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Project Name
Transfer of the Kaka'ako Makai Park Lands to the City and County of Honolulu
Do you support or oppose?
Support
Comment
<p>We have been struggling to get help from HCDA and the State to help mitigate some of the problems we are suffering from primarily due to the homeless occupying the parks for many years now. HPD Community Policing was a tremendous help to us at first when the Center was surrounded by homeless encampments, but since enforcement and jurisdiction has been clearly designated as a State responsibility now, we have been ignored and even retaliated against by enforcement from the Sheriff's Office. The parks are badly in need of maintenance and it is frustrating for us to have children be viciously attacked by mosquitoes, chased by feral cats & chickens, or jumped on or bitten by unleashed dogs in order to get to the Center. We are optimistic that with park maintenance transferred to the City, some of these problems can be alleviated.</p>
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Aloha! I am writing to express my support for the transfer of the Kaka'ako Makai Parks to the City and County of Honolulu. Over 20 years ago we were approached by the Waihee Administration with the invitation for the children's museum to become the anchor tenant in what was then the newly developing Kaka'ako Waterfront Park.

While the task of raising the funds needed to transform the old city incinerator was daunting, the promise of having dedicated park lands in the middle of downtown Honolulu - where Hawaii's families could enjoy outdoor educational activities in a safe and clean park near the shoreline - was too promising for us to ignore.

After raising \$15 million we opened the new Children's Discovery Center in 1998, and our attendance quickly rose to over 125,000 visitors annually. We hosted many events in the park that were enthusiastically supported by the community for almost 15 years. Then, when Kaka'ako Park became a virtual "safe zone" for the homeless encampments, and the Center was surrounded by tents, violence, theft, vandalism, etc. things reached a crisis point for us forcing us to consider closing our doors.

Sadly, in spite of recent efforts, the encampments are building up again in Kaka'ako parks, and we are deeply concerned about how rapidly they are becoming entrenched once again in the area. As if that were not enough, we also now have rats, feral cats living in our outdoor storage areas and fecal contamination everywhere, not to mention the feral chickens and unleashed dogs that continue to threaten the safety of the small children.

Most distressing, the mosquito population here has become extremely problematic, and we have to find a way to protect our children from being swarmed by and bitten when they come to the Center. We've consulted with Department of Health which has indicated that the breeding grounds, while not on our property, need to be taken care of immediately.

Most people are not aware that we lease the land that we've built the Center on, and the Hawaii Community Development Authority (HCDA) is our landlord. The public, thinking we are responsible for the parking lots continues to implore us to do something about the problems in the area. Having said that, the confusion over jurisdiction in the between city and state, HPD and the Sheriff's Office has left us abandoned and forgotten, with nowhere to turn.

We've tried to address the issues surrounding the Discovery Center in the most discrete and sensitive way. As a nonprofit organization, it has been a travesty for us to have to allocate precious resources (human and financial) for repairs, maintenance and replacement of equipment that has been broken or vandalized over the years. We have to raise funds to support our operations, which is difficult a task in itself, and now one deputy sheriff continues to issue tickets to parents who come to drop off family members in our loading zone area at the front of the Center. Targeting the Center for enforcement seems ludicrous to me. The challenges seem endless and change is badly needed. Perhaps transferring maintenance of the Park Lands to the City will help.

In spite of all of this, the public has implored us to say open. I am proud of what we have been able to accomplish and remain optimistic we will get the help that we've so desperately needed for way too long. Our staff has been extraordinarily dedicated to providing outstanding educational programs for those families who continue to come because they love the Center and benefit from our programs. For us to continue serving them, we need help in addressing the problems in Kaka'ako parks. We appreciate your consideration regarding our concerns. Mahalo!

Loretta Yajima,

Chair, Board of Directors & CEO

Hawaii Children's Discovery Center

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Possible Transfer of Kaka'ako Makai Park Lands to the City and County of Honolulu



Virginia Hinshaw <vhinshaw@hawaii.edu>

Mon 4/2, 11:27 AM

DBEDT HCDA Contact; Jerris Hedges <jerris@hawaii.edu>; +1 more

Reply all

Aloha! I strongly **support** the transfer of the Kaka'ako Makai Park Lands to the City and County of Honolulu.

We have been struggling to get **actions** from HCDA and the State regarding the problem of homeless occupying the parks for many years now. I am more confident that the City and County will take actions that are needed to enable our citizens to once again be able to use these parks. Currently, mauka Gateway Park is totally occupied by the homeless and they are also camping on Ilalo St., plus there are four cars in parking spaces on Ilalo occupied by homeless camping in them.

The **health and safety issues** resulting from the homeless camping throughout Kaka'ako are significant (fecal contamination, flies and mosquitoes, loose dogs who bark and bite, violence, damage to equipment for electricity and water, etc.) – this situation represents a major problem to anyone who works, lives or tries to play in this area. Many community members are sadly afraid to come into this area and participate in the educational programs available both at JABSOM and the Children's Discovery Center – that is really an unacceptable situation.

There is also a **need for HPD** to have the authority to deal with the homeless who repeatedly occupy (and reoccupy) the parks, sidewalks and bus stops in this area. I also hope that will be addressed. Mahalo for your attention to this important issue. Virginia S. Hinshaw

Virginia S. Hinshaw

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**Hawaii Community Development Authority
Regular Meeting
Wednesday, April 4, 2018
Kaka'ako Agenda**

**Possible Transfer of Kaka'ako Makai Park Lands to the City and County
Testimony in Strong Opposition**

Submitted by Michelle S. Matson
Founding Member, Kaka'ako Makai Community Planning Advisory Council

The Hawaii Community Development Authority (HCDA) possesses important oversight and significant responsibilities in the careful planning of the Kaka'ako Community Development District's stable growth and successful future. The HCDA must continue to ensure that these plans and their established land use guiding principles, practices and protections are met in the greater public interest.

In recent years, the HCDA has been successfully restructured to become representative of and responsive to the community that it was established to benefit in the interests of both the residents and many small businesses within this growing urban community. We must ensure that the HCDA is enabled to continue this important work for Kaka'ako's future in its present capacity and with the intended exemplary professional capabilities of its Board.

Today the HCDA members representing the Kaka'ako Community Development District make important and well-deliberated decisions for the future of both Kaka'ako Mauka and Kaka'ako Makai, with their now proven fair and responsive guidance for this community district. Yet much more of such significant work remains to be accomplished by the HCDA to ensure Kaka'ako's successful future well past 2030.

The HCDA's continued and consistent oversight and guidance on the appropriate implementation of the **Kaka'ako Makai Master Plan** and its public shoreline parks is essential for Kaka'ako's future in the greater public interest:

- The Kaka'ako Makai public shoreline parks are vital for the health and welfare of Kaka'ako's growing population. The HCDA's continued obligation to properly plan and ensure dedicated public parks infrastructure and facilities works hand-in-hand with the present growth of the Kaka'ako Community Development District to well past 2030.
- Also under the HCDA's jurisdiction are the Kewalo Basin fast lands and submerged lands. Kewalo Basin Harbor improvements are underway, and any disruption of this effort by uprooting the HCDA's oversight would seriously affect commercial and recreational boat owners as well as harbor leases to appropriately related businesses for accessory uses.
- Kaka'ako Makai's singular remaining historic asset, the Ala Moana Pump Station, must be restored and maintained with adaptive reuse as properly determined and protected by HCDA's oversight.

In contrast, the City and County of Honolulu is visibly staggering under the weight of parks maintenance staff deficiencies stemming from funding shortages, and the present

city administration has undertaken a bumpy trail of misguided redevelopment proposals for our treasured Honolulu parks and green open-space recreation areas, the most recent being Thomas Square, Ala Moana Park and the Ala Wai Golf Course, spurring public controversies and igniting public outcry.

Conclusively, transferring Kaka'ako Makai Park lands to the City and County is a bad idea at the wrong time.

First and foremost, Kaka'ako Waterfront Park, Kewalo Basin Park, and the Gateway Park axis are key connections within Honolulu's shoreline Lei of Green linkage from Diamond Head to Aloha Tower, and clearly these significant public shoreline green recreational open spaces must continue to be managed and maintained and by the State under the HCDA's oversight for the foreseeable future.