BILL056(24)
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 477

TRANSPORTATION (TRANS)

TRANSPORTATION (TRANS) Meeting

Meeting Date: Oct 22, 2024 @ 02:30 PM

Support: 3

Oppose: 0

I wish to comment: 0

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kevin Crummy	anakama@wik.com	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Douglas Emmett, Inc.	Support	Oct 21, 2024 @ 01:37 PM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Ben Dookchitra	ben@avalonhi.com	96815
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Avalon Group of Hawaii	Support	Oct 21, 2024 @ 04:40 PM

Testimony:

I am writing to express my support for Bill 56 (2024).

The pandemic and its aftermath hit Downtown hard and the ongoing recovery has required all hands on deck. Stakeholders across the neighborhood have invested $1.8 billion into Downtown, in the form of new corporate headquarters such as HEMIC and Hawaiian Host, new housing such as the Residences at Bishop Place, new retail such as Paris Baguette and Daiso, new educational facilities such as the HPU College of Natural and Computational Sciences, new hotels such as the AC by Marriott, and much more. We are coming together to commit resources to improve security, bring lunch and pau hana markets, and build up signature events such as First Friday and the twice-weekly Farmers Market. Our shared goal is to transform Downtown Honolulu into a thriving 24/7/365 community, bringing support to existing businesses, residents, and stakeholders while also drawing new residents, visitors, and advocates.

Bill 56 (2024) is a critical step toward this goal. Consolidating Fort Street Mall oversight within the Department of Transportation Services, which already manages Hotel Street, King Street, and Merchant Street, will provide an efficient, coordinated process for staging community-building events such as pau hana markets, live music, and art fairs. We will streamline the framework through which we will return Fort Street Mall to a thriving pedestrian thoroughfare, lined with shops, sidewalk cafes, stores, and entertainment.

Avalon has deep roots in Downtown Honolulu. Our firm was founded by Christine Camp 25 years ago in Downtown and has been a part of this community for its entire existence. From a one-person shop, our firm has grown to ~40 employees. From renting an office on the 16th floor of Davies Pacific Center, we now own the building, along with multiple other properties in Downtown, including the former Walmart/Macy's/Liberty House building fronting Fort Street Mall. We commend Councilmember Dos Santos Tam and the City Council for their support of this bill and we look forward to working together to revitalize our community.

Sincerely,

Ben Dookchitra

Chief Investment Officer

Avalon Group

Name:	Email:	Zip:
lynne matusow	lynnehi@aol.com	96817
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Oct 21, 2024 @ 04:42 PM

Testimony:

I was a member of what was then known as the Downtown Neighborhood Board for 27 years. This is a great step forward. Given that these two malls do not allow vehicular traffic, they would be a great place for outdoor year round dining. They would attract visitors in non business hours, when downtown shuts down tight. Mordant nighttime downtowns do not make sense. Please pass this bill. Greatly needed.

Douglas Emmett

October 17, 2024

Councilmember Tyler Dos Santos-Tam, Chair
Councilmember Radiant Cordero, Vice Chair
Committee on Transportation

RE: Bill 56 Relating to the Use of Malls – In Support
Tuesday, October 22, 2024

Aloha Chair Dos Santos-Tam, Vice Chair Cordero and members of the committee:

On behalf of Douglas Emmett, Inc. ("Douglas Emmett"), we appreciate this opportunity to submit testimony in support of Bill 56, which provides that the Department of Transportation Services, instead of the Department of Parks and Recreation, shall control and coordinate the use of Union Mall and Fort Street Mall.

Douglas Emmett currently owns over 2,500 workforce rental apartment units on Oahu and recently invested over $100 million to build approximately 500 more rental apartments in downtown Honolulu by converting one of our office properties into workforce housing. The Residences at Bishop Place is located between Fort Street Mall and Union Mall. Currently, these malls are subject to restrictions on use, such as limitations on outdoor dining and events. Bill 56 would help activate and revitalize downtown Honolulu. We thank the Chair for introducing this measure and ask for the Committee's favorable consideration.

Respectfully,

Kevin Crummy
Chief Investment Officer