



Kaka'ako Makai, then and now

Planning for the future

Much of Kaka'ako was once a swampland submerged in water. Over the years, this swampland has been filled, developed, and then redeveloped.

In the late 1800s, Kaka'ako's industrial land use began with the Honolulu Iron Works, which employed 120 people and was in the business of building sugar mills. Stores, churches, and schools were built.

The site known as Fisherman's Point in Kaka'ako became the Kaka'ako Leper Branch Hospital, where Hansen's Disease patients were treated before being transferred to Moloka'i.

The historic coastal "Beach Road" ran along the shoreline, with the ocean reef immediately makai, and on the mauka side of the road were fishponds, taro patches and other crops. In 1899, the road was renamed Ala Moana.

Fort Armstrong was built on landfill over the Ka'ākaukui reef in 1907 to protect Honolulu Harbor, is where Pier 1 is today.

By the 1920s Kaka'ako was home to many of the city's poor, working-class and seamen. Commercial activities burgeoned as they sprung up to serve the area. Kewalo Basin was dredged, adding to the landfill at Kaka'ako Makai. The wharf and channel were completed in 1925, easing overcrowding by the fishing fleet at Honolulu Harbor.

During World War II, Kaka'ako's entire fishing fleet and tuna cannery were taken over by the military. After the War, the mauka area was zoned industrial and most of the population moved away.

Kaka'ako Makai became an enormous trash dump with its first incinerator built in 1905, and its second built in 1930. Incinerator spoils and other debris continued to add to the landfill that created Kaka'ako Makai.

In this photo from November 1943 of the Kaka'ako waterfront, "You can actually see Aloha Tower at the top," said Ryan Tam, HCDA's Planning Director. "The former incinerator is now the Children's Discovery Center, at the bottom corner (It opened in 1995 and was expanded in 2008). This whole area is landfill. Just mauka of Ala Moana Boulevard you can see housing in the image."

In the 1970s, members of the Legislature considered Kaka'ako to be blighted. It created the Hawai'i Community Development Authority (HCDA) and the Kaka'ako redevelopment efforts began.

Originally, HCDA's jurisdiction was mauka of Ala Moana. In 1982 the Legislature added the area makai of Ala Moana Boulevard, and Governor Ariyoshi signed the Kaka'ako Plan and Rules into law calling it "a comprehensive, yet flexible document which will permit, and encourage, timely redevelopment of the area."

The plans for the makai area included residential uses through the 1980s. However, the 1989 Waterfront Master Plan conducted by the Office of State Planning "really looked at the potential for significant commercial and office space as well as entertainment uses," said Tam. "At the time, residential development did not seem compatible with this vision of the waterfront due to the aircraft,



noise impacts, traffic along Ala Moana Boulevard, and inequity of higher income housing, which would likely happen to the area. I think all these things shifted the vision."

This plan included the "Lei of Green" along the waterfront.

In 1990, Kewalo Basin Park, the first in a series of parks for Kaka'ako, was completed by HCDA and opened to the public. That year, construction on Kaka'ako waterfront Park began. Its grand opening was in 1992. In 1998, the Kaka'ako Gateway Parks opened to park users.

In addition to building parks, in the 1990s and 2000s HCDA installed infrastructure, realigned roads and built affordable housing in Kaka'ako.

In 2005, the HCDA Board adopted the Makai Area Plan comprising a mix of commercial, recreational, and residential activities. HCDA then selected Alexander and Baldwin, using the state procurement process, to develop 36 acres in Kaka'ako Makai with three 20-story residential towers, retail and dining.

"This elicited strong opposition from the community and the Legislature passed a House Concurrent Resolution, which urged HCDA to terminate the development and initiate a working group," explained Tam. "Subsequently, Act 317 banded the sale of public land, and the residential development in Kaka'ako Makai."

In 2006, the Kaka'ako Community Planning Advisory Council (CPAC) was established and developed a vision for Kaka'ako Makai and 14 guiding principles, resulting in the 2011 Kaka'ako Makai Conceptual Master Plan.

In 2023, HCDA updated the Makai Area Rules to reflect Act 317 of 2006 and incorporate the community-led Kaka'ako Makai Conceptual Master Plan. It also streamlined the permitting process.

"The Conceptual Plan was adopted in 2011. Then a significant amount of land was transferred to OHA in 2012," said Craig Nakamoto, HCDA Executive Director. "Because of that land transfer, we felt there was a need to revisit the land uses in Kaka'ako Makai, and study what infrastructure improvements will be needed to support those uses."

"I feel land uses in Kaka'ako Makai should be something that arises from community engagement, planning and discussion," said Nakamoto. "And, I would like to prepare for the legislative session knowing what the community would like the future land uses of the area to be."

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On the calendar

November 6 at 9:00 a.m.

The HCDA Board meetings will be held. For more information about HCDA, the public hearings or board meetings visit <https://dbedt.hawaii.gov/hcda/>.



Ulana Top off

Ulana Ward Village, a new mixed-use high-rise development, is constructing 697 reserved housing units, retail, commercial, light-industrial space and associated off-street parking and recently topped off the condominium. Victoria Ward, Limited also plans to construct a new park there called Ka La'i o Kukuluae'o Park, where the former 'Ewa Plaza stood, adjacent to the new Ulana project. *Photos courtesy of Howard Hughes.*



Kaka'ako *continued*

As a result, HCDA will be engaging in community planning sessions regarding the Kaka'ako Community Development District Makai area, which is makai of Ala Moana Boulevard between Ala Moana Regional Park, Pier 1 and Forrest Avenue; as well as the parcel situated mauka of Piers 6 and 7.

HCDA will inform the community of the planning session schedule as soon as it's available.

Kalaeloa Improvements

The Kalaeloa Professional Center used to be the old Barbers Point Medical facility. After the base closed, Hunt Companies Hawai'i restored and upgraded the nearly 50,000 square-foot facility, creating a welcoming business center occupied completely by local tenants providing various services.

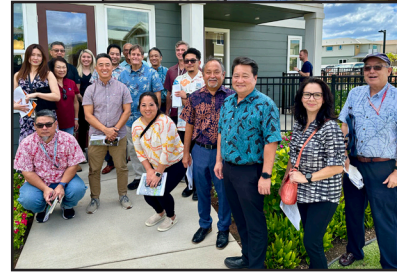
HCDA recently organized a tour of its Kalaeloa community development district and meet-up with Tony Gaston of Hunt Companies. "You guys are here experiencing something right now. A power failure. Coincidentally. Because the majority of the base is still on the navy system," he said.

"Because it is no longer an active military installation it doesn't get the same type of attention as the active military installations do, and sometimes the power goes in and out," explained Gaston. "Right now there is a power outage, it's been a couple hours now. Some of the people that work here, when that happens they go home, others are still here."

Fortunately, the 2024 Hawai'i State Legislature appropriated \$12.125 million for HCDA to upgrade the electrical system on Saratoga Avenue.

In 2020, the HCDA completed the construction of the Kalaeloa Energy Corridor, also with funds from the Hawai'i Legislature. It consisted of the construction of underground utility systems on Fort Barrette Road, down Enterprise Avenue to Midway Road, including excavating roadways and shoulders for new underground duct lines (electrical conduits) and manholes for HECO, Hawaiian Telcom and Spectrum.

"It was built to the current industry standard and was transferred to the Hawaiian Electric Company (HECO) to operate and maintain,"



explained Craig Nakamoto, executive director of HCDA.

The current \$12,125 million project to upgrade Saratoga Avenue with new electrical 12vK, will connect to the Kalaeloa Energy Corridor. Upon completion, the businesses along that street can connect to the more reliable power grid.

"Our vision is that Saratoga is the main street in Kalaeloa, an active vibrant urban community, and we are trying to make our zoning rules reinforce that," said Ryan Tam, HCDA planning director.

Aiding with the greatly needed electrical improvements in Kalaeloa, the U.S. Navy has transferred \$18 million to HCDA to begin the upgrade of electrical infrastructure, in an unprecedented partnership.

"Strategically, the Kalaeloa Airport, the film studio, and the Hawai'i Army National Guard are all on Enterprise Avenue," said Nakamoto. "And have been selected to be transferred from the Navy-owned system to HECO, in this phase."

"Navy Region Hawai'i and HCDA were able to collaborate effectively and expeditiously, and we now have a mechanism in place to continue the effort," said Rear Adm. Barnett. "This is an encouraging start, and I'm pleased to see progress through partnership."

\$50,000 donation Kalaeloa park

The Kalaeloa Heritage and Legacy Foundation shared that this past summer the Dawson 'Ohana became the Foundation's very first Kualaka'i sponsors with their \$50,000 donation toward a permanent water line. In October, they came back for their very first workday at the park. Although many shoes were sacrificed and the heat was intense, they were able accomplish a lot of work together. Many thanks to the Dawson 'Ohana!

The Kalaeloa Heritage and Legacy Foundation was established in 2011, a 501(c)3 community-based non-profit organization dedicated to preserving and protecting the Native Hawaiian cultural and historical sites of Kalaeloa through the operation and maintenance of the Kalaeloa Heritage Park.

