

FROM THE OFFICE OF
SENATOR STANLEY CHANG
East Honolulu Community Newsletter

February 2023



Aloha Friends and Neighbors,

The 2023 legislative session is now underway. With 18 new state representatives and six new state senators, a new Governor and Lieutenant Governor, and a new slate of departmental directors, there is more new energy at the Capitol than at any time since I joined the Senate in 2016.

This year, everyone agrees that housing is the top priority, including the Governor, the Senate Majority Caucus, and the House Majority Caucus. With house prices surpassing \$1.1 million in three of the four counties of Hawai'i, the present situation is unsustainable. Indeed, we are now in our sixth straight year of population decline, and thousands of local people have made the ultimate decision to leave Hawai'i, never to return.

I am once again championing a new program for leasehold housing on state lands near rail stations that is 1) revenue neutral, 2) income blind, and 3) unlimited in supply. Only Hawai'i residents who would be owner-occupants and own no other real property would be eligible to buy, and it would not require major taxpayer subsidies to scale up. I believe this is the only realistic path toward building enough supply to meet demand, and I look forward to the bill making progress this year.

One of the positive legacies of the pandemic is the availability now of remote oral testimony. If you support or oppose a bill, you can testify from the comfort of your home. Please also read below about the assistance offered by the Public Access Room, which is always happy to help members of the public with the legislative process. As always, please reach out to us if there's anything we can do.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Stanley Chang'.

Senator Stanley Chang

GET ACTIVE AT THE LEGISLATURE

Visit the Public Access Room's website for a wealth of on-demand training and resources to help you navigate the legislative process. Among other things, you can learn about advocacy, the Legislature's website, and the session calendar and its deadlines. It may help to make session more manageable! Simply navigate to lrb.hawaii.gov/par and click under its "Learn" tab.

Everyone is encouraged to visit the Public Access Room, located on the 4th floor of the Hawai'i State Capitol, where staff can answer any questions.

Public Access Room, a Division of the Legislative Reference Bureau (LRB)
415 South Beretania Street, Room 401, Honolulu, HI 96813
par@capitol.hawaii.gov, (808) 587-0478



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State Homelessness
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808-586-0193

City Homelessness
complaints@honolulu.gov
808-768-4381

Abandoned Vehicles
808-733-2530

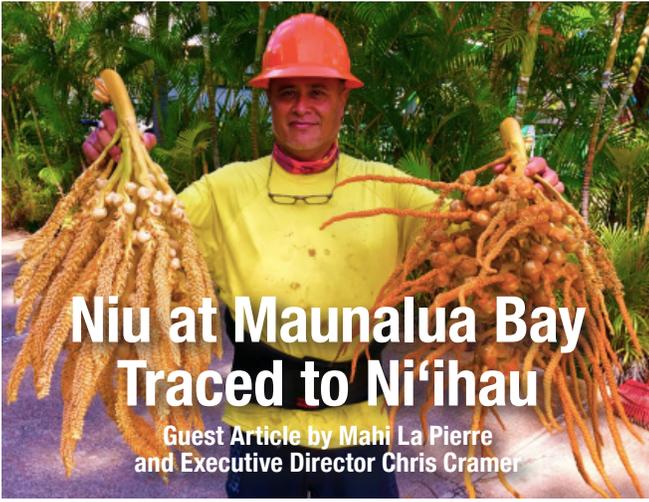
Building Permits
808-768-8000

Trash Collection
808-768-3200

Street Light Repair
808-768-5300

IN THE COMMUNITY

Image Credit: Maunaloa Fishpond Heritage Center



Niu at Maunaloa Bay Traced to Ni'ihau

Guest Article by Mahi La Pierre and Executive Director Chris Cramer

Spanning Maunaloa Bay's shoreline stand the kūpuna niu. These are descendants of a Hawaiian food system that interplanted coconut with freshwater springs and fishponds. Now too old and too tall, their tastes have become inconvenient. Each year more give way to rising seas and the chainsaw. Yet many of us don't want to lose these trees so dearly beloved in the past.

The Ni'ihau coconut grove located at the Bayer Estate in Wailupe is particularly special. According to history shared by owners Richard and Sooz Mirikitani, "The lawn has twelve of the original thirty-two coconut trees germinated from coconuts from the privately owned island of Ni'ihau."

These coconuts were a gift of Carlos Long, a close personal friend of the Robinson family (which owns Ni'ihau). Because Hawai'i has been the recipient of so many different types of coconut trees over the years, there has been a loss of varietal identity (e.g. cross breeding with Samoan coconut trees), and as such, coconut trees from Ni'ihau, while not botanically unique, are historically unique in that they are directly descended from those brought by the early Polynesian settlers to Hawai'i. The missing twenty trees were removed and donated in the early 1970s, some of which were used in connection with the landscaping of the new Aloha Stadium."

In normal years, Richard and Sooz keep the towering niu safely trimmed. During the pandemic they allowed the Ni'ihau trees to flower. This was the perfect opportunity for the Maunaloa Fishpond Heritage Center. We contacted practitioners from Niu Now to check out the Ni'ihau grove. Niu Now researcher Indrajit Gunasekara identified one tree as having especially unique characteristics. This could be an original variety brought to Hawai'i. Niu expert Alex Hubbard, who operates THE CUT, donated his services to climb the tree with safety netting. Once the nuts mature, we can grow out this rare coconut variety from Ni'ihau and ensure they continue into the future.

Originally published in the Maunaloa Fishpond Heritage Center Winter 2022 Newsletter

CONTINUED CLOSURE AT KOKO HEAD SHOOTING COMPLEX

The Koko Head Shooting Complex is scheduled to remain closed through February 2023.

Following consultations between the City and a firearm range consultant, a timeline of physical improvements is being developed in order to safely reopen the facility. The specifics of this timeline will be announced once those dates are confirmed. Currently, the Honolulu Department of Parks and Recreation is working on internal and external signage for the facility while updating administrative policies governing the complex's operation, including additional training for complex staff.

"Mahalo to the firearms community for their continued patience and understanding while we work to make these necessary fixes to this popular facility," says Department of Parks and Recreation's Nathan Serota.



**Koko Head Shooting Complex
scheduled to remain closed
through February 2023**

Image Credit: City and County of Honolulu

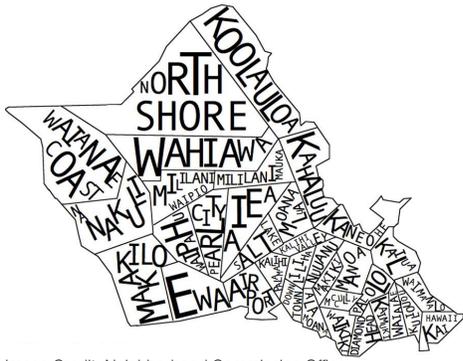


Image Credit: Neighborhood Commission Office

Open Neighborhood Board Elections

The Neighborhood Commission Office (NCO) has recently announced that the 2023 Neighborhood Board Elections are open for candidate registration! Neighborhood Boards are the only government-supported civic engagement system in the State of Hawai'i since 1973.

With 33 Neighborhood Boards all across O'ahu, all members of the community are encouraged to register for this year's 2023 Neighborhood Board Elections.

There is no experience required and participants need to be over the age of 18 to register as a candidate. This is a two-year term starting from July 1st 2023 to June 30th 2025. The Neighborhood Board meetings affect the current and future generations to promote transparency, collaboration and in-person involvement to better our communities. You can register as a candidate or vote for your Neighborhood Board here: web1.hnl.info/nbe.

Important Dates:

1. Friday, February 17, 2023
Candidate Filing Deadline
2. Friday, April 28, 2023
Voting Begins
3. Friday, May 19, 2023
Voting Ends

TREE CANOPY RESTORATION AT KAIMUKĪ PUBLIC LIBRARY

Patrons of the Kaimukī Public Library can look forward to a return of a tree canopy soon!

Undergraduate students at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources planted a mixture of native and non-native plants fronting the library. The students worked under the guidance of Andrew Kaufman, the CTAHR Associate Professor and Landscape Specialist.

According to Kaufman, this experience provides students with the opportunity to learn by doing. "In class, they learn the theoretical and the basics, and then actually put that into working measurements to put things in the ground that really affect the environment and people. I just feel really privileged, and I think that the mission of UH Mānoa... is to give back, not only to the 'āina but to the people."

Hailey Catherman, a student in Dr. Kaufman's undergraduate Tropical Plant and Soil Science class, said this tree planting "incorporated all the lessons we had been taught throughout the semester. Getting the opportunity to apply our learning to a real-life landscape design and installation in a way that simultaneously gave back to the community was a really cool experience to be a part of."

According to remarks by Lea Domingo, the library branch manager of Kaimukī Library, "We are also thankful to the various organizations and individuals who donated their time and energy. They made our dreams of adding more trees to Kaimukī Library possible!" Making the public library more green has always been a dream of the institution, according to Domingo, since disease-ridden trees needed to be removed about a decade ago. "Kaimukī Library staff and its community are so appreciative towards the UH students and Dr. Kaufman who donated their hard work and time to making Kaimukī Library greener."



Image Credit: UH News

YOUR CONCERNS

LOCATIONS	JAN	FEB	MARCH
Kapālama Driver Licensing Center	Jan. 7	Feb. 4	March 18
Sheridan Park Road Test Office	Jan. 14	Feb. 25	March 4
Kapolei Driver Licensing Center	Jan. 28	Feb. 11	March 11
Ko'olau Driver Licensing Center	Jan. 14	Feb. 18	March 4

Image Credit: City and County of Honolulu

Saturday Hours for Licensing Centers

The Kapālama Driver Licensing Center, Kapolei Driver Licensing Center and Ko'olau Driver Licensing Center will open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on select Saturdays. These extended hours are being offered for O'ahu residents to renew a driver's license, obtain a state identification card, or take a road test. The Sheridan Park Road Test Office will only offer road tests.

More than 72,000 driver's licenses and state identification cards are set to expire in 2023, and an additional 41,000-

plus road test appointments are expected this year. Kim Hashiro, director of the city's Department of Customer Services, says these weekend hours are "the latest example of ongoing efforts to improve operations while providing practical options to residents who need our services."

To make an appointment, go to AlohaQ.org. Stand-by service is available to customers who cannot get an appointment at a driver licensing center, but same-day service is not guaranteed.

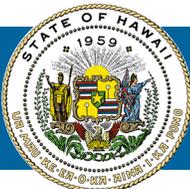
FISHING PAUSE AT WAIKĪKĪ-DIAMOND HEAD SHORELINE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT AREA

From now through December 31, 2023, the Waikīkī-Diamond Head Shoreline Fisheries Management Area (SFMA) will be closed to fishing. The periodic close here is intended to give various species a chance to replenish their population.

The SFMA encompasses the nearshore waters between the 'Ewa wall of the Waikīkī War Memorial Natatorium and the Diamond Head Lighthouse, from the high-water mark on shore to a minimum seaward distance of 500 yards, or to the edge of the fringing reef if one occurs beyond 500 yards. The area is closed to fishing during odd-numbered years. Fishing is not allowed at any time in the adjacent Waikīkī Marine Life Conservation District (MLCD), which extends from the 'Ewa wall of the Natatorium to the Kapahulu groin (jetty). To report violations of any fishing regulation, call the DLNR enforcement hotline at **(808) 643-DLNR** (643-3567).



Image Credit: DLNR Division of Aquatic Resources



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