



**Re: Hawaii - Walking with Alice in a Wonderland where Global Warming Does not Exist.  
(Living in a disintegrating cocoon where personal interests are paramount)**

**U.N.:** “No credible pathway is in place to limit any rise in global temperature to 1.5° C,” the internationally agreed “tipping point” target, and sea level rise [SLR] to not exceeding 1 meter or 3.3 feet. Totally inadequate current pledges by countries for action by 2030, even if delivered in full, would mean a rise in global heating of about 2.5° C by 2100 and catastrophic extreme weather around the world along with wild animal and plant extinction. If the long-term pledges by countries to hit net zero emissions by 2050 were delivered, global temperature would still rise by 1.8° C by 2100. “But the glacial pace of action means meeting even this temperature limit was not credible.”

**Fact.:** SLR could exceed 2 feet by mid-century and even approach six feet before 2100 if ice sheets continue to melt at an accelerated rate. Weather extremes and biodiversity collapse would endanger humanity.

**U.N. solution:** “A rapid transformation of societies is immediately needed to limit the worst impacts of the looming climate crisis and the failure to reduce carbon emissions (and the continuous destruction of biodiversity).”

**Hawaii’s answer: NO rapid transformation of societies. Self-interests paramount.** Keeping big business, tax benefits, and the local economy going by focusing on more lucrative high-rise construction in Honolulu’s NOAA 4-foot SLR inundation zone where infrastructure is in place. This increases residential development beach-side; targeting out-of-state buyers and upscale tourists while ignoring the dire need for affordable housing for the disappearing middle class, and not tackling local food security and self-sufficiency as almost 80% of food is imported to Hawaii. Tourism is the driving force and one hand washes the other.

- A. Honolulu/Kaka’ako—Upending already for years the goals of a mixed income community and affordable housing, the State and County of Honolulu are continuing to support luxury “vested” high-rise development in the mauka (mountain side) of Ala Moana Blvd., even planning to expand development now to the ocean side.
- B. Honolulu City Council Expanding Coastal Development—September 2022 — Apparently to cooperate with the State in expanding development in the lucrative 3-4-foot SLR zone, popular Bill 041, which would have set restrictions on development along Oahu’s coastal zone, was suddenly shelved. Now the State can continue to pave the way for extending residential luxury development makai (ocean side) of Ala Moana Blvd. by upending the local area plan that precluded such development.
- C. State of Hawaii: The Sky is the Limit – October 2022 — Using a zoning law that allows exemptions to zoning height and density limits for projects that provide over 50% of housing units at prices that are “affordable to moderate income households” (families earning between \$104,480 and \$182,840), the State increased the zoning law on a 3.5-acre parcel with infrastructure in place located within the NOAA 4-foot SLR inundation zone for an influential local developer from 150 feet to 400 feet in height along with a 4.5 times greater density for housing units for “professionals.” The proposal displaces 141 1960s low-income apartment units whose evicted tenants – after a two-month rent-free period – would likely require public assistance or become homeless. The City Council is expected to add some face-saving corrections to what has been described as a “sweetheart deal.”
- D. Waikiki Special District – High-Rise Construction Ongoing with Proposed Increase in Building Height and Density in Hawaii’s Tourist Industry Breadbasket – Under the guise of making the district more resilient to climate change and sea level rise and providing more affordable housing, the City proposed to greatly increase building height and density for the first time in 50 years. Waikiki itself and its high-rises could be turned into a Venice-style island. Concerns about factual adaptation and resiliency to sea level rise and the impacts to people now and in the future have not been addressed.

**Past Failures: Oahu Rail to “Nowhere” at the cost of over \$10 billion with a decade of deceptions and delays.**

Deceived voters barely approved a 20-mile limited rail to Ala Moana Center instead of the University of Hawaii at the cost of \$5.2 billion. The final project, at a cost of over \$10 billion, will be a few miles short of Ala Moana Center as another \$2 billion is needed to reach that destination. While 29,000 descendants of Native Hawaiians are still waiting for their Hawaiian Home lots promised more than 100 years ago, \$5-\$6 billion would have provided everyone with the lots years ago. This would have also relieved the pressure on others for affordable housing and homelessness while (God forbid?) lowering home prices by lessening scarcity. As an alternative, the State’s affordable housing needs could have also been met. Instead, the State in 2022, “flush with borrowed Covid funds,” finally allocated \$600 mil. for about 3,000 Hawaiian Homestead lots largely without infrastructure yet in place. The more desirable locations, such as the State’s ocean accessory sites, had already been largely confiscated for development soon after the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom in 1893.

## Facts Matter

### **Hawaii --- Corporate Profits and Local Politics are Overriding Public Safety Concerns:**

A. The deteriorating underground flood control drainage and sewer infrastructure within the 4-foot SLR inundation zone will require hundreds of millions of dollars in maintenance and repair by 2050 as sea level rises. The October 2022 “Cooke Street” sink hole will already require over \$20 mil. in basic repairs.

Much of the 4-ft SLR zone in Waikiki and Kaka`ako consisted of wetlands that included rice paddies, taro fields and fish ponds. Drained and filled-in with waste, the subsurface is largely unstable and often heavily polluted, described as “floating oil and diesel fuel, sewage from cesspool and septic tanks and leaky sewage pipes.” With sea level rise such polluted subsurface is lifted to the surface with corrosion already affecting cement, rebars, and other building foundation elements. More frequent flooding and constant road repairs will create continuous traffic gridlock nightmares.

B. Hawaii is also accelerating the Climate Change avalanche by continuing to market itself as a “retreat” from the immediate effects of Global Warming.

Oahu is accelerating the permitting of residential high-rises and hotels in the 4-foot SLR inundation zone despite the subsidence and underground pollution concerns, to attract rich retirees, well-financed executives, and well-to-do tourists. Corporations are not required to divulge their own research pertaining to the dangers of building there or the detrimental effects on the community as sea level rises. While association fees in overall well-maintained high-rises have risen as much as 300% over the last 15-20 years, exceeding 30-year mortgage payments at time of purchase, hundreds of other high-rises in Honolulu with less aggressive maintenance fees increases face unaddressed safety concerns.

**The World** - To meet the needs/demands of the human population that has surpassed 8 billion on its pace to exceed 10 billion, nature’s terrestrial, marine, and freshwater systems are beginning to collapse under a rapid biodiversity loss due to overexploitation pressures along with pollution and the mushrooming climate crisis. Nature is humanity’s life support system and “greenwashing” - misleading environmental claims - must end. (UN Biodiversity 2022).

\*Under an accelerated 2.5° Celsius rise in global temperature, hundreds of millions of people would need to be relocated from coastal and low-lying/sinking areas and could also die due to weather-related extremes/food scarcity.

\*Almost a third of climate-heating emissions come from the needs of the global food system which is expected to greatly increase by 2050. It could be transformed if governments changed farm subsidies – which are overwhelmingly harmful to the environment – and cut food waste and help develop new low-carbon foods (UNEP 2022).

\*Redirecting global financial flows to green investments is critical. A transformation to a low-emissions economy would require at least \$4tn-\$6tn a year in investment, about 2% of global financial assets. Due to their short-term self-interests, most financial groups have shown limited interest to date, despite their stated intentions (UN 2022).

\*Oil companies could doom global climate change efforts for hundreds of billions of dollars in profits by continuing to heavily invest in projects that “protect and entrench the use of fossil fuels” (US House Oversight Committee 2022).

\*Climate Justice Tax. Lesser-developed and low-lying island nations heavily affected by climate change and sea level rise are demanding that countries that have emitted most of the carbon dioxide that is driving climate change, compensate poor countries that have not contributed significantly to the problem and suffer the most. Who are the polluters? Let us look in the mirror. Hawaii, with its long-time love with oil and the polluting tourist industry, should require a Climate Justice tax of Hawaii visitors (and residents?).



**1920s - Lanikai (Ka’ohao) Beach, Oahu – Soon after the 1893 illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom, poorly planned subdivisions are continuing to spring up along Hawaii’s beaches, even extending into the high-tide zone.**