

Kakaako Downtown Forum
May 21, 2014
Hosted by ThinkTech

Participants' Top Reasons For Attending Forum

1. Finding out about projects
2. Learn about business prospects
3. Learn about Kakaako housing
4. Influence public policy affecting Kakaako
5. Preserving the neighborhood
6. Expressing concerns about development

Participants' Top Issues of Importance To Them

1. Sustainability and green areas
2. Accessibility and transportation
3. Residence diversity and affordable housing
4. General revitalizing of Kakaako
5. Transparency and accountability
6. Space for new and traditional culture

Questions for HCDA From Participants

- **Describe the neighborhood for future residents.**
 - When you buy in Kakaako, it's not just about buying a condo. You're buying a community and a way of life.
 - A "sense of place" will be created through the utilization of a complete streets and urban village design. There will be housing that people can afford, that is close to good-paying jobs, recreation spaces, restaurants, and other services built near public transit.
- **What specific actions or physical changes will improve multi-modal transportation in Kakaako?**
 - Kakaako will become Hawaii's first true transit oriented community, with development centered on building an active, walkable, compact community. Safe pedestrian pathways, bicycle lanes, and transit pathways will serve to connect the neighborhood and reduce automobile use and traffic. The HCDA is working closely with the city so that this "complete streets" concept will be mirrored in surrounding neighborhoods as well, ensuring a network of connectivity. Numerous retail, dining, and entertainment facilities will also drive interest in Kakaako, making it a gathering place with something for everyone.
- **What can the city or state do to encourage connectivity between makai and Mauka portions of Kakaako?**
 - Redevelopment of Kewalo Basin harbor is also being envisioned to pay tribute to the historic connection of the Ward Estate and the ocean at Kewalo.

Transitioning the mauka development to the makai development will be done using water as a connecting feature.

- **View planes?**
 - View corridors are currently established to maintain mauka to makai views. In addition, developers are encouraged to align their buildings so the widest side is perpendicular the mountains and thereby does not block mauka-makai views.
- **How is HCDA dealing with climate change and sea level rise?**
 - The UH Sea Grant Program did a study on sea level rise and action recommendations to developers, including a three prong approach of “accommodation, protection, and retreat.” We recognize sea level rise is an ongoing issue that affects not just Kakaako, but our entire state, and we are working together with developers to ensure the community’s safety and resilience.
 - Developers in Kakaako are also keenly aware of the rising water and are designing their buildings to accommodate ocean changes. Essential systems, like machine rooms and elevator control systems, are built above ground level so they will still be operational, even in the event of flooding. The Howard Hughes Corporation is also raising the foundation heights for its future buildings to meet sea level rise guidelines. Some developers also have plans to construct ground floor walls that serve the dual purpose of increasing privacy for first floor tenants, and preventing flooding during a storm surge.
- **What additional green public spaces and parks other than concrete covered parks?**
 - Kakaako and the immediate area, which includes Thomas Square and Ala Moana Beach Park, exceeds the required city guidelines for park space. In these areas, there are currently 127.7 acres of park space—well above the guideline of 60 acres for the projected population of 30,000 by the year 2030.
 - In addition, major landowners, Howard Hughes and Kamehameha Schools, have extra green and open spaces in their master plans, which will add more than 6 acres to the current total.
 - HCDA built Kolowalu park in 2010 using public facilities dedication fees and will continue using such monies from developers to build future parks and public spaces
- **Infrastructure...What about the present sewage breaks and water main breaks with present capacity**
 - See web for list and map of \$225 million in infrastructure repairs since the 1980’s. Many of these upgrades were done to drive development and lay the foundation for a growing community, which is only now coming to fruition.
 - This is evidenced by testimony from David Bills, a local engineer who was called as an expert witness in the field of engineering and infrastructure during the public hearing for Keauhou Lane. Bills testified that not only is there adequate sewer lines to service the Keauhou Lane project in Kakaako, but the lines may even be under-utilized. He testified that unpleasant odors in Kakaako are actually the result of empty sewer lines with sewage flowing too slowly. He says this

causes sewage to stagnate and fill the empty air space in the lines with odorous gases. With an increase in sewage, there will be less air space in the lines, thereby decreasing the odors.

- Each proposed development is reviewed by the appropriate city and state agencies to determine whether sufficient infrastructure currently exists. If the current infrastructure is inadequate to support the project, it then becomes the developer's responsibility to pay for the necessary upgrades. As an example, Howard Hughes Corporation will pay to improve the sewer connection in the Ward area to service its upcoming residential high rises.
- All developers must pay their fair share for any improvements their projects require. However, we do not ask one developer to pay for the improvements for FUTURE developers.
- **Work is one of the three elements of your motto. How will this be fulfilled?**
 - As mentioned in a Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism study, there are currently 1,260 businesses in the Kakaako district. Clearly, this number demonstrates that "work" is a definite part of the fabric that comprises Kakaako, and will remain so in the future. Over 90 percent of these 1,260 companies are small businesses, with less than 100 employees. In fact, 36% of all Kakaako businesses have just one employee, with another 26% having just two to four employees. The majority of these businesses are in the service industry, retail trade, and professional/ technical services.
- **Would you be limiting how many foreigners can buy in Kakaako so that it's really for the local community of the state?**
 - Discriminating against any particular group of homebuyers is illegal, so it is not possible to limit foreign purchases, or purchases by the "rich." However, certain measures are in place to ensure homebuyers of reserved housing units are owner occupants, meaning they use the property as their primary residence.
 - Offshore buyers or local investors will likely purchase the more expensive luxury and market units in Kakaako, leaving the more affordable reserved housing units for local buyers. By maintaining such a mixture of units, the Kakaako district will retain its real property values, with some first time homeowners actually seeing increases in property worth.
 - According to a DBEDT READ study, 32% of Kakaako homeowners are aged 15-34, making it a popular neighborhood among young homeowners. Many of these are first time homebuyers who value convenience, connectivity, and affordability. Condos in Kakaako are generally cheaper than homes in Honolulu, and cater to smaller families (perhaps with 2 adults and 1 child) with a more active/ community based lifestyle.
- **What kind of affordable housing is being built in Kakaako, and do they include rentals?**
 - Yes, several of the new developments will have rental units for qualified income households. For example, the newly completed Halekauwila Place offers 204 rental units to those making less than 60 percent of the area median income (AMI), which is just about \$40,000 for a single person.
 - See project summary sheet for full listing of all current development projects and the individuals they serve.

- **Are there any plans for new schools in kakaako?**
 - The HCDA is also in close contact with the Department of Education to determine whether additional schools are necessary, as the current household size in Kakaako is just 1.9 people, which suggests few children in the district. However, we expect that number to grow as more young families move into the area thanks to workforce housing opportunities. We look forward to supporting our island's keiki by implementing any recommendations the DOE makes.
 - The HCDA is already in talks with Seagull Schools to build a children's day care center in the Kakaako Makai area. It would have about 120 slots for children in grades Pre-K through Kindergarten, creating a convenient option for those young families who move into the neighborhood.
- **How will the vision for Kakaako be achieved if most of the buildings ask for, and receive waivers from the master plan.**
 - There is a difference between a building modification and a waiver. Our current Mauka Area Rules, the product of several years of public collaboration, only allow for building modifications when certain conditions exist. If these conditions are met, the Authority can permit the modification, which is what was seen for several recent development permit applications. These modifications served to enhance various communal benefits, which support our vision for Kakaako. For example, the Authority approved a podium height increase for Keauhou Lane, with the understanding that doing so would allow the development to create more retail and pedestrian friendly features at the ground level, thereby enhancing the neighborhood as a live, work, play destination.
 - Dynamic community involvement is vital to the HCDA's mission of creating a cohesive gathering place of homes, businesses, and services for all in Kakaako. We are committed to hearing what people have to say, and we hold public hearings at various times on both weekdays and weekends so each person is given multiple opportunities to testify on each project application.

Other Panelist Questions from Participants (taken verbatim, as written)

- Why should preserving views be a legitimate reason to oppose projects?
- What other land should be developed if Kaka'ako isn't fully developed?
- Is it true that Kakaako have double-digit density?
- With all these developments project for the community, how will you tackle the homeless community?
- How important is true sustainability (not green washing) to you in the planning and development of Kakaako?
- How is "Old Kakaako" going to be repaired first? The parks, sidewalks & bus stops are filled with homeless and not available to citizens now
- There is currently a high number of homeless in the area. How do you plan to develop this area while considering the homeless?
- What other city standards should HCDA follow to ensure accountability and transparency?
- How long will the real going to completed and reach to UH? Thank you!

- It's all very well having plans for transportation services but what are the plans for increased traffic problems when it's already bad now?
- Is any more plan to modify for the old buildings around the project? Is the project going to have significant impact of the neighborhood?
- Wouldn't it be best for all of Honolulu and the state for Kakaako to be under one jurisdiction -- the C&C of Honolulu?
- How can city council help move Kaka'ako development forward faster?
- How is the city or state protecting our community from over development that should immediately address sea level rise along the Kakaako coast?
- There have been some concerns about educational infrastructure in Kakaako. What are the plans to build new schools in the area?
- Where is the agora park?
- what are limitations to bridging Ala Moana Blvd to connect mauka with makai?
- How is comprehensive plans for water, wastewater, and green infrastructure be coordinated between land owners?
- Instead of developers having small open space requirements why can't we pool that to create a mega open space like central park in NYC?
- Where are the schools being built if this is to be a family community?
- Overcrowding has been a concern. How does building in Kakaako help to alleviate overcrowding/sprawl in other parts of the island?
- What about the Hawaiian sense of place-how important is this and how do we preserve and protect from over development?
- Ms. Matson: do you agree that urban infill development is better than suburban sprawl?
- Does Howard Hughes master plan's receiving LEED ND Platinum certification mean that current & planned infrastructure is adequate?
- What are we doing to connect Mauka & Maka'i areas of Kakaako? Not another Aloha Tower isolated area.
- Can Tony Ching and Michelle Matson discuss park space more in depth: should Ala Moana Park/Thomas Square/Civic Center park space count?
- How are you all planning to address the homeless population in K?
- How will rail and TOD integrate into the new Kakaako?
- How are the two major master plans in Kakaako similar and also different?
- What should be done if community doesn't participate in planning process?
- What type of technology infrastructure you plans to invest in?
- Is appropriate housing for UH students, faculty and staff part of Kaka'ako development?
- Kakaako will not succeed if the homeless situation persists. How is the Kakaako leadership planning to deal with it?
- Elizabeth Hokada mentioned free wifi in Kakaako. Why did KS do this, and where is it available?
- Is it true that Howard Hughes is planning \$50 million condos for off-shore buyers?
- Any specific observations on the rising sea level?
- Will OHA re-introduce residential development next year? Is high rise , high risk residential bldg. really within OHA's fiscal responsibility
- Where will the rail stations in Kakaako be located?
- Expound on the arts & culture district around Kakaako. What would that look like?

- Affordability for families is an issue. How do we ensure that kakaako doesn't turn into another investment opportunity for the wealthy?
- What will the average cost for a 2 bed apartment in kakaako excluding affordable housing prices?
- For KS and HHC: who do you expect will be the new residents of Kakaako? Who is your target?
- The Kakaako makai master plan was approved in 2011. The most desired concept is the lei of green and ocean front promenade. Implantation?
- Dr. Apple: how is cancer center and jabsom dealing with climate change?
- What is currently happening at mother Waldron park? Who is responsible for it?
- Would roof topermits say
- The homeless problem, particularly on the makai side, is getting worse. How will OHA handle this?
- isn't the Governor and his chief of staff from PRP Bruce Coppa behind all the development decisions? More community preference included?
- Why does OHA need to build so high? Why not shorter buildings on the makai side?
- OHA's word should be Holomua - move forward.
- Would the city consider closing any internal streets in order to increase pedestrian access?
- KS spoke about small biz incubation. Why this focus? And have there been any success stories yet?
- The city has looked at new transportation ideas like parklets. Will we see that happen, and are there any other ideas?
- for Michelle: what solutions do you have for expanding Makai Park? Where does the land come from?
- Is hawaii close to the Ring of Fire thus is it vulnerable to earthquake and tsunami? Are high rise buildings advisable for urban planning?
- Would the new urban planning include rebuilding of water system and wastewater mgmt? Can u give us examples on how it should be done?
- How do we stop NIMBYism?
- How often do the big developers meet to coordinate their visions or is that solely left up to hcda? Should that be required?
- Do you expect that folks living in suburban areas and who now commute, will decide to move to the urban core?
- New buildings - no AC's but utilizing hawaii's good air flow and lessening the use of fossil fuels for a greener city??
- To much noise siren moped
- Halal foods and mosque to perform prayers for muslim. Will you include these for the urban planning?