

**KIRRA DOWNING DIRECT TESTIMONY**

**PRESENTATION HEARING**

**Land Block 1, Project 6 (Mahana Ward Village) (KAK 23-027)**

**Q Please state your name, place of employment, and position.**

A Kirra Downing, VP of Communications, DTL Hawaii.

**Q How long have you held this position?**

A Nearly 8 years, since September 2015.

**Q Please describe your educational background and professional experience.**

A Please see my resume, marked as an exhibit in this proceeding.

**Q Please tell us about your company, DTL Hawaii, and what it does.**

A DTL Hawaii (DTL) is a multidisciplinary Hawaiian strategy studio that helps businesses, governments, organizations, and communities navigate change. DTL has built a respected reputation within the community as a creative interpreter of culture through planning and design. DTL's deep understanding and knowledge of Hawaii's sensibilities and sensitivities has led to it successfully facilitating dialogs, bridging perspectives and developing appropriate collaborative solutions to both challenging issues and exciting opportunities within our community.

**Q Please describe the assistance that Victoria Ward, Limited (VWL) requested with respect to this project, Mahana Ward Village.**

A VWL requested that DTL present name candidates and recommendations for the Block N-West project, including the name that was ultimately chosen, Mahana Ward Village. VWL also requested that DTL describe VWL's approach and commitment to integrating cultural narratives and elements within Ward Village developments, including Mahana Ward Village.

**Q Why is it important to treat the process of developing, bestowing, and accepting the name for a project with respect and care?**

A The Hawaiian word for name is *inoa*, and Hawaiians have long considered it to be a person's most important possession. It is believed that a name has *mana* (an influencing power or lifeforce) and because of this, the name becomes a living entity and causes beneficial outcomes for the individual. This is why new names were traditionally chosen only after careful thought and consultation.

**Q Please describe the process of how you developed the name Mahana Ward Village.**

A The factors we use to arrive at the name candidates included reflecting on the significance of naming; evaluating name candidates based on the qualities of an effective name; evaluating the distinctiveness and ease of name candidates; evaluating the meaning, depth, positivity/negativity and ownability of name candidates; considering names inspired by the place or design of the building to be named; considering names inspired by VWL's brand messaging; and an overall discussion of these factors with VWL.

**Q What is the meaning and significance of the name Mahana, and how is the name reflected in the project's design and integration within Ward Village?**

A Mahana Ward Village will welcome area residents and visitors alike at the mauka side of Ward Village. Uniquely situated at the corner of Ward Avenue and Halekauwila, these residences sit at the mauka crown of Victoria Ward Park.

Mahana, meaning warmth or warm feeling, and that of which the rising and setting sun exude, evokes the hospitality of the former estate of the Ward 'ohana, Old Plantation, which was known as a place of hospitality and welcoming. Mahana Ward Village will draw color, material and pattern inspirations from the natural light, warmth of the sun, the vibrant evening tones of sunset, and the stories of place and cultural tales of the significance of the sun. These inspirations join together to evoke feelings of friendship, home, and community.

In addition, Mahana Ward Village's colonnade is inspired by a hybrid of native palm motif and the Hawai'i State Capitol's organic columns, creating a unique composition that honors past and present.

**Q Please describe VWL's approach and commitment to integrating cultural narratives and elements within Ward Village developments, including Mahana Ward Village.**

A VWL demonstrates a commitment to respect and bring forward the history and culture of this special place by integrating cultural narratives and elements throughout Ward Village in several ways.

#### *Naming*

The naming of Mahana reflects the deep respect and gratitude for the project's location at the mauka side of Ward Village, and evokes the serenity and history of place, including, the hospitality of the former estate of the Ward 'ohana, Old Plantation, and the stories of place and cultural tales of the significance of the sun.

Likewise, other developments within Ward Village, such as The Launiu, Ulana Ward Village, the Ka La'i o Kukulua'e'o Park, and Kalae, which were name candidates and

recommendations provided by DTL, were selected by VWL to recognize and celebrate the rich history and culture of this special place.

### *Location and Open Spaces*

Mahana Ward Village will be located within Land Block 1 in the Auahi neighborhood. Within Land Block 1, Mahana Ward Village will be bounded by Ward Avenue to the northwest, a HART station easement to the north, Queen Street to the northeast, 'A'ali'i to the southeast, and the future Halekauwila private driveway to the southwest.

Mahana Ward Village will have convenient access from Halekauwila Street, which will provide a direct route through Ward Village and connect the greater Kaka'ako community via Halekauwila Street west of Ward Avenue.

Mahana Ward Village's location at the corner of Ward Avenue and the Halekauwila corridor, within walking distance of the expanded Victoria Ward Park, and orientation which enhances mauka-makai views, is designed to allow residents and visitors to experience the different open green spaces and connect with the 'āina and one another in a way that is meaningful. Shade trees and lush landscaping featuring native plantings and flowering trees create a comfortable, walkable atmosphere for residents and visitors.

Ward Village, as a whole, is projected to provide nearly 9 acres of open space and nearly 8-1/2 acres of public facilities for community gatherings and events – all secured and maintained without expense to the public.

### *Building Location and Orientation*

The building's location and orientation were carefully considered to preserve mauka-makai views. Mauka-makai views are important for visual aesthetics, and important to maintain metaphoric connectivity and balance that is and remains important to Hawaiian culture and the people of Hawai'i.

### *Use of Storytelling to Integrate Cultural Narratives and Elements*

The Ward Village Neighborhood is a part of the former Ward Estate which extended from Thomas Square to the shoreline. The over 100 acres of lands in the Ward Estate generated income from various goods and crops, such as coconut (niu), makaloa grass, cattle, horses, taro, kiawe firewood, fish, and salt from the estate's salt pans. Thus, the lands underlying the current Ward Village Neighborhood have a long history of productivity, culture, and community.

Mahana Ward Village is thoughtfully located among network of parks and open spaces through various parks provided through Ward MP, creating a sense of community. Mahana Ward Village is within walking distance to the Victoria Ward Park (mauka and makai), which is planned to integrate cultural narratives through storytelling elements

inspired by the former estate of the Ward 'ohana, Old Plantation, which may include lyric sidewalks with ample shade and lush landscaping, play structures inspired by palai ferns, pergola structures inspired by the shade provided by waving palms, seating terraces in the makai park incorporating horses or cattle, and native flowers and flowering trees.

Mahana Ward Village is also within walking distance of the 30,000 square foot Ka La'i o Kukuluāe'o Park, which is under construction with Ulana Ward Village at the makai entrance to Ward Village, and will feature an active keiki playground and recreational lawn area.

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