



PRESS RELEASE

MAYOR KIRK CALDWELL
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, December 18, 2020
Press Office: (808) 768-5768

Media Kit: [Photos and video from blessing and property](#)

City & County Partnership Opens Affordable Housing Units in the Historic Maunakea Marketplace



(Left) Future resident Sean Fernandez (l) with Hale Kipa Case Manager (r) standing outside units. (Middle) Furnished studio with historic windows. (Right) Common area room with fitness, laundry, and lounge area.

HONOLULU – Today, the City and County of Honolulu’s Department of Community Services and MKM, LLC blessed the newly built Residence at Maunakea, which has been taking applications for 38 affordable units on the second floor of Chinatown’s landmark Maunakea Marketplace and anticipates beginning to move in residents next week.

Formerly used as commercial and excess storage space, former Governor Neil Abercrombie, building owner Russell Geysler, and their team at MKM, LLC, converted the 25,000 square feet of barely used space into 38 affordable rental apartment units, four of which are reserved for individuals and families transitioning out of homelessness. The building also features common areas that continue the City’s work to build communities within affordable housing properties. In addition to the 38 studios, one-

bedroom, and two-bedroom units, residents will have a fitness area, lounge, laundry, and living room space complete with artwork by the project's architect.

The City serves as the landowner and provided funding for the project through the City's Affordable Housing Fund. The revolving fund annually receives ½ of 1 percent of City revenues, which are invested in projects that create rental units available to low-income individuals and families earning 60% of Area Median Income or less for at least 60 years. In Honolulu, that means a family of 3 earning less than \$68,040, a couple earning less than \$60,480, or a single earning less than \$52,920. In addition, the project committed to reserve 10% of its available units to individuals and families transitioning out of homelessness.

“We have kuleana to ensure housing for all of our residents of O‘ahu. The truly affordable housing units the City has built over the past few years provide not only a decent safe place to live for those experiencing or at risk of homelessness, they provide an opportunity for families to have more resources available for food, for healthcare, for education, and for a better quality of life,” Mayor Caldwell remarked.

Future resident Sean Fernandez shared his journey, “I was on the streets for three years. RYSE found me and helped me get housed through a Housing First voucher. The program really helped me to turn my life around.” Standing on the second floor of Maunakea Marketplace and holding back tears, Fernandez shared, “this really helps a lot. I'm happy, and I can actually show my daughter some improvements and have her in my life.”

Director the Department of Community Services, Pamela A. Witty-Oakland shared, “our Team's focus is on developing housing that is truly affordable for O‘ahu's families. The residents of Honolulu affirmed this commitment in the 2016 Charter Amendment, and projects like these allow us to take the Mayor's vision of Housing First to the next level.”

Governor Neil Abercrombie, who helped to spearhead the project talked about the opportunity for revitalization of Chinatown. “I appreciate all the hard work and determination from Mayor Caldwell and his team, especially Director Pam Witty-Oakland and the staff at Community Services. They assisted us and addressed any and all obstacles that popped up throughout the entire process. I can't wait for other opportunities to work with them in the near future.”

Building owner Russell Geyser shared, “the Residence at Maunakea will be one of the gems in our entire property portfolio. To be able to repurpose excess space into homes is a personal achievement my team and I will cherish for years to come.”

Studio apartments will rent for \$800 - \$1,295 a month. One bedrooms will range from \$1,200 - \$1,417. Rent for a two-bedroom will range from \$1,400 - \$1,701 a month. Rents include water and sewer fees. Avalon Development is managing the property. Requests can be sent to rentals@avalonhi.com or call (808) 587-7770. Visit <http://www.residenceatmaunakea.com/> for more information on the project.

Department of Community Services
 City and County of Honolulu
 Website: <http://www.honolulu.gov/dcs>

ABOUT DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

The Department of Community Services (DCS) is an agency of the City and County of Honolulu focused on creating opportunities to improve the quality of life for the people of O‘ahu. DCS oversees the City’s work in key areas such as housing, homeless services, community development, aging & disability resources, grants, housing & rental assistance, workforce training, and youth services.

ABOUT THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING FUND

Bill 10, CD 2 (2007) was passed on June 6, 2007 and became law on June 25, 2007 as Ordinance No. 7-19. This required units to be 50% AMI or below and set-aside in perpetuity. A Charter amendment was approved by the voters in 2016 which changed the requirements to be 60% AMI or below for 60 years which made the fund more desirable by developments.

On average, the City receives approximately \$7,000,000 annually through the ½ of 1 percent of Real Property Taxes as provided by Charter. This fund is separate and in addition to the funding that the Department of Land Management leverages to build affordable housing for households earning 50% AMI or below. Below are examples of projects the Department of Community Services has assisted in different stages of development through the City’s Affordable Housing Fund since 2015:

Kūlana Nani Apartment	For renovation of City apartments in Kāne‘ohe.
Family Justice Center	Due diligence of a twenty unit apartment building.
Ola Ka ‘Ilima / Artspace Lofts	To assist in developing low- to moderate-income housing.
Hale Makana o Mā‘ili	Performance mortgage to assist in developing fifty-six low- to moderate-income housing units (LIHTC).
Pūnāwai Building	For a portion of construction of hygiene center and 42 units of permanent rental housing.
Nā Lei Hulu Kūpuna, Phase I & II	For acquisition and renovation of seventy-five low-income apartments for seniors.
Pauahi Hale	For the installation of a new fire alarm system in a City facility that provides permanent rentals for housing first clients and individuals experiencing severe mental illness.
Kahauiki Village Phase II	For infrastructure and construction of 114 temporary housing units for families and individuals experiencing homelessness.
Maunakea Marketplace	For renovation and repurposing of thirty-eight 2nd floor units to create housing for families and individuals experiencing homelessness.
Kewalo Street	For partial funding to complete funded Special Needs Housing purchase of 10 bedroom duplex leased to The Youth Collaborative, serving homeless youth.

Hau'ula Homes

For due diligence and partial funding of three duplexes to add 15 dwelling units to the City's Special Needs Housing Inventory. NOFA for leasing to occur once sale is complete

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