



Ka Poe O Kakaako (People of Kakaako): A Journey of Change

By Craig Nakamoto

An often-quoted proverb states that “a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” For more than a hundred houseless persons, who once called Kakaako Gateway Park home, the first step occurred in 2019 with the formation of Ka Poe O Kakaako (KPOK). Lindsay Pacheco, Aura Reyes, and James Koshiba, a Hui Aloha member, described this journey.

The needs of the houseless who once lived at Gateway Park are more acute now. Most of them have scattered to other areas in urban Honolulu. To address those needs, they have “latched on to each other like family and still try to keep in touch,” said Lindsay.

But locating them is a challenge. Aura plays a major role in locating members—recently KPOK undertook a major effort to locate KPOK members.

The eventual goal of KPOK is to transition their members to permanent housing. This is not an easy task. “It takes a long time to find shelter,” says Aura. This was echoed by James, who said, “most people don’t realize that getting housing from the street is a long process, sometimes taking years.”

Only some of the KPOK members have found permanent shelter. The transition to permanent shelter is also a multi-step process.

The houseless need the “stability” of a community first. Living houseless is so “absorbing,” says Aura, who also experienced houselessness. “So much of your day is spent “living in the moment, finding food, finding water, and worrying about being shuffled from place to place.” Stability means not having to worry about those things.

KPOK’s vision is to build a community, and community build.

KPOK is working to create Kauhale Housing, a village where houseless people can care for each other as well as the community around them. The idea arose as KPOK members were living in Gateway Park, inspired by Pu’uhonua O Wai’anae (POW), a village of 250 houseless people who have organized to care for one another and do monthly community service.

POW’s outreach to other houseless people has connected individuals with needed food, clothing and service providers. When

on the verge of being evicted, POW fundraised enough to purchase land in Waianae for a permanent home, their POW farm village.

KPOK is working with the State and City to create the Kauhale near Nimitz Highway and Middle Street. The Kauhale will provide “supportive relationships” that are so necessary.

The creation of the Kauhale also goes back to one of the reasons for forming KPOK—to offer stability to the KPOK members, said James.

A community will give the houseless “hope. A sense of belonging to something. It brings purpose back into their lives,” said Lindsay.

The other way that KPOK is making a difference is through its community building efforts. KPOK members are doing good work in the community, with the help of Hui Aloha, to clean up areas, and dispel some of the stigma and stereotypes about the houseless. KPOK leaders, like Lindsay and Aura, are participating in neighborhood board meetings, which is where I first heard the testimonies of Lindsay and Aura. “They are changing the hearts and minds” of the community and community leaders about the houseless, said James.

Besides creating the Kauhale, “the biggest opportunity is having leaders like Lindsay and Aura at the table to join community discussions, meet with policy makers, educate people, and influence decisions. “Having Aura, Lindsay, and others who experienced houselessness, at the table is a game changer,” said James.

The biggest challenge is helping KPOK members maintain hope, said Lindsay and Aura. Echoed James, “when you’re on the street, houseless, it is difficult to maintain hope.” With leaders like Lindsay, Aura, and James, there is hope on this journey.

POW Farm Village: A Permanent Home



STREETSCAPES

We explored the South Street Market at Ward Village on a Sunday morning, found shoppers enjoying their Sunday, and asked them:

“Streetscape” generally refers to the natural and built fabric of the street. It is the design quality of the street and its visual effect. The concept recognizes that a street is a public place where people congregate and engage in various activities. In this feature, we take to the streets of our communities to interview people.



“Café Villamor at the HiClimb place on Ilaniwai Street because I can rock climb and get something to eat and drink.” -Benson

“What is your favorite place in Kakaako for coffee ?”



“9BarHNL at Salt” -Darby “Morning Brew at Salt” -Randie “Morning Brew at Salt” -Hailey “Arvo Café at Salt” -Lan “Arvo Café at Salt” -Glenny “Morning Brew Café & Bistro at Salt” -Janiene

DESIGN ELEMENTS

Taking it to the Streets

Master Plan for Kakaako Mauka Area

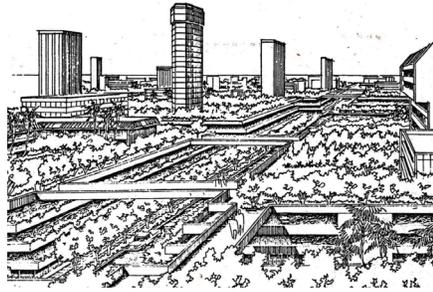
By George Atta and Craig Nakamoto

That describes the evolution of the master plan for the Mauka area of the Kakaako Community Development District.

In 1976, the Hawaii State Legislature recognized the need to revitalize Kakaako and created the Kakaako community development district. The Hawaii State Legislature saw great potential in Kakaako, and later the Kalaeloa and Heeia community development districts, and designated these areas Community Development Districts. The Legislature believed that establishing the Hawaii Community Development Authority for planning and development would result in communities that serve the highest needs and aspirations of Hawaii's people.

The first Mauka area plan and rules were adopted in 1982. This was the culmination of a comprehensive planning program that began in 1977 involving an inventory of assets in Kakaako, evaluation of infrastructure capacity and constraints, the development of alternatives, and the finalization of the plan and rules through a public process. This master plan envisioned 45-foot platforms throughout the district, forming "new land upon which people-oriented spaces will abound. In effect, the decks of these platforms will become a new living environment." Activities such as jogging, swimming, picnics, and court games would occur on landscaped decks. Pedestrian ways will connect to adjacent decks, creating a system of open space, and be the "key mode" of movement between residences, offices, and retail stores located within the platforms. That envisioned urban design remained for over 23 years.

An idea for a different urban form started to take shape. Another comprehensive review of the 1982 master plan and rules commenced in 2005, amid some public concerns that the urban form concepts should be revised to create a more desirable community for Kakaako residents, businesses, and visitors, and that some of the concepts, like shared private spaces at the podium level, were not workable. Although the 1982 master plan and rules had been amended numerous times since 1982, the amendment that would emerge in 2011 was the result of extensive community input and a five-year long planning



1982 Illustration of Kakaako's Future Urban Form



2011 Mauka Area Master Plan Pedestrian Friendly Urban Form

process and changed the vision for the urban form for the Mauka area.

The 2011 Mauka area master plan and rules embrace "smart growth" principles:

1) Adopt key Smart Growth concepts including: Pedestrian friendly urban form, including structures built at human scale and defined public spaces; Neighborhoods defined by centers, edges, and a mix of uses; Streets designed to accommodate multiple modes of transportation and to balance the need for access, circulation, and mobility; Street patterns that create a network and alternate travel routes throughout the District; Civic buildings (meeting halls, community facilities, churches, schools, and museums) are located on prominent sites within neighborhood centers.

2) Promote mixed-use neighborhoods, recognizing that every project need not be mixed-use.

3) Strengthen connection with surrounding neighborhoods and districts.

4) Define and establish specific objectives for neighborhoods, corridors, and streets.

5) Building on existing assets and planned investments, such as Mother Waldron Park, street and utility improvements and the proposed high-capacity transit line.

6) Encourage a mix of housing opportunities including reserved housing and affordable units.

The activity that was envisioned at the podium levels has been "taken to the streets" creating a vibrant urban village community and streetscape where people live, work, and play.

What does the future hold for Kakaako? It has been a decade since the last Mauka area plan and rules were adopted. HCDA will be reviewing the Mauka area rules in the coming year to identify possible revisions to the rules after engaging the community for input and feedback.

On the calendar

November 3

A virtual public decision-making hearing will be held regarding the Kalaeloa Home Lands Solar, LLC proposal to build a photovoltaic electrical solar farm on a parcel of land owned by the State of Hawaii Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, in Kalaeloa.

November 3

The next HCDA Board meetings will be held. For more information on the public hearings, board meetings or about HCDA visit dbedt.hawaii.gov/hcda.

What's cooking?

By Craig Nakamoto

This recipe was shared with me by a friend and former coworker at MDX Hawaii, Inc. She was integral to the provider relations department, often working with the medical providers and their staff on events. Everyone called her, "Mel", but her real name is, "Melody". I think her real name befits her personality as she always worked harmoniously with the medical providers and their staff.

1 small roasted beet 1 15 oz can chickpeas, drained Juice of 1 lemon, + zest
Salt and black pepper to taste 2 cloves garlic, or to taste ¼ c. extra virgin olive oil
Garnished with olive oil, paprika, hot chili flakes and parsley – to your liking

Preheat oven to 375 degrees, wash and remove stem. Drizzle beet with olive or avocado oil, wrap tightly with foil, and roast for one hour. Beet should be tender. Cool to room temperature.

Peel and quarter. Place it in your food processor or blender. Add remaining ingredients except for olive oil and blend until smooth. Drizzle in olive oil. Taste and adjust seasoning as needed. If it's too thick, add a bit of water. Add a splash of balsamic vinegar for a kick. Serve on crackers, vegetables or in sandwiches. Will keep in the refrigerator for about a week.

Beet Hummus Dip



2 T. tahini
Balsamic Vinegar to taste