

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Pu‘uhonua O Wai‘anae Reaches Major Milestone with \$150,000 Grant from Nareit Hawaii Community Giving Initiative**

### **Nonprofit Group Completes Purchase of 20-Acre Land Parcel, Begins Fundraising to Build Affordable Homes for Houseless Families**

**HONOLULU – Feb. 21, 2020** – With a second \$150,000 grant from the Nareit Hawaii Community Giving Initiative, Pu‘uhonua O Wai‘anae has achieved a major milestone with its community-based plan to provide new, affordable housing for houseless residents living in tents at Waianae Boat Harbor.

The nonprofit Pu‘uhonua O Wai‘anae has utilized the grant to both complete the purchase of a 20-acre parcel of land in Waianae and launch its fundraising efforts to build a permanent village of affordable homes for up to 250 residents who are currently houseless.

Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) in Hawaii provided the \$150,000 grant to Pu‘uhonua O Wai‘anae through the Nareit Hawaii Community Giving Initiative of the Nareit Foundation, a section 501(c)(3) organization. This is the second \$150,000 grant the Nareit Foundation has presented to Pu‘uhonua O Wai‘anae, with the first grant awarded in December 2018.

“It’s an honor for REITs to support Pu‘uhonua O Wai‘anae and help these families, keiki and kupuna escape from being houseless,” said Gladys Quinto Marrone, executive director for Nareit Hawaii. “REITs are committed to providing affordable housing and it is a privilege to offer our support and see the inspiring vision of this aloha-inspired community of homes coming to fruition.”

James Pakele, nonprofit president of Pu‘uhonua O Wai‘anae, commented on the significance of the Nareit Foundation’s continued support of Pu‘uhonua O Wai‘anae. “The Nareit Foundation was our first major donor. They believed in us and gave others confidence to donate. Their first gift was the one that made this fundraising campaign ‘real.’ They were the first major funder for the land, and now they’re the first major donor for Phase 2 – building homes for our people.”

Twinkle Borge, village leader at Pu‘uhonua O Wai‘anae, noted the grant is a major step to keep the village’s residents on a path forward to move into new homes. “The Nareit Foundation is helping us to realize our dream. Putting our people into houses on land that belongs to us. Keeping our village together and building a permanent home for all of us.”

#### **Pu‘uhonua O Wai‘anae: Aloha Lives Here**

Pu‘uhonua O Wai‘anae is a village of 250 people living unhoused on the leeward side of Oahu. A majority of residents are Native Hawaiians. It is an inspiring community-first approach to “houselessness” that: (1) Is self-organized at nearly zero cost to taxpayers; (2) Gets people the help they need – medical care, social services, school supplies, food security and permanent housing, and; (3) Provides safety, healing, and purpose through a community of aloha.

For more information and to support the village of people living at Pu‘uhonua O Wai‘anae, please visit <https://www.alohaliveshere.org>.

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### REITs and the Nareit Hawaii Community Giving Initiative

Nareit is the worldwide representative voice for real estate investment trusts (REITs) and publicly traded real estate companies with an interest in U.S. real estate and capital markets. REITs are long-term property holders that own, renovate and manage affordable housing projects, commercial buildings, medical facilities, shopping centers, cell phone towers, and hotels throughout Hawaii.

The Nareit Foundation encourages other qualified organizations throughout Hawaii to submit applications to be considered for grants supporting affordable housing projects in 2020 through its Nareit Hawaii Community Giving Initiative.

Applicants should be implementing projects that provide affordable housing for sale or rent. Grant funds are not intended for planning and will only go to organizations with "shovel-ready" projects or to make land purchases for such projects.

All applicants must fill out the electronic application form found on the Nareit Hawaii website at <http://www.nareithawaii.com/reits-give-back/> and submit it via e-mail to [info@nareithawaii.com](mailto:info@nareithawaii.com).

For more information about REITs in Hawaii and the Nareit Hawaii Community Giving Initiative, please visit [www.nareithawaii.com](http://www.nareithawaii.com).

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**Link to image:** <https://i.imgur.com/wsamoNz.jpg>

**Caption (left photo):** Displaying the check presented today by Nareit Hawaii to Pu'uhonua O Wai'anae are from (l-r): Keahi Renaud, chief of staff for Senator Maile Shimabukuro; Representative Cedric Gates; Twinkle Borge, village leader at Pu'uhonua O Wai'anae; Gladys Quinto Marrone, executive director of Nareit Hawaii, and; James Pakele, nonprofit president of Pu'uhonua O Wai'anae. Photo courtesy: Nareit Hawaii



**Link to image:** <https://i.imgur.com/oXaSRtH.jpg>

**Caption (right photo):** Residents of the Pu'uhonua O Wai'anae village joined in the celebration of today's check presentation of \$150,000 by Nareit Hawaii. Photo courtesy: Nareit Hawaii