

# TULCHIN RESEARCH

**To:** Interested Parties

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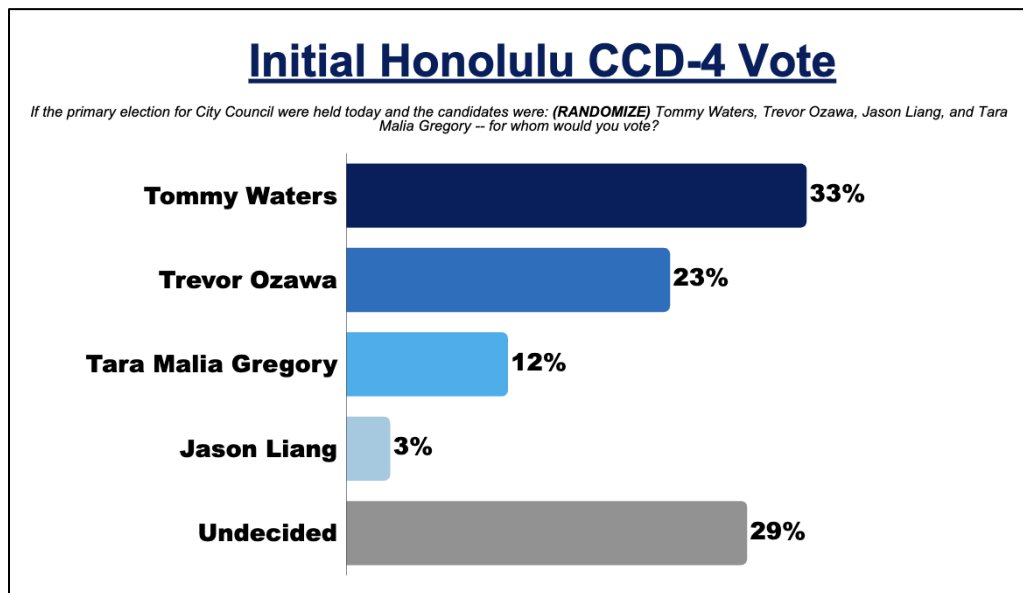
## **Poll Shows Council Chair Tommy Waters Leading the Crowded CCD4 Primary Field**

A new survey of likely primary voters finds City Council Chair Tommy Waters leading a competitive four-way primary field for the 4<sup>th</sup> City Council District seat in Honolulu. Waters opens the race with a clear advantage over the rest of the field, which also grows once voters hear information about him and his vision for Honolulu, particularly on affordability, clean water, and public safety.

These findings point to a clear strategic picture: Waters enters the primary as the clear frontrunner, and his record gives him strong material to consolidate and grow that lead in the weeks ahead.

### **Waters Leads the Primary Field**

In the initial four-way ballot, Tommy Waters leads the field with support from a third of the electorate (33%), followed by Trevor Ozawa at 23% in second place. Tara Malia Gregory (12%) trails further behind while Jason Liang draws just 3% and 29% of likely voters remain undecided. Waters' ten-point margin gives him a clear and meaningful advantage, but with nearly three in ten voters still undecided, there is still opportunity for the field to shift.



While Waters enters the primary with a clear lead, the size of the undecided vote means the campaign cannot afford to be passive. The good news for Waters and his supporters is that his record on the Council gives him several strong, well-tested messages to drive home with these remaining voters.

## Voters Respond Strongly to Waters' Record on Affordability, Clean Water, and Public Safety

When voters hear positive statements about Waters' record on the City Council, his support strengthens considerably. Specifically, voters respond most favorably to Waters' work on **affordability** (5.72 mean score on a 1-10 scale), where he helped secure the largest affordable housing allocation in city history and delivered property tax relief for homeowners and renters. His record on protecting **clean water** (5.69 mean score) and natural resources, including \$25 million dedicated to safeguarding O'ahu's drinking water, also tests well. His record on **public safety**, including fully funding public safety budgets and investing in police facilities and ocean safety (5.67 mean score) also resonates with voters and helps to reinforce how he will work to keep the communities in and around Honolulu safe.

### **Top Waters Positive Messages**

*Here are statements made by SUPPORTERS of candidates for city council. On a scale from 1 to 10, please indicate how convincing each statement is as a reason to support each candidate, with a TEN being VERY convincing and a ONE being NOT AT ALL convincing.*

**(AFFORDABILITY)** Tommy Waters understands the cost of living crisis is forcing too many local families to leave Hawai'i. As City Council Chair, Waters helped secure the largest affordable housing allocation in city history, approving 27 projects that would create nearly 11,000 homes. He also delivered property tax relief for homeowners and long-term renters and fought steep sewer fee increases, because every decision should make life more affordable for Honolulu residents.

**(CLEAN WATER)** Tommy Waters understands that protecting clean water and natural resources is essential to Hawai'i's future. He helped dedicate \$25 million to protect O'ahu's drinking water from future contamination, supported \$8 million annually for the Climate Resiliency Fund, and funded conversions of cesspools in high-risk areas.

**(PUBLIC SAFETY)** Tommy Waters knows public safety means more than responding after something goes wrong. It means preventing problems before they happen, including building safer streets, better-maintained parks, reliable infrastructure, and city services that work. On the City Council, Waters fully funded public safety budgets, supported new emergency management and ocean safety departments, invested in police facilities and equipment, and pushed for more prosecutors to address crime and keep Honolulu neighborhoods safe.

## Conclusion

These findings show that Waters starts out strong as the leader in this race, and that he has multiple messaging elements that resonate with voters and serve to help consolidate and grow his lead in the primary and beyond. Affordability, clean water, and public safety all resonate broadly with the City Council District 4 electorate and reinforce the record Waters has built as Council Chair. But with nearly three in ten voters still undecided, Waters has to consolidate his support with his base while also building on his opportunity for growth.

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**Survey Methodology:** The findings in this memo are based on a survey of 300 likely primary voters in Honolulu's 4<sup>th</sup> City Council District, conducted from June 22-27, 2026. The survey was administered using a multi-modal approach, including landline and cellphone interviews as well as online data collection via email and text-to-web. The margin of error for the full sample is  $\pm 5.66$  percentage points. The sample was drawn to reflect the likely Honolulu City Council District 4 primary electorate, and results were weighted to match expected turnout by key demographic characteristics, including age, gender, geography, and ethnicity.