

**KA'IULANI SODARO DIRECT TESTIMONY**

**MODIFICATION HEARING**

**Land Block 4, Project 2 (Block E) (KAK 23-038)**

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

A Ka'iulani Sodaro, Senior Vice President, Planning and Development, Victoria Ward, Limited ("VWL").

**Q Please briefly summarize the modifications requested for Block E.**

A Consistent with the Mauka Area Plan, the Ward Neighborhood Master Plan ("Ward MP") and previously-approved developments both in Ward Village and in the Kaka'ako Mauka Area, VWL is requesting two modifications to the Vested Rules for Block E's podium:

1) Increase the Block E platform height from forty-five (45) feet to sixty-five (65) feet; and

2) Accommodate a continuous building façade on the platform above twenty (20) feet (instead of the 1:1 setback) along the Ala Mona Boulevard view corridor setback.

Both modifications, among other benefits, facilitate the provision of ground floor pedestrian activation, and additional commercial, public and open space in and around Block E.

Both modifications are contemplated by the Mauka Area Plan, the Ward MP, and/or the Vested Rules, and are also consistent with other developments in Ward Village and Kaka'ako.

There are no requested modifications to the required platform yard setbacks, and no requested modifications to Block E's tower, including to the tower height and view corridor setbacks.

**Q What are the public benefits from the requested modifications?**

A The modifications are essential to implementing the mixed-use live, work, play vision of the Mauka Area Plan. Both modifications to the platform allow additional volume, and allow the bulk of the parking structure to be pulled up and away from the street, therefore facilitating the vertical mixing of uses throughout the building, including approximately 15,000 square feet of commercial space along Auahi Street (combined with Block D) accessible through the retail colonnade.

As will be discussed by other witnesses, the modifications to Block E are particularly important to providing these street level retail spaces and pedestrian features, given the compact site and various constraints within Land Block 4.

A helpful illustration of how the modifications facilitate the transfer of volume within the platform to facilitate commercial uses and increase publicly-accessible space at ground level is shown on Exhibit 31 of the application (Exhibit 1 in this proceeding). The left illustration on Exhibit 31 depicts Block E without the modifications (and as permitted by right under the Vested Rules). The middle illustration shows the massing based on commitments in the Ward MP, and the right illustration shows Block E's proposed design with the modifications. The modifications permit the additional ground floor commercial space within the podium, as well as the increased space at ground level.

Exhibits 33 through 36 of the application provide street-level depictions of Block E comparing the platform as permitted by the Vested Rules and as proposed with the modifications. As these depictions illustrate, the modifications result in more green space and pedestrian activation at ground level as contemplated by the Mauka Area Plan and the Ward MP. Finally, increasing the platform height avoids the need for subsurface excavation associated with underground parking structures in an area with known subsurface sensitivities, including proximity to the water table.

The second requested modification to eliminate the 1:1 setback along Ala Moana Boulevard (in addition to increasing the volume in the platform), also creates a continuous platform façade that permits a stronger definition of the streetscape along Ala Moana Boulevard. This modification, which was proposed in the Ward MP, and is consistent with other projects in Ward Village (and within Kaka'ako), in turn, permits much more flexibility in the design of the platform, allowing the greater use of screening and architectural elements to activate the street front and provide a smaller sense of scale to enhance pedestrian experiences along the landscaped path fronting Ala Moana Boulevard.

Exhibits 33 through 36 of the application, for example, illustrate the additional architectural elements and designs that will be applied to the continuous façade of Block E's platform, creating a much more varied and interesting streetscape to complement the Diamond Head Plaza Park, Block D, and the IBM Building.

Importantly, VWL is not requesting any modifications to Block E's tower, including the tower height, or the seventy-five (75) foot tower setback required on view corridor streets, and Block E platform will comply with the fifteen (15) foot front yard setback required by the Vested Rules. The tower and yard setbacks (along with the mauka-makai orientation of the long side of the building tower) will help to maintain mauka-makai views and the enhance the Kamake'e Street view corridor.

As such, these design modifications provide significant community and public benefits, including facilitating ground floor pedestrian activation, commercial uses within the

podium, substantial publicly-accessible space in and around the development, and a strong and interesting streetscape that preserves important view planes at this key gateway to Ward Village and Auahi Street.

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