



MITCH D. ROTH
MAYOR

April 25, 2023

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Community Meeting Scheduled May 15 for 34 Rainbow Drive Project

Input and Recommendations Sought for Master Plan for Old Hilo Memorial Hospital Site

The Hawai'i County Office of Housing and Community Development will host a community meeting on May 15, 2023, to gather input and recommendations for the development of a master plan for the old Hilo Memorial Hospital site at 34 Rainbow Drive.

Residents, service providers, stakeholders and other interested parties are encouraged to come have their say in the future of the property from 5 to 6 p.m. May 15, 2023, in the Aupuni Center Conference Room in Hilo.

Opened in 1897, Hilo Memorial Hospital served the community's health care needs until the 1950s when Hilo Hospital opened on the grounds of what is today Hilo Medical Center. Old Hilo Memorial Hospital and the 25-acre parcel it sits on are now under the management of the County by way of a governor's executive order.

Since the closure of Hilo Memorial Hospital, various agencies and entities have occupied the facility. Currently leasing space in the building are Big Island Substance Abuse Council and HOPE Services. Hope Services since late 2019 has operated its portion of the building as Keolahou, an emergency shelter, and Hale Kūlike, a permanent supportive housing program serving single men.

With the existing hospital in use and a firm contracted for its renovations, the County is now working with a consultant to develop a master plan for the remaining 20 acres surrounding the old hospital. The site, situated between Rainbow Drive and Wailuku River, is located below Rainbow Falls and above Gilbert Carvalho Park.

The master plan for the undeveloped portions of the property will help to determine the future uses of the site, including the number of affordable housing units and/or services that could be offered.

“Community input is critical to the success of any project, and gathering this information early on in the planning process will help the Hawai‘i County Office of Housing and Community Development ensure the 34 Rainbow Drive project responds to and meets the community’s needs,” said Housing Administrator Susan Kunz.

To request an auxiliary aid/service or other accommodation due to a disability, contact Ian Pitts of Fung Associates, LLC, at (808) 941-3000.

The Hawai‘i County Office of Housing and Community Development is responsible for the planning, administration, and operation of all County of Hawai‘i housing programs. Our Mission is to provide for the development of viable communities through decent housing, suitable living environments and expanded economic opportunities.



Caption: The Hawai‘i County Office of Housing and Community Development will host a community meeting May 15 to gather input and recommendations for the development of a master plan for the old Hilo Memorial Hospital site at 34 Rainbow Drive. The 25-acre parcel, which includes the former hospital, is seen in this aerial

photo. For reference, the road at left is Rainbow Drive and Rainbow Falls is situated in the upper left quadrant of the photo. Photo courtesy of the County of Hawai'i.

###

MEDIA CONTACT:

Chelsea Jensen

Public Information Officer

Hawai'i County Office of Housing and Community Development

ChelseaA.Jensen@hawaiicounty.gov

(808) 932-5944