

KAILUA VILLAGE PROJECTS UPDATES SEPTEMBER 2002

Several Hawaii County and related projects were underway that impact the Kailua Village core (on and around Alii Drive from Palani Road to Walua Road.) Here are some project updates:

1 - Kahakai Road Closure (County)

Kahakai Road, in Kailua Village from Huggo's Restaurant (at the north end) through the Royal Kona Resort to the Kona Reef Condominiums (at the south.) We are preparing an ordinance for Council consideration that calls for a "temporary" closure of Kahakai Road. (Temporary due to access needs for parcels subject to long-term leases.)

The section of road through Huggo's would be available to pedestrians, bicyclists and emergency vehicles. The south section of the road, from Alii Drive at the Kona Reef to the Royal Kona Resort, will be open to two-way traffic.

2 - Alii Drive - Oneo Bay Enhancement (County)

Three million dollars in improvements to Alii Drive in the vicinity of Oneo Bay (from Bubba Gump's Restaurant to Royal Kona Resort,) identified as the island's #1 priority "enhancement" project, will be planned, designed and constructed with federal financial support. We are in the planning phase of the project.

Initial project conceptions call for a pedestrian walkway to be cantilevered over the existing seawall, under-grounding of utilities, pedestrian sidewalks, bike lanes and other beautification features. Neighboring Kahakai Road, anticipated to be closed through Huggo's, will be incorporated into the overall Oneo Bay design.

3 - Expansion of County Parking Lot (County)

A small state-owned parcel adjoins the County's parking lot in the core of Kailua Village. Hawaii County requested an Executive Order (EO) for the site for parking lot expansion; improvement suggestions include adding public restrooms. The EO request was delayed to confirm state-ownership of the parcel. Ownership has been confirmed and the EO process is again underway.

4 - Emma's Square Improvements (County)

Years ago the County and community worked together by improving sidewalk, landscaping and other features in the vicinity of "Emma's Square" (the area under the monkey pod tree at the ABC store near Mokuaikaua Church and across from Hulihee Palace.)

Recently, the community has suggested that the area be refurbished by removing the rock walls and berms, and opening the area for more pedestrian access. Some suggestions include that the site be leased to adjoining properties

for open air seating, kiosks, etc. Working with the community, the County is investigating the alternatives.

5 - Investigate Business Improvement District for Kailua (County)

A Business Improvement District (BID) is public-private partnership created to provide additional services and programs for a specific geographic area. The BID is typically governed by a non-profit organization made up primarily of those who pay assessments. Waikiki recently initiated the first BID in the State.

The businesses and owners in a BID pay assessments in order to provide the money necessary to fund and manage these supplemental services. Safety and security, sidewalk cleaning, landscape maintenance and visitor information are the most popular services provided by BIDs.

The program may be an excellent opportunity for communities in Hawaii County. Preliminary investigations have been on-going in Kailua Village to see if the property owners there have an interest in pursuing this alternative. The state legislature passed enabling legislation permitting BIDs; Hawaii County Council must pass an ordinance permitting BIDs in Hawaii County.

6 - Kuakini Highway (County)

Kuakini Hwy, from Palani Rd to Hualalai Rd, calls for improvement with synchronized traffic signals, road widening to accommodate 2-lanes of traffic in each direction, turning pockets, bicycle lanes, pedestrian sidewalks and landscaping (efforts will be made to retain the existing trees).

Construction was anticipated to commence in 2003. Due to scope and scale of the Parkway project (the County's priority project in the region,) and the competitive nature of the federal highway funds, improvements to Kuakini may be delayed until 2004. Scheduling details will be better known in Oct. 2002.

7 - Kailua Pier (State)

Built in 1955 by the State Department of Transportation's Harbors Division, the 350-foot Kailua Pier is the focal point for activities in Kailua Village. Engineering studies indicate that the pier's foundations are deteriorating to dangerous levels. The State has released funds for pier improvement. Special orders for steel pilings are being processed, construction should begin shortly.

Kailua-Kona pier renovation project will repair and improve the pier's structural supports to make it safe for multiple uses, repair dock landings to accommodate the various vessels using the pier and include other improvements.