



On the calendar

April 5 at 9a.m.

A Public Presentation Hearing will be held on a development permit application for Launui, a proposed 486-unit residential mixed-use condominium with commercial space on the ground floor, located on the northwest corner of Ala Moana Boulevard and Ward Avenue.

April 5

The next HCDA Board meetings will follow the public hearing.

April 6 at 9 a.m.

A public Modification Hearing will be held to allow the Applicant to present its Modification Request, to allow any other party the opportunity to present their position, and to provide the general public with the opportunity to present oral and/or written testimony.

The Decision-Making Hearing will be on June 7 at 9 a.m.

For more information on this public hearing, board meeting or about HCDA visit dbedt.hawaii.gov/hcda.

Get featured?

If you want to include an event, know an individual or a business in Kaka'ako, Kalaheo or He'eia that we could feature, or just want more Community Connection, let us know by emailing us at: dbedt.hcda.contact@hawaii.gov.



Spill the Tea Cafe

The safe place for teens celebrates its first year

"My dream was to become a doctor and help kids with their mental health," wrote 15-year-old Mat, when creating a GoFund-Me account to build a teen cafe. "I told my mom (she's a therapist) that I wanted to open a teen cafe where kids could come and drink boba, hang out, and go to group therapy. This way, we could all learn to cope together. I even came up with the name myself, 'Spill the Tea Cafe!' My mom said it was a cool idea, and that I didn't have to become a doctor to make this dream come true!"

Spill the Tea Cafe is one-year-old this month. The safe, inclusive space for at-risk youth to receive free mental health services, including individual and group therapy sessions, is also a place to hang out with kids who may be going through similar challenges.

The Youth PrideFest in 2022 was one of the many successful highlights of their first year. "We had performances by our youth, tie dye art, and lots of BOBA," said Kiki Lúgaro, the Office Manager at Spill the Tea Cafe. "It was such a fun and empowering experience for everyone who attended. It was also a great opportunity for us to connect with the LGBTQ+ community in Hawai'i and show our support for kids that are placed at higher risk when it comes to mental health challenges. This is due to the discrimination our kids face at school, home, church, and sports."

"What sets us apart is our focus on marketing to teens and creating a space that is truly by and for them," said Lúgaro. "We listen to the teens about what they want and need in a mental health clinic and do not make any decisions without consulting with our teen advisory council."

"We strive to provide a destigmatized space where kids can hang out, enjoy free boba,



play games on our PS5 or foosball table, and even browse books in our library. By creating a space that is welcoming and fun, we hope to remove some of the barriers that teens may face when seeking mental health services and create a community where they feel heard, supported, and empowered."

When asked why they serve coffee and tea, offer games and a study space to their clients free of charge, Lúgaro replied, "Mat actually thought of it. He wanted to create

a space that was fun and inviting for teens, and he wanted to have boba in the cafe. He also believes that mental health is about more than just therapy sessions - it's about creating a sense of community and connection. By offering games and other activities, we hope to create a space where teens feel comfortable to just be themselves."

"We hope to make mental health services more accessible and reduce the rates of suicide among at-risk youth in Hawai'i," said Lúgaro.

"The most powerful highlight this year by far is the numerous thank you notes and messages from kids telling us that we have helped them and even saved their life," shared Lúgaro. "It reminds us of why we do this work even when the road ahead can feel very long at times."

To learn more visit www.spilltheteacafe.org, email: spilltheteacafehi@gmail.com or call 808.797.4970.

Launiu

A proposed residential community in Kaka'ako

Lush and sprawling coconut groves have long been the iconic image of serene Hawai'i living. The coconut grove and swaying fronds that graced the estate of the Ward 'ohana, provided shade as a respite from the sun, as well as practical needs of living and comforting rustling sounds caused by the cooling trade winds.

Launiu means coconut tree leaves, and is the name a proposed development project.

Currently a vacant surface parking lot located at 928 Ala Moana Boulevard, a residential community is being proposed by Victoria Ward, Limited, consisting of residential condominiums, retail space, recreational facilities, and off-street parking.

"In harmony with the Ward Neighborhood Master Plan," said Doug Johnstone, president of the Hawai'i region of the Howard Hughes Corporation in their development permit application. "The Launiu achieves the envisioned 'placemaking' and pedestrian activation using a variety of approaches previously recognized by HCDA and successfully employed in other areas of Ward Village, including wide sidewalks, shade trees and landscaping, minimal curb cuts, public art, ground-floor commercial space, podium-level homes, and aesthetically interesting liner facades to screen the podium and parking garage."

Commercial space on the ground floor of this project will activate and add visual interest to the corner of Ward Avenue and Ala Moana Boulevard, creating a welcoming gateway into the area.

The application seeks two modifications. The first is to create a



65-foot podium, and the second is for the podium to occupy the Ward Avenue and Ala Moana Boulevard view corridor setbacks (See image).

Ground floor retail space and podium-level homes on the second through sixth floors will screen the podium parking garage along Ward Avenue and extend around Ala Moana Boulevard and Auahi Street to activate and add visual interest on the three sides of the Launiu project.

The construction of the Launiu project will have a positive impact on Hawai'i's economy, accounting for an approximate \$690 million output, of which \$233 million would be in workers' earnings. The project estimates it will create over 780 jobs in the first year of construction and over 900 jobs, each year, for the two years following. The operations and maintenance over a 30-year period are anticipated to generate, in present value of constant 2022 dollars approximately: \$189.2 million in output, \$62.7 million in workers' earnings, \$11.4 million in state tax revenue, 22 permanent jobs, and \$123.4 million in real property tax.

Spring is here!

For many spring cleaning is that annual time we give our home a good cleaning and purge unused items.

Help save the environment. Instead of adding your gently used items to a landfill this year, we hope that you will consider donating items. Below are few suggestions of places where you can donate various items from clothing to windows and doors.

Habitat for Humanity Leeward ReStore
91-291 Kalaeloa Blvd. Kapolei
808-682-8411
<https://leewardhabitat.org/shop-the-restore>

Re-Use Hawaii
200 Keawe Street, Honolulu
808-537-2228
reusehawaii.org/donate-materials

United Cerebral Palsy
414 Kuwili Street, Honolulu
808-532-6744 <https://ucpickup.org/>.

Ladies, if you are finding your spring wardrobe a little thin, a coworker recently introduced us to Dress for Success, a YWCA program that is about more than a new outfit. Their Pre-Loved Clothing sale is free and open to the public, monthly at the Richards Street YWCA, Elizabeth Fuller Hall.

The Honolulu Dress for Success program has been helping women find stability through employment, advance in their careers, and achieve economic independence since 2003. Services are provided free of charge, and 100% of proceeds from the sales go directly toward the women's workforce development program.

To learn more visit <https://www.ywcaoahu.org/dress-for-success-honolulu-sale>.

Like new clothing donations are accepted on Mondays and Thursdays from 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. at 1040 Richards Street. Call 808-538-7061 about dropping-off donations.

For more information about the YWCA visit www.ywcaoahu.org.

Pre-Loved Clothing sale dates:

April 24 and 26
May 23 and 24
June 28 and 29

