

FOR INFORMATION

I. SUBJECT

Discussion and Presentation by HCDA Staff Regarding the Planning, Design, and Construction of Community Facilities at the Mother Waldron Neighborhood Park, 525 Coral Street, Honolulu, Hawaii, 96813, and Further Described by Oahu Tax Map Key No. 2-1-051:005 that could include spaces for organizations such as the Honolulu Kupuna Shed Hawai'i, a non-profit corporation and Section 501(c)(3) Tax-Exempt Organization.

II. BACKGROUND

One of the agency's one-year goals for the Kaka'ako community development district is as follows:

“Public Facilities Improvement Projects in the Kaka'ako District

Target Phase: Ongoing

Priority: Medium

Strategy: The HCDA has funds in its public facilities subaccount that should be used to fund public facilities improvements within the Kaka'ako district. Identify small or middle sized, highly visible improvement projects that will benefit the community.”

Although well-used at times, Mother Waldron Neighborhood Park is still beset by reports of illegal activity and homeless encampments. One strategy to improve the safety and overall experience for park users is to add facilities and programming that increase the community presence within the park. Studies have identified close relationships between the level of park usage and the perception of safety, and that greater park usage is associated with safer park environments.¹

Staff are exploring the idea to place a new senior community center and workshop within Mother Waldron Neighborhood Park as a way to bring additional activity to the park and provide desired community facilities. Staff are also looking for potential community organizations to establish programming and help to steward the park. An example of such an organization is the Honolulu Kupuna Shed Hawai'i (“Kupuna Shed”), which is a community nonprofit that provides spaces for seniors and individuals of all ages to pursue creative interests and socialize with others.² Since 2016, the Kupuna Shed has provided workshop spaces, tools, and programming to support individual and group projects that help address isolation and loneliness. The Kupuna Shed is also part of the International Men's Shed Organization, which includes nearly 3,000 similar facilities in 12 countries throughout the world. Recent projects undertaken by Kupuna Shed

¹ <https://www.nrpa.org/contentassets/f768428a39aa4035ae55b2aaff372617/park-safety.pdf>

² <https://honolulukupunashed.org/>

members have included making outdoor picnic tables for elementary schools to use during the Covid-19 pandemic, cutting boards, playhouses, repairing used bicycles, and donating items to organizations in the community.

III. DISCUSSION

The Kupuna Shed is currently relocating its workshop facilities from a warehouse in Honolulu Harbor that was provided by the State of Hawaii Department of Transportation (“DOT”), to a temporary space located at Lana Lane in Kaka‘ako. The Kupuna Shed is still looking for a permanent facility, and HCDA staff are exploring an idea to provide a site in Mother Waldron Neighborhood Park. Funding for the construction of the facility would be required from the Legislature, however, in the form of capital improvement program funds.

Staff intend to commence with the planning process, in anticipation of the possibility of receiving construction funding from the Legislature. The planning process will include consultation with community stakeholders. The Mother Waldron Playground is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and any new facilities would need to be designed to be compatible with the existing cultural landscape and historic structures. In addition, staff are also analyzing the compatibility of the workshop uses with the park environment.

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