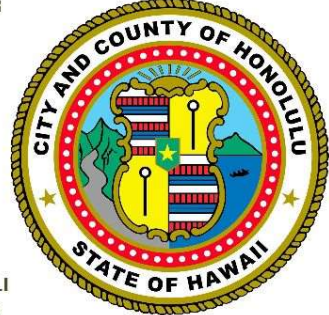


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ESTHER CITY COUNCILMEMBER  
DISTRICT 3

KIA'ĀINA



ĀHUIMANU | HE'EIA | HA'IKŪ | KĀNE'OHE | MAUNAWILI  
KAILUA | OLOMANA | ENCHANTED LAKE | WAIMĀNALO

**November 29, 2021**

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**O'ahu General Plan Update after  
20 years awaiting Final Passage**

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# O'AHU GENERAL PLAN

~~Your Island, Your Future~~

Our Island, Our Future



*The O'ahu General Plan is a comprehensive policy plan that sets forth long-range goals of Honolulu's residents. It lays the foundation for a comprehensive planning process that addresses physical, social, cultural, economic and environmental concerns affecting the City and County of Honolulu. It is also the means by which the City and County government provides direction to the growth projected for O'ahu.*

On November 18, the Committee on Zoning and Planning, of which I am Vice Chair, had its final hearing on [Resolution 21-23, CD 1](#), which updates the O'ahu General Plan. The full Council is expected to take up its final vote at the December 1, 2021 hearing.

To get to this point the Department of Planning and Permitting has done extensive consultation with City agencies, other governmental and private organizations, and residents of the City & County of Honolulu. And the City Council has held many public hearings and committee meetings. Numerous

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changes have been made based on community input, including amendments I secured as follows:

- Reinsertion of more robust affordable housing language,
- Adjustments to the development pattern map to enhance clarity and readability and to add categories to identify non-designated areas, and
- Amendment of the subtitle from “Your Island, Your Future,” to “Our Island, Our Future.”

Mahalo to the Department of Planning and Permitting, Chair Brandon Elefante of the Committee on Zoning and Planning, and to our District 3 community members for providing insight and recommendations to make the plan better. Your voices have been heard. If approved on December 1, this will be the first time the Plan has been updated in nearly 20 years.

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## **Commercial Activities Update at Waimānalo Beach Parks**

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*Waimānalo Beach Park, Photo Credit: Civil Beat*

On November 18, Bill 38, CD1, my modified bill which bans commercial activities at Waimānalo beach parks and right of ways with exceptions for commercial filming, was passed out of the Parks and Community Services Committee.

The [CD1](#) would:

- Prohibit still photography and special event videography at Waimānalo beach parks and right-of-ways on weekends and holidays,
  - Continue to allow the Department of Parks and Recreation to approve permits for television and movie filming activities at Waimānalo beach parks and right-of-ways after vetting and coordination with Film Office, and
  - Prohibit motor carriers from entering Waimānalo beach parks when transporting individuals to engage in commercial activities.
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We heard and received a lot of constructive testimony, including numerous community members who testified in support of a complete ban of commercial still photography and special events videography. I will be considering such input and whether to recommend further amendments to Bill 38, CD1.

The next step is for the full City Council to consider Bill 38, CD1 at the [Council meeting on December 1 for second reading](#). The bill will have one more hearing in the Parks and Community Services Committee, tentatively scheduled for January 13, 2022, at 2:30 p.m., and I am anticipating a third and final full Council reading tentatively scheduled for January 26, 2022. As Bill 38, CD1, continues through the legislative process, please email me **specific** concerns or recommendations related to the bill at [ekiaaina@honolulu.gov](mailto:ekiaaina@honolulu.gov).

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**O‘ahu’s Housing Prices Continue to Climb,  
Windward prices even higher**

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According to the Honolulu Board of Realtors' October 2021 Monthly Housing report, the median price for a single-family home on O'ahu is \$1 million, and \$500,000 for a condo, a 15.6% and 13.8% increase, respectively, from October 2020. For the Windward side, housing prices are even higher. For Kāne'ohe, the median price for a single-family home is \$1.2 million and \$716,000 for a condo, a 28% and 26% increase, respectively, from the same time last year. For Kailua- Waimānalo, the median price for a single-family home is \$1.8 million and \$960,000 for a condo, a 43% and 67% increase, respectively, from the same time last year. For details on each neighborhood, please go to pages 30-31 of the following [report](#).

# Short-Term Rental Reforms Moving Forward



After passing first reading of the full City Council on November 10, I am looking forward to working with my colleagues on further refinements of [Bill 41](#), relating to short term rentals. The City's Planning Commission sent the measure to the City Council with [numerous recommendations](#) and based on testimony received and discussion with Commissioners, the Department of Permitting and Planning has already proposed numerous amendments in a proposed [CD1 to Bill 41](#).

DPP's proposed CD1 would amend Chapter 8, Real Property Tax, and Chapter 21, Land Use Ordinance, of the Revised Ordinances of Honolulu by:

- Changing (expanding and reducing) where short term rentals are allowed;

- Amending the definition of short term rentals to be for 180 days instead of 30 days with exceptions;
- Taxing all short term rentals at the hotel rate or the bed and breakfast rate;
- Establishing a short term rental enforcement fund, increasing enforcement tools, and increasing fines;
- Requiring registration and registration fees for all short term rentals;
- Adopting extensive use and development standards for all short-rentals except for those with non-conforming use certificates; and
- Making numerous adjustments to how short term rentals can operate in a hotels and condominium hotels.

A lot of input was provided at the full Council hearing and in order to give the Council the time it needs for more analysis, discussion, and refinement on the complex provisions, on November 18, the Planning and Zoning Committee, of which I am Vice Chair, approved an extension of time to consider this measure. The Committee will likely hear the measure itself at its next hearing, which is tentatively scheduled for January 13, 2022.

I continue to be interested in your thoughts on DPP's proposed CD1, including the:

- Expansion of short term rentals in apartment districts near resorts;
- Change in definition of transient vacation units and bed and breakfasts for periods of less than 180 days instead of 30 days;
- Tax parity;
- Establishment of the enforcement fund and increase in enforcement tools; and
- Applicability of the use and development standards to all short-term rentals except for those with non-conforming use certificates.

Now that we have a bill that has been introduced, please provide me **specifics** on the provisions you support, oppose, and recommended amendments. You can email me at [ekiaaina@honolulu.gov](mailto:ekiaaina@honolulu.gov).

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## Special Account for Visitor Impacts part of City Transient Accommodations Tax



*Waikiki Beach, Photo Credit: Civil Beat*

On November 17, the Budget Committee, of which I am a member, continued discussions on Bill 40, CD1, which would create a 3% Transient Accommodations Tax (TAT) at the county level.

The committee passed a second draft, [Bill 40, CD2](#), that designates various percentages to the bill's named funds and accounts.

The CD2 allocates the TAT as follows for the first two years: 1.75% to the general fund; 1% to the transit fund; and 0.25% to a special account to mitigate visitor impacts on

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public facilities and natural resources. After two years, the allocation to the general fund would decrease to 1.25%, and the allocation to the transit fund would increase to 1.5%. The special account to mitigate visitor impacts on public facilities and natural resources will remain at 0.25%.

On October 20, at an earlier Budget committee meeting, I was successful in including “natural resources” to the special account for visitor impacts. On November 17, I was also able to add “operations” into the language, which will provide flexibility in how the departments use the funds from the special account for operations to mitigate visitor impacts. The final language says the funds must be used as follows:

Be used to mitigate the impacts of visitors on public facilities and natural resources, including the restoration, operations, and maintenance of beaches and parks

The next step is for the City Council to consider Bill 40, CD2, for final passage at the full Council meeting on December 1. If the bill passes, I look forward to working with the Administration and my colleagues at the Council to appropriate these funds in the upcoming budget cycles starting with FY 2023.

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**In the Community:  
Matthew John Darnell Jr.**

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*Matthew John Darnell, Jr., center, with his Boy Scouts Troop 223.*

On November 17, it was my pleasure to present a Honolulu City Council Honorary Certificate of Recognition to Matthew John Darnell, Jr., for his outstanding community service and achieving the distinguished rank of Eagle Scout, the highest advancement rank in the Boy Scouts of America. A member of the Boy Scouts Troop 223, Matthew is the son of Mathew and Cindy Parnell from Kailua. A senior at Kalāheo High School, he also plays varsity basketball and football. Matthew's Eagle Scout project involved planning, organizing, and building a bench for school kids around a monkey pod tree at Saint Anthony School, which is also where his troop meets.

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## Community Outreach

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*On November 19, Councilmember Kia'aina passed out turkeys to churches to deliver to communities with Hui Mahi'ai 'Āina and City Council Members Radiant Cordero and Tommy Waters. The bonus was being able to buy plants and poinsettias at nearby Waimānalo nurseries after.*

One of the most important jobs as your Councilmember is to make sure that you are able to reach me with your inquiries or to share your concerns. You can either email me at [ekiaaina@honolulu.gov](mailto:ekiaaina@honolulu.gov) or call me at (808) 768-5003. You may also want to follow me on my [Facebook page](#).

If you want to contact City agencies directly, you can also utilize the City's 311 mobile application, which provides a free, simple, and intuitive platform empowering people to report potholes, broken streetlights, cracked sidewalks, illegal dumping, vandalized/broken signs and more via your smartphone. Please note that this app serves as a tool for residents to request City services and report non-emergency issues, which will then be reviewed by the appropriate City department and assigned.

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You can also access this service through the City's website [here](#) or call the City's information hotline at: (808) 768-CITY (2489).

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**Councilmember Esther Kia'āina, District 3**

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