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COMMITTEE ON ZONING AND PLANNING

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O'ahu General Plan Hui testimony on proposed amendment to  
Resolution 21-23 O'ahu General Plan

**O'ahu General Plan Hui Mission Statement**

We envision an updated O'ahu General Plan that recognizes residents and future generations as the highest priority in planning for our extraordinary and unique Pacific island home. We strive to holomua – move forward – a revised General Plan that: promotes sustainable, inclusive, self-reliant communities; is rooted in Hawai'i's indigenous wisdom and ahupua'a practices; acknowledges the carrying capacity and limits of our infrastructure and natural resources; protects and enhances a clean and healthful environment, and promotes environmental and social justice; acts immediately on the climate emergency; advances neighborhood food security; supports housing that is attainable for local families and working residents; promotes a diversified economy that substantially reduces reliance on tourism; ensures effective implementation, accountability, and alignment with O'ahu's eight sustainable and development plans; and enforces strict adherence to City and County ordinances and rules. Sustainability focuses on meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Sustainability implies equilibrium and limits. Never ending growth is not sustainable, especially on an island.

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We thank Council member Elefante for his understanding of the importance of sustainability, climate change and sea level rise by including these issues in his amendments to the General Plan.

According to the City Charter, the General Plan “...is to contain statements of the general social, economic, environmental and design objectives to be achieved for the general welfare and prosperity of the people of the city and the most desirable population distribution and regional development pattern...” which are all quality of life issues.

In addition to following the mandate of the City Charter a realistic and workable General Plan should:

- Encourage, honor and incorporate legitimate and meaningful resident participation
- Recognize residents and future generations as the highest priority in planning for our extraordinary and unique island home
- Promote sustainable, inclusive and self-reliant communities
- Be rooted in Hawaii’s indigenous wisdom and ahupua`a practices
- Acknowledge the carrying capacity and limits of our infrastructure, natural resources and land
- Protect and enhance a clean and healthful environment
- Support housing that is attainable for local families and working residents.
- Recognize residents and future generations as the highest priority in planning for our extraordinary and unique Pacific island home.

We would like you to consider making the following changes:

- Add Climate Change to the Energy title to read Energy Systems and Climate Change. This change recognizes the connection between energy sources and our changing climate.
- Add Carrying Capacity to the Population title to read Population/Carrying Capacity. We must recognize that we live on an island in which there are a maximum number of individuals that an environment can sustain over time without destroying or degrading the environment. Our planning documents must recognize this connection and begin enacting policies to address the capacity of our island, our communities, our water and infrastructure before we reach the point of no return.

Please consider our amendments, underlined and ~~crossed-out~~, to item 25, which amends the 5<sup>th</sup> paragraph of the Preamble, Content of the General Plan:

- Compact and mixed-use development patterns that encourage low- and mid-rise housing for residents that reflects and preserve neighborhood character and higher densities and conserve energy and resources;
- Preservation and protection of agricultural, natural, cultural and open space resources;
- Energy efficient multi-modal transportation, pedestrian-friendly pathways, ~~networks~~ and ~~rail~~ transit-oriented developments along the 20-mile rail line to reduce automobile use;
- Efficient building design and technology to reduce waste, water, and energy consumption to achieve net-zero targets;
- Greater public awareness of and actions to avoid and reduce waste and eliminate excessive consumption;
- ~~Increased participating and scope of~~ Workable and efficient on-island recycling, upcycling, and waste stream reduction programs;
- Use of renewable energy sources to reduce dependence on imported fossil fuels to align with city and state climate and energy targets; where economically and environmentally appropriate;
- Place greater emphasis on production, distribution, and consumption of locally-grown food and locally produced products;
- Economic diversification that prioritizes emphasizes the well-being of O‘ahu’s residents and is resilient to changes in global conditions;

Item 29, Balance Economy, page 8, add the amendment to the following to the last sentence: A new policy also promotes an equitable access to technology and innovation and technologically savvy economy ...

Item 30, Natural Environment and Resource Stewardship, page 8, please consider adding amendments to the last sentence, The objectives and policies must recognize the importance of Hawai’i’s indigenous wisdom and ahupua’a practices and address climate change in protecting the natural environment for current and future generations.

Item 31, Housing and Communities, page 8, please consider our amendments to the paragraph: Obtaining decent, reasonably priced primary homes in safe and attractive neighborhoods has been a persistent problem for the residents of O‘ahu primarily due to the second-home market and vacation rentals in residential zones, and is a primary concern of the General Plan. This section recognizes the importance of preserving existing residential neighborhoods, developing whole communities that are well-integrated with the surrounding land uses and the natural environment and that include housing, services, amenities, and job opportunities.

Item 32, page 8, please consider adding the following amendments: The objectives and policies for housing seek to provide a choice of living environments and affordable housing for residents, including the houseless, and to reduce inflationary speculation. ensure a wide range of housing

~~opportunities and choices for residents and to increase the availability of affordable housing and meet County and State affordability goals; to encourage higher-density housing via mixed-use and transit-oriented developments in rail station areas; to encourage infill housing where permitted; to increase the use of sustainable building designs and techniques; to reduce speculation in land and housing; and to address issues associated with homelessness so that all people have decent and stable shelter.~~

Item 33, Transportation and Utilities, please consider adding the following amendments: A safe, efficient, and cost-effective ~~multi-modal~~ transportation and pedestrian-friendly systems that reduce dependence on fossil fuels and generates less greenhouse gas emissions is essential to our environment, economic productivity, and quality of life. ~~The cost of building and maintaining the various elements of a comprehensive transportation system to service the island is a major public investment.~~ Coordinated planning of accessibility and circulation requirements and integration of the transportation system with existing and planned developments is important to resident quality of life and achieving sustainability. ~~in the effective management of urban growth.~~ The transportation objectives and policies address the need for a balanced ground transportation system that allows safe, comfortable, and convenient travel for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transit riders, and motorists.

Item 35, Transportation and Utilities, please consider adding the following amendments, To ensure sustainability, ~~Population growth results in increased demands for~~ reliable, cost-effective water, sewerage, recycling, and solid waste disposal services require innovation and better management provided by City government. ~~as well as the communication, electricity, and gas systems provided by the private sector.~~ Not only must such needs be met, but The social, economic, and environmental consequences of meeting these needs must be evaluated and mitigated. ~~carefully considered.~~

We eliminated Item 36 as too wordy and unfocused.

Item 37, we recommend the title Energy Systems and Climate Change.

Item 38, please consider amending (and shortening) the paragraph to read:  
~~There is no more salient example of the direct impact of world events on an island community than the provision of energy.~~ With about 90% of O‘ahu’s electrical and transportation needs powered by imported fossil fuels, increasing energy self-sufficiency is a major priority to achieving stride toward sustainability. ~~Revised objectives and policies recognize that nature is all around us, even in urban areas. Renewable energy development, efficient energy utilization, conservation, and reducing energy demand are addressed with the goals of reducing dependence on outside sources, increasing the resiliency of energy systems, and promoting sustainable energy practices.~~ Policies must support net zero to net positive performance in the areas of energy, low carbon emissions, waste streams, all utilities, and food security.

Item 40, Preamble, Physical Development and Urban Design, we recommend the following amendments: Urban design emphasis is contained in objectives to create and maintain quality of life for residents ~~attractive, meaningful, and stimulating environments~~ and to promote and

enhance the social and physical character of O‘ahu’s older towns and neighborhoods. Given the population distribution reflected in the General Plan, it is intended that rural centers maintain their rural character, providing for residents and future generations to remain in their home towns and maintain the existing character of our rural and suburban communities.

For Item 44, Preamble, Culture and Recreation, we recommend the following amendments: Protection and preservation and enhancement of Hawai‘i’s multiethnic culture will be directed toward people, our most important resource, and achieved through policies that encourage and respect the Native Hawaiian culture and its vital influence on the way of life on O‘ahu; recognize unique local cultures, values and traditions; protect and preserve enhance cultural, historic and archaeological sites, buildings, and artifacts; and promote the living arts and culture of our multi-cultural heritage. The City ~~also~~ recognizes the importance of providing adequate well-maintained park space and facilities to keep up with resident needs and mitigate visitor impacts in all parts of the island. ~~changing demand.~~

Item 49, Preamble, Role of the City Government, we recommend adding: The City and County government will implement the policies contained in the General Plan through ordinances and resolutions as well as through rules and regulations. Public accountability, strict enforcement, and effective implementation are critical to carry out the objectives and policies of the General Plan. Also essential to policy implementation are the City’s annual budget and six-year capital-improvement program, both of which should be consistent with the objectives and policies of the General Plan, especially with regard to long-term commitments of funding.

The Population Carrying Capacity section is about planning for and controlling population to avoid social and economic disruptions and recognizing that O‘ahu’s natural resources are finite.

We must recognize that we live on an island in which there are a maximum number of individuals that an environment can sustain over time without destroying or degrading the environment. Add the tourist population, military population and resident population together and our island environment could be at a tipping point but without addressing the carrying capacity of the `aina we will only know when it is too late.

In the Population/Carrying Capacity section we would like you to reconsider the following:

I. Population Objective A

- Keep the existing wording *To control growth of Oahu’s resident and visitor populations in order to avoid social, economic, and environmental disruptions.*
  - This policy has been a foundational element of the General Plan for over forty years. It wisely recognizes the limits inherent in an island environment.
  - Abandoning this objective means that we have given up on controlling growth in order to provide a better quality of life for local residents.

I. Population/Carrying Capacity Objective A Policy 2

- Replace proposed wording with Limit the number of tourists allowed on the island based on carry capacity and impacts on residents, infrastructure, and natural resources. This statement is in keeping with HTAs regenerative tourism and recognizes the need to study

untold and uncontrolled numbers of tourists on local residents, our infrastructure and our island finite natural resources.

- We would like you to consider replacing the wording in Population Objective A Policy 2 Provide adequate support facilities to accommodate future numbers of visitors to O`ahu while seeking to minimize disruption to residents and protect the natural environment with Limit the number of tourists allowed on the island based on carry capacity and impacts on residents, infrastructure, and natural resources. The General Plan is the people’s plan, our guiding document of policies and objectives that should be directed to achieving a greater quality of life for local residents and not tourists.

I. Population/Carrying Capacity Objective A Policy 5

- Replace ~~Support family planning and social equity~~ with Recognize the resident population’s impact on climate change and plan for climate change effects on development. This proposed wording recognizes people’s impact on the climate and how changing climate will impact development, present and future, so that we can begin discussing and enacting policies that address such things as rising sea levels and relocating infrastructure from coastal areas.

I. Population/Carrying Capacity Objective A Policy 6

- Keep the current policy Publicize the desire of the City to limit population growth. This policy has been in the General Plan since 2002 and is the only that policy that expresses the City’s objective to limit population on O`ahu to ensure a better quality of life for local residents. If it is removed then there is no City policy expressing the desire to limit population on O`ahu.

I. Population/Carrying Capacity Objective B

- Change this Objective to read *To establish a pattern of population distribution that will allow all residents to enjoy a good quality of life.* The proposed wording *live, work and play in harmony* is meaningless and open to interpretation. Quality of life recognizes the degree to which residents are healthy, comfortable, and have a joyful and meaningful life.

I. Population/Carrying Capacity Objective B, Policy 1

- Delete the words ~~and county~~ and keep the existing wording Allocate efficiently the money and resources of the City in order to meet the needs of O`ahu’s anticipated future population. This policy pro-actively recognizes that funding and other resources will be needed island wide.

I. Population Objective B Policy 3

- Add and undesirable spreading of development is prevented to a. of this new policy to read a. development is contained within growth boundaries to prevent undesirable spreading of development. The proposed wording clarifies that urban sprawl is not encouraged or a desired growth pattern.

\*\* See O`ahu Development Pattern maps at end of testimony

II. Balanced Economy Objective A Policy 3

- Please consider adding the underlined words: Pursue opportunities to grow and strategically develop non-polluting industries such as [trade, communications, media, medical, life sciences,] regenerative tourism, healthcare, agriculture, renewable energy, and technology in appropriate locations that contribute to O‘ahu’s long-term environmental, economic, and social sustainability. (*Regenerative tourism aims to restore the harm that our system has already done to the natural world, and by using nature's principles, to create the conditions of life to flourish. It views wholes and not parts, and is a very different way of looking at the world.*)

## II. Balance Economy Objective C Policy 7

- Please consider our proposed amendments: Encourage landowners, in every district, to actively use agriculturally designated and zoned lands for agricultural and farming and ranching purposes.

## II. Balanced Economy Objective C Policy 8

- Please consider our proposed amendments: Require ~~Encourage~~ landowners, in every district, to permanently preserve agricultural land with high productivity potential for agricultural production. *We eliminated reference to coexistence with renewable energy generation as this policy should focus on food security for the future.*

## III. Natural Environment and Resource Stewardship Objective A Policy 4

- Please consider our proposed amendments: Increase tree canopy and ensure their integration into new developments, and protect existing trees on public and private lands and require widespread native tree planting, installation of pollinator gardens and ~~and encourage their integration into new developments~~ sustainable landscaping in all new communities.

## IV. Housing and Communities Objective A, Policy 2

- Please consider our proposed amendments: Increase automation, transparency, and efficiency in permit approval procedures for housing for local owners of residential single-family homes and other development projects.

## IV. Housing and Communities Objective A, Policy 3

- Please consider our proposed amendments: Encourage residential development that protects existing distinct residential communities and the island way of life with a balance of innovative residential developments with attention to climate change [which] that result in lower costs, [the] sustainable use of resources, [the] more efficient use of land and infrastructure, greater convenience and privacy, and a distinct community identity.

## IV. Housing and Communities Objective A, Policy 9

- Please consider this new wording: Whenever possible, preserve existing housing that is affordable to low- and moderate-income residents.

## IV. Housing and Communities Objective C, Policy 5-6

- We recommend, adding the following: Discourage residential development in areas where the topography makes construction difficult or hazardous, where slopes are 20% or greater, where sea level rise and flooding are a hazard, and where providing and

maintaining roads, utilities, and other facilities would be extremely costly or environmentally damaging.

IV. Housing and Communities Objective C, Policy 7

- We recommend, adding the following: Preserve older communities through planned maintenance and infrastructure replacement through self-help and housing rehabilitation programs utilizing governmental, public, and private investments.

IV. Housing and Communities Objective C, Policy 8

- We recommend the adding to the following: Encourage the military to provide housing for active duty personnel and their families on military bases and in areas turned over to military housing contractors and provide incentives to land owners so that available residential housing be offered to local families first and that rent caps be established to prevent rents based on military housing allowances.

V. Transportation and Utilities Objective B, Policy 2

- We recommend keeping the deleted language recognizing climate change and existing and future drought conditions.

VI. Energy Systems and Climate Change Objective C

- We recommend adding businesses and visitors in addition to residents.

VI. Energy Systems and Climate Change Objective C, Policy 1

- We recommending adding businesses and visitors in addition to residents.

VI. Energy Systems and Climate Change Objective D (new)

- Please consider incorporating this new Objective into the General Plan: Site on-land windmills to protect human health.

VI. Energy Systems and Climate Change, Objective D, Policy 1 (new)

- Please consider incorporating Policy 1 into the General Plan: Require that utility-scale on-land wind turbines be setback a minimum of 5 miles from all residentially zoned property lines, schools, farms, care homes, and hospitals.

VI. Energy Systems and Climate Change, Objective E (new)

- Please consider incorporating Objective E into the General Plan: To align City goals and programs with international and national targets for addressing climate change and increase energy self-sufficiency by 50% by 2030 compared to 2020 importation of fossil fuels to O‘ahu and maintain an efficient, reliable, resilient, and cost-effective energy system.

VII. Physical Development and Urban Design Objective A, Policy 4



- We recommend the following amendments: Facilitate and encourage ~~compact low and mid-rise higher-density~~ development in urban areas as primary homes for residents designated for such uses.

VII. Physical Development and Urban Design, Objective A, Policy 5

- We recommend: Encourage the establishment of ~~mixed-use~~ town centers that are compatible with the physical and social character of their community.

VII. Physical Development and Urban Design, Objective A, Policy 14 (new)

- Please consider incorporating this new Policy into the General Plan: Evaluate infrastructure and natural environment carrying capacity when considering any new development.

VII. Physical Development and Urban Design, Object B, Policy 4 (new)

- Please consider incorporating this new policy into the General Plan: Identify and recognize vulnerable coastal and inland areas susceptible to sea level rise.

VIII. Public Safety and Resiliency Objective A, Policy 12 (new)

- Please consider incorporating this new Policy into the General Plan: Establish Neighborhood Security Watch Groups through cooperation/collaboration with local law enforcement and people living in each community to reduce crime and improve their quality of life.

X. Culture and Recreation Objective A, Policy 1

- Please consider our proposed amendments: Protect and preserve ~~Recognize~~ the Native Hawaiian host culture, including its customs, language, history, and close connection to the natural environment, as a dynamic, living culture and as an integral part of O‘ahu’s sustainability and way of life that is rooted in Hawai‘i’s indigenous wisdom and ahupua‘a practices.

X. Culture and Recreation Objective B, Policy 1

- Please consider incorporating these amendments into the General Plan: [~~Encourage~~] Promote Support the restoration and preservation of ~~early~~ Hawaiian cultural structures, artifacts, ~~and~~ landmarks, and ahupua‘a boundaries.

X. Culture and Recreation Objective D

- Please consider incorporating this new wording into the General Plan: Manage public access to natural areas in a way that ensures protection of those areas.

X. Culture and Recreation Objective D, Policy 2

- Please consider incorporating this new wording into the General Plan: Through public participation and dialogue, develop, [~~and~~] maintain, and expand a system of regional parks and specialized recreation facilities to meet the needs of the different diverse communities on O‘ahu.

X. Culture and Recreation Objective D, Policy 8

- Please consider incorporating this new wording into the General Plan: Prohibit unpermitted commercial use of beaches and public parks outside of resort areas.

X. Objective D, Policy 13

- Please consider incorporating this new wording into the General Plan: Provide the safe use of Oahu's oceans through stronger support for the City Ocean Safety Department.

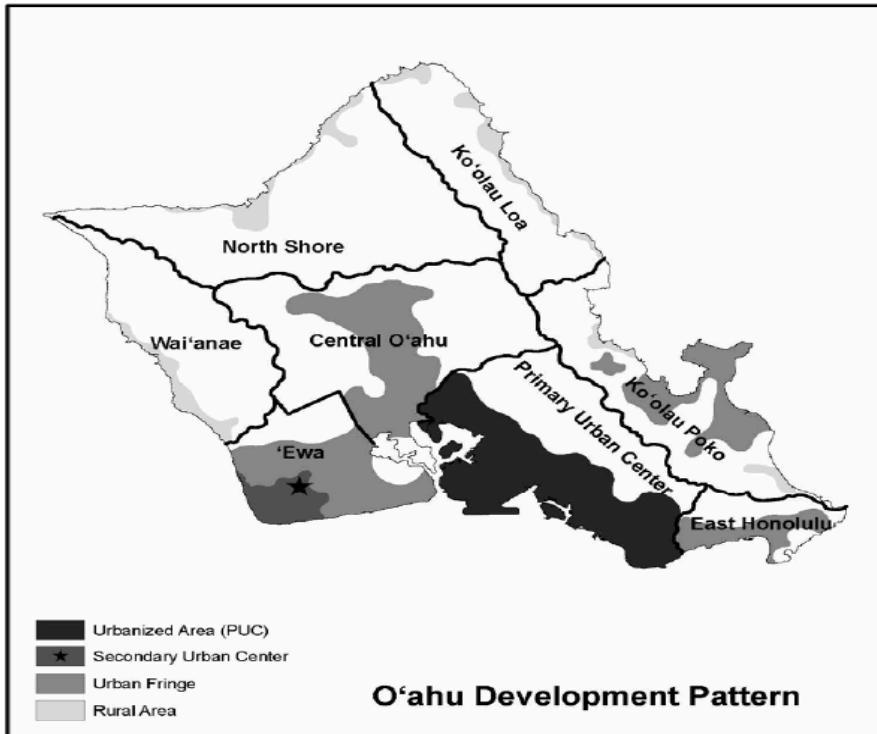
XI. Government Operations and Fiscal Management Objective A

- Please consider incorporating this new wording into the General Plan: All city powers shall be used to service and advance the general welfare, safety and aspirations of its inhabitants in an efficient, effective, ethical and professional manner and in a sustainable manner that promotes stewardship of natural resources for present and future generations.

XI. Government Operations and Fiscal Management Objective B, Policy 1

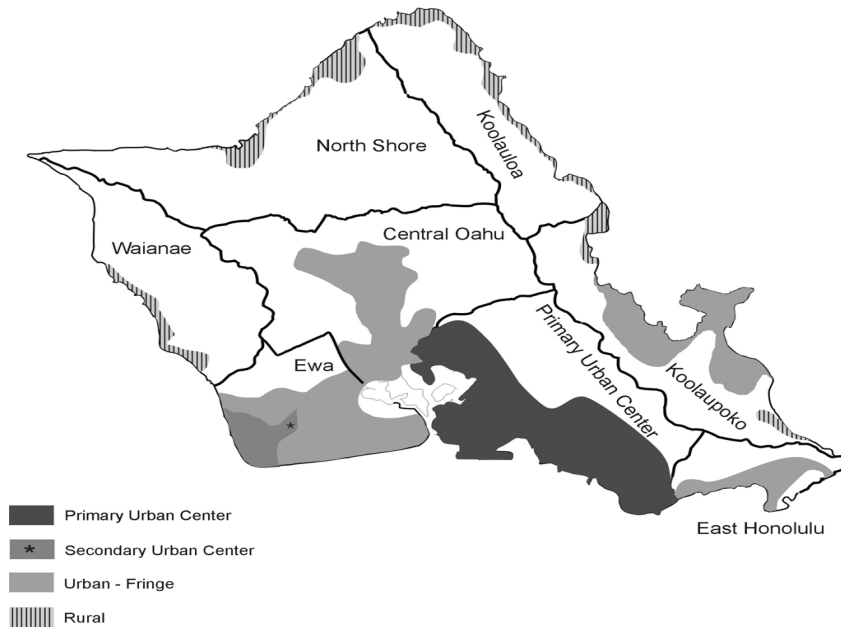
- Please consider incorporating this new wording into the General Plan: Provide for a balanced budget through fiscal prudence and careful analysis of priorities to protect O'ahu's residents and the public interest.

**New map in 2017 General Plan Resolution 21-23**



*\*Revised, June 2016 version*

## General Plan Development Pattern



### Existing map in current General Plan

**The map is not user friendly, confusing, hard to read and understand where and what the changes are.**

**A new map needs to have stronger distinctions i.e. hatched lines, colors etc. between the different areas.**

**A new map needs an overlay with sufficient detail to identify changes and allow readers to understand the boundary and designation changes.**

**A new map needs to use horizontal lines to identify rural areas.**

**A new map needs a legend to explain why rural areas were removed in Koolau Loa and Koolau and what all the white represents.**