

(Note: This Fact Sheet was widely circulated by Friends of Sherwood Forest in May 2019, though some of the content has been updated since then. Please note that we are posting it here for documentation purposes; not all of the views expressed in this document are necessarily those of SaveSherwoodForest.org.)

Saving Sherwood Forest: **Seven Essential Facts You Need to Know Right Now**

Despite the huge public outcry, bulldozers continue to level Sherwood Forest on Waimanalo Beach, for a sports complex, four ball fields, **470 paved parking stalls**, and more. The plan will cost taxpayers **32 million dollars**. Trees are being destroyed as quickly as possible because the Environmental Assessment requires completion of tree-clearing for Phase 1 by June 1st. (Additional tree clearing is planned for a later date.) More than 30,000 people have signed a petition to stop this. The community clearly *does not want* this “development” in Sherwood forest. There are countless good reasons to oppose it, but here are seven of the most important:

The Mayor Is Making Alarmingly False Claims. On May 14th, Mayor Caldwell stated in writing that there is an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the project. In fact, there was never an EIS—only an Environmental Assessment. (An EIS is *much* more comprehensive, and takes a much more careful look at environmental impacts.) Anyone who reads the Master Plan can easily confirm this. His statement to the press refers *nine times* to “the EIS,” but the EIS does not exist. By feeding disinformation to the media, the Mayor has demonstrated yet again why he has no credibility, and why the public has rightly seen this entire process as deceptive from the start.

The Plan Desecrates an Area with Native Hawaiian Burial Sites. Excavations in 1967 by the University of Hawaii, reported in *Archaeology & Physical Anthropology in Oceania*, found artifacts and remains “dating from AD 600” in the Sherwood Forest area. The site is described as “a permanent habitation,” occupied by a “domestic group relying on the sea and agricultural areas in Waimanalo Valley” for subsistence, and “representative of an incipient stage in the development of Hawaiian culture.” The authors cite the presence of human skeletons, and state that burial sites include “locations removed by several hundred meters from the shore of Waimanalo Bay... while the locus near the shore appeared to be a village site.” The report details an excavation covering “approximately 10% of the site” within a relatively small (12 by 20 meter) location in the Bellows area. It found 89 cultural artifacts, later given to the Bishop Museum, and documented “seven burials” in great detail. One burial “was left intact in an unexcavated portion (of the site) ... for future excavation.” The vast majority of the Sherwood area has never been excavated. The report describes the general area as “rich in archaeological materials” and containing other burial sites. This extremely sensitive archeological area deserves to be treated with far more cultural respect than to be paved over for 470 parking stalls and a sports complex. Note: the current plan also calls for boring holes **to ten feet deep**, but the excavation reported that in each case the human remains were found to have been buried “up **to one meter deep**.”

Mayor Caldwell’s Refusal to Stop the Work is Unethical and Illogical. He could halt it immediately, but he fails to listen to the public. He gives two reasons for this: (1) because the work has already been given as an “award” to a private contractor, and (2) because stopping it would cost taxpayers “as much as \$300,000”—yet he contradicts his own rationale by pushing forward an *unwanted* project that will cost taxpayers \$32 million.

The Plan is Intentionally Destroying Endangered Species Habitat. Both endangered hoary bats and shearwaters nest in Sherwood Forest, but the plan barely mentions the effects it is having on these species. Since the permit prohibits cutting trees taller than 15 feet during hoary bat nesting season (which begins June 1st), Ikaika Anderson has openly admitted that the current intent is to remove as many trees as possible prior to June 1st. They are racing to destroy the habitat of an endangered species, in what appears to be a clear violation of the Endangered Species Act. Anderson claims they have a “waiver” from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, allowing them to destroy endangered hoary bat habitat until June 1st, but no one has seen this waiver and he has not made it available to the public. If such a waiver exists, does it expose the Fish and Wildlife Service to major litigation for failing to administer the Endangered Species Act?

The Impacts on Windward Traffic Haven’t Been Adequately Addressed. Many of the 470 parking stalls will be for large tour buses, drastically changing the community forever. On May 14th, the Mayor admitted in writing that “it is not possible to conduct a current traffic analysis and apply it to the 2012 EIS.” Again, there was never an EIS—he is falsely claiming there was—but he is conceding that a traffic assessment from 2012 does *not* reflect current traffic. In fact, the number of registered vehicles in Waimanalo indicates that traffic has doubled since 2012. (By the way, the same principle applies to water usage, which also hasn’t been adequately addressed by the plan, and which likewise has changed significantly since 2012.)

Those Pushing the Plan Deny that it Took Us All by Surprise. This small group claims the public had a fair chance to weigh in on the plan. But only 15 hand-picked (unelected) “planning committee” members decided on it 10 years ago, and most of them have since withdrawn their support for the plan. Neighborhood board meeting records clearly show that until relatively recently ***the plan was not mentioned at any meeting after 2012.*** Those pushing it fulfilled the minimum paperwork requirements (technically allowing them to now claim that we had all been invited to voice our opinions all along), and then the plan “went dark” until the bulldozers arrived. Even as bulldozers were ripping down trees, ***not one*** of the following organizations had heard anything about the plan: Sea Life Park, the Sierra Club, Earth Justice, Envirowatch, Life of The Land, Na Kua Aina o Waimanalo, Hawaii’s Thousand Friends, the Surfrider Foundation, Holo Kino, KAHEA, and more. Although an Environmental Assessment (EA) was done in 2012, the agency that checks the EA to see if it needs an Environmental Impact Statement ***just so happened to be the very same agency that introduced the plan in the first place,*** so (of course) ***they*** said it did not need an EIS. So much for healthy checks and balances. The bottom line: no matter what they claim now, we all know from our own experience that the plan was slipped under the radar. We are the best judges of whether we were deceived.

The Plan is Unnecessary and Redundant. Waimanalo already has two ball fields in disrepair, ignored by the city. Why should we believe they can manage *four* new ones, if they can’t even maintain the two existing ones? The mayor says it would be “impractical” to fix one of them, but he doesn’t clarify what that means, or explain what it would cost. Everyone knows that it would cost only a tiny fraction of the \$32 million he plans to have us spend.