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June 3, 2021

Aloha:

In recognition of “National Homeownership Month”, the Kauai Board of REALTORS will be hosting two **FREE** educational events encouraging our ohana that “Homeownership Is Possible” on June 17, 2021 with Hawaiian Community Assets and June 24, 2021 with Hawaii Homeownership Center. Both events are scheduled from 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. All hopeful residents are encouraged to register via the Kauaiboard.com website.

For years, the County of Kauai has recognized that low residential inventory and high demand continues to grow on the island. Density approvals made in 2019 allowed owners to build Additional Rental Units (ARU); Additional Dwelling Units (ADU) and kitchens in Guest Homes. Height restrictions within the Lihue Corridor were increased to allow R-40 zoning, but our housing shortage still continues. Only a handful of property owners took advantage of the density upgrades. Others were left with mandatory cesspool conversions or high infrastructure costs. Property owners should check with the Planning Department to see what is allowed within their districts.

Amendments were made to the housing policy decreasing the 30% mandate, while increasing the distribution of units within the 80% - 100% AMI while removing the 120% - 140% AMI. KBR submitted testimony opposing the bill that removed the working class families earning between the 100% - 180% AMI. Other barriers in creating housing are the high FRC costs (Facilities Reserve Charge) for new water meter installations; the new 2019 fire code mandates; and post covid increases in shipping and building supplies making it difficult for the average working household to build or qualify for a home. As more people work from home, commercial spaces are now being considered for residential conversions.

The Kauai Board of REALTORS 2021 Government Affairs position statement promotes housing that starts with adequate infrastructure (Water, Sewer, Solid Waste, Roads, etc.). However to get there, we, as a community, need to understand the issues and make it happen. Without water, there are no homes. Without wastewater there are no homes.

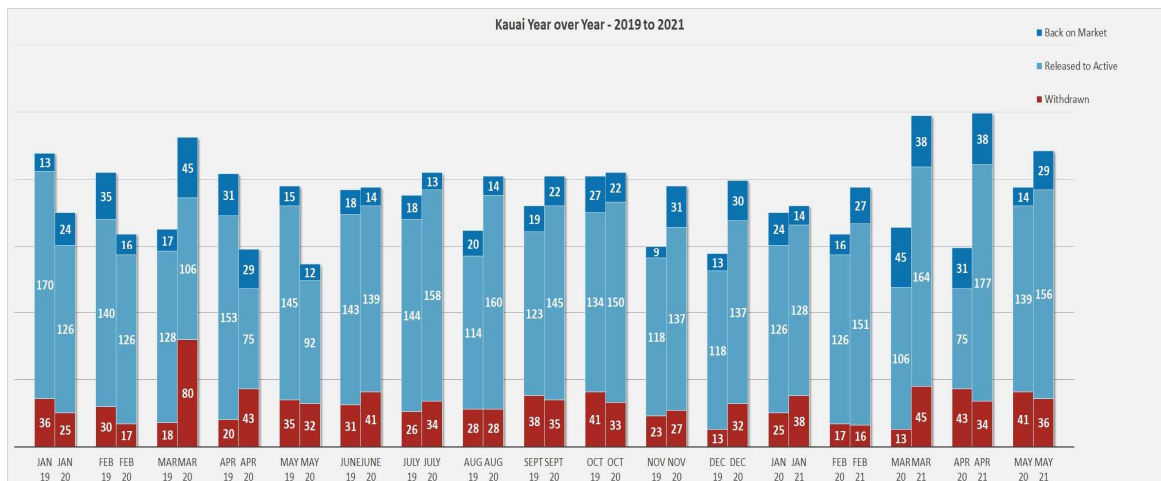
In the State Legislative Session, the Hawaii Association of REALTORS Government Affairs Committee tracked 496 bills during the 2020-2021 Legislative Session. 1,397 Bills were introduced in the House and 1,423 Bills were introduced in the Senate. A total of 3,203 volunteer hours were spent tracking and submitting testimony in support or opposition of the bills. The followings bills have been submitted to the Governor for his signature:

- SB474, CD1 - Sea Level Rise Disclosure
- HB392, SD2 - Military; Early Termination

- HB1191, CD1 - Broadband; Underserved Communities
- HB961, SD2 - Licensing; Military Spouse
- HB 244, CD1 - Land Recordation; Bureau of Conveyances
- HB 1253, CD1 - Employment Practices; Mobile Applications
- HB 58, CD1 - Conveyance Tax
- HB 485, CD1 - Rental Motor Vehicle Surcharge
- HB 862, CD1 - Transient Accommodations Tax
- HB 286, SD2 - Real Estate Investment Trusts
- HB 1298, CD1 - Special Funds; Transfer
- HB 1299, CD1 - Special Funds; Transfer
- HB 1043, CD1 - Transient Accommodations; Penalties
- SB 329, CD1 - Condo; Disposition of Unclaimed Possessions
- HB 599, CD 1 - Remote Meetings; Planned Community; Condos
- HB 79, SD2 - Affordable Homeownership Revolving Fund
- HB 80, CD1 - Low Income Housing Tax Credit
- HB 499, CD1 - Public Lands; Leases
- HB 1149, CD1 - Land Use Commission; Office of Planning
- SB 1054, SD2 - Brownfield Cleanup
- SB 1166, HD2 - Public Lands; Rental Reduction or Waiver
- SB 140, CD1 - Transit-Oriented Development
- SB 225, CD1 - Infrastructure Improvements; TOD Projects
- SB 186, CD1 - Agricultural Land; Covenants
- HB 247, SD2 - Condominium Property Regime (CPR); Ag District

Governor Ige must provide the Legislature with a list of bills he may veto by June 21, 2021. Each bill that he signs before that date, or that is not on the veto list, becomes law regardless of his signature. Any listed bills not vetoed become law after July 6, 2021. The Legislature may then decide to override any vetoes at that point. You can track each of these bills at www.capitol.hawaii.gov

For those of you tracking the market, here's a snapshot through May, 2021



Karen Ono
Association Executive