RES26-127
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 198

*ZONING & PLANNING (ZON)

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

Meeting Date: May 21, 2026 @ 09:00 AM

Support: 34

Oppose: 0

I wish to comment: 0

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Ken Takeya	takeyak001@hawaii.rr.com	96734
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 17, 2026 @ 03:19 PM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Brian Kang	bak.nb4@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 17, 2026 @ 04:17 PM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
DArcy Kerrigan	datcy@homesbythesea.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 19, 2026 @ 10:50 AM

Testimony:

I think the Queen theater needs to be preserved for its architectural significance and an important part of the history of Kaimuki.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Molly Mamaril	mollymamaril@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 19, 2026 @ 12:52 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Chair and Councilmembers,

I hope you are well. My name is Molly Mamaril and I'm a Kaimukī, O'ahu resident writing in strong support of Resolution 26-127 and the proposed acquisition and restoration of the Queen Theater in Kaimukī.

The Queen Theater is a beloved landmark with the potential to become a vibrant community gathering space once again. Preserving this historic building while creating opportunities for arts, culture, education, and community events would benefit residents and help strengthen the Kaimukī neighborhood for generations to come.

Mahalo for supporting this investment in Honolulu's history, culture, and community.

Sincerely,

Molly Mamaril

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Ranell Asuega	asuegafualaau@yahoo.com	96816

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 19, 2026 @ 01:11 PM

Testimony:

I support this and would love to see the community space that it can be used as!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Sarah Chinen	sarahchinen@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 19, 2026 @ 02:19 PM

Testimony:

I support the acquisition of the Queen Theatre by the City, 100%. It is such an iconic building in the center of Kaimuki Town and giving the City the option of converting it into a usable space to benefit the community of Kaimuki makes so much sense.

Thank you for the foresight and gumption of this resolution!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Christine Otto Zaa	ottozaa@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 19, 2026 @ 02:28 PM

Testimony:

Chair Kia‘āina, Vice Chair Waters, and Committee Members:

As a lifelong resident of Kaimukī and Kapahulu, I write in strong support of Resolution 26-127 relating to the acquisition and restoration of the Queen Theater property.

The Queen Theater is an iconic Kaimukī landmark. I have fond memories of watching PG-rated movies there as a child, and I would hate to see the building sold to a developer with no connection to our community or its history.

It's unfortunate that the theater has been allowed to deteriorate over the years. Restoring the theater would not only preserve an important piece of Honolulu's history, but also provide the community with a safe gathering space where keiki, kūpuna, and families can come together, connect, and support surrounding businesses.

I respectfully urge the Committee to support Resolution 26-127 so the City can continue efforts to acquire and restore the Queen Theater for the benefit of the community and future generations.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Christine Otto Zaa		
Name: Phyllis Takara	Email: kina7pua@icloud.com	Zip: 96816
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: May 19, 2026 @ 03:25 PM
Testimony: I support Res26-127. Nostalgic building in our community as it makes it very special in our neighborhood. They can create many programs for children and kupuna.		
Name: Juanita Liu	Email: liujuanita@gmail.com	Zip: 96816
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: May 19, 2026 @ 04:36 PM
Name: Kelsie Aguilera	Email: aguilerakelsie@gmail.com	Zip: 96816
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: May 19, 2026 @ 05:07 PM
Testimony: I support the resolution.		
Name: Anderson Le	Email: ale@hiff.org	Zip: 96816
Representing: Hawaii International Film Festival	Position: Support	Submitted: May 19, 2026 @ 06:39 PM
Name: Patricia Watson	Email: pat.watson@yahoo.com	Zip: 96816
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: May 19, 2026 @ 08:03 PM
Testimony: I am away but needed to take the time to show my full support & gratitude for this measure to secure Queen's Theater which has deteriorated for years in Kaimuki to be purchased & used for the betterment of all of Honolulu. Thank you.		
Name: Michelle Matson	Email: MSMatson808@gmail.com	Zip: 96815
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: May 19, 2026 @ 08:16 PM

Testimony:

I strongly support the City's acquisition of the historic Queen Theater at 3588 Wai'alae Avenue in Kaimuki as a significant community treasure and historical landmark.

The City's acquisition of the historic Queen Theater will help ensure its preservation, restoration and protection as a public gathering place with a strong community identity, and as a continuing legacy providing public benefits for present and future generations.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Lane Nagano	lbnagano@yahoo.com	96826
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 19, 2026 @ 10:11 PM

Testimony:

I support Resolution 26-127.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
John Otto	ottobond808@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 19, 2026 @ 10:17 PM

Testimony:

Fond times going to Queen Theater as a child and hanging out in Kaimuki. Would love for the next generation to enjoy the same.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Shawn Zaa	shawnzaa@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 19, 2026 @ 10:28 PM

Testimony:

Save the Queen!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Audrey Abe	audreyabecpa@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 19, 2026 @ 11:23 PM

Testimony:

I am in support of RES26-127

Name:	Email:	Zip:
A Laurence	a-laurence1@yandex.com	96815

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 20, 2026 @ 12:46 AM

Testimony:

I support the proposal to acquire the Queen Theater in Kaimuki for use as a multipurpose venue.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Sharon Gebhardt	cubes19.bees@icloud.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 20, 2026 @ 06:51 AM

Testimony:

As a former Manager of Kumu Kahua Theatre, Theatre Arts & Speech Teaching Specialist- at the Kamehameha Schools & in AZ, and community member of the Kaimuki area, I thoroughly support the City acquiring the Queen Theatre as a community resource for the performing arts. The arts are the soul of a country & community. This resource would provide a much needed boost to the enrichment of students and a welcome partner to drive community members to engage in businesses in Kaimuki. This historic building deserves to remain a source for the arts & nurture our communities many talents. Let's keep our community's soul & nurture artistry in Kaimuki & beyond via acquiring & reimagining the Historic Queen Theatre!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Torie Nakata-Nagao	tatatatorie@gmail.com	96817
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 20, 2026 @ 07:35 AM

Testimony:

Save the Queen!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Steven Yamashiro	HiChumsley@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 20, 2026 @ 09:17 AM

Testimony:

I support RES26-127

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kahi Pacarro	kahipacarro@gmail.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 20, 2026 @ 11:37 AM

Testimony:

As someone that lived adjacent to the Queen Theater for over a decade, I watched different levels of use occur while an

opportunity for community positivity remained off the table. Most use I saw was vagrancy and wasted opportunity. When I did get to experience the interior, my mind began wandering at the possibilities. The Queen is a gem and deserves to be restored. If the community has the chance to be a part of that restoration, I am in full support of getting behind the effort.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Charles Egesdal	cegesdal@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 20, 2026 @ 12:04 PM

Testimony:

My name is Charles Egesdal and I live in Center St. I am writing in strong support of this resolution. I think it would be incredibly beneficial to our community to have a revitalized Queen Theatre and space for the arts. I have 2 young daughters and would jump at the opportunity to walk to a show or even better yet one day see them perform there. Kaimuki is a growing and thriving community which values the arts and revitalizing the Queen Theatre would reflect our community values.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Stephen Yuen	stevey@g70.design	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 20, 2026 @ 01:17 PM

Testimony:

20 May 2026

Dear Committee,

I am providing comment IN FAVOR

A process using exclusively private ownership transfer and/or market lease and/or re-development has been tried and for over 40 years, the Queen theatre has remained empty.

City government involvement is a logical next step, and this resolution allows for that first step in a much longer process of community involvement and funding considerations.

I would be happy to provide more comment and answer any questions from my perspective.

mahalo,steve

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Mahlon Moore	mahlonmoore@gmail.com	96816-3267
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Friends of Queen Theater	Support	May 20, 2026 @ 03:28 PM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Lori Yamada	lorikyamada@hotmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
EnVision Kaimuki	Support	May 20, 2026 @ 03:38 PM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Ann Castelfranco	ann@demitasse.net	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 20, 2026 @ 04:34 PM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Liberty Peralta	libperalta@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 20, 2026 @ 06:10 PM

Testimony:

Liberty Keonilani Peralta
920 Koko Head Avenue
Honolulu, HI 96816
libperalta@gmail.com

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

Mahalo for this opportunity to submit testimony in support of RES26-127.

As a longtime Kaimuki resident, I am a daily witness to the unfortunate blight that the Queen Theatre has become. With this property now for sale, it presents an exciting opportunity for the City & County of Honolulu to preserve and revitalize this historical landmark.

Having an active cultural hub in the heart of Kaimuki would encourage families to gather, support, and celebrate our thriving local visual and performing arts scene. As a student and employee of a nearby dance studio, I know having a new and distinctly local venue to share our craft and talent would be a gift for our students and the community.

I previously owned a small business in the neighborhood, and am a friend to several Kaimuki business owners. I'm certain that a thriving Queen Theatre would attract additional foot traffic to the area, and benefit our small businesses that continue to face headwinds in these challenging times.

Part of "supporting local" is fostering an environment in which our families, residents, and local businesses can thrive. A healthy and active Queen Theatre means a healthy and active Kaimuki.

Mahalo for your support of this resolution.

Liberty Keonilani Peralta

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Nanci Kreidman	nancikreidman@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 20, 2026 @ 06:36 PM

Testimony:

Aloha,

Kaimuki has become a thriving center for the community to conduct business, engage with family and friends, support restaurants and other retail establishments.

Securing the theater on Waialae Avenue adds dimension, history, art and promise for greater presence in community spaces.

Please consider supporting this Resolution.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Sreenandh Krishnagopalan	sreedom@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 20, 2026 @ 06:50 PM

Testimony:

Something needs to be done to restore the queen theater - it is a historical treasure that is disintegrating before our eyes. If private buyers aren't going to restore it, we should have the city take the lead and do the right thing. It will help transform the neighborhood and can be a ongoing gift for the community. I hope we can find a way to also use it as a venue for commercial acts (bands, touring companies, etc) and the money can go to the city to help recoup some of the cost of renovation.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Lucy Egesdal	lucyegesdal@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 20, 2026 @ 07:32 PM

Testimony:

I am a neighbor of the queen theater and a kaimuki community member. Currently the queen theater sits abandoned and is a blight to our beautiful, vibrant neighborhood. I would love to see it converted into a space that benefits everyone in the community through community space and the arts. I have two young children who could grow up knowing the queen theater as an active space for creativity throughout their childhood

Name:	Email:	Zip:
David Ross	dr0ss@msn.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 20, 2026 @ 10:23 PM

Testimony:

I'm writing as a 30 year resident of Kaimuki in support of this resolution, which is the first step in the process of acquiring the Queen Theater building for the people of Honolulu. This building, especially its marquee, is iconic for one of the oldest neighborhoods of urban Honolulu, and for too long the private owners have held the community hostage by allowing the building to fall into disrepair while pretending they had a plan to restore it.

Any future for the property that does not preserve the exterior will be a blow to the identity of our neighborhood, and to the history of the City. Please do not let this opportunity pass.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Becky Gardner	beckygforkaimuki@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 20, 2026 @ 11:44 PM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Noa Gardner	k12magard@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Tree Moss	Support	May 21, 2026 @ 08:38 AM

Testimony:

Aloha, gNoa Gardner. I stand in strong support of this resolution to help restore and revitalize the Queen Theater. I was born and raised on 22nd Ave and my grandfather as a boy bought candy from the crack seed store on Koko Head Ave and would go and watch films at Queen Theater. The memory of this place still remains quite strong in the longtime families of this area.

I am also in support of this resolution because I am a playwright that is part of a collective of other local playwrights called Tree Moss Hawaii. Our collective's mission is to help strengthen the theatrical infrastructure in Hawaii and in doing so, help kama'aina theater-makers return home to pursue their craft. Unfortunately, many of our members live on the mainland because there is not a lot of opportunities to pursue theater here in Hawaii. Bringing Queen's Theater back to life would help provide a home base and a gathering place for not only playwrights but for screenwriters as well. Tree Moss has strong ties to the local film community and I know that our combined efforts of both theater and film would help make Queen Theater a success. The opportunity for potential programming (screening of local films, local plays, development readings, etc.) is substantial.

Furthermore, I have watched Kaimuki make a concerted effort to bring life to the community through business as well as

its young people in both Palolo and Kaimuki, while at the same time, maintain its original, unique spirit, combining both old and new. Queen Theater would be a big draw to the many restaurants, coffee shops, shopping businesses on Waialae Ave.

Finally, it’s hard to express how awesome it would be to bring something from old Hawaii back to life. Losing our cultural gems across Hawaii hurts our collective spirits as a community and kama’aina of this place. What an opportunity to resurrect something. A place we can claim with love and pride and have it be ours.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

My suggestion is, since Kaimuki is a small older community that is now popular for the variety of restaurants and specialty shops why not keep it that way. The property is approximately 10,440 S/F with the parking lot being almost non-existent. Possibly a solution could be worked out with BOH to allow parking between 5AM-7AM for unloading of vendors. There would still be a need for an elevator which could be built on the inside back wall with modifications to comply with ADA standards and be used in case the elevator in the front is inoperable. The front of the building could still be used as an entrance with pictures and memorabilia of the old Kaimuki in display cases using mylar glass to prevent vandalism but would also require an elevator to access the second floor. The lower floor would have smaller specialty "Made in Hawaii" shops that sell locally made or sourced products. The upper floor could house a 3,000 S/F auditorium with the rest of the 5,000 S/F could be restaurants that would enhance the use of the auditorium by the patrons using both spaces to help each other out from a profit and use perspective. To further enhance the use of the site, the auditorium could be rented out to organizations as a meeting place for any organization or even a party venue looking for a unique meeting area with access to food that could be catered by the restaurants. If done tastefully it could be Kaimuki's hot spot that would attract the local community as well as the tourist industry. This would also drive business to the many shops in the area.

My guess cost estimate without seeing anything to be about 6-7 million dollars. I am not sure how the project would be funded but at least with a solid business plan the Yu's might be able to obtain financing with possibly a little help from the City in terms of permitting and other associated fees as well as private investors interested in growing a viable business. Obviously, this would be a long-term investment, but it would become the legacy of the Yu family as it seems M. Yu wants.

I saw suggestions to use it for affordable housing or even for senior activities, but this is a business district so the venue should remain similar. Both could be built on the old Liliuokalani Elementary school site which I had proposed many years ago since it was deemed a historical site. To justify tearing down the school there is now a sign with the name Liliuokalani Elementary School on the corner of the site thanks to former Governor Abercrombie and politics but that is another story for another time.

May 17, 2026

Honorable Esther Kiaʻāina
Chair, Committee on Zoning & Planning

Honorable Tommy Waters
Vice Chair, Committee on Zoning & Planning

Re: Testimony in Support of Resolution No. 26-127 (Adopting A Revision to the Public Infrastructure Map for the Primary Urben Center Development Area [Re: Queen Theater Property])
Committee on Zoning & Planning
Hearing: Thursday, May 21, 2026 at 9:00 a.m.

Aloha Chair Kiaʻāina, Vice Chair Waters, and Members:

My name is Brian Kang, and I am the current chairperson of Kaimukī Neighborhood Board No. 4; however, I am submitting this testimony in strong support of Resolution No. 26-127 in my personal capacity, as the Board has not had the opportunity to take a formal position on Resolution No. 26-127 to date.

As indicated in Resolution No. 26-127, the Queen Theater is a prominent historic and cultural landmark on Waiʻalae Avenue in the heart of the Kaimukī business district, and its current state and possible restoration has been the subject of very significant interest and discussions within our community for decades, including at numerous meetings of the Kaimukī Neighborhood Board. Enclosed for your information, for example, is a resolution that the Board adopted in 2021 urging the City and County of Honolulu to address various issues relating to the theater and to explore how its restoration and preservation may be used for public purposes.

As noted in the Board resolution, many in our Kaimukī community believe that the acquisition and restoration of the Queen Theater for public and community uses will significantly contribute to the betterment of our community, including helping to strengthen Kaimukīʻs economy, character, and charm. My personal hope is that the City will continue its efforts to finally acquire the theater and work with community stakeholders to preserve and restore this unique treasure for public uses, including as a multi-purpose gathering place and community venue in the heart of our historic community.

I urge the Committee to favorably consider Resolution 26-127 so that efforts may continue for the City to research and plan for the City's acquisition of the Queen Theater property for the public benefit of the Kaimukī community and the residents of the City and County of Honolulu for generations to come.

Mahalo you for your consideration of this matter.

Brian Kang

Enclosure

KAIMUKI NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD NO. 4
c/o NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION ◆ 925 DILLINGHAM BOULEVARD SUITE 160 ◆ HONOLULU, HAWAII, 96817
TEL: (808) 768-3710◆FAX (808) 768-3711◆ EMAIL: nco@honolulu.gov◆ INTERNET: www.honolulu.gov/nco

RESOLUTION URGING THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU TO TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION ON QUEENS THEATER TO: (1) ADDRESS SAFETY AND SANITARY CONCERNS; (2) OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZE ITS HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL VALUE; AND (3) EXPLORE HOW ITS RESTORATION AND PRESERVATION CAN BE PUT TO USE FOR A PUBLIC PURPOSE BY RECREATING FEATURES OF OLD HISTORIC KAIMUKI TOWN THAT BOOST MORALE AND STIMULATES THE ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION OF OUR SMALL LOCAL BUSINESS DISTRICT AND RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY;

WHEREAS, the Kaimuki Neighborhood Board No. 4 is committed to improving safety, supporting the local economy, enhancing, and preserving the lifestyle, character, and beauty of our historic small town neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, many of the local businesses near and around Queen Theater have shut-down due to the pandemic, making the revitalization of Kaimuki's business district and boost to our community morale necessary; and

WHEREAS, the surroundings of Queen Theater has a high degree of foot and vehicular traffic by Kaimuki residents and patrons because it is at the corner of Center Street and Waialae Avenue – an important intersection in the center of Kaimuki's small business district, adjacent to two public parking lots, two prominent banks, and a few meters away from the homes of Kaimuki residents; and

WHEREAS, the owner has not maintained the property for over 40 years, letting it deteriorate into very poor, hazardous conditions; and

WHEREAS, this neglect has resulted in unsanitary and unsafe conditions, prompting community concern about illicit and illegal activity, vagrancy, sanitation, fire hazards, and the building's structural and environmental integrity; and

WHEREAS, government officials representing the Kaimuki community have, for years, in public meetings, actively sought the opinion and input of this Board on the present condition and their future vision of Queen Theater, indicating their interest and support in addressing these concerns; and

WHEREAS, the topic of Queen Theater has been on the Kaimuki Neighborhood Board agenda for three consecutive meetings – January, February, and March 2021, and to date, the owner, nor any of his agents, has failed to

attend Board meetings or otherwise share his perspective on these complaints and concerns; and

WHEREAS, widespread and persistent concerns and complaints have been directed to Envision Kaimuki, (a local non-profit organization dedicated to supporting Kaimuki residents and businesses to ensure Kaimuki's growth evolves with a sense of community and a commitment to promote the unique charm and character of "Old Historic Kaimuki Town"), which issued a public survey in February 2021 to ascertain further community input on Queen Theater – which was widely distributed by the Kaimuki Neighborhood Board and public officials for two months – eliciting over 100 responses from individuals with strong connections to Kaimuki; and

WHEREAS, the results of Envision Kaimuki's survey indicate 67.7% of those responding have seen or are concerned about illegal activities around Queen Theater, with only 46.5% saying they felt safe there at night, and just 68.7% feeling safe during evening hours; and

WHEREAS, accounts given by women before this Board indicate that they do not feel particularly safe in the vicinity of Queen's Theater, where they have also been subjected to sexual harassment; and

WHEREAS, as indicated through the Envision Kaimuki Survey and verbal accounts given to this Board, there have been persistent incidences of unsanitary conditions; loud shouting; storage of personal belongings; vagrancy; and people entering the facility illegally – for example, as recently as March 7, 2021 – human excrement was observed next to Center Street doors to the theater for 5 days before it was cleaned up; and

WHEREAS, the Queen Theater was built in the 1930s and opened on June 29, 1936 – during the heyday of its Art Deco design and style; and

WHEREAS, nostalgic accounts of the theater in its early days - from articles, websites, and surveys recount 10 and 15-cent tickets for admission, unique live shows including a special kids' club and Saturday matinee shows; and

WHEREAS, the Queen Theater stopped operating as a theater over 36 years ago, and since 1985, has been sitting vacant and unused for its intended purpose for the majority of that time; and

WHEREAS, the Queen Theater has a history of being used for illegal, underground, illicit, and/or unsavory activities, such as in its use in 1970s to show adult films, as a performance venue for rock concerts where structural damage to the building was

and encouraged, and a history of squatters – all activity requiring police raids and interventions by the fire department over the years; and

WHEREAS, no known legitimate business activity is currently taking place within the theater, which would otherwise require government regulation and oversight; and

WHEREAS, the Kaimuki community and this Board considers Queen Theater a community treasure and iconic historical landmark – with 79.8% of those responding to Envision Kaimuki's survey considering it a "historical building"; and

WHEREAS, numerous magazine articles and even the Historic Hawaii Foundation features Queen Theater on its website as a historical building and describes it as "endangered;" and

WHEREAS, movie theaters built during the 1920s and 1930s have significant historical and architectural value, with some in Hawaii having been accepted to the National Register of Historical Places – namely the Hawaii Theatre on Bethel street in Downtown Honolulu, Iao Theater in Wailuku, and Palace Theater in Hilo; and

WHEREAS, the Queen Theater's historical significance makes it also a strong candidate for inclusion on the National and/or Hawaii Register of Historical Places - which recognizes a property's historical, architectural, engineering, cultural or archaeological significance and can include buildings, sites, objects, structures and districts if it is at least 50 years old, retains historic integrity, and meets established criteria; and

WHEREAS, designation in the National Register of Historic Places, which is the official list of the Nation's historic places worthy of preservation authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, and part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archeological resources, presents a significant opportunities for grants and economic revitalization programs; and

WHEREAS, there has been strong, persistent interest over many years from members of the community in revitalizing Queen Theater as a community performance space to accommodate the wide range of Kaimuki organizations promoting arts and culture – with perhaps the most coordinated efforts coming from the local non-profit "Friends of the Queen Theater," which explained on its website over 10 years ago that "an operating theater in Kaimuki would enliven and bring more business to the community, just as the Hawaii Theatre has done in downtown Honolulu. As a historic structure, tax credits and other incentives are available for its rehabilitation"; and

WHEREAS, prolonged delay in preserving the structural and architectural integrity undermines the Queen's Theater eligibility for historic designation in the Hawaii and National Registers of Historical Places – thus necessitating prompt action; and

WHEREAS, with so many local businesses lost to the pandemic, the restoration of Queen Theater, and the boost to community morale and economic stimulation it engenders will revitalize Kaimuki's economy, character and charm; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Kaimuki Neighborhood Board No. 4 urges the City and County of Honolulu to take immediate action to address the safety and sanitary concerns surrounding Queens Theater, officially recognize its historical and cultural value, and explore how its restoration and preservation can be used for a public purpose in stimulating the economy and boosting the morale of Kaimuki businesses and residents; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the chairperson transmitted to the chairperson and all members of the Honolulu City Council, and the Mayor.

APPROVED (7-1-1) at the March 17, 2021 Kaimukī Neighborhood Board Meting

Sharon Schneider

Respectfully submitted by Sharon Schneider , Chair, Neighborhood Board #4

Memo to: City Council Committee on Zoning and Planning

From: Juanita Liu, Ph.D., Kaimuki Neighorhood Board Transportation Committee and Kaimuki Resident

Subject: Queen's Theater Map Changes, Council Resolution 26-127

I am writing as a resident and in an individual capacity in support of the City acquiring the Queen's Theater property to renovate it as a community entertainment center on Waialae Avenue. Kaimuki is a unique town that has retained much of its character throughout the decades.

Those of us who grew up here have many nostalgic memories, but we also want to see Kaimuki to continue to grow and be revitalized as many structures are aging. Kaimuki Town has become the center of many popular and some high demand restaurants and other unique goods and services.

A community recreation center would add much to the ambiance of Kaimuki because it would provide a welcome venue to serve as a gathering place for recreation, entertainment and gatherings, thus adding a welcome dimension.

In addition, since parking is so tight, it would be important to bring back the essential bus trunk route of former Bus 9 that would once again give residents in central Kaimuki, the KCC students and especially the 1,000 Kaimuki Middle School students a direct bus ride to Kaimuki Town.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my comments.

May 19, 2026

To: Honolulu City Council
RE: Support for Resolution 24-176 – Acquisition and Revitalization of the Queen Theater Property

Aloha Chair and Members of the Honolulu City Council,

I write in strong support of Resolution 24-176 and the City's acquisition and restoration efforts surrounding the historic Queen Theater property in Kaimukī.

For many years, the Queen Theater has sat dormant, dilapidated, and unused—an unfortunate contradiction to its status as one of Honolulu's most iconic historic landmarks, officially recognized by the Historic Hawai'i Foundation in 2006. For generations, the theater stood as a cultural beacon at the top of Kaimukī, and its decline has long symbolized a missed opportunity for the neighborhood and the broader community.

It is truly incredible news that the current property owner is finally moving forward with the sale of the property to the City and County of Honolulu, opening the door for its long-awaited restoration and rebirth as a mixed-use cultural theater and community gathering space.

Kaimukī remains one of the premier neighborhoods on O'ahu precisely because it has retained what makes Hawai'i special: a walkable, family-friendly ecosystem rooted in local identity. The neighborhood thrives because of its small businesses, mom-and-pop shops, independent eateries, and community-first spirit. Organizations and movements such as "Keep It Kaimukī" have worked hard to preserve these guardrails against overdevelopment, big-box homogenization, and mainland encroachment.

The restoration of the Queen Theater—more than 50 years in the making—would be the crowning achievement for the neighborhood. Reimagined as a nonprofit cultural center and mixed-use theater, it has the potential to once again become a vibrant beacon for the arts and a gateway representing Hawai'i's multicultural identity through film, theater, music, and visual arts.

Beyond its cultural value, the revitalized Queen Theater would serve as an economic generator for Kaimukī, bringing thoughtful foot traffic, supporting surrounding local businesses, activating the avenue day and night, and strengthening Kaimukī's reputation as perhaps the best neighborhood in the State of Hawai'i.

With the Hawai'i International Film Festival (HIFF) office located on Waialae Avenue just two blocks away from the Queen Theater, this also presents an incredible opportunity for HIFF to potentially throw its name into the hat as a prospective nonprofit operator or as part of a future management hui for the space. Regardless of the ultimate outcome or operational structure, HIFF fully supports this resolution as the necessary and long-overdue step toward finally moving this property forward after so many years of stagnation and non-action.

No other neighborhood on O‘ahu possesses the same balance of diversity, authenticity, walkability, historic character, and commitment to keeping things truly local. The Queen Theater can and should stand at the center of that identity once again.

Mahalo for your leadership and consideration in supporting this important resolution and helping restore one of Honolulu’s great cultural landmarks for future generations.

Respectfully submitted,
Anderson Le
Hawai‘I International Film Festival

TESTIMONY

Honolulu City Council
Zoning & Planning Meeting, Thursday, May 21, 2026,9am

Dear Chair Waters,

My name is Mahlon Moore and I live on Koko Head Avenue in Kaimuki, only a few short blocks from the Queen Theater.

As a long-standing member of the “Friends of Queen Theater,” I would like to show my support for Chair Waters’ resolution to purchase the Queen Theater and return it to the community for community use.

Our 501c3 organization has been trying to get the owners to understand the value the theater would have for the Kaimuki community.

We asked for comments from the public as to their opinion about the theatre and there was overwhelming response to make the facility a community resource, a place were community meetings could be held, where amateur productions could be staged, where movies could be screened and where hula halau could practice and perform. The general consensus was that renting existing auditoriums (mostly school facilities) is too costly and having the Queen Theater as a community facility would be a boon to Kaimuki.

It has been quite apparent that the owners have had no intention of turning the facility into something the community wants and now that the City has stepped in with an offer to purchase the property, I am in full support.

I hope that the City can move forward with the purchase and initiate the overhaul the facility needs. Please know that we, the Kaimuki community, would most like to see the facility restored as a theater along with appropriate parking and upgraded infrastructure. We stand ready to help in any way we can, from organizing fund raising activities to actually running and maintaining the theater. We do not want the Queen to be a financial burden to the City but believe that a well-run facility could be a tremendous asset to the community.

More information about our organization can be found on our website, friendsofqueentheater.com.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify,

Mahlon Moore
96816
808-256-7221
mahlonmoore@gmail.com
Member of Friends of Queen Theater

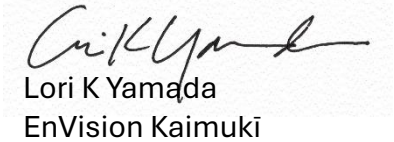
Chair Kiaʻāina and members of the Zoning and Planning Committee,

My name is Lori Yamada, and I speak on behalf of EnVision Kaimukī. I was born and raised in the Pālolo and Kaimukī area, and I testify today in support of Resolution 26-127. I feel that amending the PIM for the Primary Urban Center development plan is a logical step in preserving Queen Theater. Since the owner of the Queen Theater has put the property up for sale, this is an opportune time for the City to buy the property in order to save the historic building and turn it into a useful public facility.

EnVision Kaimukī has been aware of Queen Theater becoming a blight on the neighborhood for many years. Queen Theater's iconic sign and marquee have long been a part of Kaimukī's small-town charm, and now they are badly in need of repair. Ideally, the community would like Queen Theater to become a functioning theater again. But for now, our hope is that the building can be rehabilitated to keep it from being an eyesore and to keep our town safe from criminal activity.

I hope that through this resolution, Queen Theater can be restored to something we all will be proud of.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.



Lori K Yamada
EnVision Kaimukī

Testimony on Resolution 26-127: ADOPTING A REVISION TO THE PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE MAP FOR THE PRIMARY URBAN CENTER DEVELOPMENT PLAN AREA.

I'm writing in support of Resolution 26-127. This resolution will allow the addition of a government building symbol to the Public Infrastructure Map in the vicinity of 3588 Wai'alae Avenue, the location of the Queen Theatre. While this seems like a small thing, it would clear the way for the possible involvement of the City Council in the preservation of the iconic Queen Theatre in Kaimuki.

As a long-time resident of the Kaimuki neighborhood, the preservation of the Queen Theatre is very important to me and to my neighbors. It is the principal landmark of the Kaimuki business district and remains a reminder of a time when Honolulu neighborhoods had their own distinctive characters and institutions. The decision of the owners to sell the property creates the opportunity to preserve the theater and restore it to a central function in the community. But it also raises the horrifying possibility that the theater could be sold to a developer, torn down and lost forever. Without the first step proposed in Resolution 26-127, the City Council has no way to prevent the loss of another historic Honolulu building. So, I urge you to pass Resolution 26-127.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Ann Castelfranco
96816

May 20, 2026

Honorable Esther Kia'āina, Chair, Committee on Zoning & Planning
Honorable Tommy Waters, Vice Chair, Committee on Zoning & Planning
Honolulu City Council
530 King Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Testimony in Support for Resolution No. 26-127 Re: Queen Theater
Thursday, May 21, 2026 9:00am

Re: Resolution 24-176, CD1 - Adopting A Revision to the Public Infrastructure Map for the Primary Urben Center Development Area

Dear Chair and Members of the Honolulu City Council:

Thank you for your continued attention to the future of the Queen Theater — one of Kaimukī's most iconic and emotionally significant landmarks.

My name is Becky Gardner. I'm an attorney, small business owner, longtime Kaimukī resident, former resident of Center Street (the corner of which Queen Theater is located), and an active member of the Kaimukī Neighborhood Board for nearly a decade. I submit this testimony in **strong support** of the City's acquisition of the Queen Theater property and the broader effort to restore and reactivate this historic space for community benefit.

For many of us, the Queen Theater is not merely an old building; an eyesore, dilapidated by neglect. It is memory. It is identity. It is a symbol of what Kaimukī once was; and a promise of what it may become.

Over the years, I have heard countless stories from residents, kūpuna, artists, families, and business owners about what the theater meant to them. Many remember seeing films there as children with their families and friends. Others recall first dates, surf films, live performances, and the unique glow of the marquee overlooking Waialae Avenue. The Queen Theater is woven into the emotional and cultural fabric of this community.

Five years ago, under the direction of community matriarch - the late Sharon Schneider - Envision Kaimukī conducted a survey of local residents on their views of the theater. Respondents repeatedly described the theater as "iconic," "historic," "the heart of Kaimukī," and one of the last remaining structures giving the neighborhood its unique identity and sense of place. Many expressed support for restoring the theater into a community arts center, educational venue, live performance space, cultural hub, or neighborhood gathering place.

Others emphasized that preserving the theater is not simply about nostalgia, but about maintaining the character, walkability, and vitality of Kaimukī itself.

At the same time, the survey and years of Neighborhood Board discussions make clear that the current condition of the property has become untenable. Residents have consistently raised concerns regarding structural deterioration, falling debris, illegal activity, fire hazards, vagrancy, graffiti, and public safety surrounding the neglected property.

As someone who lived nearby with two young daughters, I personally experienced these concerns firsthand. We often avoided walking directly in front of the theater because of illicit activity, unsafe conditions, and individuals congregating in and around the property. I have personally witnessed debris falling from the marquee, individuals climbing onto the roof, and unsafe and unsanitary conditions adjacent to the building.

Yet despite all of this, the community has never abandoned hope for the Queen.

In multiple community forums, residents continue to express their views — not merely to complain, but to dream. They envisioned youth arts programming. Independent film screenings. Jazz performances. Cultural events. Educational programming. Community theater. A revitalized gathering place capable of serving not just Kaimukī, but East Honolulu more broadly.

Communities do not fight this hard – for so long - for places that are meaningless.

Allowing Queen Theater to continue deteriorating sends a message of abandonment and decline. **Restoring it, however, could become the cornerstone of a broader economic and cultural revitalization strategy for the neighborhood.**

Across the country, we have seen how historic theaters and cultural districts can anchor successful redevelopment efforts. Communities have leveraged public-private partnerships, historic preservation tax credits, arts investment, and strategic redevelopment initiatives to transform aging landmarks into thriving economic engines and cultural assets. In Hawaii alone, there is the Palace Theater in Hilo, the Iao Theater on Maui, and similar restoration efforts throughout the state which demonstrate what is possible when government, nonprofits, businesses, and communities work together toward a shared vision.

Kaimukī deserves that same level of investment and vision.

Thus, I respectfully urge not only the City and County of Honolulu, but also the State Legislature, state agencies, and broader public sector partners to actively engage in this effort moving forward. Restoring the Queen Theater should not be viewed as a standalone

construction project, but as part of a larger economic redevelopment strategy for the Kaimukī business district and surrounding community.

Moreover, I urge the City and County to encourage participation from State government — particularly with respect to historic preservation funding, rehabilitation tax credits, infrastructure support, cultural grants, transit and streetscape improvements, and the potential creation of an arts, cultural, or economic enterprise zone surrounding the theater corridor. Should this resolution move forward, I will personally commit to advocate for state partnership and coordinated investment.

This is not simply about saving an old building. It is about restoring Queen Theater's dignity. Improving quality of life. Boosting community pride. Supporting local businesses. Creating safe and vibrant gathering spaces. Preserving cultural identity. Investing in arts and education. Strengthening walkability and neighborhood vitality. And ensuring that future generations inherit a Kaimukī that still remembers itself.

The Queen Theater has waited long enough – and so has the community.

I respectfully urge this Council to continue taking decisive action toward acquisition, preservation, restoration, and community-centered redevelopment of this irreplaceable landmark.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony and for your continued commitment to the health, safety, cultural preservation, and economic vitality of the Kaimukī community.

Save the Queen - and may we all prosper under her timeless, resilient reign.

With Aloha,



Rebecca (Becky) Gardner, Esq.
Owner-Founder, Policy Matters LLC
Law Office of Rebecca P. Gardner, LLC