at this time—be disposed of through alternative means and must be deposited into a landfill; and

WHEREAS, the Waimanalo Gulch Sanitary Landfill ("WGSL") currently serves as the City's only permitted public municipal solid waste landfill and is authorized to operate under a special use permit approved by the State of Hawai'i Land Use Commission until March 2, 2028; and

WHEREAS, thereafter, the City must close operations at the WGSL and open a new solid waste landfill to support O'ahu's robust economy and population of nearly one million residents; and

WHEREAS, although landfills currently serve a vital islandwide need, they also impose certain localized environmental, economic, traffic, and quality-of-life burdens on host communities; and

WHEREAS, host communities should not bear those burdens without receiving certain durable and measurable community benefits in return; and

WHEREAS, community benefits packages for impacted host communities should be the result of a fair, transparent, and predictable process that is agreed upon by members of the community, technical experts, and City Administration officials, rather than the result of intense or unorganized negotiations and bargaining that occurs after a landfill site has been selected or already built; and

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WHEREAS, the City Council ("Council") finds it necessary to establish an advisory committee to develop a standardized framework for determining such community benefits packages in order to enhance public confidence, create efficiency in government, and provide much deserved community benefits to host communities affected by an existing or new solid waste landfill; and

WHEREAS, under Council Rule 9A, the Council may, by adoption of a resolution, establish advisory committees to assist the Council in the resolution or study of issues; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that a Landfill Community Benefits Advisory Committee ("Advisory Committee") is hereby established to assist the Council in the development and maintenance of a fair, transparent, and predictable framework for determining appropriate community benefit packages for communities that host existing or new municipal solid waste landfills; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Advisory Committee be composed of, but is not limited to, the following members who will be appointed by the Council Chair unless otherwise indicated below:

1. The Director of the Department of Environmental Services;
2. The Chief Engineer of the Department of Facility Maintenance;
3. Two community representatives from the Kailua area;
4. Two community representatives from the Hawai'i Kai area;
5. Two community representatives from the Nānākuli-Mā'ili area;
6. Two community representatives from the Makakilo-Kapolei-Honokai Hale area;
7. Two representatives from the construction industry;
8. Two representatives from organized labor; and
9. Two representatives with expertise in any of the following fields:
    A. Environmental health;

B. Public health;

C. Community development; or

D. Affordable housing; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that at the initial meeting of the Advisory Committee, the Advisory Committee shall elect a Chair from among its members; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Advisory Committee may invite additional stakeholders, subject matter experts, representatives of community organizations, and experts from other jurisdictions to participate in the Advisory Committee's discussions and provide information and technical assistance, as appropriate; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Advisory Committee shall:

1. Identify both quantitative and qualitive impacts imposed upon host communities, such as environmental, health, transportation, infrastructure, recreation, economic, cultural, and quality-of-life impacts;

2. Develop a methodology for valuing those impacts, including any cumulative impacts related to former or active landfill facilities that might be present in or around the host community;

3. Consider the following types of community benefits:

   A. *Direct community investment benefits*. This may include direct annual payments and appropriations for community facilities, parks, libraries, recreation activities, public safety, or other locally identified priorities;

   B. *Environmental protection benefits*. This may include additional City services for air, groundwater, odor, and noise monitoring; watershed protection from pollutants; habitat restorations or relocations; vegetation buffers; and post-closure land remediation and stewardship;

   C. *Workforce and economic benefits.* This may include new City policies for host community hiring and contracting preferences; and

programs and grants to support workforce training, apprenticeships, internships, scholarships, small business opportunities, and economic development;

D. *Infrastructure benefits*. This may include appropriations for road widening and surface maintenance; pedestrian safety; additional transit services; and other improvements to help mitigate the impacts on infrastructure related to the solid waste landfill;

E. *Cultural stewardship benefits.* This may include the protection of traditional cultural resources; the safeguarding of heritage sites; policy preferences for traditional land stewardship methods; and cultural monitoring services; and

F. *Legacy benefits.* This may include the establishment of community endowments, trusts, or special funds to support the host community;

4. Create a standardized community benefits framework or decision matrix that will take the anticipated impacts on a host community as inputs, match them with the appropriate community benefits, and output a comprehensive community benefits package; provided that in so doing, the Advisory Committee shall also:

   A. Develop a workable formula for direct annual payments and other long-term community investments;

   B. Recommend criteria for recognizing cumulative burdens from former or active landfills and other significant waste burning and recycling facilities;

   C. Recommend a process for updating community benefits when landfill facility size, permitted tonnage, operating life, traffic, and environmental conditions materially change; and

   D. Recommend accountability mechanisms for monitoring whether community benefits are delivered;

5. Submit a report to the Council within 180 days of the adoption of this resolution detailing the Advisory Committee's findings and

recommendations, which shall include the Advisory Committee's proposed standardized community benefits framework or decision matrix; and

6. Continue to stay abreast of solid waste landfill news and related community issues, make recommendations to the Council regarding proposals to update or improve the proposed standardized community benefits framework or decision matrix, and provide informational reports to the Council and the public as necessary; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Advisory Committee shall remain in effect until dissolved by the Council; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Advisory Committee members shall serve without compensation and may not expend or encumber any appropriated funds unless expressly authorized by the Council; and

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BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Council Chair; the Director of the Department of Environmental Services; and the Chief Engineer of the Department of Facility Maintenance.

INTRODUCED BY:

DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

NOV 5 2026

Honolulu, Hawai'i

Councilmembers

Report Title:
Landfill Benefits Advisory Committee; Council Advisory Committee; Community Benefits Framework; Solid Waste Landfills; City Council ("CCL"); Department of Environmental Services ("ENV"); Department of Facility Maintenance ("DFM"); Report

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