BILL048(25)
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 546

*ZONING & PLANNING (ZON)

***ZONING & PLANNING (ZON) Meeting**

Meeting Date: Oct 16, 2025 @ 09:00 AM

Support: 3

Oppose: 0

I wish to comment: 0

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Amelia Keefe	ameliak@hawaii.edu	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Oct 14, 2025 @ 09:09 PM

Testimony:

I support the bill to establish Chaplain Lane as a pedestrian mall. This area already provides us with a great community. As a pedestrian mall it would help to support and benefit many local businesses. This bill would also help to develop this safe space for the community and help to continue building an inclusive and welcoming space.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Dylan Armstrong	dylan.p.armstrong@gmail.com	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Oct 15, 2025 @ 10:29 AM

Testimony:

To the COMMITTEE on ZONING & PLANNING

Esther Kiaʻāina, Chair

Tommy Waters, Vice Chair

Aloha mai kākou:

I write in support of Bill 48, which would repurpose the alley known as Chaplain Lane for pedestrian uses.

The biggest single constraint on Honolulu's economy, public safety, and quality of life, is its allocation and ordering of the spatial environment. It is almost impossible to overstate how much space is wasted in Honolulu on redundancy, much of it either road paving or parking. Chaplain Lane is used for both.

I've worked as a "spatial planner," which is a skill-set within urban planning, for both the University of Hawaiʻi and a Fortune 500 company. Additionally, I've traversed Chaplain Lane many times, and believe that the redevelopment of downtown and Chinatown is one of the greatest and most dynamic opportunities for the improvement of all Honolulu.

This bill is a very small step towards that improvement, with as of two previous hearing no written opponents in testimony and very little to lose in its changes to the urban grid, being a narrow alleyway.

The council should neither fear small victories nor rest on laurels with these.

Best,

Dylan P. Armstrong

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Ross Isokane	isokane@gmail.com	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Oct 15, 2025 @ 03:14 PM

Testimony:

I support making Chaplain Lane into a pedestrian mall.

As a member of the Downtown-Chinatown Neighborhood Board, we recently adopted and circulated a resolution (https://www4.honolulu.gov/docushare/dsweb/View/Collection-16035) urging the City to do more to encourage more community events taking place in our neighborhood (to help further our revitalization efforts).

I believe converting Chaplain Lane into a pedestrian mall can further this objective (and I'm not aware of potential unintended consequences for any vehicles that regularly use the lane).

However, I will use this as an opportunity to express my own concerns that even with the expansion of pedestrian malls, Downtown-Chinatown's most historically popular/successful community events (i.e. our legacy holiday block parties which have attracted thousands into our neighborhood) have failed to materialize over the last three (3) years since Hallowbaloo 2022. Our understanding is Hallowbaloo 2025, which was initially planned for Fort Street Mall, will not be taking place at all this year.

My own personal perception is that City approval/permitting for street usage for these particular events (which I understand is led/coordinated by DTS) has not been a "user-friendly" process for the event organizers. While I don't get to sit in the room during the DTS approval/permitting meetings, my perception is that the City has operated with a bias that seeks reasons to discourage these events (i.e., DTS and related City department stakeholders are looking for reasons to say "No" rather than seeking solutions and working with permit applicants on potential concerns with the goal of saying "Yes").

Are the City's reasons for saying "No" well-grounded in reality and representative of valid concerns for the public? Or is this an example of over-regulation that stifles entrepreneur activity (to engage in coordination and promotional activities for community events that benefit a neighborhood in dire need of revitalization)?

I can only speculate, but given the DTS process of event/street usage permit approvals is not the most transparent and open to the public (from my perspective), I do question if this bill to transfer more power to DTS will actually have the intended effect of promoting more of the historically successful community events from Downtown-Chinatown's recent past.

In summary, I support this bill. But with respect to future community event permit applications (i.e., for our legacy holiday block parties), rather than operating with a bias to be quick to say "No," for Downtown-Chinatown's sake, please

encourage the City to be like Barack Obama and say “Yes, we can.”