HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL

KE KANIHELA O KE KALANA O HONOLULU

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

No. 24-176

RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE CITY ADMINISTRATION TO TAKE THE STEPS NECESSARY TO ACQUIRE THE QUEEN THEATER PROPERTY, INCLUDING, IF NECESSARY, THE PREPARATION OF A RESOLUTION FOR THE COUNCIL TO INITIATE PROCEEDINGS IN EMINENT DOMAIN.

WHEREAS, an approximately 10,396 square-foot parcel of real property located in the heart of Kaimukī at 3588 Waiʻalae Avenue, Honolulu, Hawaiʻi 96816, identified as Tax Map Key No. 3-3-006:039 and on which is situated a building long known as the Queen Theater (the "Property"), has for some time been the subject of public complaints about its blighted condition; and

WHEREAS, the Property is owned by Narciso H. Yu, Jr., and Adoree S. Yu ("Owner"); and

WHEREAS, the Queen Theater was built in 1936, and over the years the 850-seat theater has hosted numerous traveling shows and rock concerts and has screened hundreds of movies; and

WHEREAS, the Kaimukī community considers the Queen Theater a community treasure and iconic historical landmark, and in 2006, the Historic Hawaiʻi Foundation added the Queen Theater to its list of most endangered historic places on Oʻahu; and

WHEREAS, in light of the Property's location on Waiʻalae Avenue, the main thoroughfare of Kaimukī's business district, the Property's surroundings sustain heavy foot and vehicular traffic by Kaimukī residents, other residents of the City and County of Honolulu ("City"), and visitors; and

WHEREAS, for the most part, since 1985, the Queen Theater has not been operated as a theater and has been vacant and unused; and

WHEREAS, it appears that the Owner has not properly maintained the Property since the Queen Theater's closure in the 1980s, resulting in structural deterioration and potentially hazardous conditions for pedestrians walking near the Property; and

WHEREAS, the Property has been the subject of numerous complaints from and raised serious concerns for Kaimukī community members regarding unsanitary and unsafe conditions and illicit and illegal activities; and

WHEREAS, due to these complaints and concerns, the Kaimukī Neighborhood Board No. 4 discussed the Property's disposition during three consecutive meetings in

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2021, one meeting in 2022, nine consecutive meetings in 2023, and one meeting in 2024, and to date, these complaints and concerns have not been resolved; and

WHEREAS, the Owner has rejected numerous offers to purchase the Property and appears to be generally reluctant to sell; and

WHEREAS, many Kaimukī community members believe that the restoration of the Queen Theater, in light of its historical importance to and location in the Kaimukī area, would, among other things, foster the revitalization of the Kaimukī business district and surrounding Kaimukī community; and

WHEREAS, the Council concurs that restoration of the Property for public use as a City-owned multipurpose venue for theatrical, musical, and community performances would be in the best interest of the people of the City; and

WHEREAS, accordingly, the Council believes that it is in the best interest of the people of the City for the City Administration to commence certain actions to prepare for the acquisition of the Property for the public use set forth above and, if it is unable to negotiate a purchase of the Property at a fair price, to submit to the Council for its consideration a resolution authorizing the Corporation Counsel to initiate condemnation proceedings to acquire the Property; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that the City Administration is requested to complete the following actions to prepare for the City's acquisition of the parcel of real property located at 3588 Waiʻalae Avenue, Honolulu, Hawaiʻi 96816, identified as Tax Map Key No. 3-3-006:039, and the building thereon (otherwise known as the "Queen Theater Property"):

1. Prepare land surveys of the Queen Theater Property;

2. Prepare land survey maps of the Queen Theater Property;

3. Prepare metes and bounds descriptions of the Queen Theater Property;

4. Conduct title searches for the Queen Theater Property;

5. Prepare appraisals of the fair market value of the Queen Theater Property; and

6. Prepare a public infrastructure map amendment, if necessary; and

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Administration is requested to submit to the Council, within 45 days after the adoption of this resolution, a schedule with estimated completion dates for each action set forth above; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that upon completion of the preparatory actions set forth above, the City Administration is requested to negotiate a purchase of the Queen Theater Property at its fair market value and, if it is unable to negotiate such a purchase, to submit to the Council for its approval a resolution authorizing the Corporation Counsel to initiate proceedings in eminent domain to acquire the Queen Theater Property for the public purpose of developing a City-owned multipurpose venue for theatrical, musical, and community performances for the use and enjoyment of the public; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Mayor, the Managing Director, the Director of Land Management, the Director of Enterprise Services, the Director of Design and Construction, and the Corporation Counsel.

INTRODUCED BY:

Tommy Waters

DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

JUL 0 1 2024
Honolulu, Hawai'i

Councilmembers

Report Title:
Eminent Domain; Queen Theater; Kaimukī, O'ahu; 3588 Wai'alae Avenue; Tax Map Key No. 3-3-006:039

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