



RESOLUTION

SUPPORTING THE RECOGNITION AND PRESERVATION OF THE HISTORIC HAWAIIAN TRAILS OF KANEHILI, EWA PLAINS, WEST OAHU.

WHEREAS, the area known as Marine Corps Air Station ("MCAS") Ewa and Naval Air Station ("NAS") Barbers Point, and today called Kalaeloa as administered by the Hawaii Community Development Authority ("HCDA"), are part of the greater *ahupuaa* of Honouliuli and also part of the vast Ewa Plains of West Oahu, and were, in fact, a region ancient Hawaiians called and knew as Kanehili; and

WHEREAS, the Ewa Plains are a massive ancient karst coral reef where the ocean meets mountain streams and fresh rain water percolates through the porous 100,000 year old coral in Kanehili to spawn freshwater shrimp and some of the world's most diverse *limu* varieties favored by ancient Hawaiians and residents today; and

WHEREAS, when the historic Hawaiian Kanehili trails were created they were the only means of overland transportation that enabled gathering of *limu*, plants, water, harvesting of materials needed for shelter, clothing, medical care, tools for religious observances, defense and for communication using *kukini* (swift runners); and

WHEREAS, these Kanehili trails and their adjacent historic sites provide clues as to how communities were linked socially, economically, and politically; which areas were important in early times as places of commerce and religious practice; where particularly powerful chiefs resided; and where valuable forest and sea resources were once located; and

WHEREAS, these Kanehili trails are some of the most important historic and cultural trails on the island of Oahu and are linked to the very early Polynesian voyager settlements to Oahu, major figures of Hawaiian royalty, the historic invasion and conquest of Oahu by Kamehameha, very important *heiau*, religious sites, observation points and ancient burial areas; and

WHEREAS, these Kanehili trails of the Oahu Honouliuli *ahupuaa* were first identified after Western contact by Lt. C.R. Malden of the Royal Navy in 1825 and became known as the Malden Trails on the first published Oahu maps; and

WHEREAS, these Kanehili trails identified by Malden became used for ranching and horseback transportation and became an indelible part of West Oahu's 150 year old Paniolo and Pau horseback culture and early Hawaiian Kingdom history of ranches and farms, which were the original Western economic settlements of the Ewa Plains; and



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WHEREAS, these Kanehili trails identified by Malden became the location where the Ewa Mill and Plantation was established and why the Oahu Railway was extended to this very important trailside agricultural community which allowed sugar cane to become the major economic engine of the Ewa Plains; and

WHEREAS, these Kanehili trails in 1925, due to the nearby location of Ewa Mill and the Oahu Railway, became incorporated into the U.S. Navy development of Ewa Mooring Mast Field as a naval airship mooring site, and surveyor photos show the Kanehili area to have a vast and extensive limestone karst coral sinkhole landscape through which the trails provided foot and horseback access to streams, karst waterhole springs, sinkholes, caves and access to *limu* and fishing; and

WHEREAS, these Kanehili trails, springs, and underground karst water transport system later became further documented in State and Federal land surveys and aquifer maps, and in 1941 when the Ewa Mooring Mast Field became a U.S. Marine Corps airbase known as Ewa Field, these walking and horse ranch trails continued to be used by the Marines and Ewa Plantation community for access to the shoreline; and

WHEREAS, after the Japanese air attack on December 7, 1941 and the great expansion of the Kanehili area into military airports which became MCAS Ewa and NAS Barbers Point during WW-II, these trails were even more important for military training, patrols on foot and mounted Marine Corps horseback security patrols; and

WHEREAS, after the closure of the Marine and Navy airbases, published 1950s maps show the Kanehili trails on former MCAS Ewa (and still used today by the Barbers Point riding club) and further validate these trails as well over 50 years old and eligible for the National Historic Register as historic horse and foot trail rights-of-way; and

WHEREAS, these historic Kanehili horse and foot trails also link in with the over 100-year-old Oahu Railway right-of-way and the currently funded Pearl Harbor Historic Trail plan that allows travel by foot, horse or bike from Pearl Harbor to Nanakuli, and which places the Ewa Plains Kanehili trails at the very center of this major Trans-West Oahu trail route and provides access all the way to the Ewa shoreline; and

WHEREAS, the Ewa Plains community has highly qualified Hawaiian cultural practitioners and historians who are able to teach the visiting public and school children the story of Kanehili as the "House of Limu" in Ewa, Oahu with the great varieties of flavorful and medicinal *limu*; and



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WHEREAS, an educational feature of these Kanehili trails would include understanding the restored karst sinkhole sites along the trailways as an integral part of the ecological system that sustains the great Ewa "House of Limu" and nourishes food sources such as tasty freshwater shrimp, and which also helps maintain the sustainability of offshore fisheries; and

WHEREAS, these Kanehili cultural historic ecosystem trails will be a complete cultural, historic, recreational and educational experience of walking, biking or horseback riding over trails featuring native Hawaiian plants, bird and aquatic life and telling cultural histories, explaining geological facts, and Ewa Field history; and

WHEREAS, the Kanehili trails preservation project will be a community supported endeavor bringing together Hawaiian cultural practitioners, educators, scientists, environmental and veteran organizations in a positive, holistic concept for community preservation, education, recreation and restoration; and

WHEREAS, recreational trails in Kanehili could qualify for federal National Park Service ("NPS") Recreational Trails Program funding, as well as support from other federal programs such as the Surface Transportation Plan, Transit Enhancements program, and Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Improvement Program and would be consistent with the Oahu Regional Transportation Plan; and

WHEREAS, federal programs such as the National Park Service Battlefield Protection Program have grants and assistance available to help develop the Ewa Field battlefield as an historic site with walking trails and points for historic interpretation; and

WHEREAS, federal programs such as the United States Fish & Wildlife Service have programs to restore Ewa Plains karst sinkholes and have already demonstrated that Hawaiian freshwater shrimp can flourish and be restocked in these unique karst sinkhole habitats, providing working environments for education and training; and

WHEREAS, the Oahu Na Ala Hele organization is the Hawaii State law mandated trail program in charge of registering and assisting with the protection of historic Hawaiian trails, and their assistance will be sought as well; and

WHEREAS, there are many interested individuals from equestrian clubs, biking organizations, recreational groups, schools, colleges and universities, and active duty military family morale, welfare and recreation organizations that could benefit from and assist in supporting a multi-faceted adopted segment Kanehili trails program; and



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WHEREAS, the City and County of Honolulu Parks and Recreation Department could also include in their U.S. Navy transferred regional park lands for Kanehili – Kalaeloa, a Kanehili historic and cultural trails program, and further, may consider naming the park as Kanehili Regional Park in recognition of the original ancient Hawaiian name for the area; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that it supports the establishment and designation of historic trails in Kanehili that would include the preservation of the Hawaiian cultural history, military history, ecological and archeological significance of the region and allow access for recreational and educational activity; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that where the Kanehili historic and cultural trails program traverses and intersects outside of the jurisdiction of the City and County of Honolulu, the City and County of Honolulu shall place the right of ways of the trail program into the jurisdiction of the City for maintenance and operation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Administration, the State, and the United States government are urged to participate in the development and establishment of the historic trails in Kanehili; and



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BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Mayor, the Governor, the President of the United States, the Commander of United States Pacific Command, the Hawaii Community Development Authority, the Department of Hawaiian Homelands, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the Department of Land and Natural Resources, the Executive Director and Policy Committee of the Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization, and Hunt Companies, Inc., 4401 North Mesa, El Paso, Texas 79902-1107.

INTRODUCED BY:

Tom BERG

DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

MAR 27 2012

Honolulu, Hawaii

Councilmembers