

Honolulu Mayor 2020 Election Candidate Survey by The Outdoor Circle

Please list your name and contact information for your campaign

ID: 2

1) Name and contact info for campaign

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Economic Sustainability/Livability & Quality of Life on our Island:

Please answer below each question

ID: 4

2) What is your vision for improving “Honolulu’s livability?” How does city government facilitate, direct, stimulate and/or achieve this vision? How will you provide accountability and performance measures for achieving this vision?

Honolulu has the potential to become one of the most advanced and livable cities in the world. It has the perfect climate for outdoor activities, for achieving pedestrian-friendly architecture and streets and innovating with the best practices of cities across the globe. We have spent millions of dollars promoting Hawaii as a destination for tourists that could be spent creating a more exclusive tourist environment geared to luxury tourism and eco-friendly visitors. With this plan we could have fewer tourists who pay more for their accommodations with a more complete experience, saving the environment and allowing residents to enjoy their home. If some of those

millions of dollars were diverted into making our streets safer and more of a visual reflection of the iconic Hawaii in our landscape and building, our city would be more livable. If we overhaul DPP, emphasizing the importance of enforcement of Monster Home ordinances and transient vacation rentals, we could bring down the cost of living. If we could place 5,000 tiny homes in kauhale villages across Oahu, we could house our homeless with dignity. We could reach out to cities across the world to find best practices for safety and beautification that promotes multi-modal transportation. I have spoken to bright young architects who have wonderful plans for creating multi-family dwellings that are smart, green and affordable homes. We can repurpose abandoned retail spaces with new zoning to create affordable housing.

I believe that we are poised to reassess how we have done business in the past. It will require a new vision that is not beholden to special interests and old ideas.

ID: 5

3) The pandemic shutdown gives us an opportunity to look at carrying capacity of our natural resources, infrastructure and quality of life. In your vision of Honolulu's future diverse economy, what changes would you pursue in the percentage of the economy for hospitality; defense; agriculture; education; intellectual property development in technology, media and research; commercial and industrial entrepreneurship; etc. What do you anticipate the "new economy" to be? How will you prepare Honolulu to embrace, advance and lead the new economy?

The impact of COVID-19 showed that we have become too dependent on the outside world to feed us and employ us. As mayor, I refuse to continue this economic model. We must diversify our economy to thrive in the future. Our new industries must enhance and protect our natural resources, feed our people and protect the planet. Tourism will continue to be a strong economic driver for Hawaii, but it should not be the largest one. We need to move back to a time when Hawaii attracted the higher spending tourist of the 1980's that brought \$18 billion to our economy (with inflation) vs. the \$17 billion we have today. We have close to double the tourists today, which means locals are paying more for infrastructure, parks, roads, emergency services and public safety. For the sake of our island, we must manage tourism based on the economic benefit per person and based on environmental science and carrying capacity.

In early March 2020, I was one of the first to demand that tourists be tested prior to arrival to Hawaii and I was criticized. I am happy that more leaders now support this idea. I believe tourists must be tested prior to boarding a plane to come to Hawaii unless they are arriving from cities with low COVID-19 cases. Should they later be found to test positive once they have arrived, they should be booked on a trip home immediately. Most would likely prefer to heal at home. Only with these strict procedures will we keep our population safe and Hawaii's economy protected from future shutdowns.

Create New Partnerships

Currently, economic partnerships between local businesses and military bases are not being explored. The military continues to outsource projects to mainland companies, but we have the talent here. These projects could be worth hundreds of millions of dollars to our economy.

Improve City Systems

Currently, receiving approval from the City for a small home improvement project can take one to two-years but with improvements to the Department of Planning and Permitting (DPP) we could cut it to a four-week process. As the Zoning and Housing Committee Chair, I led the investigation of the DPP and requested the audit that was released last year. Improvements to this Department, as per the auditor's recommendations, could allow private sector development to add another \$500 million to the economy.

New Economies

O'ahu is perfectly poised to become an international hub for the technology industry and cyber security. There are many opportunities that have yet to be explored in these areas. Boosting our local food production with government support could reduce food costs by about 60%. As mayor, I would prioritize grants to assist farmers so they can have access to water, affordable land and organic fertilizers. TCOM (thermal energy conversion of organic materials) technology can turn agricultural waste into clean energy without harmful emissions and produce hydrogen or high-carbon organic fertilizer. I support protections for farmland in Central O'ahu and I would provide grants and funding for new agriculture businesses.

The path to our independence from mainland agriculture is enhanced agricultural production at home. I will also promote alternative agriculture, including products such as breadfruit (ulu), that have multiple uses. It is predicted to be a multi-billion-dollar industry in the next 10 years.

Hawai'i has popularized exotics in the past, including pineapple, papaya, coconuts and macadamia nuts. We can do it again. Breadfruit, for example, is a traditional crop that rapidly begins producing fruit. The fruit can be consumed in many ways, including a low-glycemic, gluten-free flour. Its leaves can produce animal-friendly squalene, which is used for skin products and makeup and traditionally obtained from harvesting squalene from sharks. One company is producing vodka from breadfruit, which is in high demand with a backlog of 70,000 orders. These are examples of how we can think of solutions out of the box that will enhance our sustainability, improve and diversify our economy and tap our cultural resources by bringing us back to our agricultural roots.

These two products, breadfruit and TCOM technology, have the potential create a whole new industry and to convert waste into energy with a positive impact on our unique Pacific Island culture.

4) What are your thoughts on the rail? Should it stop (or pause) at Middle Street? Aala Park? Ala Moana? UH Manoa? Go to “at grade” and be rerouted on King Street? How can we ensure that stations and the tracks are better blended with the environment, have better landscaping and increasing trees along the route than is proposed or currently exists?

In 2008, voters opted for a high-speed rail project by charter. We have a mandate to complete the project, but we need to do it right. I am very disappointed in the people who allowed corruption and payoffs to infiltrate the rail construction and I hold them responsible for the delays that make people in my district still sit in traffic for hours. I am one of these drivers and so I will do everything I can to fix things at HART. It was the city council's investigation into HART that lead to the current FBI investigation. As mayor, I would ensure that people who cheated the public by misappropriating funds and misusing their powers within HART to benefit friends will go to jail.

I oppose any additional costs to residents, especially with so many residents out of work. I believe we must resolve any uncertainty about our economic recovery before we make any decision regarding this expensive project. That is especially true because HART is undergoing federal scrutiny amid incredible cost increases and delays. I will not throw more money at HART until I know how that money is being spent. I will seek public input on the short-term bonds being increased to longer-term bonds that will spread out the cash-on-hand during our economic crisis.

I support design that is appropriate and approved by the community. As we move forward, we will have the opportunity to reevaluate the visual impact. It is too soon to consider any proposal that would potentially slow progress or increase costs when so much is up in the air.

ID: 7

5) Noise pollution from weed whackers and vehicles modified to emit extra noise is dangerous and degrades quality of life. Specific noise ordinances are left to individual police to enforce, which results in no uniform policy or action. What concrete steps would you take to implement and enforce a uniform noise code like other cities have via muffler regulation and noise monitoring, etc.?

HPD enforcement of noise violations are driven by complaint, like smoking violations, off leash dog violations and many other misdemeanor offenses. The Hawaii Administrative Rules Title 11, Department of Health, Ch. 46 Community Noise Control limits decibels according to zoning from 55-70 dBA, varying by time of day. With so many working from home during the pandemic, we often must suffer through construction, motorcycle mufflers and leaf blowers.

ID: 8

6) Homelessness routinely ranks as a top concern of residents. Understanding this is a complex issue, what are your plans to move people from the streets into

housing and receive appropriate assistance, and reclaiming public areas, beaches, parks, streets and sidewalks for their intended uses by the public at large?

We must try every innovative solution to resolve homelessness, including construction of tiny homes, repurposing buildings that are now out of use due to the shut-down as shelter space and additional facilities for care and counseling.

Last year, I brought a plan to the council to spend \$23 million to address homelessness. That could be used as each district saw fit, and included shelter, rest stop, outreach, affordable housing and service zones and hygiene facilities.

This year, I proposed that the city invest more in mental health and addiction recovery. We do not have enough recovery/treatment facilities to address the problem. We must also eliminate barriers that keep our houseless residents from getting the help they need. This includes reducing tedious paperwork that proves to be too much for individuals with mental illness and addiction, who are without computers or cannot access to information required on the forms. We need boots on the ground to evaluate and bring help to those who need it without delays that can keep people on the streets in declining health for years.

Any sit-lie ban is only moving a homeless individual from one sidewalk to another. It does nothing to solve the problem. It is a means to reduce the visual and social reminder of homelessness.

Green Space & Trees:

Please answer below each question

ID: 9

7) What is your commitment to enhancing the urban landscape? Specifically, how would you prioritize the proper planting, care and pruning of trees and stop the unnecessary cutting down of mature trees during public or private development projects? How would you include the public's on-going input in this process?

With the unanimous passage of my City Council Resolution 19-279, the island-wide Adopt-A Tree initiative, to make Hawaii the first carbon-neutral state in the world. Prioritizing the environment is a key element in my vision for change on Oahu.

My Adopt-A-Tree program would address climate change; reduce air pollution; improve water quality; provide wildlife habitat and stabilize street temperatures. In Oahu's urban environments, trees create shade; they provide wind and sound barriers and reduce storm water runoff.

Trees promote a sense of place and community.

A recent pilot program in Kailua paired non-profit Smart Trees Pacific and the City and County of Honolulu Division of Urban Forestry to help resident volunteers survey neighborhoods to determine where new trees can be planted.

In just two years, Citizen Foresters completed a comprehensive tree inventory, identifying nearly 500 opportunities to plant trees. Residents volunteers adopted free trees and planted near their homes to enhance their property and the environment.

As the world reels from the effects of global warming trends, Oahu can become part of the solution, one tree at a time.

From resolutions for recycling tires to banning plastics, I have been in the forefront of environmental issues, championing critical environmental causes throughout my career.

ID: 10

8) The city's current urban canopy coverage is about 20%, well below other "livable" cities and even with stated goals to increase tree canopy to 35%, no real progress is being made. This makes walking outdoors for work, shopping, etc. difficult and decreases livability. Given that climate models predict a much hotter Honolulu, what efforts would you propose to increase our tree canopy at a time when it is still decreasing by 1% annually?

Please see answer #9, above.

I would fully fund Adopt-A-Tree and I support efforts to improve microclimates by planting trees throughout Oahu.

ID: 11

9) Do you support traffic speed reductions, "bulb outs," on-demand crosswalk signals, and other traffic calming to increase pedestrian and bike safety and create walkable and aging-friendly cities?

I support traffic-calming measures to make our streets safer for pedestrians, which is part of the Complete Streets plan that was adopted by the City Council in 2012. In my district on the Leeward side, I have fought to bring traffic calming measures to our streets where pedestrians have sadly lost their lives in traffic accidents. I would like to make Oahu a pedestrian-friendly place for all in every district.

ID: 12

10) Would you support the creation of a “Tree Czar” to ensure that the city departments work together to protect trees, oversee the increase of canopy shade tree planting and generally answer to the public on matters advocating for protecting trees and increased tree canopy coverage?

In March 2019, the City and County of Honolulu approved the Division of Urban Forestry In conjunction with the Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency, finalized the Urban Tree Plan for Oahu. The Division of Urban Forestry falls under the Department of Parks and Recreation. As a member of the City Council, last year, I ordered an audit of the Department of Parks and Recreation. Auditors found that the " Despite the Department of Parks and Recreation’s (DPR) recent efforts to improve park facilities, further improvements are needed to effectively manage city parks and ensure that maintenance efforts are consistent and equitable. Current operational practices are reactive and appear to wait for park conditions to deteriorate before action is taken, rather than maintaining quality conditions. Park vandalism continues to be a high-risk area as it compromises park usability and appearance. For its Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects, DPR does not track financial data and lacks awareness of project status. There is limited accountability for park CIP projects that were funded, but not completed. This suggests that the DPR is not adequately handling their responsibilities. As mayor, I would require DPR to institutionalize accountability practices and maintaining our urban tree canopy would be high on my list.

Tax Concerns:

Please answer after each question

ID: 14

11) Would you support a “green tax” to improve our green infrastructure, purchase open space, and better our parks as other cities have done?

I would not support any further tax burden for the people of Oahu in this trying time. However, when we restart tourism, I would support examining ways that the visitor industry could better support our infrastructure and environment, which is disproportionately affected by the number of tourists that visit Oahu.

ID: 15

12) Only Hawaii has a GET, which greatly burdens businesses but leaves end users with the impression that they pay less than 5%, while actually paying about 19%? Would you support elimination of the GET for essential goods like food and medicine? Would you support shifting to a sales tax to make the tax more transparent?

Everything that burdens our people must be on the table at this time. While some are considering raising taxes to make up for budget deficits, I am looking at how we can make Honolulu more affordable to residents, especially with our economic crisis.

City Infrastructure Maintenance & Other Government Services:

Please answer below each question

ID: 16

13) Where do you stand on the Neighborhood Board system (some people want to dismantle it)?

I support the Neighborhood Board system.

ID: 17

14) How will you improve maintenance of city parks, sidewalks, bike paths and beaches?

Last year, I introduced my Keep Hawaii Hawaii initiative, which is a set of bills aimed at making tourism sustainable. It requires the visitor industry to produce an annual report on sustainability. It also offers visitors a chance to purchase admissions

to several popular attractions with funds going to maintain our infrastructure. I propose a larger share of our infrastructure burden be shifted to the visitor industry, which benefits from our public spaces and attractions.

ID: 18

15) How would you foster timely, open, transparent, and on-going communication with the public regarding issues relevant to their community? Too often the public learns about an issue too late to act. Would you require each department to have a public liaison/ ombudsman to ensure that citizen concerns are being met and addressed at each department?

It was wrong for Gov. Ige to suspend open government laws. That is especially true given recent events that have already greatly undermined the community's faith in Honolulu's leadership. Government should be transparent. The best results occur when an informed electorate participates in a robust conversation that produces true collaboration. Transparency is the bedrock of democracy. My experience in City Hall has shown me that it works best that way. All government meetings should be videotaped or livestreamed. No one is too big to fail. Government watchdogs, like members of the police commission who saw something was amiss with the Kealohas, should be protected, not fired. We can learn from that experience.

ID: 19

16) How would you work to ensure that Honolulu works to implement the best and brightest ideas for governance and livability from other cities around the world?

I have already reached out across the world to speak with leaders of So. Korea to learn how they responded to the virus. They responded with technology to track and isolate people infected with the virus. I have sought out leaders in the Pacific Islander community to talk about the future of Hawaii's agriculture and Native Cultural practices that will help us get back on our feet. I look at communities that are using innovative models for transportation and creating cycling corridors and pedestrian pathways that reinvigorate neighborhoods. I am looking at architects worldwide who have designed affordable housing that can innovate in Honolulu and others who have created models for housing homeless individuals that we can adopt if we change a few ordinances and get creative.

I look for solutions in communities where things are working and try to bring the best practices to Honolulu. Just as we innovated with the most sweeping phase-out of plastics in the country, Honolulu can become a place of innovation for the future.

Sign Laws/Visual Pollution:

Please answer below each question

ID: 20

17) The Outdoor Circle has worked for over a century to keep Hawaii visual-pollution free with no off-site ads and strict controls on signage, something that is unique that keeps our state beautiful and protected from visual clutter. Will you oppose all commercial advertising & sign clutter on all public property, parks, and equipment (including TheBus) to respect the century-old tradition of banning off-site advertising throughout our beautiful state?

Yes!

ID: 21

18) Will you support regulation of unrelated commercial advertising (for example a tour bus advertising for an unrelated attraction) on vehicles, whether permanently parked or mobile?

Yes.

ID: 22

19) Will you place controls on the sign clutter and visual blight caused by unregulated food trucks operating on commercial property in many parts of the island?

We can regulate food truck signage on commercial property.

ID: 23

20) What steps will you take to reduce light pollution, as well as the visual blight from overhead utility lines?

Some policy changes can reduce blue light by using filters to reduce the impact and preserve our night skies. Outdoor street lighting has been addressed on Maui and Kauai over a decade ago. It can be addressed on Oahu. The political will has been absent, especially in Waikiki. The state's Starlight Reserve law was passed in 2009 to recognize dark skies as a cultural, scientific, and natural asset. As mayor, I would have the political will to save our night skies.

Tourism:

Please answer below each question

ID: 24

21) How can we be smart about tourism, when it returns, to prevent overtaxing of our infrastructure (traffic, parking at scenic spots, beaches, etc.), and destruction to our natural resources with fewer visitors, but higher daily per capita spend?

I introduced Keep Hawaii Hawaii to fund infrastructure improvements without taxing the residents. With the break in tourism, we have seen how the land and sea responds when it is not subject to overuse. We can never go back to the way it was. Tourism's impact on our coral reefs, our beloved cultural resources, trails, public parks and destinations throughout Oahu has been slowly eroding our heritage. It is time we manage our visitors, create luxury destinations, environmental and educational experiences, cultural awareness and other examples that do not impact our āina. Currently, our visitor industry has the lowest wages in the country and the greatest impact on the environment. We have not properly evaluated our importance as a desirable global destiny. We cannot support this volume of tourists.

ID: 25

22) There is serious opposition to short term vacation rentals in many neighborhoods for a number of reasons. Should these types of rentals be permanently banned outside of tourist zoning areas?

I am proud of the work that we have done in City Council. In 2019, I supported Bill 89 to limit short-term vacation rentals. It was a bold move that I am proud of. The city has debated it for years and never had the political will to tackle it until we did.

However, any ordinance is only as effective as enforcement. Despite the consequences, there are still hundreds of short-term vacation rentals throughout Oahu.

With so many hotels closed, there are vacationers who are staying in these short-term rentals without being monitored for the 14-day quarantine. Keeping our residents safe is of primary importance.

When a residential neighborhood is subject to the impact of a transient guests who disregard resident's rights to the private enjoyment of their homes - it disrupts the character of a neighborhood. I do not support hotel-accommodation in a single-family residential area. More needs to be done to enhance enforcement of these restrictions.

Climate Change

Please answer below each question

ID: 26

23) Climate change is a global issue but with local impacts. While Honolulu has an office dealing with climate change, what is your view on the urgent needed to change direction, if any, to minimize or accommodate predicted climate change impacts on Honolulu? What would be your highest priorities to be achieved in your first term on climate change?

O'ahu must continue our progress to fight climate change. I am proud of my work at the City Council to help pass Bill 40, the most comprehensive phase-out of plastics in the nation. Last year, I introduced Resolution 20-8, asking the city to adopt a 4-day, 10-hour work week, which not only gives our employees an extra day to recover, it also reduces traffic and associated pollution.

The 2017 Hawaii Sea Level Rise Vulnerability and Adaptation Report showed that 3.2 feet of sea level rise will impact 3,880 structures and 13,300 residents, resulting in \$12.9 billion dollars of loss and damage to private property.

We, on the Honolulu City Council approved a resolution "to initiate legal action against fossil fuel companies to recover damages for their role in causing climate change and sea level rise, and associated impacts on the City and County of Honolulu."

New construction near shorelines that are exposed to flooding shall have setbacks in recognition of these conditions and shall be raised to absorb rising waters. These strategies guided construction in the past and should be used going forward.

We have adopted a strategy and a framework for reaching 100% clean energy as rapidly as possible.

We have sought to earmark funding sources to aid homeowners who will be affected by sea level rise.

As a council member, I have been aggressive in pursuing strategies to mitigate environmental impacts.

I created several pieces of legislation to "Keep Hawai'i Hawai'i." Bill 34 requires the visitor industry to provide annual reports on the progress of sustainability efforts to the city. Bill 51 asks tourists and locals to sign a pledge to respect the environment, wildlife and cultural spaces. Bill 68, which I introduced, gives visitors the option to purchase a pass to several city attractions that would create a fund for the proceeds to supplement tourist impact mitigations. I have asked the state legislature to require that videos be shown on airline and cruise ships to inform our visitors about their impacts on our island. I have lobbied extensively for clean energy, and I have met with leaders in those fields whose visions for a sustainable Oahu I would like to implement as mayor. With Bill 25, we passed legislation that requires electric car chargers in new construction. We passed other legislation that requires deeper setbacks and raised first floors for new construction in waterfront dwellings. Oahu tourism must be managed to allow the 'āina to rest and regenerate in sensitive environments, including our ocean and coral reefs. As mayor, resiliency and sustainability will guide my decisions and priorities. I will seek 100% clean energy by 2035 and make clean energy an industry to reduce our dependence on tourism. Technology such as TCOM can convert organic waste into energy. I am proud of the Oahu Resiliency Plan and implementing it will be a priority, should I become mayor.

I will continue to work towards 100% clean energy and towards strategies to mitigate environmental crisis on our coastlines.

ID: 27

24) What position do you have on the proposed Ala Wai Watershed Army Corp Plan which has faced serious community opposition? Would you support signing the PPP agreement as it is?

Before any Project Partnership Agreement (PPA) is signed with the mayor (hopefully me), the EDR (Engineering Document Report) should be approved by Washington first to guarantee the revised plan, not the original plan, will be built; and that conditions are met so the EIS is approved by the court and the injunction removed. This ensures that the project will not revert to the previously approved original plan, which includes six catchment basins that are not in the

EDR. Clearly, this is an example of poor community outreach that has created unnecessary delays and mistrust within the community.

Development:

Please answer below each question

ID: 28

25) How would you make enforcement effective against "monster homes" in our neighborhoods?

Last year, we passed Bill 79 (Ordinance 19-3) to limit floor-area ratios, wet bars, laundry rooms and bathrooms to end Monster Homes. It was a difficult process, but we finally found a path that would allow for multi-generational homes to accommodate family members. But reports of Monster Homes being built continue to come in. I asked for an audit of the DPP. What we found was that the DPP does not identify "at-risk properties." Only a few developers have built 75% of the Monster Homes.

We found that the department does not effectively manage building permits and inspections related to large dwellings; doesn't use information from its operations to support its regulatory needs; and the lack of assembled information leads to administrative delays in researching and monitoring problems with construction individually. It only discovers problems with these buildings through complaints. The department did not manage plan expirations and allowed these large developments to continue with expired plans. The department doesn't pursue violations, fees and fines. The DPP did not take into account the type of construction being proposed or the neighborhood character it would impact. Moreover, complaints are investigated depending on who files them - beginning with the mayor and the city council members.

What this means is that the entire Department of Planning and Permitting requires an overhaul. I would speed permitting by emphasizing inspections on projects that are being built by reputable licensed architects and contractors, so that it won't take two years to be approved to remodel a kitchen or bath. I would set up a linear path for permitting and a sign-off in each sector, to reduce redundancy and repetition. I would fully staff the department and add inspectors to handle complaints. Lastly, if there are holes in the Monster Home ordinance, we will plug the holes.

ID: 29

26) Development has been proposed that would violate existing zoning and/or land use laws. Will you agree to protect view corridors and scenic view planes as they currently exist, especially on city-controlled land?

Absolutely.

I believe that the best projects are projects that have been thoroughly vetted in the community. When community input is heard and incorporated, the resulting project becomes a source of pride for the neighborhood that participated.

Spot-zoning can be destructive to a community, especially when the zoning is in place to protect significant features that are important to the community, and view corridors and scenic view planes that have been determined by our land use ordinances should be respected. Zone changes should only be considered when there is an overriding reason that benefits all stakeholders.

ID: 30

27) Where do you stand on land-use rezoning, in particular the rezoning and repurposing of preservation land and the repurposing of residential lands for non-single-family home use. How do you feel about individual communities across Oahu being allowed to decide what should be built in their own communities? Will you agree to protect green space in all lands designated as “Preservation,” “Conservation” or “Prime Agricultural.”

Yes. The Oahu General Plan was created in 1977 and amended in 2002. As mayor, I would form a study group to see if it is time to update the General Plan. If it is decided that the GP needs to be updated, I would use the neighborhood boards to form committees to examine their own neighborhoods; hold town halls and study groups. Any changes that are made must come from the community they are in.

ID: 31

28) What other comments or thoughts would you like to leave for our community?

Thank You!

ID: 1

Thank you for taking our survey. Your response is very important to us. Please answer to the best of your ability.
