



# Office of Housing and Community Development NEWSLETTER



The 110-unit Waikoloa Family Affordable is ready for occupancy.

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## A New Place to Call Home 110-UNIT WAIKOLOA FAMILY AFFORDABLE IS COMPLETE & READY FOR OCCUPANCY

Waikoloa Family Affordable – Hawai'i Island's newest affordable housing development – is ready for occupancy.

The project's 110 rental units will begin filling with families this month following completion of construction of the estimated \$46 million project developed by nonprofit Coalition for Specialized Housing and partner GSF LLC.

"Waikoloa Family Affordable is our first project on Hawai'i Island. This low-income rental project will help provide direly needed housing to Hawai'i County," said Coalition for Specialized Housing President Jeff Emerson.

Waikoloa Family Affordable serves households earning up to 60% of area median income (AMI) as determined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Six units are reserved for households earning no more than 30% of AMI.

Monthly rent for a household earning 60% of AMI ranges from \$941 for a one-



Waikoloa Family Affordable is seen this spring as construction wrapped up on the affordable rental project in South Kohala. Courtesy photos

bedroom unit to \$1,108 for a two-bedroom townhouse unit. The monthly rate for the





# 'A LONG-TIME COMING'

## Blessing held; construction begins on 100-unit Kaloko Heights Affordable Housing Project in Kailua-Kona

Ground was broken and a blessing held on April 28 for Hawai'i Island's newest affordable housing development that will provide dozens of much-needed homes for low-income families in Kailua-Kona.

The Kaloko Heights Affordable Housing Project will feature 99 family units, including 58 3-bedroom units and 41 2-bedroom units, in addition to one 3-bedroom manager's unit.

The 10.75-acre site is located on the Kohala (north) side of Hina Lani Street, approximately 2.3 miles mauka (east) of Queen Ka'ahumanu Highway.

The \$54.4 million development will serve families earning 30% to 60% of area median income (AMI), which ranges from \$39,200 to \$78,400 for a family of four. Rent will range from \$530 to \$1,335, depending on income.

"This is a much-needed project that's been a long-time coming," said Keith Kato, executive director of the Hawaii Island Community Development Corporation. "At the end of the day, we're going to end up with a project with units for 100 families, low-income families. This will be a much-needed addition to the community."

Another critical component in getting the project off the ground was the construction of a new sewer line to service the affordable housing units, as well as the 1,300-unit market rate development planned by RCFC



Dignitaries break ground for the Kaloko Affordable Housing Project during a ceremony Friday, April 28, 2023, in Kailua-Kona. Photos Courtesy of County of Hawai'i

Kaloko Heights LLC. Without a connection to the existing sewer line near the West Hawaii Civic Center, neither project could progress.

To facilitate the costly improvements, Hawai'i County partnered with RCFC Kaloko Heights LLC to implement a Community Facilities District and issue just over \$13 million in special tax revenue bonds to finance the project.

"This innovative funding mechanism allows the Kaloko Affordable Housing Project to move forward now to provide much-needed affordable housing on Hawai'i Island. Reaching this milestone and marking the start of construction of this long-planned affordable housing development would not have been possible without this partnership," said Office of Housing and Community Development Housing Administrator Susan Kunz.



Construction crews work at the site of the Kaloko Heights Affordable Housing Project.

# Attention landlords: Discrimination against tenants with housing vouchers is now prohibited

## NEW LAW APPLIES TO OWNERS WHO RENT OUT 4 OR MORE UNITS

Discrimination against voucher holders and recipients of other housing assistance programs is now illegal for many landlords in Hawaii.

Act 310, which became law on May 1, prohibits discrimination, including in advertisements for available real property, against prospective or current tenants based on participation in a Permanent Supportive Housing program or any Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program.

The law applies mainly to landlords who own more than four rental properties with some exemptions allowed.

The law aims to reduce source-of-income discrimination against people who use these

types of rental assistance. It provides Section 8 participants with the same protections afforded to other classes under state and federal Fair Housing laws.

"When voucher holders are denied an opportunity to rent, it is a barrier to securing housing assistance," said Office of Housing and Community Development Existing Housing Division Manager Michael Yee. "This law is a needed step in the right direction and will help provide individuals and families greater access to affordable housing."

A fine up to \$2,000 will be issued for initial violations. Each subsequent violation will net a landlord a \$2,500 fine.

### TYPES OF DISCRIMINATION NOW PROHIBITED:

Advertising a rental property as not accepting vouchers

Refusing to engage in a rental transaction with someone based on their participation in a housing assistance program

Requiring rental conditions different from those required for a person not participating in a housing assistance program





# Hawai'i County receives additional housing vouchers to help address homelessness

The Office of Housing and Community Development is one of 135 agencies chosen by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to receive a share of \$45 million in housing vouchers to provide supportive services to those facing homelessness in rural communities.

Hawai'i County's public housing authority was awarded 15 Stability Vouchers to assist

individuals and families who are homeless, at-risk of homelessness, fleeing domestic violence, or were recently homeless. A total of 25 Stability Vouchers were awarded in Hawai'i, with the County of Maui receiving the other 10 vouchers.

The vouchers are among 3,379 awarded nationally to 135 public housing authorities and partnering Continuum of Care communities across the United

States, HUD announced in early June.

The vouchers build upon some \$486 million in grants HUD awarded in April to communities. Together, they comprise a first-of-its-kind package of federal resources to help communities make continued progress in reducing homelessness.

"HUD is committed to making sure that people in unsheltered

settings and in rural housing have access to housing and to help them deal with the affordability crisis," said HUD Secretary Marcia L. Fudge. "These vouchers will enable communities to partner with health and housing agencies to coordinate efforts to reduce homelessness and help thousands of people move off the streets into permanent housing."

## WAIKOLOA:

*Continued from front*

six units reserved for extremely low-income households is \$405.

The development features 39 one-bedroom units, 40 two-bedroom flats and 31 two-bedroom townhouses, in addition to a manager's unit. The units are housed in eight two-story buildings with four units each and 10 two-story buildings with eight units each. Each unit features a solar hot water system, AC, range/oven, refrigerator/freezer, garbage disposal, storage, and a parking stall.

Common amenities include an on-site resident manager and manager office, coin-operated laundry facility and access to amenities offered by the Waikoloa Village Association, including its community center, pool, and golf course.

Financing for the \$46 million project came via the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corp., First Hawaiian Bank, HHF LLC, and the Coalition for Specialized Housing. Government assistance came via Low-Income Housing Tax Credits

(LITHC), Rental Housing Revolving Fund (RHRF) allocation, and Hula Mae Multi-Family tax-exempt bonds (HMMF).

"We could not have successfully completed this project without significant support from the state Hawai'i Housing Finance & Development Corporation and County of Hawai'i," noted Andrew Furuta, project manager for GSF LLC.

The need for affordable housing on Hawai'i Island is dire, and increasing the availability and accessibility of affordable housing remains Hawai'i County Mayor Mitch Roth's top priority. Per the 2019 Hawai'i Housing Planning Study, Hawai'i County needs to add 10,796 affordable housing units by 2025 to meet the community's needs.

"The Office of Housing and Community Development is excited to see this much-needed affordable housing project begin to fill with local families," said Housing Administrator Susan Kunz. "We are pleased to work with affordable housing developers, such as the Coalition for



Units at Waikoloa Family Affordable are ready for occupancy. Courtesy photo

Specialized Housing and GSF LLC, to help these much-needed projects reach fruition as the administration continues its efforts to address the shortage of affordable housing on Hawai'i Island."

Waikoloa Family Affordable is managed by Locations Property Management, which still has units available despite holding a lottery to select tenants earlier this year. The property manager also maintains a waitlist.

Tenant requirements include

the applicant household having a minimum monthly income at least 2.5 times the monthly rent, passing a credit and criminal check and providing landlord references. Applicants must also be a U.S. Citizen or permanent resident alien and occupy their unit as their primary residence.

Waikoloa Family Affordable is located at 68-3911 Makanakai Drive.

For more information, or to download an application to become a resident, visit [www.locationsrentals.com](http://www.locationsrentals.com).

## A PATH TO SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Families who participate in the federal Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program are eligible to be part of the Office of Housing and Community Development's Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program.

FSS is a voluntary program that helps families become economically

independent.

Through this program, households learn to set goals that always include employment and often include homeownership. Family Self-Sufficiency Program participants agree, via a five-year contract, to establish and attain specific goals.

Two key features of the program are financial incentive (escrow/savings) and case management (coaching).

For more information, visit [tinyurl.com/55yvbthd](http://tinyurl.com/55yvbthd), call (808) 959-4642 or send an email to [sec8fss@hawaiicounty.gov](mailto:sec8fss@hawaiicounty.gov). Informational meetings are held monthly.



**Affordable Housing Production Program proposals now due by July 31**

The Office of Housing and Community Development has extended its request for proposals for Affordable Housing Production Program funding through July 31.

Up to \$18 million is available to qualified applicants working to increase, support, or sustain the availability of affordable housing in Hawai'i County.

The funding, an unprecedented investment in the community, was made possible through Ordinance 22-77.

For more information, and to view sessions held on May 4 and 9, visit [housing.hawaiicounty.gov/ahp](http://housing.hawaiicounty.gov/ahp).

**HOMEOWNER ASSISTANCE FUND PROGRAM EXPANDS TO HELP MORE HAWAI'I ISLAND RESIDENTS**

After more than a year in operation, the Homeowner Assistance Fund (HAF) Program is expanding to provide additional assistance to help even more homeowners in Hawai'i. Now there are more ways for homeowners who didn't qualify before to qualify for much-needed assistance.

Effective immediately, the program is expanding in four significant ways:

- The maximum assistance amount per household has been increased from \$30,000 to \$60,000
- Forward payment mortgage assistance is available for up to 12 months
- Homeowners do not have to be delinquent to qualify for assistance
- Reverse mortgage homeowners are now eligible

Since the program's inception over a year ago, service providers Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement and Hawai'i Community Lending have provided essential mortgage assistance to homeowners who experienced financial hardship caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

This expansion will provide more Hawai'i Island

homeowners with access to essential mortgage assistance.

Through the program, homeowners may receive assistance with their mortgages, certain property charges, or utilities. Homeowners do not have to have a mortgage to qualify for certain property charges or utility payment assistance, as long as all other program eligibility requirements are met.

Homeowners must have experienced a financial hardship caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and meet other eligibility requirements to qualify.

Homeowners who previously applied are encouraged to contact their local program service provider to find out if they are now eligible for assistance or additional assistance.

The program is currently available only in Hawai'i and Kauai counties and the City and County of Honolulu.

Find out more about the program, as well as how to apply in Hawai'i County, by calling Hawai'i Community Assets at (808) 587-7656 or by visiting [www.hawaiicomunitylending.com/haf](http://www.hawaiicomunitylending.com/haf).

**JOIN THE OHCD TEAM!**

The Office of Housing and Community Development is hiring for the following positions:

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

SPECIAL PROGRAM SPECIALIST

We're looking for a highly organized and goal-oriented individual who will provide valuable administrative support to the Team. Previous working experience in assisting with the management of multiple projects is preferred. Full-time contract employment with benefits. If you are interested, submit a resume to [ohcdengagement@hawaiicounty.gov](mailto:ohcdengagement@hawaiicounty.gov).

SPECIAL PROJECTS COORDINATOR

We're looking for a highly organized, goal-oriented program manager. Individual will lead and manage a program from design through completion, including working with community service organizations to ensure project goals and objectives are met. Full-time contract employment with benefits. If you are interested, submit a resume to [ohcdengagement@hawaiicounty.gov](mailto:ohcdengagement@hawaiicounty.gov).



**HUMAN RESOURCES**

HUMAN RESOURCES TECHNICIAN II

This position assists in the development and execution of a departmental human resources program for a small operating department; advises on civil service and exempt laws and regulations and human resources policies and procedures; and performs other related duties as required. Full-time permanent position with benefits. Interested candidates should submit a resume via email to [christine.nguyen@hawaiicounty.gov](mailto:christine.nguyen@hawaiicounty.gov).

ACCOUNTANT II

The position independently performs professional accounting work in the maintenance of an accounting system; analyzes fiscal data; and performs other related duties as required. Full-time permanent position with benefits. Interested candidates should submit a resume via email to [christine.nguyen@hawaiicounty.gov](mailto:christine.nguyen@hawaiicounty.gov).

The County of Hawai'i is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

**UPCOMING OFFICE CLOSURES**

- Tuesday, July 4 — Independence Day
- Friday, August 18 — Statehood Day
- Monday, September 4 — Labor Day
- Friday, November 10 — Veterans Day



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