

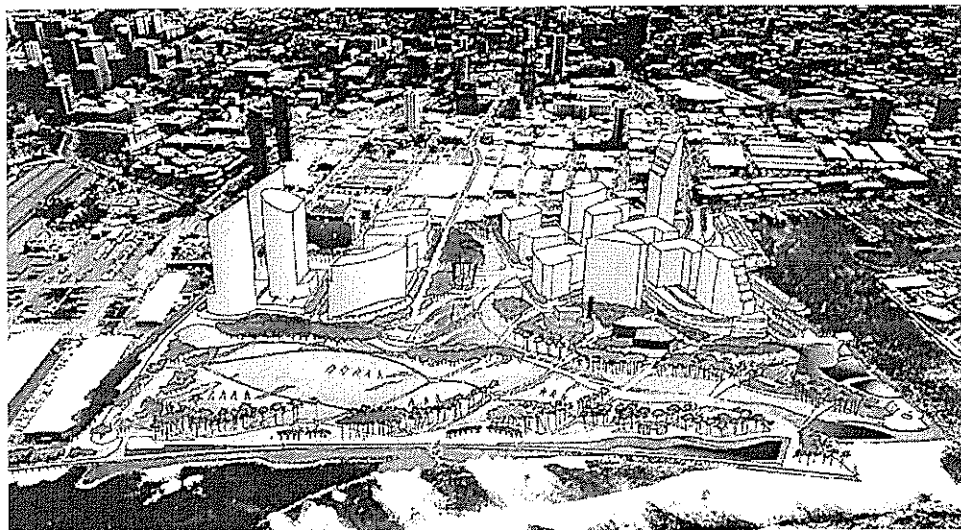
Kakaako Connection

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HCDA SEEKS PUBLIC INPUT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MASTER PLAN FOR THE KAKAOKO WATERFRONT PARK



A perspective of the Kakaako Waterfront Park as envisioned under the proposed master plan.

The Hawaii Community Development Authority's (HCDA) is soliciting public input in the development of a master plan for the Kakaako Waterfront Park. The goal of the master plan is to create a one-of-a-kind urban park that will feature a unique blending of cultural and recreational activities for Hawaii's residents and visitors. "This will be a long-term plan that the State can implement over time," states HCDA Executive Director Jan Yokota. "The plan will provide an overall structure or thematic framework for the Kakaako Waterfront Park so that new amenities, facilities and enhancements can be developed there in the coming years." With public input and suggestions, the HCDA will be working to achieve a first-rate design that appropriately sites and integrates the proposed attractions and a broad range of amenities such as water features, works of art, interpretive walks and gardens, and innovative children's play areas. The essential goal of the master plan is to create a unique urban park, one that will be an exceptional amenity and resource for the community.

A design competition for the Kakaako Waterfront Park master plan was held in September 1998. Based on the conceptual designs prepared for the competition, the firm of Wallace Roberts and Todd (WRT) was selected to prepare the final master plan. The conceptual master plan will be viewed as the foundation for the final plan to be prepared by WRT. The HCDA is currently soliciting comments and ideas on the types of amenities and activities that could be located in the Kakaako Waterfront Park to meet its goal of creating a unique urban park.

WRT selected the Hawaiian fishing net as the unifying theme for Kakaako Makai and the Kakaako Waterfront Park. The net provides a framework for both the Kakaako Waterfront Park and nearby redevelopment areas and it will allow the seamless integration of public and private areas, land and water, and recreational and cultural activities. In this

vision, the net stretches over the site, "catching" along its strands the District's major landforms, buildings and plazas, play areas, streets and paths, and the "knots" represent the potential gathering areas. The major cultural facilities are centered around the Children's Discovery Center, creating a critical mass of cultural and recreational attractions.

Proposed recreational elements of the conceptual master plan include: an Arboretum of Myths (a venue for learning about native plant species), carousel, boating lake, participatory fountain (with computerized jets), playground, play plaza (featuring oversized seashells), swimming cove, fishing pier and picnic grounds (with luau lanais). Augmenting the Children's Discovery Center, the proposed cultural elements are: a market/crafts fair (open air market space for weekend use), a Kakaako Visitor Center, hula halau (with outdoor stage suitable for weddings), a culinary center, a traditional boat building yard, art assembly area, an amphitheater (with a capacity of 5,000 people) and a secondary performance area. Other proposed elements of the plan include: 'Wing' Canopy (shade structures with built-in solar collectors for night lighting), a Kakaako Aquarium, a tidal pool, wave catcher, blow hole, tidal gauge, hala grove, wind monument and aquatic plant display.

In addition to comments on the conceptual master plan, the HCDA would like to hear your suggestions for a first phase project, one that can be developed for under \$2 million. Please send your comments to: HCDA, 677 Ala Moana Blvd., Suite 1001, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813. Fax: (808) 599-2613, e-mail: hcd@gte.net Should you have any questions, please call Susan Tamura, Project Manager, at (808) 587-2865. The HCDA is planning to finalize the master plan by the end of September 1999.

KEWALO BASIN

Oahu's Lifeline to the Sea

As the State considers development proposals for 18 acres of its urban waterfront property in Kakaako Makai, The Kakaako Connection takes a historical look at Kewalo Basin...

Since its beginnings, the Kewalo Basin harbor and waterfront have played a very important role as Oahu's lifeline to the sea. Strategically located between Waikiki and Downtown Honolulu, Kewalo Basin has provided Hawaii's people with an invaluable connection to the sea and has served as a vital access point for seagoing vessels. Over the past eight decades, the evolution of Kewalo Basin—the hub of Oahu's commercial fishing, charter sport fishing, and ocean excursion industries—has greatly contributed to the richness and vibrancy of the State economy. Combined together, these three industries have provided important services, products and employment for Hawaii's people, a significant economic element within the waterfront. Over the years, Kewalo Basin has also served as an outstanding recreational resource for residents and visitors. It is a popular site for surfing and fishing, and the park grounds have become a beautiful, scenic retreat.

The remarkable qualities and contributions of Kewalo Basin, and the special relationship it has nurtured with the State and its people, have been recognized by the Hawaii Community Development Authority (HCDA), the guardian of Kakaako and the Kewalo Basin and waterfront. As the agency proceeds with the redevelopment of Kakaako's Makai lands and waterfront, it intends to build on the strengths and diversity of Kewalo Basin as it shapes the area's future.

The Origins of Kewalo Basin

A harbor of about 55 acres (including ocean acreage), Kewalo Basin was originally constructed in 1921 to alleviate congestion in Honolulu Harbor and to serve as a docking facility for lumber schooners. A concrete wharf was built in 1926, about the time that the lumber schooner industry began to fade out and the developing commercial fishing industry moved into Kewalo Basin. The Mauka portion of the Kewalo harbor was constructed in 1928 and 1934, and in 1951 the Waikiki end of the bulkhead was added. With the harbor improvements, the fishing fleet in Honolulu Harbor relocated to Kewalo Basin in 1929. By 1932, the channel leading to the sea was dredged to ease the overcrowding of flat-bottomed Japanese skiffs along Honolulu Harbor. Kewalo Basin was extensively dredged and expanded by the U.S. Navy in World War II. Kewalo Basin's fishing gear shed was added in 1954 and, one year later, eight acres of filled land were deposited along the Makai side of Kewalo Basin to form a peninsula protected by rock revetment.

Today, Kewalo Basin provides the primary berthing space for Oahu's commercial and charter fishing fleet, as well as cruise, dinner, and excursion boats. A lunchwagon, featuring local plate lunch favorites, and two restaurants have become popular institutions at Kewalo Basin. Fisherman's Wharf Restaurant, which opened in 1952, and John Dominis Restaurant, in operation for 20 years now, currently serve their trademark



cuisine to Hawaii's residents and visitors. The Diamond Head edge of Kewalo Basin is also home to the University of Hawaii's Kewalo Basin Marine Mammal Laboratory (KBMML) which was founded more than 25 years ago by Dr. Louis Herman. The facility, conceived as a research and educational facility dedicated to the laboratory and field study of dolphin and whale behavior, has a worldwide reputation as an institution of excellence in marine mammal studies and education. It is the only facility of its kind devoted entirely to the study of dolphin cognition, communication, and intelligence. Since 1975, KBMML also has pioneered the formal study of humpback whales wintering in Hawaiian waters.

The commercial fishing industry occupies about 75 percent of the total berths in the basin. Of the approximately 150 fishing vessels using Kewalo Basin, 35 have permanent berths there. The fishing boats operating out of Kewalo Basin can generally be identified by their individual specialties such as the aku boats, long-line tuna boats (Ahi and Yellow-Fin Tuna), and boats that fish for bottom fish and lobster. Landside Kewalo Basin activities directly related to the commercial fishing industry include the fish auction facilities on Ahui Street, the marine shipyard and railway and support services such as the net shed and fueling operations. (The tuna cannery ceased operations in 1985 and the ice plant facility has been relocated within the Kewalo harbor.)

A Popular Recreational Spot

In the years before the mid-1950s, there were several hundred Japanese families living in Kakaako, most of them working as fishermen or as part of the fishing industry. Fishermen regularly traveled the short distance to Kewalo Basin for their long days out at sea. Kakaako residents were fond of Kewalo Basin (earlier called "Blue Pond") as it served as a favorite neighborhood gathering spot for swimming, recreational fishing and gathering of ogo and limu. To recapture and facilitate recreational activities at Kewalo Basin, the HCDA in 1990 created an attractive five-acre park on the Kewalo Basin triangular peninsula. The Kewalo Basin Park today is a well-used facility with its scenic pedestrian promenade along the existing seawall, bollards, trellises, observation areas and public comfort station. A popular recreation area, the Park is the center of ocean-



Hawaiian Tuna Packers, Limited
Kewalo Basin, May 1939

related activities, such as fishing, surfing, picnicking and strolling.

For many decades, Hawaii's surfers have come to ride the waves fronting Kewalo Basin. Even today, the waves at "Kewalos"—fronting the Diamond Head portion of the Kewalo harbor—are enjoyed by surfers and "Point Panic"—at the mouth of Kewalo Basin entrance—provides a challenging water playground for body surfers. In 1992, the HCDA constructed a stairway leading to the water at the Ewa edge of Kewalo Basin, designed for easy access to Point Panic.

Hawaiian Tuna Packers

During its years in operation, the Hawaiian Tuna Packers cannery at Kewalo Basin played a substantial role in the creation and sustenance of the commercial fishing industry on Oahu. The fishing industry and related fishing businesses grew and flourished during the early 1900s and up to the Second World War. Tuna canning developed because of the ability of Hawaii's Japanese fishermen to harvest large quantities of aku. F.W. MacFarlane developed the first cannery in 1916 at Kewalo. The cannery, in 1922, became known as the Hawaiian Tuna Packers. After World War II, the cannery was acquired by Castle & Cooke Inc. and became part of Bumble Bee seafoods. Occupying about 157,000 square feet, the cannery and seven surrounding buildings (including an ice plant) served an important function of moderating the fluctuating volume of fish caught in Hawaii's waters. Skipjack (aku) tuna fishermen relied on Hawaiian Tuna Packers to buy fish they could not sell in the fresh market. The first boats to dock at the cannery would supply the fresh fish market and the other boats would provide their catch to the cannery operations. During the summer season, the fishing fleet often provided almost 70 percent of its catch to the Hawaiian Tuna Packers because aku was more abundant in the summer and there was less demand during non-holiday months.

The Hawaiian Tuna Packers operation also spawned the development of the Kewalo shipyard. Castle & Cooke, whose Bumble Bee business was dependent on the catches of the fishing boats, constructed the shipyard to keep the vessels seagoing and to perform repairs. The company subtracted dry dock fees from the fishermen's catch.

Castle & Cooke operated the cannery until late 1984, when it first

closed the plant temporarily and then permanently a few months later. In quitting the seafood business, the company cited worldwide economic changes as having rendered the operation unprofitable.

Kewalo Shipyard

Recognizing that the Kewalo shipyard has buoyed the health of the commercial fishing fleet, Charles Pires purchased the Hawaiian Tuna Packers shipyard when it went out of business in 1985. "Most of the fishing vessels were actually built in this shipyard," says Pires today. "It made sense to me to buy the shipyard. I'm into boats and it's in my blood. I was (literally) born on a boat." Currently, Pires' company, Honolulu Marine, performs ship repairs and refurbishing. He estimates that about 40 percent of his work directly services the commercial fishing industry. "It's not what I would call an exciting profession, but it's a challenging one," Pires explains. "It's the kind of trade where you're hearing a squeak and you have to figure out how to solve the problem."

United Fishing Agency's Fish Auction

Today, the fish auction is acknowledged as the backbone of the commercial fishing industry. Conducted by the United Fishing Agency, Ltd. (UFA) at its Kewalo Basin/Ahui Street facility, the auction is a beehive of activity six days a week. The auction operation works this way: the aku, long-line and bottom fishermen send their day's catch to UFA where it is sorted, weighed and labeled with the vessel's name. The auction commences at the crack of dawn. Local and mainland fish wholesalers, supermarkets and retailers (many armed with cell phones) participate in the bidding for the day's fish supply. Bids are made in increments of ten cents per pound until the highest bid is pledged. The fish are then iced and delivered.

Matsujiro Otani founded the UFA in 1952 in an attempt to revive the fishing industry and, over a period of time, consolidated several fish auctions into one facility. The UFA first operated out of a marketplace at Aala Park and moved to its current Kewalo space 18 years ago. Otani's son, Akira, is the company's president and Frank Goto is UFA's manager. Goto, who has worked in the commercial fishing industry for 50 years, explains that, in addition to the fish auction, the UFA performs an invaluable function of handling the paperwork, taxes and accounting for the fishing boat owners. The agency charges a 10 percent cut and after other costs (for fuel, ice and bait) are deducted, the balance is paid to the fishing boat's owner.

Goto observes that the fishing industry has "grown tremendously" over the years. "Today, gross sales (of the UFA) over a one-week period is the same as sales for an entire year from several years ago," he says. Goto attributes the growth of the industry to several factors: the high consumption of seafood by Hawaii's people, the use of new and

Continued on Page 4



The UFA fish auction.

KEWALO BASIN *(Continued from Page 3)*

technologically advanced fishing gear, and the infusion of fishermen from Okinawa, Korea, Vietnam and the U.S. mainland into the local commercial fishing industry. "Kewalo Basin was and continues to be very important to the fishing industry," he adds.

Cruise and Charter Fishing Boats at Kewalo Basin

Since the 1950s, the Kewalo Basin harbor has served a crucial purpose for the Hawaii tourism industry as the homeport for excursion cruise and charter sport fishing boats. Cruise boats, the largest vessels berthed at the harbor, provide ocean tours and excursions on a regular departure schedule. Because of their convenient Kewalo Basin location near Waikiki, cruise boats offer an assortment of tours throughout the day, including Pearl Harbor and sightseeing cruises, snorkeling excursions, nightclub cruises, and sunset dinner cruises. Today, ten cruise boats are berthed at Kewalo Basin. Approximately 35 charter boats also are currently permanently berthed at Kewalo Basin. The charter boats are commissioned for deep sea fishing excursions, as well as for parasailing and diving. They are generally located towards the Diamond Head/mauka corner of the harbor and off the finger piers extending into the basin.

Looking Ahead

The State Department of Transportation's 2020 Master Plan targets Piers 36-38 as a site for its proposed Domestic Fishing Village, which will consolidate fish auction, fresh fish processing, icehouse and fueling operations. The project is planned to be constructed in phases. First, the State will construct a concrete loading/unloading dock at Pier 38 to allow for direct and efficient transfer of fresh seafood from the commercial fishing fleet into an adjacent fish auction house. In the second phase, the State plans to construct infrastructure and subdivide landside parcels for development by individual seafood and fresh fish processing wholesalers. UFA's Goto is hopeful that the State can start construction on the first phase of the Fishing Village Project by early 2000. "We are looking forward to getting into a new facility that will be much larger and less congested, one that will have a people-friendly feel," he says.

The State's vision for Kakaako Makai is the creation of an exciting and attractive people-oriented place that will be known for its world-class waterfront. This vision would be accomplished through the development of civic, cultural, recreational and commercial facilities that respect and coexist with the special character and activities that have distinguished and made Kewalo Basin such a unique harbor. The State is now considering development proposals for 18 acres of State-owned land Ewa of Kewalo

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS FOR KEWALO BASIN LANDS

The two development teams (Imperial Associates, Ltd. and Kewalo Project Development, Ltd.) submitting proposals for the State-owned lands at Kewalo Basin will make presentations on their proposals on July 7, 1999. They will present their proposals at:

- Hawaii Community Development Authority Meeting
July 7, 1999 at 2:00 p.m.
677 Ala Moana Boulevard, Suite 1016
- Kakaako Improvement Association Meeting
July 7, 1999 at 6:00 p.m.
Ward Warehouse, Kakaako Room (2nd floor)

Basin, including the parcels housing the Kewalo shipyard, the fish auction and the former Hawaiian Tuna Packers site. The HCDA is encouraging the use of the Kewalo Basin lands for commercial development (including recreational, cultural and maritime activities). Says HCDA Executive Director Jan Yokota, "We recognize the special history, contributions and value of the cruise, charter boat and commercial fishing industries at Kewalo Basin. We are trying to encourage new development with a theme that builds on the existing maritime character of the harbor, one that highlights and enhances the value of the area to the visitor and commercial fishing industries.

"By developing the Kewalo Basin parcels, we want to cultivate an environment that will be a special place of lasting public interest and one that will recapture the spirit and essence of the harbor's past. What has made Kewalo Basin so extraordinary over the years has been the vibrant coexistence of the different industries, along with recreational and other activities located there. Our development objectives for Kewalo Basin lands stress that public access to the waterfront and sea should be maintained. This can be done with our Kewalo Basin park areas and a wide pedestrian promenade along the waterfront with public activity areas that contain ample seating, inviting storefronts and outdoor dining."

Yokota adds, "Our guidelines encourage developers to design their projects with architecture that recalls the historic maritime character of the waterfront. Through the mix of activities, arrangement and style of buildings, and open space, we can better emphasize and respect our strong connection to the sea and the special maritime experiences of Kewalo Basin."

(Visit the HCDA web site: <http://www.hawaii.gov/hcda>)

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