



NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR

HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS
HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION
DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS

JOBIE M.K. MASAGATANI
DIRECTOR

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS BREAKS GROUND FOR FIRST PHASE OF HOMESTEAD SUBDIVISION IN KEALAKEHE, KAILUA-KONA

La'i 'Ōpua Village 4 'Ākau Future Home to 117 Hawaiian 'Ohana

KEALAKEHE, HAWAI'I — Gov. Neil Abercrombie, community leaders, government officials, and future homesteaders joined Chair Jobie Masagatani, Hawaiian Homes Commissioners and the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands in a groundbreaking ceremony today to begin construction on what will become the future home for 117 Hawaiian Home Lands beneficiaries and their families in the first phase of the La'i 'Ōpua Village 4 subdivision in Kealakehe, Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i.

DHHL awarded the future La'i 'Ōpua Village 4 homeowners an "Undivided Interest" lease for a lot in this subdivision in October 2005. The undivided interest lease program was designed to provide lessees the time to prepare for home ownership while the subdivision was developed. Phase I of La'i 'Ōpua Village 4 'Ākau is located on 33.9 acres of Hawaiian Home Lands approximately seven miles south of the Kona International Airport, mauka of Kealakehe High School.

"Today, I am reminded of the work my colleagues and I accomplished while serving in Washington, D.C. that created opportunities for the betterment of native Hawaiians, like the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act," said Gov. Abercrombie. "These programs help to prepare native Hawaiians for home ownership, fund critical infrastructure improvements for beneficiaries, and enable us to build vibrant communities for success for generations to come."

DHHL is the only Hawai'i recipient of federal funds under the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA) administered through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. NAHASDA funds covered 95 percent of the total infrastructure cost for La'i 'Ōpua Village 4, Phase I 'Ākau. The telecommunications infrastructure is being financed by Sandwich Isles Communications, Inc.

"These homes not only represent an incredible opportunity for 117 Hawaiian Homes beneficiaries, but also a great opportunity for leveraging limited state monies with federal funds in a way that only this Department can do," said Jobie Masagatani, Hawaiian Homes Commission chair and Department of Hawaiian Home Lands director. "Without the continued support of Governor Abercrombie and his administration, this would not be possible."





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Total infrastructure cost for the first phase of La‘i ‘Ōpua Village 4 ‘Ākau is approximately \$11 million. Infrastructure work includes clearing and grubbing, grading; constructing roadways; and installing a drainage system, wastewater system, water system and other utilities. The project also includes a mailbox cluster lot, a plant preservation lot, and a boat parking lot.

Construction is expected to begin in late February 2014, and be completed by February 2015, with home construction to follow. Isemoto Contracting Co., is the contractor with R.M. Towill Corporation providing construction management services, Engineers Surveyors Hawaii, Inc., is providing design consultation services.

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ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS

The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands is governed by the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1920, enacted by the U.S. Congress to protect and improve the lives of native Hawaiians. The act created a Hawaiian Homes Commission to administer certain public lands, called Hawaiian home lands, for homesteads. Those native Hawaiians (lower-case n) are defined as individuals having at least 50 percent Hawaiian blood.

The Act was incorporated as a provision in the State Constitution in 1959 when Hawai‘i was granted statehood. Responsibility for the Commission and the Hawaiian home lands was transferred to the State at that time. Except for provisions that increase benefits to lessees or relate to administration of the Act, the law can be amended only with the consent of Congress.

The primary responsibilities of the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands are to serve its beneficiaries and to manage its extensive land trust. The land trust consists of over 200,000 acres on the islands of Hawai‘i, Maui, Moloka‘i, Lāna‘i, O‘ahu, and Kaua‘i.

DHHL provides direct benefits to native Hawaiians in many ways. Beneficiaries may receive 99-year homestead leases at \$1 per year for residential, agricultural, or pastoral purposes. These leases may be extended for an aggregate term not to exceed 199 years. Beneficiaries may receive financial assistance through direct loans, insured loans, or loan guarantees for home purchase, construction, home replacement, or repair.

In addition to administering the homesteading program, DHHL leases trust lands not in homestead use at market value and issues revocable permits, licenses, and rights-of-entry. The income from these enterprises is used to supplement DHHL’s programs, including continued homestead development.

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