



**Ko Olina Community Association, Inc. Testimony**  
**Project #2023/SUP-2(FK)**  
**May 15, 2023**

**RE: KOCA Supports Increased Oversight of the Landfill Siting Process**

The Honolulu Department of Environmental Services (“ENV”) has missed every deadline associated with the closure and replacement of the Waimanalo Gulch Sanitary Landfill (“WGSL” or the “Landfill”). Its pending application seeks to push off the December 31, 2022 deadline to select a new landfill. ENV must be held to its closure deadline of March 2, 2028. To ensure the deadline is met, Ko Olina Community Association, Inc. (“KOCA”) asks that the Honolulu Planning Commission require ENV to report quarterly in person to the Commission on its efforts to select a new landfill. Reporting during Commission meetings will provide the public with an opportunity to provide testimony and enable the Commission to hold ENV accountable.

KOCA is part of the Leeward community that has been adversely affected by the Landfill. Over the years, Ko Olina’s residents, workers, and visitors have expressed concerns regarding odors, noise, dust, blasting, visual blight, truck traffic and flying litter from the Landfill. LUC 11/1/19 Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and Decision and Order Approving with Modifications the City and County of Honolulu Planning Commission’s Recommendation to Approve Special Use Permit (“LUC Decision”), Finding of Fact (“FOF”) ¶ 327. Indeed, in 2012, the Landfill released unknown quantities of municipal solid waste, sewage sludge, leachate, and medical solid waste into coastal waters. *Id.* ¶ 340.

The pending application involves the most recent delay in a long history of delays to identify a new landfill. ENV has asked to extend a deadline set by the State Land Use Commission (“LUC”) to “identify an alternative landfill site that may be used upon closure of WGSL.” LUC Decision at 104. The current deadline passed five months ago on December 31, 2022. *Id.*

The Landfill should have been closed and a new landfill opened a long time ago. The Landfill was ordered by the LUC to close by 2008 and a new site selected by 2004. LUC Decision, FOF ¶ 286. Several sites were identified by a site selection committee. Instead of following the LUC’s directives and the committee’s recommendation, the City selected the existing Landfill as the “new” landfill. *Id.* ¶¶ 287-89. The ENV was then ordered to begin the process of identifying and developing a new site by 2010 with reasonable diligence. *Id.* ¶¶ 59, 405. Another site selection process followed, sites were identified, but no site was selected.

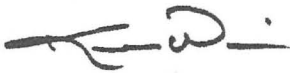
In response to the LUC’s most recent order to identify a new site by December 31, 2022, the ENV formed a new site selection committee in 2021. Six sites were offered as the only alternatives. The committee held eight meetings between October 2021 and June 2022, during which time the committee determined that none of the proposed sites were acceptable.

ENV has asked for more time to address issues posed by Act 73. This law was enacted in 2020, a year before the site selection committee was convened. ENV now proposes to explore the use of federal lands and to work with the Hawai'i Legislature on amendments to Act 73. These avenues should have been pursued prior to the initiation of the site selection committee process.

ENV's request for more time to select a new landfill should be viewed in this context of the long history of delays and harmful effects on the community. To ensure that a new landfill is selected as soon as possible and the closure deadline is met, the Honolulu Planning Commission should require ENV to report quarterly in person to the Commission on its efforts to select a new landfill. Meetings before the Commission will provide the public with a forum to participate in the process and offer public testimony. The Commissioners will be able to consider that public input to ask the right questions and hold ENV accountable. Oversight by the Commission will provide the community reassurance that the risks and benefits associated with the proposed designation of a new site are properly taken into consideration.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Sincerely,  
Ko Olina Community Association, Inc.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken Williams', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Ken Williams  
General Manager

**From:** Kristin Vasquez <kristin.vasquez@koolina.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 15, 2023 10:17 AM  
**To:** Takara, Gloria C <gtakara@honolulu.gov>  
**Subject:** Waimanalo Gulch Land Use Extension - 2023/SUP-2(FK)

CAUTION: Email received from an **EXTERNAL** sender. Please confirm the content is safe prior to opening attachments or links.

Aloha Ms. Takara,

Please find attached testimony for the Ko Olina Community Association.

Mahalo,

***Kristin Vasquez***

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