



*Hawaii's Thousand Friends*

**ANNUAL REPORT 2016**



Photo by Jack Wolford



Aloha Friends:

Many years ago, when I was studying government management, the course curriculum included a reading of a land - mark study about governance in a major mainland city titled: "Community Power Structure."<sup>\*1</sup> Very briefly the bot-

tom line was that more government decisions were actually made by people behind the scenes rather than by public officials. Powerful money interests controlled the major governance decisions through supporting political candidates both before and after elections. Government actions became based upon income and profit rather than the long - term needs of the city and its residents. City infrastructure deteriorated, parts of the city were neglected, quality of life for many decreased, and even public upheavals occurred. Could symptoms of this be visible or evident in other cities today?

For example: What if multiple high-rise buildings were allowed that local residents could ill afford? What if major areas of fertile farmland were allowed to be developed? What if land use bodies added specific development projects at the last minute that agencies did not propose? What if sensitive habitat and resource lands were being developed for tourist attractions? What if industrial developments were allowed without city sewers? What if dumping of hazardous waste was not effectively enforced? What if agencies ignored water pollution events? What if inspectors looked the other way on inspections, or inspector's positions were not funded? What if housing developments were allowed without schools? What if unnecessary development bonuses were proposed for land near a new rail line?

What if housing developments were not required to provide a meaningful amount of affordable housing? What if city actions were taken only after lawsuits or consent decrees? What if there was a housing crisis and no enforcement of non-residents renting homes to tourists? If some or all of these actions exist, what would that city look like, who would benefit? Why would elected officials permit this?

Can a concerned citizen really do something about these kinds of problems? While these can be frustrating systemic problems that defy any single solution, one effective protection is for a city to have a long-range community land use planning program that is actively supported by the public. In communities with growth pressures, strong, active public participation in the planning process can help assure that development decisions are consistent with community desires and values, and can have a positive overall effect on government honesty and effectiveness. If the general public is apathetic and not active in support, it is likely that decisions will be made by individuals or groups based upon their own special or short term interests.

What can you do? The first step to support the planning process is to get informed. Request that your name be put on required mailing or email lists for Planning Department hearings, Planning Commission notices, Council zoning and planning committee agendas, and the State Board of Land and Natural resources agendas. And be sure to submit testimony on items that concern you. If you think that change is needed, just sitting back and complaining won't help.

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<sup>\*1</sup> Hunter, F. (1953). *Community Power Structure: A Study of Decision of Makers*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

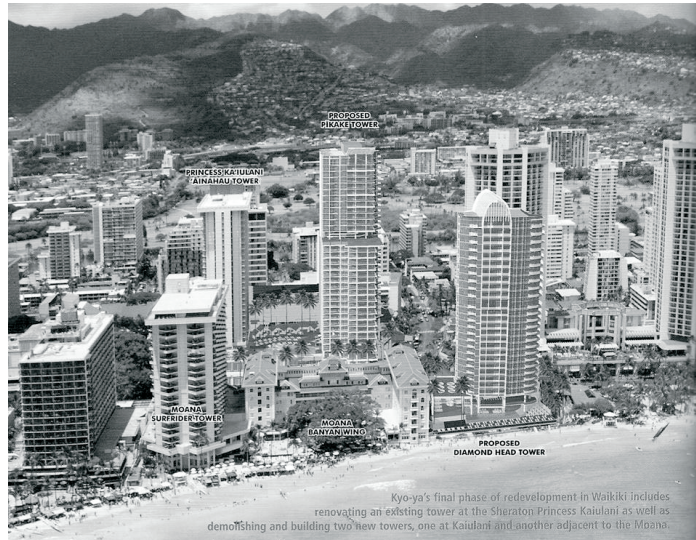
# Kyo-ya . . . *The 2016 Charter Amendment end run*

From 2010 until 2015 Hawaii's Thousand Friends, KAHEA-The Hawaiian Environmental Alliance, Surfrider Foundation, Ka Iwi Coalition and Michelle Matson fought against the Director of the City Department of Planning and Permitting (DPP) granting a variance to Kyo-ya that would allow a new hotel to encroach 60-feet into the Waikiki shoreline setback.

After a lengthy legal battle the Hawai'i Supreme Court on September 23, 2015 ruled unanimously in our favor and against the zoning variance, affirming coastal zoning protections and the importance of open space.

So that is that – right. Wrong.

This year Roy Mamemiya Jr. Managing Director of the City and County proposed charter amendment #81 to the Charter Commission. Charter Amendment #81 is a not so subtle



2010 FEIS Princess Kaʻulani Renovation & Development and the Replacement of the Moana Surfrider Hotel Diamond Head Tower with a New Tower.

end run around the Hawai'i Supreme Court's 9-0 ruling against DPP granting a variance to Kyo-ya.

If Charter Amendment #81 were passed the public's interest in wise land use planning would be reduced to confusing and less stringent language than the current Charter language, would undermine Honolulu's zoning regulations, could lead to major weakening of the City's Land Use Ordinance and Special District Design Standards and would give more discretion the Director of DPP.

Plaintiff organizations with our attorney Linda Paul mobilized to defeat Charter Amendment #81 and we did.

It was down to the wire with Charter Commissioners maneuvering at the last hearing on the amendment but Linda Paul's testimony and tenacity convinced commissioners of the perils of Charter Amendment #81 and they voted it down.



1920 photograph of the Waikiki plain before the construction of the Ala Wai Canal.



# *Pueo*

## *Oahu's Endangered Owl*



Pueo, one of ten subspecies worldwide of the widespread Short-eared Owl, are endemic to Hawai'i and were once prevalent throughout all the islands. The establishment of the Short-eared Owl in Hawai'i is thought to have occurred sometime after the arrival of the Polynesians. Unlike most owls, pueo are active during the day and hunt for food in the early morning and evening. Like their continental relatives, they primarily prey on small mammals.

Little is understood of the general ecology of the pueo, especially in relation to breeding. There are no pueo population estimates or population trend estimates, nor are there data on their movement patterns. However, based on sources such as bird counts and on discoveries of pueo that suffered premature death, the pueo population has been declining for decades.

Once numerous, pueo on Oahu have been considered an endangered species by the State of Hawai'i since 1982. Their declining numbers are likely due to loss of habitat, predators, and possibly wind-turbine development. Pueo are included on the Migratory Bird Species list and are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. However, the Migratory Bird Act does not protect pueo habitat.

Pueo live in a variety of habitats, including both wet and dry forests, and on Oahu are most commonly found in open grasslands and shrub lands such as on the Ewa Plain and in Kalaeloa, Kapolei, the open area around UH West Oahu, and the grasslands at Ho'opili

Pueo nest on the ground and lays three to six eggs over a span of several months. Nesting on the ground makes

them extremely vulnerable to cats and mongoose, as well as to habitat loss from conversion of open grassland to urban uses. An example of pueo habitat loss is Ho'opili, an area in Kapolei slated for the development of 11,000 homes.

Surveys conducted for the Rail and Ho'opili Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) determined that no pueo were sighted in either project area. Many people doubted that finding since the grasslands in both project areas provide prime pueo habitat. The public's skepticism of the findings has been confirmed by recent sightings of the pueo in the grasslands of both project sites

At the end of the year the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) Division of Forestry and Wildlife will release a request for proposals for the development of a standardized survey to determine the abundance, distribution, nesting habitat, and the movement of the pueo, and for implementation of the survey results. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will coordinate with DLNR on surveys of Oahu and neighbor islands.

Native Hawaiians and Ewa Plain residents have waited too long for someone to heed their call for action to protect Oahu's endangered pueo. These communities are taking action on their own by bringing about further awareness of the plight of the pueo and by creating a conservation habitat plan to protect their nesting and foraging habitat on Oahu. Expect to hear more about ways to protect this important species in the near future.







## *Creighton Mattoon*

When Creighton Mattoon passed away on July 2, 2016, our environmental community lost a great friend and protector of our natural resources and community interests.

Creighton lived with his wife Cathleen in Punalu`u where they have been long-time community leaders in their mission to Keep the Country Country.

Creighton was a Hawaii's Thousand Friends board member from 1990-1993. His warm smile, easy going manner, knowledge and wisdom contributed much to our organization and made our board meetings enjoyable and productive.

In 1993 HTF recognized Creighton as our second Unsung Hero for his active participation in many organizations and his everlasting devotion to community, strategic planning, and malama `aina.

Our deepest condolences to Creighton's wife Cathleen and family.



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