

Shall the Authority Accept the Determination of Finding of No Significant Impact for the Final Environmental Assessment Prepared for the Innovation Block at Lot C (Tax Map Key: 2-1-015: 052) Master Plan?

Staff Report
January 6, 2016

Background: The Hawaii Community Development Authority (“HCDA”) has been considering the development of the 5.5-acre site, referred to as Lot “C” located in the Kakaako Makai Area of the Kakaako Community Development District. Information on development plans for Lot C (see Exhibit A for a conceptual master plan) was provided to the Authority and discussed on January 2014, May 2014, September 2014, October 2014, and October 2015. In November 2015, the Authority authorized the Executive Director to prepare and release a Request for Proposal for a civic/mixed-use commercial development on Lot C including Sandbox for the High Technology Development Corporation (“HTDC”). The phased development will improve the entire parcel with the initial phase being a collaboration between the HTDC, the HCDA, and a private entity.

As required by Hawaii Revised Statutes (“HRS”) §343-5(a) for projects that propose use of State lands or funds, an Environmental Assessment (“EA”) has been prepared for the proposed Innovation Block at Lot C Master Plan.

Discussion: The proposed development is anticipated to include the following uses which are described under the EA:

- Entrepreneurs’ Sandbox/Collaboration Center,
- Innovation Hale,
- Kewalo Incubation Center,
- Learning Center, and
- Regional Parking Garage including parking for John A. Burns School of Medicine (“JABSOM”) and University of Hawaii Cancer Center.

In September 2015, the HCDA transmitted a Draft EA and Anticipated Finding of No Significant Impact (“DEA-AFONSI”) for the proposed development to the Office of Environmental Quality Control. The DEA-AFONSI was published in the Environmental Notice on September 23, 2015. Comments received are addressed in the Final Environmental Assessment (“FEA”) which is provided on CD-ROM as Exhibit B. The proposed project is not expected to have a significant cumulative effect upon the

environment. Primary impacts of the project's proposed actions are short term and would result from construction activities such as dust, noise, and traffic. The Makai Area Conceptual Master Plan (see Exhibit C, provided on CD-ROM) adopted by the Authority in 2011 indicates JABSOM Parking facility and Future Public Improvement on Lot C. The proposed uses on Lot C are consistent with the Makai Area Conceptual Master Plan. The proposed uses are also consistent with the Makai Area Plan and Rules as well as the City and County of Honolulu's Primary Urban Center Plan.

Per Hawaii Administrative Rules ("HAR") §11-200-11.2, the HCDA has the authority to make a determination on the FEA as the approving agency. Applying the significance criteria of §11-200-12, HAR, the HCDA can issue a notice of determination for the FEA either noting that the proposed action may have a significant effect or is not likely to have a significant effect. A determination of significant effect would serve as an Environmental Impact Statement preparation notice, in accordance with §11-200-9, HAR. A determination of not likely having a significant effect would serve as a negative declaration in accordance with §11-200-9, HAR.

Section 11-200-12, HAR, provides that in considering the significance of potential environmental effects, the approving agency shall consider the sum of effects on the quality of the environment, and shall evaluate the overall and cumulative effects of the proposed action. The FEA adequately responds to each of the required criteria of significance, and it is reasonable for the HCDA to determine that the proposed Innovation Block at Lot C Master Plan will not have a significant effect on the environment, warranting a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Authority accept a determination of Finding of No Significant Impact for the Final Environmental Assessment for the proposed Innovation Block at Lot C (Tax Map Key: 2-1-015: 052) Master Plan, in accordance with Chapter 343, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

Attachments: Exhibit A – Conceptual Site Plan
Exhibit B – Final Environmental Assessment
Exhibit C – Makai Area Conceptual Master Plan