

VOTER'S GUIDE 2022



2022 CANDIDATES

Each election year, the Honolulu Board of REALTORS® asks candidates for county races key questions about issues important to our members and the real estate industry.

Candidates who want to receive campaign contributions from the REALTORS® Political Action Committee (RPAC) will be evaluated on their responses to these questions, as well as other evaluation criteria, such as electability, viability, political influence, and demonstrated leadership.

This year, Primary Elections will be held for Honolulu City Council Districts 2, 4, 6, and 8. This Voter's Guide will help you get to know your candidates for county offices. It will also help our members tell us who you believe has earned the support of RPAC.

Please share this guide with family, friends, and clients and remember to ask for clarification from any candidate whose answer seems unclear.

This year's election will be done by mail in ballot.

DISTRICT 2: Mililani Mauka, Wahiawa, Mokuleia, Waialua, Hale'iwa, Pupukeya, Sunset Beach, Kahuku, La'ie, Hau'ula, Punalu'u, Kahana, Ka'a'awa, Kualoa, Waiahole, and Kahalu'u

- **Racquel Achiu**
- **Lupe Funaki***
- **Makuakai Rothman**
- **Chad Tsuneyoshi**
- **Matt Weyer**

DISTRICT 4: Hawaii Kai, Kuli'ou'ou, Niu Valley, 'Aina Haina, Wailupe, Wai'alaie Iki, Kalani Valley, Kahala, Wilhelmina Rise, Kamuki, portions of Kapahulu, Diamond Head, Black Point, Waikiki, and Ala Moana Beach Park

- **Kaleo Nakoa Kalima**
- **Tommy Waters***

DISTRICT 6: Portions of Makiki, Downtown Honolulu, Punchbowl, Pauoa Valley, Nu'uanu, 'Alewa Heights, Papakolea, Fort Shafter, Moanalua, Halawa, 'Aiea, Kalihi Valley and portions of Liliha and Kalihi

- **Tyler Dos Santos-Tam**
- **Ikaika Hussey**
- **Nalani Jenkins**
- **Chance K. Naauao-Ota***
- **Dennis Masaru Nakasato***
- **Traci K. Toguchi**
- **Chad Toshiro Wolke***

DISTRICT 8: Lower 'Aiea, Pearlridge, Waimalu, Newtown, Pearl City, Seaview, Crestview, Waipi'o Gentry and portions of Waipahu

- **Charmaine T. Doran**
- **Ron Menor**
- **Dion Mesta**
- **Val Aquino Okimoto**
- **Keone F. Simon**

* Candidate did not respond

VOTER'S GUIDE 2022

Candidates running for each City Council District were asked to submit information about their background and were allowed up to 175 words to clarify their position on each of the following issues:

- 1. Housing Affordability:** What role can City government play to support the creation of affordable housing for homebuyers?
- 2. Stakeholder Engagement:** How would you engage stakeholders to address bills before you that impact housing?
- 3. Real Property Tax:** What is your position on real property taxes related to empty/vacant homes and Residential A?
- 4. City Budget, Fiscal Responsibility:** What do you believe is the City's greatest opportunity to reduce costs or increase revenue?
- 5. Constituent Consensus Building:** What is your philosophy to build consensus among constituents when dealing with issues faced by the Council like the recent Kailua development and the recent short-term rentals legislation?

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CANDIDATE PROFILES - DISTRICT 2



DISTRICT 2 - Mililani Mauka, Wahiawa, Mokuleia, Waialua, Hale`iwa, Pupukea, Sunset Beach, Kahuku, La`ie, Hau`ula, Punalu`u, Kahana, Ka`a`awa, Kualoa, Waiahole, and Kahalu`u



Racquel Achiu

YEARS LIVED IN DISTRICT: 53

CURRENT POSITION/OCCUPATION: Rancher/Farmer

PREVIOUS PUBLIC OFFICES/APPOINTMENTS HELD: North Shore Neighborhood Board

CURRENT & PREVIOUS COMMUNITY, CIVIC OR POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT: North Shore Neighborhood Board - Vice Chair (current), Member (2017-present); Waialua High School Community Council (2017-present) - Chair (current); Waialua High School - Co-Advisor & Event Coordinator (2014-2017; Class of 2017); North Shore Hanapa`a Club/Jackpot Fishing Tournament - Director (2008-present); North Shore AYSO - Registrar/Coordinator (2006-2013)



Makuakai Rothman

YEARS LIVED IN DISTRICT: 38

CURRENT POSITION/OCCUPATION: Business owner

PREVIOUS PUBLIC OFFICES/APPOINTMENTS HELD: N/A

CURRENT & PREVIOUS COMMUNITY, CIVIC OR POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT: N/A

CANDIDATE PROFILES - DISTRICT 2 CONT'D



DISTRICT 2 - Mililani Mauka, Wahiawa, Mokuleia, Waialua, Hale`iwa, Pupukea, Sunset Beach, Kahuku, La`ie, Hau`ula, Punalu`u, Kahana, Ka`a`awa, Kualoa, Waiahole, and Kahaalu`u



Chad Tsuneyoshi

YEARS LIVED IN DISTRICT: 14

CURRENT POSITION/OCCUPATION: Owner, Pacific Marketing; Volunteer Counselor

PREVIOUS PUBLIC OFFICES/APPOINTMENTS HELD: N/A

CURRENT & PREVIOUS COMMUNITY, CIVIC OR POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT:

Co-founder, Rides for Angels (nonprofit); Former Board Member, Ha`awi Mai Ka Pu`uwai (project for anti-gang/youth mentoring program); Former Chairman, Ibew 1260 Scholarship Funds; Founder, Community Gym Kalihi



Matt Weyer

YEARS LIVED IN DISTRICT: 19

CURRENT POSITION/OCCUPATION: Private Attorney; Planner, City & County of Honolulu

PREVIOUS PUBLIC OFFICES/APPOINTMENTS HELD: Waipahu Neighborhood Board (3 Terms)

CURRENT & PREVIOUS COMMUNITY, CIVIC OR POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT: Board Member, Hawaii State Bar Association Young Lawyers Division; Prior Board Member, Law for Youth Empowerment



HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

What role can City government play to support the creation of affordable housing for homebuyers?



Racquel Achiu

City's role would be, is to, review and heavily scrutinize proposed projects to ensure the intent and financial health of the projects to support and provide TRUE AFFORDABLE HOUSING options FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS. A primary consideration in reviewing proposed "affordable housing" projects would be in the transparency in the costs of the project versus the targeted market. WHAT IS AFFORDABLE HOUSING & WHAT MARKET WILL BE TARGETED? For example, in a housing market of \$1.5M, what would be considered "affordable housing?" Is it \$800K? That is where we, the City, need to dissect the project to understand what exactly is "affordable housing" for local residents. Who is being targeted for "affordable housing?" The City has to place guidelines and transparency first and hold developers accountable and responsible to achieve a credible project. We need to ensure we include rent to own and affordable rentals as part of the housing mix. No option should be left on the table.



Makuakai Rothman

The City and County of Honolulu DPP should streamline the planning and permitting processes for housing projects aimed at certain low-income AMI demographics so that these projects can be expedited and sold to the people in need of homes for Honolulu residents. The City must also introduce policies and legislation to keep those homes available to certain potential buyers that must meet the housing AMI and be held in inventory to keep the homes affordable.



Chad Tsuneyoshi

I believe the City can and should have a major role in creating affordable housing. "Low hanging fruit" that should be considered is transit-oriented development (TOD) along the rail line, mix-use development on available City/State lands, and a partnership with the Department of Hawaiian Homelands (DHHL) to effectively spend down the recent \$600 million allocations by the Legislature.

While there are areas where the City can directly support the development of affordable housing units (i.e., developments on City-owned/managed lands), the City cannot address the affordable housing issue by itself. There needs to be a cohesive working relationship with State and Federal partners.

Issuance of permits and other regulatory matters (related to development) is handled at the City level. Thus, improvements to the operations at DPP would significantly help speed up development of projects. To remedy some of the long-standing operational issues within DPP, I believe the department needs to evaluate the overall permit application process; consider fully implementing and enforcing electronic plan submission and plan reviews, and vigorously enforce current administrative rules and internal procedures/policies.



HOUSING AFFORDABILITY -CONT'D

What role can City government play to support the creation of affordable housing for homebuyers?



Matt Weyer

The City can:

1. Expand the down-payment assistance and landlord engagement programs currently supported through the Department of Community Services.
2. Invest in infrastructure - roads, sidewalks, and sewers, to speed up the completion of ongoing projects and provide for future projects.
3. Speed up permitting by filling the many DPP vacancies, utilizing pay differentials to stop the City from losing workers to the private sector.
4. Implement self-certification for specific, low-level permits to help clear the backlog and speed up the permitting process across the board.
5. Maximize density in the urban core to provide for mixed-use development that supports new housing opportunities and incorporates multi-modal transportation.
6. Make City land available for creation of new housing units.
7. Create a Department of Housing so the City's housing policy and activities are streamlined and centralized in one location versus spread across at least five departments/offices.
8. Deploy Capital Improvement Project and ARPA funds to support housing development for low-income and homeless families and leverage additional federal funds like those available through U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

How would you engage stakeholders to address bills before you that impact housing?



Racquel Achiu

I will seek to improve the notification system to adequately inform communities, community leaders, etc. in a timely manner of upcoming bills that impact housing, especially within their respective communities. I will encourage each community, likely through their neighborhood boards and community associations, to form committees (if they haven't already) to represent and report the communities' position on the bills. Community input, review and participation will be critical to the progression of any bill up for review. I will take community input as a priority when reviewing and voting on bills.



Makuakai Rothman

We are all stakeholders when it comes to housing. I feel that native Hawaiians are frequently not included in housing discussions, and I am very interested in creating focus groups to hear what problems need to be addressed by the City so that they can stay on their land. I want to see more local families stay here and local families return to Hawai'i.



Chad Tsuneyoshi

Stakeholders, particularly those from the community, must be involved in every step of the process. Too often have we seen great projects not come to fruition due to pushback from community members, neighborhood boards, etc. I would work to become a mediator and bring all interests, both community and developers, to the table to discuss the issue at hand and work to find a compromise if there is disagreement.



Matt Weyer

I would solicit feedback from those affected by any legislation, inviting stakeholders to talk story and explain how a particular bill affects their industry. I commit to being available, accessible, and listening to our community's concerns. This includes your concerns as members of our community. I truly believe that we will not be able to solve all of the challenges ahead alone, and it will take all of us coming together to create the quality of life O'ahu residents deserve. The bills that we pass should be data driven and reflect the actual reality on the ground.



What is your position on real property taxes related to empty/vacant homes and Residential A?



Racquel Achiu

The property tax system is due for a review.

1. There are vacant homes with businesses and corporations as the property owners who aren't residents; they come a couple times a year and don't contribute to the community or affordable rental market. Yet there are local residents with homes vacant due to kupuna/families moving in with each other to overcome financial strains, healthcare, etc. while leaving one of their homes vacant. It's not unreasonable to have non-resident, corporate property owners in a separate tax bracket. Local resident property owners trying to navigate their ability to survive and keep their homes should be in another tax bracket AND consider a tax incentive to rent the home to another local resident at an AFFORDABLE rate.
2. Cap property tax on seniors' homes maybe at the rate when they retired OR when they originally acquired/inherited their property.
3. Residential A: Off-Shore/foreign/out-of-state investors/business/commercial property owners should pay a higher tax. Local residents should pay the standard rate and not held to this classification as most homes are currently valued over \$1M, therefore should remain within regular residential property tax rates. TVU's should be imposed higher rates as appropriately permitted in resort-zoned areas.



Makuakai Rothman

When it comes to vacant homes, yes, they must be taxed more. I think residents should pay taxes based on their original home price and not be taxed more due to foreign investments driving up the value of homes. Property valuations are out of private homeowner control and there needs to be a way for residents to stay in Hawai'i without property taxes increasing exponentially every year.



Chad Tsuneyoshi

Honolulu has one of the nation's highest housing costs – over \$1M median cost for a single-family home. Yet the median household income in Honolulu is only about \$85,000 per year. Out-of-state investors heavily occupy much of our housing units, leaving 34,253 housing units vacant (2020 Census).

Unfortunately, our City's tax structure incentivizes this practice. With the lowest property tax in the nation and little incentive to use the property for homes for local residents, this causes enormous outside investments in our local housing market.

I support an Empty Homes Tax because it would not only deter non-residents from investing in our housing market, but it has the potential to raise revenues for the City. In Canada, the Empty Homes Tax has resulted in a 26% reduction in vacant homes and \$106 million in new tax revenues for affordable housing initiatives in Vancouver, and over \$231 million in revenues for affordable housing in British Columbia.

A vacant home tax won't solve all our issues, but it should be a critical part of the solution.



What is your position on real property taxes related to empty/vacant homes and Residential A?



Matt Weyer

As our youth and local families move away, it is clear that we are experiencing a housing crisis that requires multiple approaches. As a planner in the Department of Community Services' Community Based Development Branch, overseeing acquisition and construction projects, and a prior civil litigator working in construction litigation, I know that meeting our housing needs solely through development will take years. As we work to meet our 50,000+ unit shortfall by implementing the steps above, an empty/vacant home tax as recommended by the Oahu Real Property Tax Advisory Commission could be used to push some of the 70,000 vacant units in our state back into the housing market. This increase in supply would reduce demand/costs and result in Realtors having more inventory at their disposal to fulfill their passion of getting our families into their own homes.

CITY BUDGET, FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY



What do you believe is the City's greatest opportunity to reduce costs or increase revenue?



Racquel Achiu

As mentioned in question 3 [Real Property Tax], re-evaluating the property tax format would be significant. However, I believe that it is time to implement a visitor and/or non-resident tax or fee to create revenue that better offsets the impacts of visitors, non-residents, investors, etc. Primarily a visitor's tax or fee would provide a significant relief to the impacts on our resources, infrastructure, and communities. Also, investing in the technology of our governing agencies and offices would ultimately reduce costs of operation in the long term. For example, if elected, I will continue to focus on collaborating with the Department of Planning and Permitting to significantly improve processes. A main factor in that improvement will be the investment in technology.



Makuakai Rothman

The City has funding set aside such as the Affordable Housing Fund that is currently not being spent and they are trying to launch applications for developers but there isn't any movement yet. The City has funding set aside from the Clean Water Natural Land Fund and only three projects were approved and \$18 million sitting in that fund. There needs to be better spending practices across the board, which will reduce costs and increase revenue.



Chad Tsuneyoshi

As stated in the previous question [Real Property Tax], I think implementing a vacant home tax is one option the City should consider to increase revenues. More importantly, the City should work with the State Legislature to determine if alternative revenue streams can be considered to help make up for the loss of monies due to the COVID-19 shutdown (e.g., legalization of marijuana).



Matt Weyer

By making the Department of Permitting and Planning more efficient, through the steps discussed above [see Real Property Tax] and digitizing more of our permitting process, we can reduce costs while speeding up the permitting process. As discussed above, an empty/vacant home tax would be one mechanism to generate revenue, understanding that not all of the 70,000 empty/vacant units will immediately be put back on the market. The City should also create a full-time position dedicated to identifying and applying for federal grant funds. The Departments of Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Agriculture have grant opportunities that slip by every year that could be leveraged and used to invest in the infrastructure needed to support the expansion of housing and public safety.

CONSTITUENT CONSENSUS BUILDING



What is your philosophy to build consensus among constituents when dealing with issues faced by the Council like the recent Kailua development and the recent short-term rentals legislation?



Racquel Achiu

We need to start the outreach process very early to see where the concerns are in the community. We need to be sensitive and aware of community concerns - what is the community's history with these types of projects? Reach out to a broad section of the community not just neighborhood boards but community associations and other community groups. I strongly supported Bill 41 for regulating vacation rentals. It had grown out of control and Hale'iwa had the most on the island. Too many of our residents were turned out of their homes (as affordable monthly rent) as offshore owners decided to go the TVU route (higher, multiple rents in a month). It's had a very negative impact on the North Shore. The regulation is fair by keeping it in resort areas.



Makuakai Rothman

I think that affordable housing projects that were taken away to build expensive homes need to be given back to communities. I would do my research and meet with the community because consensus building is a long-term process and communities change over time and projects are often on long timelines. I will do my best to elevate the voices of our community for our housing needs.



Chad Tsuneyoshi

For any project or initiative to be successful, I firmly believe community stakeholders must be engaged throughout the entire project. Yes, there are points in the process where community consultation is mandated, but to earn the community's trust, developers and planners need to be transparent and willing to openly engage with the community at every step of the way.

I also believe that individuals from all sides of the issue need to be willing to come to the table and discuss their viewpoints and opinions. As a City Councilmember, I will work to be that convener and help find common ground.



What is your philosophy to build consensus among constituents when dealing with issues faced by the Council like the recent Kailua development and the recent short-term rentals legislation?



Matt Weyer

Consensus-building requires commitment, communication, and patience. We sometimes need to override our fight or flight instinct and begin with listening - engaging the community, listening to their concerns, and talking through issues. Having engaged in these conversations, I believe collaboration is possible when you gather folks that share a deep love for Hawai'i/our community, even when they disagree. This is why I spend every day as a planner trying to get folks into housing and why I believe our housing crisis is solvable.

The Kailua development is an example of misinformation given too much time to spread before stakeholders meaningfully engaged the community. It's important for stakeholders to engage early on, give folks an opportunity to be heard and included in the conversation going forward. The alternative is to operate in silos and achieve nothing for our community.

The goal of short-term rental legislation is to increase housing inventory and reduce negative impacts of tourism on residential neighborhoods. The general consensus, even in the hospitality industry, is we can lessen the number of visitors and still support the good-paying jobs and economic growth that tourism brings. With millions more visitors a year than available hotel rooms, visitors chip away at available long-term rentals by moving into our neighborhoods. Is there room for an honest discussion about B&B activity on occupied properties? Of course, and I hope to be a part of that conversation. We have to first get a handle on our housing crisis and refine the regulatory framework to be enforceable. I've seen properties that were sold to provide long-term housing after they were no longer able to operate as a vacation rental. Unlike other cities, where folks can move to the suburbs to escape rising costs, O'ahu families are constrained by our shores and will leave in greater numbers if we don't change the path we're on. Without families here we won't have a vibrant workforce.

CANDIDATE PROFILES - DISTRICT 4



DISTRICT 4 - Hawaii Kai, Kuli`ou`ou, Niu Valley, `Aina Haina, Wailupe, Wai`alae Iki, Kalani Valley, Kahala, Wilhelmina Rise, Kamuki, portions of Kapahulu, Diamond Head, Black Point, Waikiki, and Ala Moana Beach Park



Kaleo Nakoa

YEARS LIVED IN DISTRICT: 4

CURRENT POSITION/OCCUPATION: Retired

PREVIOUS PUBLIC OFFICES/APPOINTMENTS HELD:
N/A

CURRENT & PREVIOUS COMMUNITY, CIVIC OR POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT: N/A



Tommy Waters

YEARS LIVED IN DISTRICT: 31

CURRENT POSITION/OCCUPATION: Councilmember for District 4 and Chair, Honolulu City Council

PREVIOUS PUBLIC OFFICES/APPOINTMENTS HELD:
State House (2002-2008)

CURRENT & PREVIOUS COMMUNITY, CIVIC OR POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT: Kailua Neighborhood Board

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY



What role can City government play to support the creation of affordable housing for homebuyers?



Kaleo Nakoa

It's not about creating affordable housing, it's about regulating outside investors from outpricing the people of Hawai'i. That will make housing more affordable for the people. Building "affordable" homes always has back door deals for the developer, contractor, and the officials involved. We don't need to keep over populating Hawai'i when the infrastructure is already collapsing, and traffic is at an all-time high.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT



How would you engage stakeholders to address bills before you that impact housing?



Kaleo Nakoa

Transparency! This means reaching out to the subject matter experts and asking for their mana'o on all the issues pertaining to City and County issues. I met a mortgage lender at the Kaka'ako farmers market, and she asked me "How do you plan to keep Hawai'i affordable?" My reply was "to regulate the investors that have no interest to occupy the residence. A lot of people in Hawai'i work their entire lives to reach the goal of owning their own homes that they can pass down from generation to generation, and they offer everything that they can afford to have a home, and when an outside investor offers \$10K above asking price, cash, that is demoralizing to everyone involved and crushes the hopes and dreams of everyone that wants to become a homeowner." It became more relevant to me when I saw the look on her face of a sense of hope that someone understands the struggles.



What is your position on real property taxes related to empty/vacant homes and Residential A?



Kaleo Nakoa

How long do we consider a property to be empty/vacant? If a home is purchased and not occupied within a month or two than is that when we say they are empty? Every circumstance to why a home is empty differs. Maybe it's empty or vacant because the homeowner doesn't want to rent due to past tenants being destructive and causing more of an issue than good for the homeowner. Maybe an outside investor who purchased the home is waiting for the market to jump up so they can sell when the market is high? What if there was a plan to keep Hawai'i affordable by introducing a bill that would keep the tax rate for the homeowner at the rate that the home was purchased? Just as long as that home is occupied and owned by an immediate family member of the original homeowner, the taxes stay at that rate. But once they sell, new owners will take on the current tax rate, and if that seller were to buy another home in Hawai'i, they would then be taxed at the current rate of when they purchased their new home.

CITY BUDGET, FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY



What do you believe is the City's greatest opportunity to reduce costs or increase revenue?



Kaleo Nakoa

Traffic light cameras. Every day you drive to and from work, count how many drivers run red lights. Then times that by \$130 (possible fine), let's estimate 20 drivers depending on where you live and work, $20 \times 130 = 2600 \times 365 = \$949,000/\text{year}$. Of course, cost up front will scare people, but this project will always bring in revenue. Reducing costs, use timers for the sprinklers in City parks that would turn on at night instead of having workers manually turn them on at peak hours when it's the worst time to water grass. In the military we would bid out our contracts to three different companies and would choose the best one. It gives local businesses a chance to bid for City contracts and will also build a better relationship with the community. When hearing politicians pass bills, my question to them is always, "What's the 20-year plan?" Did they account for maintenance costs, are they planning for the end-of-life cycle for their grand ideas? That's planning that would reduce the costs down the road, which the community won't have to worry about because the City has a 20-year plan.

CONSTITUENT CONSENSUS BUILDING



What is your philosophy to build consensus among constituents when dealing with issues faced by the Council like the recent Kailua development and the recent short-term rentals legislation?



Kaleo Nakoa

I am already in communication with constituents, with other neighborhoods that are fighting over development from Manoa, Punchbowl, Kalama Valley, and Chinatown. As for short-term rentals, this is a subject that definitely needs to have a balance. We definitely do not need any more monster homes or these short-term rentals that are intrusive to the community or neighborhood that they are located. But if it's a local family that has a mother-in-law or a home that is available to rent, there could be different regulations/bills in place that the neighborhood boards could have say in how they are managed.

CANDIDATE PROFILES - DISTRICT 6



DISTRICT 6 - Portions of Makiki, Downtown Honolulu, Punchbowl, Pauoa Valley, Nu`uanu, `Alewa Heights, Papakolea, Fort Shafter, Moanalua, Halawa, `Aiea, Kalihi Valley and portions of Liliha and Kalihi



Tyler Dos Santos-Tam

YEARS LIVED IN DISTRICT: 34

CURRENT POSITION/OCCUPATION: Self-employed business consultant

PREVIOUS PUBLIC OFFICES/APPOINTMENTS HELD:
Member, Liliha Neighborhood Board (2011-2017);
Chair, Democratic Party of Hawaii (2020-2022)

CURRENT & PREVIOUS COMMUNITY, CIVIC OR POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT: Honorary Consul of Portugal in Hawaii; Commissioner, Honolulu Neighborhood Commission; Co-Founder, HI Good Neighbor



Nalani Jenkins

YEARS LIVED IN DISTRICT: 32+

CURRENT POSITION/OCCUPATION: President, Na Leo Pilimehana; President, 721, LLC

PREVIOUS PUBLIC OFFICES/APPOINTMENTS HELD: N/A

CURRENT & PREVIOUS COMMUNITY, CIVIC OR POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT: President - Haleiwa Main Street, North Shore Chamber of Commerce; Wahiawa Rotary Club; Waialua Pop Warner; Kamehameha Football Booster Club; Hawaii Academy of Recording Arts

CANDIDATE PROFILES - DISTRICT 6 CONT'D



DISTRICT 6 - Portions of Makiki, Downtown Honolulu, Punchbowl, Pauoa Valley, Nu`uanu, `Alewa Heights, Papakolea, Fort Shafter, Moanalua, Halawa, `Aiea, Kalihi Valley and portions of Liliha and Kalihi



Traci K. Toguchi

YEARS LIVED IN DISTRICT: 10

CURRENT POSITION/OCCUPATION: City Council District VI Legislative Analyst, City and County of Honolulu

PREVIOUS PUBLIC OFFICES/APPOINTMENTS HELD: N/A

CURRENT & PREVIOUS COMMUNITY, CIVIC OR POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT: Volunteer since age 8 at Kuakini Medical Center (guest singer for elderly patients), to age 17 at Maunalani Senior Center (assist with feedings, activities, visit patients) and Waikiki Friendly Neighbors Program (took elderly woman to her favorite restaurant for lunch every week), to age 20-21 for Downtown Exchange Club, National Active & Retired Federal Employees (speaker), to age 20s-30s in Honolulu, Los Angeles & other parts of U.S. - Alzheimer's Association (board member, spokesperson, visit patients), to present, homeless shelters/feeding sites - Next Step Shelter and River of Life (guest coordinator/administrator for feedings, assist with feedings), Hawaii Paralegal Association member



Ikaika Hussey

YEARS LIVED IN DISTRICT: 7

CURRENT POSITION/OCCUPATION: Developer of carbon sequestration projects (biochar, carbon-neutral jet fuel)

PREVIOUS PUBLIC OFFICES/APPOINTMENTS HELD: Neighborhood board; delegate to Native Hawaiian Convention

CURRENT & PREVIOUS COMMUNITY, CIVIC OR POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT: Domestic Violence Action Center; Faith Action for Community Equity



HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

What role can City government play to support the creation of affordable housing for homebuyers?



Tyler Dos Santos-Tam

Of all of the candidates, I have the strongest track record of supporting and working to create more affordable housing. I was a supporter of – and testified on – creating housing for those on the edge of homelessness through renovation and expansion of City-owned or -sponsored housing sites in Chinatown and worked with a coalition of housing stakeholders to expand the requirement for tax-exempt projects to accept Section 8 voucherholders. I was proud to have been the chief advocate for expansion of the 201H program to extend the State general excise tax credit and corresponding City fee waiver program to include additional affordable rental apartments.

As a Councilmember, I'm not just going to sit around and talk about the challenges we face when it comes to housing; instead, I'm ready to roll up my sleeves and take action. We need to create more affordable housing that's within reach of our local residents, and I'm ready on Day 1 to introduce legislation that would break down barriers to creating affordable, low-rise apartment units in existing apartment zones and within existing height limits.



Nalani Jenkins

Delays, government red-tape, and outdated zoning policies are the issues in City government that hinder the creation of more affordable housing. I would work with the Department of Planning and Permitting (DPP) to streamline processes, reduce delays, and explore appropriate sites for affordable housing development. District 6 – Middle Street to Ward Avenue – is a complex blend of residential, commercial, industrial, roads/freeways, and transit corridors. There are many opportunities within this urban core to support affordable housing projects. At the council level, we need to look at the inefficiencies hindering builders and restricting supply and work to improve the City processes that support good growth. Keep the country county, and let's make our City a better City.



HOUSING AFFORDABILITY -CONT'D

What role can City government play to support the creation of affordable housing for homebuyers?



Traci K. Toguchi

The Revised Charter of the City and County of Honolulu provides affordable housing-related powers, duties and functions through the Office of Housing (HOU), Department of Community Services (DCS), Department of Land Management, and Department of Planning and Permitting (DPP), in particular, for HOU to oversee affordable housing programs or projects or programs for low-income, homeless, or special needs populations, which includes senior housing, for the benefit of the people of the City. This includes overseeing, coordinating and directing the development, preparation, and implementation of respective plans and programs, as well as activities and functions, and the coordination of City activities and programs with those of state and federal governments and public or private housing organizations within the State. Among other things, the Charter provides for DCS to develop and administer projects, programs and plans for housing programs and plans of action for housing programs, including those designed to achieve sound community development, and DPP's administration of ordinances regulating land utilization, including those relating to proposals designed to aid the affordable housing supply.



Ikaika Hussey

The City should get back in to the business of building affordable housing for local residents. We should all take a close look at the urban renewal efforts in Chinatown/ Downtown in the 1960s; there are many lessons to be learned there (Kukui Gardens etc).

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT



How would you engage stakeholders to address bills before you that impact housing?



Tyler Dos Santos-Tam

As with all bills, I will proactively seek to meet with stakeholders from all sides of the spectrum to try to work through issues before they become overly contentious.



Nalani Jenkins

I have a background in community engagement, from being a Senior VP at a local communications firm to now owning a communications and marketing company. To effectively engage stakeholders, you need to seek to understand the issue and what groups it impacts. Next, create a stakeholder map and determine appropriate ways to communicate with your target audiences. Seniors may prefer paper or telephone communications, while younger stakeholders may want to engage digitally. Disseminating information is usually a one-way process, while engagement is a two-way process, requiring conversations, town hall meetings, or public testimony. Building trust with your constituents by listening to understand will create open communication channels and engagement on many levels. It is also important to seek input from small businesses, community leaders, and organizations that participate in or are impacted by the bill you are proposing to ensure that you consider all sides of the issue and all parties to the legislation.



Traci K. Toguchi

Publicize such through the City Council's resources, as well as what I would develop for District VI constituents, including mailing lists, email lists, and phone lists accordingly (especially if there are time constraints).



Ikaika Hussey

I'd actively consult all stakeholders.

REAL PROPERTY TAX



What is your position on real property taxes related to empty/vacant homes and Residential A?



Tyler Dos Santos-Tam

I am open to exploring a tax on empty/vacant homes, and also believe that we should consider adding on a higher tier for very high-level investment properties (“Residential B”), so that those owning investment properties at the highest of values (above, say, \$3M) are paying their fair share.

As a separate but related issue, I have also been very concerned about the accelerating increases in property valuations, which is driving higher property taxes overall for local residents. We need to examine the opaque way that valuations are done, especially considering that a spike in valuation can be driven by a nearby sale, at no fault to the existing homeowner.

Finally, we also need to look into how we can implement a structure like “TIF” (similar to what many mainland jurisdictions have done), for new developments in TOD areas so that the City can meaningfully capture the new property taxes generated by those TOD developments.



Nalani Jenkins

This idea has been around for years, and some complications make this a non-starter for me. First, is it fair to charge someone more just because they don’t live in the home/unit? They are already paying their standard property taxes, but some proposals have suggested increases as high as 2000%. The justification is to create more rental units, but many of these vacant properties are higher-end condos and homes that will not significantly add to affordable housing inventories. Secondly, enforcement will be a huge issue, and our City, to date, has not had a great track record enforcing vacation rentals or monster homes. Also, privacy concerns exist when forcing someone to prove occupancy – will we start checking utility bills and travel records? I think this is another proposal that will be rife with problems and will make no actual contribution to solving the housing problem. Let’s address the root causes of the lack of affordable housing instead of proposing Band-Aid solutions that are temporary at best.



Traci K. Toguchi

I generally support/support the intent of Bill 9 (2022) to address the taxation of vacant residential properties in the City through creating a supplemental empty homes tax thereby encouraging existing owners to rent or sell vacant housing stock for use as homes for local residents, increasing the City’s supply of homes to better meet demand and reduce market pressures that cause high and unaffordable prices, and raising funds for affordable housing and homelessness solutions. The tax would only be imposed on properties not used as long-term housing and would not raise taxes on homes occupied by long-term residents. Both the O’ahu Real Property Tax Advisory Commission, and City Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency expressed its support, however, the City Department of Budget and Fiscal Services shared concerns mainly relating to the administration of such and noted concern regarding balancing the appropriate supplemental tax rate with the City’s desire to curb the proliferation of vacant homes while generating revenue for affordable housing.

REAL PROPERTY TAX -CONT'D



What is your position on real property taxes related to empty/vacant homes and Residential A?



Ikaika Hussey

I support measures to curtail empty/vacant homes. I'd like to look more closely at the Vancouver experiment, as well as New York City and San Francisco's measures to deal with this problem. (I'd also really appreciate a clear-eyed study of the extent of the issue here in Honolulu. I hear lots of anecdotal stories but have not seen real numbers. (Perhaps HBR has more info?) Taxes are a blunt instrument.

CITY BUDGET, FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY



What do you believe is the City's greatest opportunity to reduce costs or increase revenue?



Tyler Dos Santos-Tam

As stated above [Real Property Tax], we need to explore how we can meaningfully capture the increased property taxes being generated by TOD developments.

Beyond this, I am committed to working with DPP to make sure that we can streamline and accelerate the permitting process. The extremely slow and cumbersome process means that the City is foregoing additional revenue from stalled development/redevelopment projects. The quicker the City moves projects forward, the sooner the City can collect revenue from these projects. Additionally, I am committed to working with DPP and other departments to help them to do their work more efficiently, with technology and other tools, so we can reduce cost and bureaucracy.



Nalani Jenkins

As we emerge from COVID, our City faces significant issues related to hiring and retaining employees. There should be a significant effort at the City level to assess the various City functions and workforce needs and determine how we can staff at lower levels using automation, online access, and streamlined processes. Fewer staff and more online access will also lower the costs for brick-and-mortar locations, which could be repurposed, phased out, or rented. Our systems and facilities are antiquated and expensive to operate and manage. The City can improve and expand the satellite models to serve certain citizens who require face-to-face interaction. Improvement in the service provided to citizens and creating more responsive systems that are more efficient will be a huge task, but one that will pay off tremendously in the long run.



Traci K. Toguchi

Hard and diligent work in looking at our current, past, and projected expenditures and revenues to best determine such. Having worked for the City and County of Honolulu for four and a half years – at the City Council since January 2018 beginning with the Office of Council Services, then the District IV office (also as Legislative Analyst) for all but one and a half years while serving as an Information Specialist II for the City Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation, as well as in the state and federal public sectors, and in the private (in a wide array of industries, business structures, and sizes), nonprofit, and small business sectors (including as a small business owner, and from two generations of a family food business) in Honolulu, New York City, and Los Angeles, I understand why this is important to do, and also understand how this is and will be challenging. However, I believe this is imperative to truly help the people of the City and County of Honolulu as public servants/its representatives in City government.



Ikaika Hussey

Value capture for rail expansion, similar to how rail was financed in Tokyo (have the major commercial landowners shoulder the burden because they will benefit directly).

CONSTITUENT CONSENSUS BUILDING



What is your philosophy to build consensus among constituents when dealing with issues faced by the Council like the recent Kailua development and the recent short-term rentals legislation?



Tyler Dos Santos-Tam

Clear, understandable, and constant communication is key. While we may never get to a 100% consensus and residents may not always agree with the decisions that our government makes, it's necessary for our government to explain why we made those choices, and also the pros and cons of the alternatives. I think our community is akamai enough to understand the "why" behind decisions if we patiently and clearly explain them.

It's incumbent upon our leaders to bring people together to talk through issues and understand all dimensions, so that we can identify common goals.



Nalani Jenkins

We must pursue problem-solving models that expand the pie and create solutions that genuinely address the root of the problem to build consensus. Level 1 problem solving is linear (how do I get from point A to point B?) and reactive. It also looks at the situation as it exists now instead of imaging the ideal future and then constructing a road map that moves us there. Level 2 thinking prevents problems by being mindful and prepared. Not bad, but not best. Level 3 is continuously improving by proposing incremental changes and implementing them. But I would like to get to Level 4 thinking at the City Council, which is envisioning a new future and creating the new dynamic of how we think and interface. Level 4 requires looking at what success looks like as a whole (the new consensus) and then working out the strategies for how to get there. True problem solvers understand and embrace this process and can operate at Level 4.



Traci K. Toguchi

I believe in seeking to build as much consensus among constituents, especially with respect to controversial legislation, as Councilmembers represent their constituencies and also serve as public servants for the City and County of Honolulu—keeping in mind what is known as the silent majority of constituents who never contact their area legislators, nor government, thus never participate in such legislative processes, as well as what is also known as a vocal minority who frequently tend to do so. Given this, as a staff member in the current Honolulu City Council District VI office, I oftentimes take the initiative to inquire with constituents accordingly/as appropriate, including community stakeholders, as well as department staff (City, State, and Federal accordingly), and would continue to do so as this District's Councilmember.



Ikaika Hussey

I'd encourage all stakeholders to come together so that we can build consensus.

CANDIDATE PROFILES - DISTRICT 8



DISTRICT 8 - Lower `Aiea, Pearlridge, Waimalu, Newtown, Pearl City, Seaview, Crestview, Waipi`o Gentry and portions of Waipahu



Charmaine T. Doran

YEARS LIVED IN DISTRICT: 20+

CURRENT POSITION/OCCUPATION:
REALTOR; Small business owner

PREVIOUS PUBLIC OFFICES/ APPOINTMENTS HELD: 30 years of public service - Legislative Analyst, Legislative Auditor, Chief of Staff, Director, Office of Council Services

CURRENT & PREVIOUS COMMUNITY, CIVIC OR POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT:
Pearl City Neighborhood Board; League of Women Voters; Honolulu Board of REALTORS



Ron Menor

YEARS LIVED IN DISTRICT: 50

CURRENT POSITION/OCCUPATION:
Attorney

PREVIOUS PUBLIC OFFICES/ APPOINTMENTS HELD: Honolulu City Councilmember; State Senator & Representative

CURRENT & PREVIOUS COMMUNITY, CIVIC OR POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT:
Mililani Lions Club; Board of Directors, West O`ahu Branch of YMCA of Honolulu



Dion Mesta

YEARS LIVED IN DISTRICT: 5

CURRENT POSITION/OCCUPATION:
Legislative Aide

PREVIOUS PUBLIC OFFICES/ APPOINTMENTS HELD: N/A

CURRENT & PREVIOUS COMMUNITY, CIVIC OR POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT:
Pearl City Neighborhood Board; Pearl City Lions Club; Junior Chamber International Honolulu

CANDIDATE PROFILES - DISTRICT 8 CONT'D



DISTRICT 8 - Lower `Aiea, Pearlridge, Waimalu, Newtown, Pearl City, Seaview, Crestview, Waipi`o Gentry and portions Waipahu



Val Aquino Okimoto

YEARS LIVED IN DISTRICT: 19

CURRENT POSITION/OCCUPATION:

State Representative District 36

**PREVIOUS PUBLIC OFFICES/
APPOINTMENTS HELD:** N/A

**CURRENT & PREVIOUS COMMUNITY,
CIVIC OR POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT:**

MILILANI TOWN ASSOCIATION (MTA) - Director (2015 to 2021), Treasurer (2019 to 2021); MILILANI 'IKE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL - Member (2018 -present); HOALOHA 'IKE ASSOCIATION - Director, Treasurer (2016-2019); MILILANI AYSO - Team Parent/Volunteer (2013-2018); THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS - Leader/Teacher , Former President of Women's Organization (Relief Society), Youth Leader and Teacher

Keone F. Simon

YEARS LIVED IN DISTRICT: 53 (lived on the mainland for 14 years)

CURRENT POSITION/OCCUPATION:

Refinery/Terminal Operator (27 years)

**PREVIOUS PUBLIC OFFICES/
APPOINTMENTS HELD:** PPCA Board member; coached youth sports 8 years

**CURRENT & PREVIOUS COMMUNITY,
CIVIC OR POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT:** Ran for State House in 2020; PPCA board member



HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

What role can City government play to support the creation of affordable housing for homebuyers?



Charmaine T. Doran

The City's existing affordable housing policy is not working. With TOD coming soon, the City must have a solid affordable housing program that requires more units at lower median income levels and also includes housing benchmarks for each district of the island. At the same time, the City must also establish new incentives such as grants, tax credits, infrastructure partnerships, and even a loan and bond program to support affordable housing projects.

To ward-off gentrification in TOD and all affordable housing developments, the City must insist on long-term affordability for both rentals and fee-simple home sales. At one time, the City was an active part of the housing sector. This is no longer the case. The City must get back into the business of constructing affordable homes and also expand funding of their homeownership grant program. Finally, as a large employer, the City can also create new homeownership loan programs to uniquely support public sector employees.



Ron Menor

City Council must approve more residential development projects to meet pent-up demand. As a Councilmember, I consistently supported and voted in favor of every proposed residential development project, including Koa Ridge and Hoopili, and numerous condominium projects in Kaka'ako and the urban core.

City government should continue to work with housing developers by relaxing building requirements and providing financial and other incentives under the Land Use Ordinance, including easing height and density restrictions, and granting fee waivers. More City land should be made available for affordable housing development while the Council should continue to approve housing projects through the 201H process. As Chair of City Council's Zoning, Planning and Housing Committee, I worked together with housing developers to increase affordable housing inventory.

City government must do more to improve the permitting system and eliminate lengthy delays that significantly add to the cost of building housing. While on the Council, I strongly supported the inclusion of funds in DPP's budget for additional staff positions to review/process permits. I joined my colleagues in adopting Resolution 18-284, CD1, FD1 calling on the City Auditor to conduct a performance audit of DPP's processes and make recommendations for improvements. If elected, one of my top priorities will be to obtain an update from DPP about what progress has been made to implement those recommendations and initiate other improvements to the permitting process.



Dion Mesta

Under State law, exemptions from zoning density and height limits can be granted by the City Council for projects that provide low-income and affordable housing. This is a powerful tool to spur the creation of affordable housing for homebuyers as well as increasing the supply of affordable rental units. The City can also help to mitigate the cost of development by waiving fees that can assist non-profit developers in financing more affordable housing projects.



HOUSING AFFORDABILITY -CONT'D

What role can City government play to support the creation of affordable housing for homebuyers?



Val Aquino Okimoto

The primary role City government can play is to ease back on zoning regulations, increase efficiency in the Department of Planning and Permitting through a robust hiring effort, and by lowering the cost of construction and infrastructure through use of federal economic opportunity zones and by not burdening developers with mandatory construction requirements such as vehicle charging stations in affordable housing units.



Keone F. Simon

As Councilman, I'm here to help get things moving like permitting, zoning, and reducing regulations and red tape. Help affordable housing developments and get out to the way.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT



How would you engage stakeholders to address bills before you that impact housing?



Charmaine T. Doran

As a volunteer member of the Pearl City Neighborhood Board, I routinely post on social media details about upcoming meetings and legislation. I also conduct digital surveys regularly. This allows me to frequently engage with residents and receive productive community feedback on key issues. If elected, I will continue the same grassroots outreach. In addition, I will work to expand the Council's budget to facilitate increased public participation remotely, plus I will also advocate for the Council to host meetings at times when the public is less likely to be working and can participate - such as weekends or evenings.



Ron Menor

As a Councilmember, I have always been open and accessible to housing stakeholders. I held many meetings with stakeholder groups and welcomed their input and testimony during public hearings. I have also convened working groups involving diverse segments of the community on a variety of housing issues. My door will always be open to representatives of the Honolulu Board of Realtors whom I consider as key stakeholders on housing issues.



Dion Mesta

I have seen first-hand the benefit of engaging all stakeholders when addressing housing issues that impact the community. I support a community's right to influence decision making on any issue that could have a major impact on their neighborhood. To that end, if a project does not have community buy-in, valuable time will be wasted on addressing these concerns after the fact. It is critical to demonstrate a community benefit and plan to mitigate any perceived negative impacts of a project at the outset of a development proposal.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT -CONT'D



How would you engage stakeholders to address bills before you that impact housing?



Val Aquino Okimoto

I have always been a collaborative legislator, since my first days in office any bill that I wanted to introduce was first consulted with relevant shareholders. Often, I went beyond that and sought the insight of all relative parties when weighing my vote in committee and the House floor. The Hawaii Realtors have been particularly helpful in helping guide my decisions and they have always picked up the phone when I've called. I will continue to build communication pathways with all relevant parties if given the opportunity to serve my community once more.



Keone F. Simon

We are here for the people of our community and state. They are counting on us to get things done, period. Families are hurting, some homeless and most are struggling. We need to fix this broken system and act. As with any bills, communication with the community, other Councilmembers and all involved need to be on the same page. So, communication is key.



What is your position on real property taxes related to empty/vacant homes and Residential A?



Charmaine T. Doran

The City should never take more money than it needs to run the City. Unfortunately, the City has many unmet demands and always needs added revenue. As vacant homes and Residential A are typically investment or income-generating properties and/or often held by investors, it's feasible and responsible to increase property tax on these types of properties. To ensure local residents who might own Residential A properties don't carry an unfair tax burden, City Council regularly adjusts Residential A tiers to minimize property tax liability as valuations increase.

While we may think vacant homes don't cost us, this isn't always the case. Vacant homes are not available as housing – adding to the shortages, and others generate income as covert vacation rentals. However, for Residential A it could help renters if the City extended RPT discounts to properties rented below market value – similar to low-income housing exemptions offered to apartments.

Each year, the volunteer Real Property Tax Commission does an excellent job making recommendations on changes to exemptions and credits. However, a professional comprehensive review of the City's real property tax program including rates, classes, discounts, exemptions, appeals, credits, rebates, and how we tax off-base housing developments, is long overdue.



Ron Menor

I would consider measures such as Bill 9 (2022), currently being reviewed by the City Council, to establish an empty homes tax to generate additional revenue and incentivize the conversion of investment properties to housing for local residents. However, I am concerned about unintended consequences if an empty homes tax were enacted in terms of potential negative impacts on local property owners and investors. Therefore, such a measure needs to be carefully reviewed and thoroughly vetted by the City Council.

In regard to the Residential A tax issue, I am open to reevaluating the tax rates and the Tier 1 and Tier 2 net taxable valuations that are applicable to Residential A properties under ROH Section 8-11.1(h). Such a reevaluation is warranted given the financial impact of the Residential A tax on local property owners in light of the significant increases in real property values in recent years. If I am elected to the City Council, I would welcome the input of the Honolulu Board of Realtors regarding this issue.



Dion Mesta

Oahu's real property tax rate structure continues to evolve. The goal has always been fairness to property owners, with rates based mainly on assessed value and how the property is being used. By a resolution adopted in 2011, the City Council established the Real Property Tax Advisory Commission with the task of conducting a periodic review of property taxes. Input from Realtors, both as members of the Commission and from public testimony, has been reflected in each report, the most recent being submitted in June of this year. I agree with the Commission's support of a classification of empty/vacant homes as a way to improve Oahu's affordable housing crisis. I also support a tiered structure for residential properties that can provide the City administration more flexibility in setting equitable real property tax rates.

REAL PROPERTY TAX -CONT'D



What is your position on real property taxes related to empty/vacant homes and Residential A?



Val Aquino Okimoto

My instinct is to oppose any tax or fee increase that will increase the cost of living for local people and local residents that have investment properties—thus, I am willing to oppose an RPT tax increase should it be presented before the Council within the next 2-4 years.



Keone F. Simon

I believe we should raise taxes on these out-of-state homeowners that have empty/vacant homes. I do not believe in raising taxes on the people of Hawai'i they are already struggling enough.

CITY BUDGET, FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY



What do you believe is the City's greatest opportunity to reduce costs or increase revenue?



Charmaine T. Doran

Conducting a comprehensive operational program review and switching to remote work for City operations is the greatest opportunity to reduce costs.

At one time, Honolulu led the nation in connectivity and tech enterprise zones. Of course, this is no longer the case. However, it is still possible to build up a tech sector. We already have a global online retailer here and numerous viable economic incubators. In 2019, the Pearl City Neighborhood Board requested that the State and City work to establish Honolulu as a remote hub. By reinvesting in technological infrastructure, providing businesses with tax incentives and lobbying global businesses to look towards Honolulu, we can begin to diversify our economy and provide our residents and our City with greater revenue opportunities.



Ron Menor

If I am elected to the Council, I will continue to advocate for pro-growth policies that address critical needs in our communities (e.g., the need for affordable housing), as well as those that promote increased economic activity generating more revenue for important City programs and services. That is why I have been a strong supporter of transit-oriented development (TOD), which will help to create jobs, provide economic and housing opportunities, and, in general, enhance the quality of life in communities along the leeward coast through the urban core.

In order to support such growth, City government must resolve permitting issues, and implement a plan to provide the necessary utility and transportation infrastructure to accommodate future development. As the Chair of the Zoning, Planning and Housing Committee, I worked on and obtained Council approval for several TOD plans.

Another source of revenue is the 3% transient accommodation tax (TAT) that the State Legislature authorized the counties to impose.



Dion Mesta

Streamlining of government operations, tighter controls on spending, consolidation of services, and other such measures have all been suggested as ways to reduce the cost of government. These continue to be valid recommendations but belt tightening also puts a strain on delivery of services. I believe the single most promising opportunity to increase property tax revenue is increased density along the rail route. Transit oriented development can transform a three-story walk-up into a high-rise apartment building with ground floor retail businesses, generating more property taxes as well as creating new job opportunities. Working in partnership with the State, the City can incentivize workforce housing interspersed along the route, taking full advantage of existing infrastructure.

CITY BUDGET, FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY -CONT'D



What do you believe is the City's greatest opportunity to reduce costs or increase revenue?



Val Aquino Okimoto

I am a firm believer that seeking new forms of revenue is a better alternative to creating new taxes. I believe in expanding the revenue from current taxes, this means creating new jobs, bringing in industry and fostering a robust economy. Taking advantage of current federal economic policies and working closely with local developers to spur economic growth and job creation in low-income communities while providing tax benefits to investors is a plan I am focused on creating within my first 180 days in office.



Keone F. Simon

It's going to be hard to reduce cost with what's going on in our state and country. What the City can do is be pro-business by not overregulating, over taxing, and charging fees for everything. We need to put the people of our communities and state first! I promise to do that.

CONSTITUENT CONSENSUS BUILDING



What is your philosophy to build consensus among constituents when dealing with issues faced by the Council like the recent Kailua development and the recent short-term rentals legislation?



Charmaine T. Doran

We're raised to live with Aloha. We're innately kind and respectful of others. If there are genuine gaps between residents, policy, and lawmakers, it's essential that we use the central tenets of aloha – unity, kindness, agreeableness, humility, and patience – to find a common ground to move forward. This is my philosophy day-to-day.

Tough decisions – doing what is right or needed – often takes courage. I live in Pearl City. Those of us who live in the outskirts of the urban core, in Central O'ahu or the Leeward side, rarely have the opportunity to deny developments or housing projects. It was decided long ago that we would have most of the development, the shelters, the rail, and almost all of the traffic. We understand the future of O'ahu is outside of East O'ahu and Honolulu. The future is here. As an integral part of the long-term health of Honolulu, we work every day to hold government accountable and to guide development projects effectively in order to guarantee that these projects complement and not hurt our unique communities.



Ron Menor

On contentious issues/legislation, it's important to engage constituents early to identify conflicting viewpoints and try to develop consensus before issues come before the Council. As a Councilmember, I always tried to craft fair and balanced legislation that addressed concerns of different groups regarding issues where there were diverging viewpoints. However, it's important that a small but vocal minority not be permitted to block much-needed affordable housing development. If a developer/contractor has gone through the necessary permitting, they should be able to see their project to fruition. Regarding rentals, my work on STR legislation dates back to 2019 when Bill 89 was enacted as Ordinance 19-18. This exemplifies my efforts to balance concerns of competing interests, while increasing availability of rental housing on this island.



Dion Mesta

Unfortunately, the plan to build a low-income rental apartment complex in a largely single-family neighborhood in Kailua was bound to draw community opposition. The perception that 73 apartments for low-income residents would significantly change the character of the neighborhood. The controversy over short-term rentals continues to divide people who have strong views on either the economic benefits or social drawbacks of vacation rentals. The challenge of finding a compromise will continue. I hope to play a role in this effort. I agree with the HBR position that we need to ensure local residents have access to housing as a first priority, and that business interests, such as whole-home vacation rentals owned by investors are secondary.

CONSTITUENT CONSENSUS BUILDING -CONT'D



What is your philosophy to build consensus among constituents when dealing with issues faced by the Council like the recent Kailua development and the recent short-term rentals legislation?



Val Aquino Okimoto

My philosophy has always been to engage my community and my constituents directly. One of the primary reasons I decided to run for office in 2018 was to give a voice to my community who felt disconnected and ignored by their elected officials. Community buy-in is vital for a healthy democracy and for building institutional trust. As City Councilwoman I promise that no community decision is made without the people's consent and that no concern or opposition is disregarded and that all parties are welcome to the table that our community is building.



Keone F. Simon

I believe as with the Kailua affordable housing development communication is key. Also, we cannot allow a small fraction of the community to shut down a development that will help many individuals and families. On short-term rentals, my wife and I are blessed to have two rental properties.

City Council Members Not Up for Re-election

DISTRICT 1: Andria Tupola

Portions of `Ewa Villages and `Ewa Beach, Kapolei, Makakilo, Kalaeloa, Honokai Hale, Ko Olina, Nānākuli, Mā`ili, Wai`anae, Mākaha, Kea`au, and Mākua

DISTRICT 3: Esther Kia`aina

`Āhuimanu, He`eia, Ha`ikū, Kāne`ohe, Maunawili, Kailua, Olomana, Enchanted Lake, and Waimānalo

DISTRICT 5: Calvin Say

Kaimukī, Pālolo Valley, St. Louis Heights, Mānoa, Mō`ili`ili, McCully and portions of Ala Moana, Kaka`ako, and Makiki

DISTRICT 7: Radiant Cordero

Kalihi, Iwilei, Kalihi Kai, Māpunapuna, Salt Lake, Āliamanu, Hickam, Foster Village, Ford Island, and Sand Island

DISTRICT 9: Augie Tulba

Waikele, Village Park, Royal Kunia, Mililani Town, West Loch, Iroquois Point and portions of Waipahu, `Ewa Villages, and `Ewa Beach

2022 CITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE PURPOSE: To advocate for issues important to the Honolulu Board of REALTORS® and influence legislative and regulatory policies that protect private property rights, which impact the real estate industry on Oahu.

Dianne Willoughby, R, Chair, Coldwell Banker Realty

Jennifer L. Andrews, Vice-Chair, R, eXp Realty

Richard DeGutis, R, Corcoran Pacific Properties

Barbie Y. Hee, R, Engel & Volkers-Honolulu

V. Elise Lee, RA, eXp Realty

Jack M. Legal, R, Legal Realty

Jody W. Libed, RA, Coldwell Banker Realty

Darryl Macha, R, Locations LLC

Ray Marquina, RA, Property Profiles, Inc.

Meme Moody, R, BHGRE Advantage Realty North Shore

Karin V. Moody-Tsutsui, R, BHGRE Advantage Realty North Shore

Joe Paikai, R, Aloha-RE.com

Thomas E. Wilson, R, Avatina LLC

Edmund Wong, R, First Capital Realty One

HBR Government Affairs Administrator: Gavin Ching

CALL FOR GRASSROOTS HUI MEMBERS!

Help us capitalize on our grassroots strength by joining the City Affairs Committee's "Grassroots Hui." Together, we'll advocate on issues that help the industry and stop those that would hurt your business or the consumers you serve. You'll receive breaking news on emerging issues, stay up to date on legislation that impacts the real estate industry, read about the important local issues being debated at Honolulu Hale, and take action by contacting council members and other elected officials.

NAME _____

HOME ADDRESS _____

CITY/ZIP _____

PHONE (H) _____ (C) _____ (W) _____

EMAIL _____

I'm also interested in becoming a member of HBR's City Affairs Committee. Please call me.

FAX FORM TO 808-732-8732 ATTN: GAVIN CHING. MAHALO!