Waianawa landowner seeks to expand plans

A Kanemahena Schools property looks to develop 11,000 homes and cost $4.8B

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About 2,000 acres in Waianawa are largely planted in sugar cane and envisioned as a community with 11,000 homes, under a concept plan by the state's largest private landowner.

Kanemahena Schools is seeking to develop the project, which also includes five public schools, parks, more than a half million square feet of commercial space and 15 fees lots, with a partner over nearly 30 years.

Gentrified as "a community for a better tomorrow," the project would site the size of the city of Kapolei, a 2,700-home community on 300 acres in an early phase of construction on the East Side by development firm U.S.-based Hattera Capital.

The newly more than $4 billion Waianawa plan represents a dramatic expansion and revision of a plan for much of the site by Country Homes approved in 1988 and stopped in 2010.

Gentrify's plan involved 2,000 homes largely around two golf courses and other uses on 3,900 acres. Half the homes were to be for seniors, but discounting infrastructure costs and one economic downturn doomed the project after more than two decades of payroll.

For new plans, according to Kanemahena Schools, is more focused on the kama-aina market and economics, much of the homes envisioned near the city's future Pearlridge rail station.

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By the Numbers
Waianae master plan

Total area: 2,109 acres
Homes: 11,100
Commercial space: 500,000 square feet
Public schools: 5
Farm lots: 3
Park space: 126 acres
Open space: 371 acres
Development timetable: 2030-2050

Expanded plans of the Waianae development will include land close to the future Pearl Highlands rail station.

The works to be completed in 2016 but a renewable energy company has filed for feasibility study and the city has moved forward. The solar farms will be part of an integrated system and are expected to be fully operational by the end of 2016.

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station a little over a half an hour from the main edge of the Waianae property. To proceed, Kaneohe Schools will need to secure a development partner, in the process of entailing a study of environmental impact and safety for the area. The school district has not yet determined a development partner. The school district has established a committee to assess the potential of the property.

“Waianae is a very complex endeavor,” said Walter Thomeczko, manager of the district’s commercial real estate. “The plans are ambitious.”

The town has made its comments Thursday in a presentation to the state Land Use Commission. The district has requested a master plan for the area as part of the third segment of the district’s long-range plan.

The master plan includes:

- A total of 2,109 acres
- 11,100 homes
- 500,000 square feet of commercial space
- 5 public schools
- 3 farm lots
- 126 acres of parks
- 371 acres of open space

The development is scheduled to begin in 2030 and be completed by 2050.

Thomeczko said that while the plan is ambitious, it is also focused on sustainability and community development. The plan includes a mix of housing, commercial, and recreational areas, as well as preservation of open space and agricultural land.

“We’re very interested in getting this going,” he said. “We’re excited about the potential for this development and we are committed to making it a success.”

Scheuer expressed some concerns about the notion of approving a plan covering the decades, but he also acknowledged that the plan was very different from the one he had envisioned for Waianae. It’s a gift that the community has been waiting for, many years,” he said.