

## HCDA Kakaako Parks (Mauka and Makai Districts) As of May 2014

- Kakaako Waterfront Park: 30 acres
- Kakaako Makai Gateway Park: 4 acres
- Kakaako Mauka Gateway Park: 2 acres
- Kewalo Basin Park: 5 acres
- Formerly Queen Street Parks - Total Area: 100,910 sf, or 2.31 acres
  - Kolowalu Mauka Park: 37,563 sf or 0.86 acre
  - Kolowalu Makai Park: 63,347 sf or 1.45 acre
- ***Maintained by City and County***
  - Mother Waldron Park: 1.76 acres
  - Kawaiahao Mini Park: 0.2 acres

TOTAL PARK SPACE IN KAKAAKO = 45.27 ACRES

### Neighboring Parks:

Ala Moana Beach Park: 76 acres

Magic Island State Park: 30 acres

Thomas Square: 6.5 acres

Total neighboring parks = 112.5 acres

TOTAL PARKS IN IMMEDIATE AREA: 157.77 acres

---

### Population and Park Needs

2013 Kakaako Population: 12,000

2030 Projected Kakaako Population: 30,000

Honolulu City and County rules state that there must be 2 acres of park space for every 1,000 people. This calculates out to a requirement of 24 acres of park space to support the current population, and 60 acres for the projected population in the year 2030. Currently, there are 45.27 acres of park in the Kakaako Community Development District, which is well within the standards for the current population. While it does fall short for the projected population growth, one must consider the benefit of neighboring community parks, Ala Moana Beach Park and Thomas Square. These parks sit exactly at the boundary of the Kakaako Community Development District and are well utilized by Kakaako residents because of their close proximity. Because parks are not restricted for the use of a certain geographical population, it is

reasonable to say that neighboring parks can and will service the growing Kakaako population, in addition to those parks within the Kakaako Community Development District. When these neighboring parks are factored in, the acreage of parks in the Kakaako area increases to 157.7 acres, which is well within acceptable City and County standards for the projected population growth of 30,000 people in 2030.

However, it's not enough for us to be satisfied with the QUANTITY of park area. We need QUALITY park areas that are active and vibrant, so they don't turn into havens for the homeless. We recognize that this is becoming a problem in some of our Kakaako Parks, and we must take action now to take back the space for public use and enjoyment.

## **Measuring Density**

2012 New York City Population: 8,336,697

2012 Manhattan Population: 1,619,090

2010 Honolulu Population: 390,738

2013 Kakaako Population: 12,000

In comparing park space, we look to what is regarded as the most iconic park in the nation: Central Park in New York. This 843 acre park is in Manhattan and serves residents from across New York City. It contains running and walking tracks, ice skating rinks/ a swimming pool, conservatory garden, wildlife sanctuary, outdoor amphitheater, Delacorte Theater, Belvedere Castle, Swedish Cottage Marionette Theater, and major lawn areas. Because of the numerous activities in the park, it is an active area that can accommodate a variety of people at the same time.

To calculate park density, we divide the population by park acreage. For New York City's usage of Central Park, this results in 9,889 people per acre. Similarly, when you calculate Honolulu's usage of Kakaako parks, Thomas Square, and Ala Moana Beach Park, the result is 3,064 people per acre. If you reduce the scale and calculate only Manhattan's usage of Central Park, it results in 1,921 people per acre. When you calculate only Kakaako's usage of Honolulu park space, it results in just 94 people per acre. If you further reduce the numbers to include only those parks located in the Kakaako Community Development District (45.27 acres), it calculates out to 265 people per acre. In this way, it is clear that Kakaako not only has adequate park space for Kakaako residents, but all of Honolulu's residents as well. It also exceeds the standards set by what is regarded as the pinnacle of park space in the country, as Central Park still has far more people per acre than those in Kakaako.

---

## **Planning for More Open Space**

In Kakaako, the HCDA requires master plans to reserve areas for public open spaces. General Growth Properties/ Howard Hughes Corp. has committed to over 150,000 square feet of open

space, or about 3.44 acres. Their master plan shows a large 3.25 acre central plaza near Ward Centers, with several smaller plazas nearby. All would be joined with a pedestrian pathway that runs parallel to Ala Moana Boulevard.

Kamehameha Schools' master plan proposes approximately 3 acres of open space. KS envisions connecting Mother Waldron Park and the Kakaako Gateway Parks with a green belt, and also proposes a public square.

One of the HCDA's goals in the redevelopment of Kakaako is to create active, family friendly open spaces for all to enjoy. At a cost of \$190 per square foot, land in Kakaako holds high value, and we must ensure it is used wisely. The HCDA does not own much land in the district, aside from our current parks, thus it is difficult to create new park space. However, we are expanding where we can (Kewalo Basin Harbor) and are looking to improve the quality of experience in our existing parks, to ensure they become quality urban places that have meaning to the community. As our current parks are often underutilized and havens for the homeless, we know that there are many improvements that can be made.

In developing open spaces, we must go beyond green grass and passive activities in order to increase park usage and boost the area's energy. We can also better utilize existing park spaces to reach more residents. By connecting neighboring public spaces like Thomas Square, Neal Blaisdell Center, and McKinley High School, we can encourage a healthy flow of pedestrians and activity. Bicycle lanes in the area could also serve to promote multi-modal transportation and tie in with our transit oriented development plan.

### **Revitalizing Kakaako Makai**

An environmental impact statement is currently underway to determine the impact of various activities in Kakaako Makai, including at the Waterfront Park. Some proposals for such activities have included a volleyball academy, the Obama Presidential Center, an art incubator, or a light exhibition park. These are all ideas that would generate revenue for the HCDA to continue paying for the upkeep of all parks under its care. The HCDA currently spends over \$1 million dollars each year to upkeep the parks it owns (Kakaako Waterfront Park, Kewalo basin park, Kakaako Gateway parks, and Kolowalu Parks). This money does not come from the government, as we receive no legislative appropriation for watering the grass or conducting regular park maintenance. All of the monies spent on park maintenance come from HCDA asset management (lease rent from our lands), or developer public facilities dedication fees.

Bringing new activities to places like Kakaako Waterfront Park and Kakaako Makai would help make park maintenance sustainable, as the lease rent may eventually generate enough money to pay for maintenance fees by itself. In addition to providing a fiscal benefit, new activities would also bring a social benefit of bringing life back to our public parks and open spaces.

Currently, the homeless populate many areas of Kakaako parks, including Kakaako Waterfront Park and both gateway parks and surrounding sidewalks. Personal belongings crowd the sidewalks, and some members of the public have complained about disorderly conduct in the area, noting public urination and defecation, as well as fighting among the homeless. Because of

this, public access to these areas is already greatly diminished, with some choosing to avoid the area because of safety concerns. The proposal to reinvigorate the area with new activities would serve to increase foot traffic in the area and compassionately disturb the homeless and urge them to seek shelter elsewhere. In this way, we can take back the parks for public use and enjoyment.

### **Current Kakaako Park Expansion and Improvements**

**Mother Waldron Park Improvements:** Construction fences went up around Mother Waldron Park in the beginning of May 2014, kicking off a four month renovation project. Developer, Stanford Carr, is using remaining funds from the construction of his affordable rental project, Halekauwila Place, to enhance and beautify the park next door. New basketball courts and a playground, along with new landscaping and trees will be put up at Mother Waldron Park in the coming months. The improvements are scheduled to be complete in September 2014.

**McKinley High School Public Use Agreement:** HCDA is now in talks to form an agreement with McKinley High School that would allow the community to use some of the school's facilities, like the track/ field and pool, after hours and on weekends.

**Kewalo Basin Park Expansion and Connection:** HCDA is planning to create new park space at Kewalo Basin Harbor to connect Kewalo Basin Park with Ala Moana Beach Park. The area where the former dolphin lab once stood, and is now blocked off by wire construction fences, will be transformed into park space. We will be installing benches, landscaping, and perhaps even a Beach Boys type concession stand with space for water equipment storage. This will allow pedestrians to freely and safely move from the shoreline at Kewalo Basin into Ala Moana Beach. It is also consistent with the lei of green concept, which was an aspect of our Kakaako Makai Conceptual Master Plan.