

Aiea Moanalua Pearl City Waipio

Gary Okino
Caring • Committed • Capable

Gary's Message

A New Year - A New Beginning
February 2006

Aloha. As we begin 2006 and welcome in "The Year of the Dog" the Honolulu City Council is once again faced with a variety of new challenges and opportunities.

To overcome our challenges and meet new goals, I will continue to work with my colleagues at the Federal, State and City levels to develop the programs and implement the projects that will make our city an even better place to live and do business.

Foremost on nearly everyone's agenda today is traffic. Close behind is the impact of rising real property taxes. These issues greatly concern the residents of Moanalua, Aiea, Pearl City and Waipio, who must fight traffic congestion daily, and who have experienced big increases in real property values and taxes.

Fortunately, City and State officials are working to make fixed rail in Honolulu a reality. Building a rail system will not eliminate today's traffic congestion, but it will provide a convenient and effective alternative for those wishing to bypass highway gridlock in the future. The City is currently developing preliminary plans and route options for a system that will link Kapolei with in-town Honolulu. These plans and options should be ready for review and approval by the City Council before the end of this year.

In response to skyrocketing property values, the City Council is considering several real property tax relief measures. I have proposed increasing the standard home exemption from \$40,000 to \$100,000 to assure that all homeowners get the break they deserve. While other proposals are still on the table I am confident that meaningful tax relief will be approved shortly.

I continue to welcome your ideas and concerns regarding city government and look forward to working with you to further improve our city's quality of life.

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