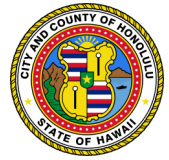




# Ewa Monthly Report October 2020 CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 9

*'Ewa, 'Ewa Beach, Mililani, Waikale, Village Park, and Royal Kunia*



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## Message from Councilmember Ron Menor

As we all know, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in unprecedented challenges for our island and State. As a City Councilmember, I have listened to your concerns, and utilized my position as your City Councilmember to urge the Governor and the Mayor to take actions to protect the public and to address the dire needs and concerns of our communities.

In the early days of the pandemic, I personally met with and later held public meetings with Dr. Scott Miscovich, a national leader in COVID-19 testing and contact tracing to inform and improve the City's and State's testing and contact tracing efforts. I introduced resolutions urging the Governor to take additional measures to limit the travel-related spread of COVID-19 (**Resolution 20-164 FD1**, adopted July 8th); requested the Mayor to increase monitoring and enforcement of COVID-19 protection measures (**Resolution 20-157**, adopted August 19th); urged the State Department of Health to institute policies and procedures to ensure that food establishments are complying with COVID-19 health and safety regulations (**Resolution 20-158**, adopted August 19th); and requested the Liquor Commission to adopt laws, rules, and orders to ensure that licensed bars are following COVID-19 related health and safety regulations (**Resolution 20-160**, adopted August 19th).

I have also introduced resolutions urging Major General Kenneth Hara, Incident Commander of Hawaii's COVID-19 response, to rescind the COVID-19 quarantine exemption for incoming family members of military personnel (**Resolution 20-167 CD1**, adopted August 19th); requesting the Governor and the Mayor to close beaches and parks where large gatherings of non-compliant individuals engaged in non-active uses are occurring (**Resolution 20-185**, adopted August 19th); and urging the Governor to ensure the safe reopening of transpacific travel and tourism by adopting pre-travel testing within 72 hours of departure, urging the Governor to implement additional diagnostic testing for incoming travelers after their arrival, and calling for the adoption and implementation of protocols to keep hotel and tourism industry workers safe (**Resolution 20-246**, adopted October 7th).

The shutdown of our tourism and visitor economy has devastated our state and local economy, causing Hawaii to have the highest unemployment rate in the nation. I realized this early on and wrote the Governor requesting a moratorium on residential evictions in March and also introduced **Resolution 20-96 FD1** adopted April 15th by the Council calling for this relief. The Governor subsequently created a moratorium on residential tenant evictions that was set to expire and so I introduced **Resolution 20-162** adopted July 8th by the Council urging the Governor to extend the moratorium on residential tenant evictions until the end of 2020. On May 6th, the Council adopted **Resolution 20-107 FD1** I introduced calling for the use of Federal CARES Act funds to create a program to rent vacant hotel rooms to quarantine and isolate residents infected with COVID 19 who were not able to socially distance from others. On September 9th, the Council adopted **Resolution 20-182** I introduced urging the Governor and the Mayor to convert vacant hotel rooms into affordable housing for Hawaii's residents. On November 5th, the Council adopted two resolutions I introduced: **Resolution 20-268 FD1** requesting Hawaii's congressional members to extend the deadline for spending of CARES Act funds (now set at the end of the year) and advocate for additional Federal funds to address COVID-19, and **Resolution 20-288** urging all branches of City and State governments to establish emergency measures to protect commercial tenants suffering from the economic downturn.

It has been an honor and a privilege serving as your councilmember for the last eight years. I will continue to work diligently on community concerns before my term of office comes to an end on January 2, 2021.

Mahalo.

### VARONA VILLAGE REDEVELOPMENT

**City Council unanimously approved Resolution 20-231 CD1 for the revitalization of Varona Village.** I have been working since 2013 to bring government and community groups together to provide housing for longtime Varona Village residents. After 28 years of waiting, the original tenants of Varona Village and their families now have something to look forward to. Varona Village is one of eight separate villages, collectively known as Ewa Villages, which served as residences for Oahu Sugar Company plantation workers. In 1990, the City acquired the property of three of these villages: Renton Village, Tenney Village and Varona Village. In 2013, I introduced **Resolution 13-114** (adopted June 5, 2013) urging the formation of a working group to address the housing needs of the Varona Village residents. The City's Ewa Villages Master Plan of 1992 formalized a program to ensure the continued tenancy for the residents of these three plantation villages by having the City acquire the land, rehabilitating the existing structures, and offering each house and lot for sale to the tenants of record and their families. In the event the tenants of record could not afford to purchase their homes, the City committed to allow them to remain in their homes at low rent.

In 1995, Oahu Sugar Company shut down operations, leaving Ewa Villages workers without jobs. By 1999, the Renton and Tenney Villages had largely been renovated and sold to residents and other qualified buyers under the terms of the 1992 Ewa Villages' Master Plan while the Varona Village was yet to be improved and renovated. The City Department of Housing and Community Development, the agency responsible for and which helped implement the renovation of the Renton and Tenney Villages, was dissolved by the City in 1999. In 2017, the City transferred responsibility for completion of Varona Village from the City's Department of Community Services to the City's Department of Land Management. On October 7, 2020, the Council unanimously approved **Resolution 20-231 CD1** authorizing the Mayor to enter into a development agreement with developer Savio/Hawaii Habilitat Varona Village LLC (Savio HH) for the revitalization of the Varona Village. The plan is to develop 133 existing residential units and a community center in two phases, with 46 homes to be renovated and offered for sale to priority tenants in the \$100,000 to \$200,000 price range in phase one, and with 87 new homes to be offered for sale starting at \$200,000 to qualified buyers and the construction of a new community center to be completed in phase 2.

## IMPORTANT COMMUNITY UPDATES

### **Governor Approved Honolulu's Move to Tier 2 on October 22 and Mayor Caldwell is Hoping to Move to Tier 3 if the Number of COVID-19 Cases Continue to Decline.**

Honolulu has a four tiered approach to reopening the City keyed to the rate of COVID-19 infections with tier 1 being the most restrictive tier (tied to the highest rate of COVID-19 infections) and tier 4 being the least restrictive (tied to the lowest rate of COVID-19 infections). The Governor approved the City's move from tier 1 to tier 2 due to Honolulu's ability to reduce the daily COVID-19 positive test counts to less than 100 and a positivity test rate of less than 5% for a two-week period. As a result these changes are now in effect: groups of 5 from different households may dine at restaurants; legally authorized short term rentals may resume business; gyms and fitness facilities may operate at 25% capacity and have indoor classes of no more than 5 people and outdoor classes of no more than 10 people; arcades will be allowed to operate at 25% capacity; helicopter tours may operate at 50% capacity; groups of 5 will be allowed indoors for all other commercial attractions operating at 50% capacity; personal care such as massage parlors and beauty services will be allowed to reopen. Bars and nightclubs will remain closed. Social gatherings remain limited to 5 people, church services remain limited to 50% capacity, and funerals remain limited to 10 people. A move to tier 3 is possible if the two week average of COVID-19 positive test counts is less than 49 cases and the two week average of the rate of positive test results is less than 2.49 percent.

For more information, contact [oneoahu.org](mailto:oneoahu.org)

**Councilmember Menor Takes Action to Keep Honolulu Residents Safe.** On October 13, 2020, shortly before Honolulu reopened tourism, Councilmember Menor wrote a letter to Honolulu Chief of Police Ballard expressing his concern that large groups of people were seen gathering in Waikiki parks and beach areas in violation of group size, social distancing, and facial covering restrictions. He requested the Chief to get control of the situation before the influx of visitors began arriving from areas where COVID-19 may be spiking and where few, if any public safety mandates may be in effect. Councilmember Menor suggested HPD step up enforcement at Waikiki, Kuhio Beach, San Souci, Ala Moana Park, Kailua/Lanikai, Haleiwa and other North Shore beaches. He also suggested that hotels and the visitor industry shoulder some of the financial responsibility for keeping our COVID-19 infections down by providing additional funding for enforcement by HPD and by deploying visitor industry staff and volunteers to help educate visitors of Honolulu's COVID-19 safety rules.

**C & C of Honolulu Has Accommodations for Residents Who Must Quarantine/Isolate in Response to COVID-19 But Whose Present Living Situation May Make It Impossible to Safely Do So.** The City has reserved 452 rooms for quarantine and isolation in response to COVID-19 at the Park Shore Hotel and the Waikiki Beachside in concert with the State of Hawaii Department of Health, which is managing the program. For information or to apply call the State Department of Health CARES 24 hour Hotline at 832-3100 or send an email to [Hlcares@Hawaii.edu](mailto:Hlcares@Hawaii.edu)

**Reports of abandoned vehicles, litter, and an illegally parked food truck on North Road in Ewa Beach** were received and processed by my office. From October 7th through 19th, District 8 HPD officers made checks along North Road. HPD cited vehicles and submitted information to

the Department of Customer Services, Abandoned Vehicle Section, for removal of these abandoned vehicles. HPD did not observe any speeding or litter, nor did they locate any food trucks in the area. HPD believes their presence may have helped deter violations. Officers will continue to monitor the area and take any enforcement action as necessary. Contact Major Craig Uehira of District 8 at 723-8403 for follow up.

**Reports of illegally parked vehicles and growing homeless encampments on Fort Weaver Road** near the Ewa Beach Golf course were received by my office. The matter was referred to HPD and the City Dept. of Customer Services for follow up. From October 7th through 18th HPD officers and members from the Community Policing Team made numerous checks at Pu'uloa Beach Park and Popoi place. On October 19th the Community Policing Team and the City Dept. of Facility Maintenance engaged in an enforcement action fronting Ewa Beach Golf Course along Fort Weaver Road and the area was cleared out. Contact Major Craig Uehira of District 8 at 723-8403 for follow up.

**Reports were received of high speed racing on Fort Weaver Road** in the evening and early morning hours by my office. HPD officers from District 8 conducted speed enforcement activities during these hours on October 2nd through the 8th and issued citations to speeders. HPD contacted the resident who raised this issue with our office and was informed that there is now much less speeding in the area. HPD will continue to monitor the situation. Lieutenant High Shin Lin of the District 8 office of the HPD may be contacted for further information.

**Reports were received by my office of late night freeway racing** from the H-1/H-2 merge all the way to Kapolei. The report detailed that this portion of the freeway is being used as a four lane speed/drift course at night on weekends and holidays, and that the racers line up across all four lanes to block traffic or drive in convoys to set up and engage in their racing activities. The Traffic Division of HPD was notified and the matter was assigned to HPD's Night Enforcement Unit responsible for patrolling all freeways in the area. As a result of HPD's efforts on October 30th, the 31st, and November 1st, 19 drivers were cited for 57 offenses which included 16 reckless driving tickets and 41 excessive speeding tickets. In addition, 15 drivers were arrested for 78 offenses which included 24 tickets for racing, 14 tickets for reckless driving, and 25 tickets for excessive speeding. The HPD District 8 First Watch officers conducted enhanced traffic enforcement checks along this freeway corridor from October 28th through November 6th and issued 56 citations for speeding and other violations. Officers will continue to monitor this area to ensure that the roads are safe.

**A report of frequent fires burning on City property** now overgrown with 10-15 feet of standing halekoa brush was received from a resident on Aipoola Place near the West Loch fairway by my office. The Department of Parks and Recreation responded and has since established and cut a firebreak between the growing halekoa and the Aipoola Place residents' property. Department of Parks director Michele Nekota has stated she will schedule additional work to remove the standing halekoa brush along the City's West Loch Fairways bike path as resources become available.

## Upcoming Meetings

### **Council Meeting**

**Wednesday - December 9, 2020**

Honolulu Hale, 530 S. King Street

- Morning Session: 10 a.m.
- Afternoon Session: 1:30 p.m.

### **Committee Meetings**

Council committee meetings will be held at Honolulu Hale, Room 205, as follows:

**Tuesday - November 17, 2020**

- Parks, Community Services, & Intergovernmental Affairs: 9 a.m.
- Business, Econ Dev, and Tourism: 10:30 a.m.
- Executive Matters & Legal Affairs: 1 p.m.

**Wednesday - November 18, 2020**

- Budget: 9 a.m.
- Public Infrastructure, Technology, & Sustainability: 1 p.m.
- Economic Assistance & Revitalization: 2:30 p.m.

**Thursday - November 19, 2020**

- Zoning, Planning, & Housing: 9 a.m.
- Transportation: 1 p.m.
- Public Safety & Welfare: 2:30 p.m.

## Useful City Contact Information

- Effective July 1st, Bulky item pickup is now by appointment only. For details, call 768-3200 and select option "0".
- For concerns regarding refuse collection and bulky items:
  - Wahiawa baseyard (Kunia Camp, Mililani, Waipio Acres) 768-3200
- To dispose of household trash and residential waste material: 226-2996 (Ewa Convenience Center)
- To report an abandoned vehicle: 733-2530
- To report a pothole: 768-7777 (City street) or 536-7852 (State road) or email: [www1.honolulu.gov/dfm/road/pothole.htm](http://www1.honolulu.gov/dfm/road/pothole.htm)
- To file a complaint with the City's complaint office: 768-4381 or email: [complaints@honolulu.gov](mailto:complaints@honolulu.gov)
- To report sidewalks that are cracked or uplifted: 768-8159
- For concerns regarding park maintenance: 675-6030
- For concerns regarding bus and handivan operations: 768-8300
- For concerns regarding motor vehicle registration and drivers' licensing: 532-4324 or 532-25
- Barking dogs: HPD (911) or the Hawaiian Humane Society (946-2187)
- Crowing roosters: 799-7791
- For complaints regarding public trees: 971-7151
- For complaints regarding satellite city halls: 532-7747
- For permits at City campgrounds: 768-3440
- For updates/ traffic advisories on Honolulu's rail transit project: 566-2299