

Preface

The *Primary Urban Center Development Plan* has been prepared in accordance with the Charter-prescribed requirements for development plans and is to be accorded force and effect as such for all Charter- and ordinance-prescribed purposes. It is one of a set of eight community-oriented plans intended to help guide public policy, investment and decision-making through the 2025-planning horizon. Each plan addresses one of eight geographic planning regions on Oahu, responding to the specific conditions and community values of each region.

Two of the eight planning regions, Ewa and the Primary Urban Center, are the areas to which major growth in population and economic activity will be directed over the next twenty years and beyond. The plans for these regions will continue to be titled “Development Plans,” and will serve as the policy guides for the development decisions and actions required to support that growth.

The remaining six planning regions are envisioned to remain relatively stable. The plans for these regions are titled “*Sustainable Communities Plans*” to appropriately indicate the intent of the plans to serve as policy guides for public actions that support existing populations, and maintain and enhance the region’s ability to sustain their unique character and lifestyle.

THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN PROCESS

This document is the culmination of the Charter-mandated development plan revision effort lead by the City and County of Honolulu’s Planning Department and its successor agency, the Department of Planning and Permitting. This effort was comprised of a process that encouraged and enabled involvement from the region’s neighborhood boards, community associations, business leaders, private landowners and area residents.

In its final form, the Plan incorporates input received from public outreach, review and comment received through a variety of formats since 1996.

LAND USE PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT IN HONOLULU

The City and County of Honolulu guides and directs land use and growth through a three-tier system of objectives, policies, planning principles, guidelines and regulations. The **General Plan** forms the first tier of this system. First adopted by resolution in 1977, the General Plan is a relatively brief document, consisting primarily of one-sentence statements of objectives and policies. It has been amended several times, but the basic objectives and policies set forth in the 1977 Plan remain intact.

The second tier of the system is formed by the **Development Plans and Sustainable Community Plans** (hereinafter referred to as “Development Plans” for simplicity), which are adopted and revised by ordinance. These plans address eight

geographic regions of the island, including the Primary Urban Center, Central Oahu, Ewa, Waianae, North Shore, Koolauloa, Koolaupoko and East Honolulu. Under the current revision program, the Primary Urban Center and Ewa retain the title “Development Plan,” while the other regions are now referred to as “*Sustainable Communities Plans*” to reflect their policy intent. The map on the following page illustrates these planning regions (Figure P.1).

The third tier of the system is composed of the **implementing ordinances and regulations**, including the Land Use Ordinance (Honolulu’s zoning code) and the City’s Capital Improvement Program. Mandated by the City Charter, these ordinances constitute the principal means for implementing the City’s plans. These ordinances are required to be consistent with the General Plan, the Development Plans (or *Sustainable Communities Plans*), and each other.

In addition to these three Charter-mandated tiers, the development plans are supplemented by two planning mechanisms that are not required by the Charter: the functional planning process and special area planning. Functional planning activities, some of which are mandated by state or federal regulations, provide long-range guidance for the development of public facilities such as the water system, wastewater disposal and transportation. Special area plans are intended to give specific guidance for neighborhoods, communities and specialized resources.

AUTHORITY OF THE DEVELOPMENT PLANS AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PLANS

The authority of the Development Plans is derived from the City Charter, which mandates preparation of a General Plan and development plans to guide “the development and improvement of the city.” Together with the General Plan, the development plans provide a policy context for the land use and budgetary actions of the City. This is the authority the originally adopted Development Plans carried, and it remains unchanged in the revised Plan presented in this document.

The Charter provides that “public improvement projects and subdivision and zoning ordinances shall be consistent with the development plan for that area.” Although the development plans are not themselves regulatory, they “regulate the regulators.” They are policy tools and are to be used, in conjunction with the programs and budgets of the City, to accomplish the objectives of the City and as guides for the decisions made in the private sector.

WHY THE DEVELOPMENT PLANS HAVE BEEN REVISED

In 1992, the City Charter Commission recommended, and the voters of Honolulu adopted, amendments to the City Charter. Chief among its findings, the Charter Commission concluded that the development plans were overly detailed and had engendered processes that duplicated the zoning process. To eliminate this unnecessary duplication, the 1992 Charter amendments changed the definition of development plans from “relatively detailed plans” to “conceptual schemes.”

The 1992 Charter amendments established that the purpose of the development plans is to provide:

- “Priorities ... (for the) coordination of major development activities”; and
- Sufficient description of the “desired urban character and the significant natural, scenic and cultural resources ... to serve as a policy guide for more detailed zoning maps and regulations and public and private sector investment decisions.”

In response to the 1992 Charter amendments, the Planning Department launched a thorough review of the development plans. The goal of that review was the revision of all eight of the development plans to bring them into conformance with the Charter-mandated conceptual orientation. The revised plan presented in this document conforms to that mandate.

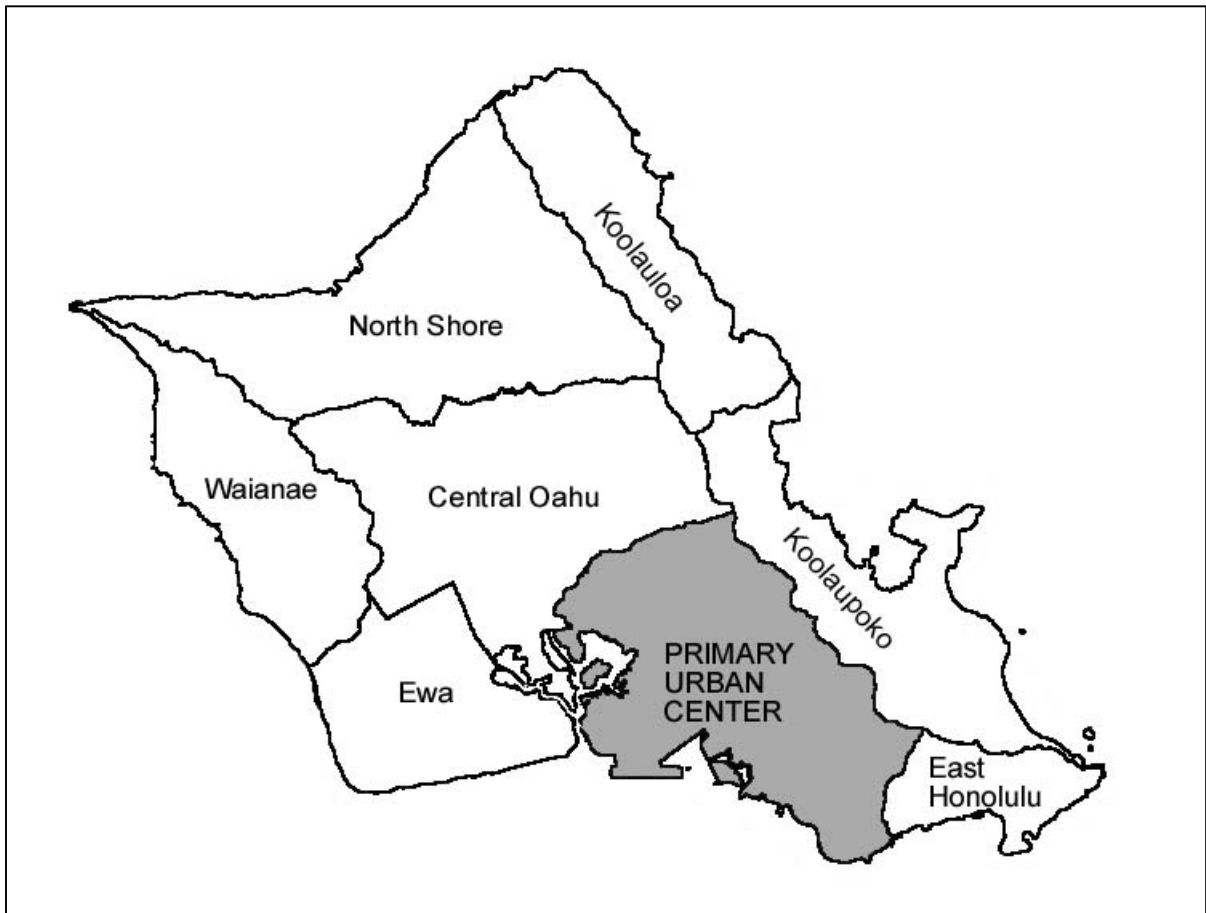


FIGURE P.1: DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PLAN AREAS FOR OAHU