

Whitmore Food Hub Master Plan Update and Food Production Warehouse Proof of Concept Study

This Request for Information (RFI) is intended to inform the University of Hawai'i Community Design Center (UHCDC) and the State of Hawai'i Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC) on the needs and interests of potential users of the proposed Whitmore Community Food Hub Complex (WCFH), TMKs (1) 7-1-002:009, 004 (POR.), 022, 023 (Figure 1) on the island of O'ahu.

Who is requesting this information?

The ADC, established in 1994, facilitates and provides direction for diversification of Hawai'i's agricultural industry. ADC's goals include: 1) transitioning former plantation land and water systems for diversified agriculture; 2) initiating development of facilities and providing support as necessary for successful diversified agriculture; and 3) providing solutions to certain bottleneck issues facing the agriculture industry.

UHCDC is a collective of University of Hawai'i faculty, staff, and allied professionals across university departments and disciplines, assisted by student interns and recent graduates. UHCDC provides a platform for collaboration on public interest built environment work.

Background

The Whitmore Community Food Hub Complex (WCFH) is proposed on the parcel currently occupied by the Whitmore Agricultural Tech Park, formerly the Dole Company Operation Facility, south of Whitmore Village. ADC owns and manages the properties which will support the proposed WCFH. While ADC is the managing agency of the Whitmore Project, they are also partnering with several community, county, state, and federal agencies/organizations for the successful implementation of this project. The goals for the project, established by ADC are:

1. To demonstrate that farming is an attractive profession that can be revenue generating and can allow farmers the ability to live and work in Hawai'i;
2. To create synergy and scale by providing a food processing facility that results in reducing the overall costs of farming and ensures supportive systems and activities become efficient;

3. To develop a comprehensive, economically sustainable facility for farmers that supports several stages of agricultural production including farms, packing and processing facilities, distribution systems, infrastructure and water, public-private partnerships and long-term investments.

In 2019, an [Environmental Assessment](#) was approved for the project's master plan, which takes a phased approach to development. In 2021, UHDCDC was contracted by ADC to update the existing master plan to reflect any changes related to evolving discussions across agencies, to seek additional input from agricultural and neighborhood stakeholders, and to develop more detailed information needed to guide future funding for site, infrastructure, and capital improvements. This RFI is part of UHDCDC's effort to move the project forward.



Figure 1: Location of proposed Whitmore Community Food Hub Complex

Purpose

The purpose of this RFI is to solicit feedback related to the proposed community food hub to be located at Whitmore, O'ahu. Specific target respondents include farmers, current and potential future tenants, producers, distributors, agricultural service and support providers, and other stakeholders. Information is being requested through a short 7-10 minute digital survey, with the option of participating in 45-minute focus groups.

The scope of information requested in the survey includes both broad needs and specific programmatic, infrastructural, and financial requirements. Questions cover topics related to food preparation, processing, storing, packaging, distribution, business incubation, and other operations. This information will be used to develop a food hub model that best addresses the needs of the agricultural community and respects the interests of the surrounding neighborhood. This is solely a preliminary request for information and not a solicitation for tenants, vendors or proposals. Participation in this RFI does not represent any commitment to the project.

Request for Information Categories

This RFI is organized into two sections:

- Section 1: General Business Data - Information relating to the respondent's operation and interests.
- Section 2: Functional/Programmatic Data - Information relating to the specific use of space.

How to respond

Please respond to the RFI through the survey linked below. If you need the survey translated to another language or format, please let us know. This survey will be open until **Sunday, October 31, 2021 at 5pm HST**. In appreciation of your time and participation, survey respondents will be entered to win one of three \$50 gift cards.

[Click Here for the Whitmore Community Food Hub Complex Survey](#)

We would like to learn more!

We are also looking for individuals willing to participate in focus groups to gather more detailed feedback. Please email UHCDC at uhcdc@hawaii.edu to indicate your willingness to participate with FOCUS GROUP in the subject line.

Please direct all questions regarding this RFI or the survey to uhcdc@hawaii.edu. Printed copies can also be mailed upon request.

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