

Kaka'ako Connection

Vol. 25, No. 3 June 2004

A Publication of the
HAWAII COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY



2004 LEGISLATURE APPROPRIATES FUNDS FOR KAKA'AKO WATERFRONT IMPROVEMENTS & PARKING STRUCTURE; KALAELOA PLANNING

The budget approved by the 2004 State Legislature, and enacted as Act 41, Session Laws of Hawaii 2004, includes appropriations for infrastructure improvements and the construction of a parking structure in the Kaka'ako Waterfront area. State lawmakers also included funding for economic master planning for the Kalaeloa Community Development District and passed a bill that clarifies the responsibility of the Hawaii Community Development Authority (HCDA) to act as an ombudsman for issues of concern within Kalaeloa.

Budget highlights include:

- \$4,200,000 in general obligation bond funds to be used for infrastructure improvements within the Kaka'ako Waterfront area;
- a \$20,000,000 revenue bond authorization for the construction of a Kaka'ako Parking Structure that will provide parking for the proposed Marine Research Center and future Kewalo Basin commercial/retail development;
- \$450,000 in general obligation bond funds to match dollar for dollar a federal government grant for Kalaeloa District economic

master planning; and

- \$3,000,000 in general obligation bond funds to be used for the reconstruction of roofs at the Honuakaha Housing Complex.

An Administration bill (S.B. 2869, SD2, HD1) passed by the State Legislature clarifies the power of the HCDA to act as an ombudsman for issues of concern within the Kalaeloa District. Currently, the Navy is in the process of conveying approximately 2,150 acres of land in Kalaeloa to various federal, State and City agencies. However, for various reasons, many of these parcels remain vacant and are deteriorating. The HCDA, which has redevelopment responsibility in Kalaeloa, is concerned about possible threats these conditions may pose to public health and safety. The bill clarifies the HCDA's power to: receive and follow up on complaints with appropriate Kalaeloa landowners; take a proactive role in researching and monitoring problem areas; and report to Kalaeloa landowners on the nature and number of complaints to ensure proper notification.

PROPOSED QUEEN ST. IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT: Enhancing the Function & Safety of Infrastructure

The Hawaii Community Development Authority (HCDA) has proposed to enhance the roadway and utility systems on a portion of Queen Street, between Kamakee Street and Ward Avenue. The Improvement District 11 (ID-11) Project would improve the function, safety and attractiveness of the thoroughfare and increase the capacities of the utility systems serving the area.

The proposed ID-11 Project would include the installation of new: sewer, water, drain and underground electrical and telecommunications systems; road pavement, sidewalks, curbs and gutters, and streetlights; and traffic signals where needed. The segment of Queen Street, from Kamakee Street to Ward Avenue, is proposed to be widened from 56 to 60 feet. Currently, HCDA is constructing the Queen Street Extension (Improvement District 10), a new roadway that will extend Queen Street from Kamakee Street to Waimanu Street. As in past Kaka'ako improvement districts, the cost of the improvements is shared by State government, the project area's landowners and the utility companies.

At a public hearing held on April 7, testimony both for and against the proposed project was heard. Those in favor pointed to the economic benefits of the project as well as its compatibility with HCDA plans. Those opposed to the project objected to HCDA's preliminary assessment amounts and the methodology/formula used to determine the assess-



The proposed Queen Street improvements would help to alleviate flooding and upgrade the roadway and utility systems.

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HYDROGEN FUEL CELL TEST FACILITY IN KAKA'AKO STUDYING VIABILITY OF ALTERNATE ENERGY SOURCES

Imagine a day when Hawaii is less dependent on fossil fuel for energy and the State is a world leader in hydrogen power. This scenario could become reality because of the work and research being conducted at a little-known, state-of-the-art facility in Kaka'ako. The Hawaii Fuel Cell Test Facility, located in a 4,000 square foot warehouse on Hawaiian Electric Co.'s (HECO) Ward Avenue property, is examining ways of making hydrogen fuel cell technology more commercially practical.

The test facility, which opened in April 2003, is a joint project coordinated by the University of Hawaii at Manoa's Hawaii Natural Energy Institute (HNEI), with partners UTC Fuel Cells, the Office of Naval Research, and HECO. Hydrogen fuel cells produce electricity electrochemically by combining hydrogen and oxygen without combustion. In most current fuel cell applications, the hydrogen is extracted from natural gas, but it can also be extracted from synthetic natural gas derived from other fossil fuels. Today, development efforts are increasingly focusing on technology to extract hydrogen from renewable sources, including biomass derived hydrogen and water using electrolysis powered renewable energy sources such as wind. Fuel cells can be used to run any electrical appliance and devices, and cars, buses as well as ships. Though currently five to ten times more expensive than using natural gas, costs are expected to drop in the future, with the added benefit of lower emissions compared to traditional vehicles or power generation.

"The Facility gives us the opportunity to study fuel cells at a scale not normally available in academia," explains Rick Rocheleau, HNEI Director. "It's another example of Hawaii's increasing role as a leader in the development and demonstration of renewable technologies."

With the use of three test stands (devices that control testing variables and log data), the HNEI is running fuel cells through a battery of trials to gauge the performance, reliability and sensitivity to impurities in the hydrogen gas fuel source, and the Facility has the capacity to house four additional test stands. The HNEI will have a fourth stand installed and operational by the end of the year.

"This joint effort between federal, State and private entities is



"It's another example of Hawaii's increasing role as a leader in the development and demonstration of renewable technologies."
Rick Rocheleau,
HNEI Director

Above: the 3 fuel cell test stands and operating personnel. At left: a close-up of the test stand

exactly the kind of collaboration it takes to move technologies like fuel cells from hopeful vision to commercial reality," said HECO President and CEO T. Michael May. "Meeting Hawaii's future energy needs will take a full array of energy options, including technologies like fuel cells and we're committed to supporting their development."

The federal government initially provided over \$1.5 million to get the Hawaii Fuel Cell Test Facility started and the HNEI is seeking other commercial and public sector partners to participate in this program.

HCDAPERSPECTIVESColumn

by **ARNOLD IMAOKA**
HCDAsenior Planner



Born and raised in a sugar plantation camp in Waipahu, I see a common experience and bond with the many residents of the ethnic camps that were found in Kaka'ako when the area was a thriving residential community for over four decades beginning in the early 1900s. During those years, Kaka'ako was a close-knit, multi-ethnic, and largely working class neighborhood where most of its inhabitants also worked, and found recreation. Kaka'ako holds many parallels to my days in the Waipahu Camp, which were filled with experiences of chasing sugar cane trucks and pulling burned cane stocks to get a snack, or fishing in the reservoirs and ditches for tilapia.

The plantation camp was a place for my family to live, work and play. I remember spending summer days playing baseball, basketball, or just fooling around at the Hongwanji Church where I also went to Japanese School, and participated in Boy Scouts and Judo. Each morning my dad took a 3-minute walk to work at the sugar mill where he was a mechanic. Each afternoon a whistle would blow to signal the end of the workday--and serve as a 3-minute warning for me to return home on my bicycle and start my homework.

The camp itself was laid out along geographic, cultural, and economic lines. The mill supervisors lived in more expansive quarters along Managers Drive while the workers lived together grouped more by ethnicity. There were a couple of Japanese churches that also served as community centers. Barber shops and convenience stores were interspersed throughout the community. We even had some fish and vegetable peddlers who periodically came with their red or green trucks. The people that operated the businesses usually lived next to or above the establishments. I also remembered an airplane toymaker who sold his wares on foot.

Yes -- so much of what we strive for today can be identified in our past. I know that as an urban planner I would like to see more mixed use in Kaka'ako, neighborhoods with kids playing at community recreation centers, adults working near their homes and public facilities adding to the quality of life. My roots in Waipahu are an important reminder of the kind of vibrant urban village we strive to create in Kaka'ako, a place that people can proudly call "home."

VOYAGER PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL: An Innovative "School of Hope and Promise"

Like any proud parent, Sue Deuber's face lights up when she speaks of her children—all 156 of them. As principal of the Voyager Public Charter School in Kaka'ako for the past two years, she has dealt with the continuing growing pains and financial hardships common to charter schools in Hawaii. But the hard work has many rewards for Deuber: the gratification of experiencing the growing interest and participation of the school's teachers and parents in the learning process and, the pleasure of seeing the students meeting performance standards and becoming excited about—and taking responsibility for—their own educational experience. "Now that the Voyager School has been around for three years, for the students that were with us as kindergarteners and first-graders, we really see a difference in how they learn, their attitudes about school, and their ability to take responsibility for their own learning," Deuber says. "We're really excited about this."

Walking through the colorfully painted rooms of the Voyager School (located in a converted Kaka'ako warehouse structure at 670 Auahi Street), one gets the sense of a nurturing, friendly learning environment. According to Deuber, the idea for Voyager is to offer a dynamic, tuition-free, high-quality program to a diverse group of kids in the downtown Honolulu area, hence the Kaka'ako location. There are 26 charter schools in Hawaii, each one unique with its own non-traditional learning curriculum and philosophy.

The Voyager school, which accepts five- to eight-year-old youngsters from around Oahu, is the first Hawaii school to integrate three different learning methods that encourage students to become active participants in their own education. The methods are Total Quality Learning, the Feuerstein's Instrumental Enrichment Program, and The Intelllearn System. Instead of grade levels, Voyager students are grouped according to their abilities and developmental level into learning teams. It's not uncommon for older students to teach younger ones and the teachers regularly employ art, music and problem-solving exercises to make learning more fun and exciting. Because research has shown the benefits of exposing children to different languages at an early age, the Voyager staff teaches students the Hawaiian, Mandarin Chinese, and Spanish languages. Voyager students must meet the same State performance standards as regular public school students and Deuber states that the Voyager school is one of the schools that met the "No Child Left Behind Act" benchmarks unconditionally.

"We have witnessed the emerging hope of students who get a whole new perspective of what learning and education is."

Sue Deuber

Principal, Voyager Public Charter School

"We have a very nurturing *ohana*-like atmosphere here (at Voyager) where it's the responsibility of every teacher to teach every child," Deuber explains. "All of us are learners and all of us are teachers. It's a kind of shared responsibility for learning. The students are also teachers of younger students." She adds, "We don't give kids enough credit. You actually immerse them with kids who are all performing at a little higher level and, most of the time, you'll see the child rise to the expectation of the group."

Although the Voyager School has a waiting list for the enrollment limit of 156 students for the 2005 school year, Deuber encourages parents to apply because spaces may open up during the summer. Parents can learn more about this unique public school education by participating in school tours on the first and third Fridays of each month. Call 521-9770 for reservations.

Principal Deuber readily admits that her two years at the helm of the Voyager School has been an "exciting adventure. This is a 'school of hope and promise'. We have witnessed the emerging hope of students who get a



At top: Voyager Public Charter School students engage in a fun learning exercise.

Above: Voyager Principal Sue Deuber talks with students.

whole new perspective of what learning and education is. There is the hope of teachers, who are now able to weigh in on the curriculum, policies and procedures. And we have the hope of parents who are seeing their kids turned on to learning. From a leadership position, I have the hope for the potential that we have to really make a difference in the big (educational) system."

Today while Deuber acknowledges that the Voyager School must continue to meet its financial challenge, it is gratifying to see the results of her labor, as well as those of teachers, parents, and students. She points to the "emerging values" that are the direct result of the school. "One of these values is 'giving,'" she explains. "When the children learned about the financial struggle of the school, we had one little girl donate a hundred dollar bill that she found. We had two kids who had a garage sale and sold some of their toys and gave the School an envelope with \$26 dollars. And there are families who go to a 'Buy One, Get One Free' sale and donate the extra item to the school. I guess it's being a part of a place where people believe in what we're doing and care enough to really go out of their way because they want to see it survive. It's very exciting."

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is a publication produced by the
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WARREN F. WEGESEND, JR. AND JONATHAN W. Y. LAI APPOINTED AS NEW HCDA MEMBERS

Governor Linda Lingle has appointed Warren F. Wegesend, Jr. to serve as a member of the Hawaii Community Development Authority (HCDA). In May, the State Senate confirmed Wegesend's appointment for a term to expire on June 30, 2007. Governor Lingle has also appointed Attorney Jonathan W.Y. Lai to serve on the HCDA on an interim basis effective July 1, 2004. If the State Senate confirms Lai's appointment in its 2005 session, his term would run until June 30, 2008.

Wegesend has worked in property management and housing in various capacities in both government and the private sector for most of his career. He is currently General Manager of the Villages of Kapolei Association and he fills the seat vacated by Patrick Kubota, who served on the HCDA for 6½ years. Prior to assuming his current position with the Villages of Kapolei Association, a community of 2,700 mixed single-family and multi-family homes, Wegesend held the positions of Real Property Asset Management Specialist for the State of Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation and Housing Management Director for the State of Hawaii Housing Authority.

Lai is a Junior Partner of the law firm of Watanabe Ing Kawashima & Komeiji LLP. He began with the firm in 1995 as an associate handling



Warren F. Wegesend, Jr.



Jonathan W. Y. Lai

foreclosures, bankruptcies and loan workouts. Becoming a junior partner in 2003, Lai also practices in the areas of real estate, commercial collections, and banking. He fills the seat vacated by Lori Ann Lum, who served on the Authority for the past eight years, the last five as Chair. A graduate of Punahou School, Lai attended the University of Southern California's Law School and the Marshall School of Business where he earned his Juris Doctor/Master of Business Administration.

PROPOSED QUEEN STREET IMPROVEMENTS (ID-11)

Continued from Page 1

ments. They expressed concerns that the assessments were too high and would adversely affect their businesses. Some landowners also worried that the project—which will replace unauthorized, perpendicular parking in the roadway right-of-way with parallel, metered stalls—will have the practical effect of reducing on-street parking for the businesses and their customers. In giving its approval to proceed with advertising for bids, the Authority instructed staff to investigate alternative assessment methods that would lower assessment amounts for landowners and to report back to the Board with alternative scenarios. Another public hearing will be scheduled after the final project cost is determined and the final assessments are calculated.

IN REMEMBRANCE

The Hawaii Community Development Authority (HCDA) expresses its sincere condolences to the family of the late Raymond Suefuji. Suefuji, the first executive director of the HCDA and former Hawaii County planning director, recently passed away in Hilo, Hawaii. Suefuji served as HCDA Executive Director from the agency's inception in 1976 until his retirement in 1983. "Mr. Suefuji was a visionary and respected professional planner who made an invaluable contribution to the Kaka'ako of today," said HCDA Executive Director Daniel Dinell. "His very positive imprint on the District is evident even today and he will be truly missed."

(Visit the HCDA web site: <http://www.HCDAweb.org>)