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STATE OF HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

> STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION DIVISION KAKUHIHEWA BUILDING 601 KAMOKILA BLVD, STE 555 KAPOLEI, HAWAII 96707

August 10, 2018

IN REPLY REFER TO: LOG: 2017.02563 DOC: 1808KN01 Architecture

Daniel Jandoc, Project Coordinator Department of Accounting and General Services 1151 Punchbowl Street Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Mr. Jandoc:

RE: HRS 6E-8 Historic Preservation Review Old Hilo Jail – Demolition 60 Punahele St. Hilo, HI 96720 Waiākea Ahupua'a, Hilo District, Island of Hawai'i TMK: (3)-2-3-023:005

On January 5, 2017, the State Historic Preservation Division (SHPD) requested a Short Form Historic American Building Survey (HABS) as a mitigation commitment for the demolition of the Old Hilo Jail (LOG NO. 2017.02563; DOC NO. 1801KN05).

Per §13-275-8, HAR, SHPD accepts the HABS (HABS HI-598; SIHP #50-10-35-07457).

SHPD's part of the permit process is complete.

Please contact Kaiwi Yoon, Architecture Branch Chief at (808) 692-8032, or at Kaiwi.N.Yoon@hawaii.gov for questions regarding architectural resources or this letter.

Mahalo,

Alan Downer

Alan Downer, PhD. Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Administrator, State Historic Preservation Division

cc: Michael.Yee@hawaiicounty.gov

# HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

## INDEX TO PHOTOGRAPHS

HABS No. HI-598

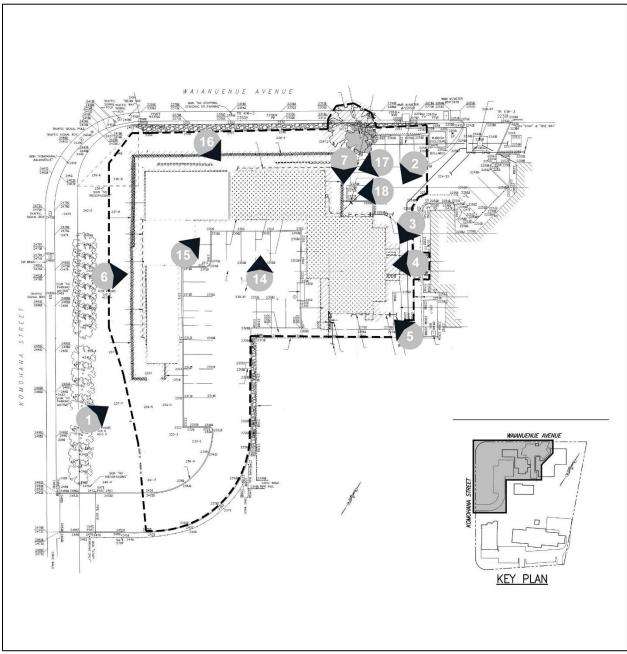
HILO JAIL (Old Hilo Jail) (South Hilo Jail) (Hilo Community Correctional Center Administration Building) 60 Punahele Street Hilo Hawaii County Hawaii

# David Franzen, Photographer

April 2018

HI-598-1	Overview of Hilo Jail from southwest side of property. View facing north.
HI-598-2	Oblique of northeast and northwest sides. View facing south.
HI-598-3	Front entrance area. View facing south.
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HI-598-19	Interior hall of wood cell block addition showing cell doors to the right. View facing south.
HI-598-20	Detail of wood cell door in wood cell block addition. View facing south.

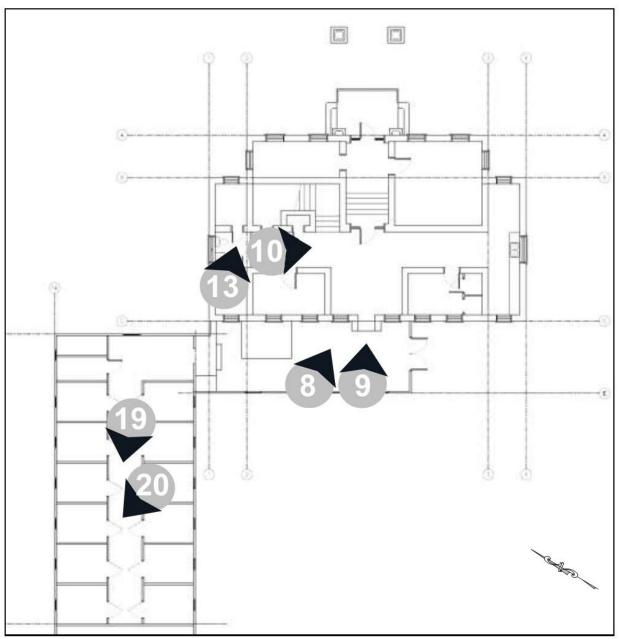
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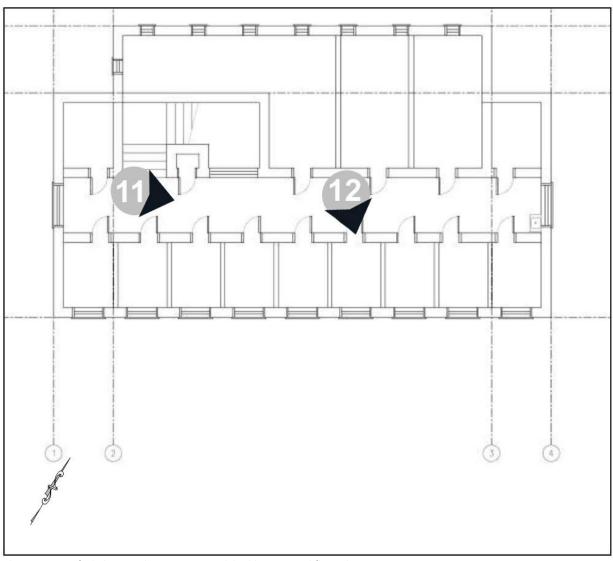
Base plan courtesy of Okahara and Associates

HILO JAIL HABS No. HI-598 INDEX TO PHOTOGRAPHS (Page 3)



Plan courtesy of Okahara and Associates. First floor plan showing brick building at top and wood cell block at left.

HILO JAIL HABS No. HI-598 INDEX TO PHOTOGRAPHS (Page 4)



Plan courtesy of Okahara and Associates. Brick building, second floor plan.

# HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY HILO JAIL (Old Hilo Jail) (South Hilo Jail) (Hilo Community Correctional Center Administration building)

## HABS No. HI-598

- Location: The Hilo Jail is located at 60 Punahele Street, Hilo, Hawai'i County, Hawai'i. The property is within the Waiakea *ahupua'a*, in the *moku* (district) of Hilo on the island of Hawai'i. The Old Hilo Jail is located near the northwest corner of a large lot bounded by Waianuenue Avenue (northwest), Komohana (southwest), and Punahele (southeast) Streets on three sides, and by residences to the fourth (northeast). The coordinates for this property, representative of the approximate center of the building, are latitude 19.718634 and longitude -155.099271. These coordinates were obtained in May 2018 via Google Earth, which uses WGS 1984 datum. There are no restrictions on the release of the locational data to the public.
- **Significance**: The Hilo Jail was designed by the prolific American architect Oliver G. Traphagen and expresses the distinct architectural and political influences of its time. This utilitarian municipal building, loosely modeled after the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century Oahu Jail, has a simple design that includes a *porte cochere*, a traditional jail with a linear cellblock plan, and small, arched door and window openings filled with metal bars, roughly 12"-thick cellblock walls, and steel doors. Planned just a few years after Hawaii's 1898 annexation to replace an earlier jail in downtown Hilo, it was constructed the same year (1905) that the territorial counties were first established. The robust, new brick building projected Hilo County's authority. Its design reflects its origins in the Hawaiian Monarchy and the subsequent American interests that overthrew it.
- **Description**: The Hilo Jail building shares a lot with several other buildings that are part of the Hawaii Community Correctional Facility and parking areas, separated from one another by fenced yards, and open lawn. The lot slopes from southwest toward the northeast, with the steepest area along Komohana Street. The lot is also divided approximately in half by a nearly diagonal swale. The area immediately surrounding the old jail includes a mortared stone wall with embedded concrete fence posts that read approximately 10' above ground level. Along the Waianuenue Avenue side of the building there is a drainage channel made up of the fence's stone wall and a second, parallel stone wall that is located closer to the building.

The jail building is made up of two formerly separate buildings that have been connected via an addition to the larger of these two. Overall the complex is reverse L-shaped in plan, and bordered by asphalt parking areas and drives, as well as grassy lawn areas.

The larger of the two buildings is a two-story, painted brick building that is symmetrical in plan, with a projecting bay at the eastern side. It has a flat roof with low parapet, and a poured concrete foundation. The concrete foundation is

at-grade at the upslope, western side of the building, and approximately 4' above grade at the downslope side. There is a porch centrally located on the downslope (eastern) side of the building. It is covered by a secondary gable roof that extends beyond the porch to shelter a driveway, and connect to one of the newer buildings nearby. The secondary roof is supported by concrete columns, wood beams and rafters with decorative, tails and is clad with corrugated metal. The walls are primarily made up of painted brick, laid in a common bond pattern. At the downslope side, portions of the walls are part of the concrete foundation, and resemble a plinth upon which the building rests.

The building has two entrances, the main, front entrance is reached via the porch on the eastern side of the building. The porch is also concrete, extends out from the building approximately 6', has two risers on each side, and a metal pipe railing. With the metal pipe railing, curved corners on the risers, and a decorative rectangular inset area at the front, this porch does not appear to have the same construction date as the building. The doorway is a segmentally arched opening filled with a metal barred grating surrounding a metal barred door. A second doorway is centrally located at the rear (western) side of the building and is now within the shed addition on this side. This entrance is reached via two small steps from the concrete floor of the addition. A frame with a stepped upper molding that projects out from the rear wall by approximately 2' houses the segmentally arched door opening. The opening has been filled with a metal door-frame, and a flush wood door.

The fenestration pattern is regular and symmetrical at the front. Window openings on the building differ, with large openings of varying dimensions mainly located on the first floor, and small openings in two sizes on both floors. All windows have concrete sills, and larger windows are segmentally arched; smaller windows either have a flat arch, or no arch. The six largest windows are located on the three sides of the eastern, projecting bay, with two evenly spaced on each side of the main entry door, and one each on the north and south side of the bay. Other large windows are centrally located on the northern and southern sides of the main portion of the building on both the first and second floors (denoting the ends of hallways that extend the length of the building on each floor), and at either side of the central rear entry door. Smaller windows are located on the rear wall, with six on the first floor, four north of the entry door and two to its south; and nine that are slightly larger on the second floor. Other small windows are located on the front of the building, with two on the first floor, and eleven, the building's smallest, on the second floor, including the north and south sides of the projecting bay. All windows are filled with metal bars. Most also have insect screen at the exterior. A small number have glass jalousies at the interior. Several of the larger windows have corrugated metal awnings supported on wood brackets.

The interior of the building contains seven rooms on the first floor, and fourteen on the second. Rooms on the first floor include a former office at the southeast, a cross-shaped open entry hall and central hall, two storage rooms, two small former cells, and two storage closets. A wide staircase leads to the second floor, where there are fourteen cells arranged on either side of a central hallway. The nine cells along the western side of the hall are all small. On the eastern side of the hall, there are two small cells at either end, two larger cells of approximately equal dimensions, a large cell formerly used as a dayroom, and a small room providing roof access. The walls and ceiling are plastered, and most of the floors are vinyl composition tile or concrete, with an elevated wood floor in one room. Doors include non-historic flush wood, historic multi-panel wood, historic metal cell doors with face-height hatch-type openings, and historic doors made of metal bars. Many historic doors retain historic hardware, including knobs, escutcheons, hinges and latches. The building does not appear to have originally had plumbing; however, three sinks and one toilet have been installed at some point.

Attached to the eastern side of the brick building is a one story, shed-roofed addition. This is a wood frame structure, with dark-stained, scored plywood walls that are open to the frame at the interior. There are four jalousie windows along the eastern wall, one flush, double entrance door on the southern end, and a single door opening northern end that opens into the wood cellblock annex to the main jail building.

The wood cellblock annex is rectangular in plan, and is oriented on an east to west axis. It is one story with a gable roof that has overhanging eaves and exposed rafter tails. The roof is clad with corrugated metal panels. There is also an area of missing cladding that appears to have contained a skylight. The foundation is poured concrete and, is located varying distances above grade, depending on the ground slope. The walls are vertical boards, with a high girt. Just above the girt are regularly spaced small windows. The windows are nearly square, barred openings covered with metal mesh screen. The eastern end of the building has three bays that are inset below the gable roof, and have projecting vertical separating walls. Aerial images show that sometime between 2010 and 2012, the building was divided at this location, and the other portion of the building demolished.<sup>1</sup> The concrete foundation of the demolished building portion remains, extending to the east and south of the extant portion. The inset bays express the locations of cells on either side of the central hallway. Plumbing lines are visible just above the foundation, corresponding to each cell.

The interior of this building is made up of an entryway, storage space (possibly a former cell), a central hallway, and twelve cells of the same size. Each cell has a historic wooden door made up of vertical and horizontal boards with Z-bracing that has a face-height hatch, and a metal latching mechanism. The cells contain an exterior window, and one above the hallway door. The walls are painted, and the floor is finished concrete. No plumbing or other fixtures remain.

**History**: Planned just a few years after Hawai'i's 1898 annexation to replace an earlier jail in downtown Hilo, it was constructed in 1905, the same year that the territorial counties were first established.

It was built on land approximately one mile southwest of Hilo town, along Kaumana Road (now called Wainuenue Avenue), near several stone quarries and Hilo Hospital. Over time the area developed, as a new high school and residences were constructed nearby.

Planning began as early as 1903, when \$16,000 was set aside by the Territorial Senate for the construction of a new jail in Hilo. The old jail in downtown Hilo had

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "Hilo" Google Earth 5Q 279974.64m E 2181692.44m N. December 11, 2010 and May 13, 2012, accessed July 17, 2018.

become crowded, with up to 80 inmates at times in a building with only eleven cells, and after input from a committee of prominent local businessmen, and eventual agreement from the governor, it was decided to locate the new jail farther from town. The chosen location was also nearer to quarries, making it more convenient to use inmate labor that was often used in municipal projects that required stone. Initial plans called for the building itself to be modeled after the Oahu Prison, and constructed of stone quarried on site. It was to have some sixty rooms total, including: "an office, guard rooms, examining room, 48 prisoners' cells, 6 cells for witnesses and two large double cells for women inmates."<sup>2</sup>

The building was described as such:

The dimensions of the building are 27 feet by 120 feet in length in the shape of a rectangle, with a seven foot corridor running the full length. Each cell is 8 feet by 10 feet. The main entrance is in the center, with a double stairway leading from the ground floor to the upper story...with only one means of entrance and exit through which an escape might occur. <sup>3</sup>

In 1904, noted architect Oliver G. Traphagen was enlisted to provide design drawings for the jail building.<sup>4</sup> Traphagen moved to Hawai'i in 1897, from Duluth Minnesota, where he was already a successful architect. He was born in Tarrytown New York in 1854, and moved to Minnesota in the 1870s with his parents. After work as a carpenter, he apprenticed with architect George Wirth, ultimately practicing in Duluth for fifteen years before the move to Hawai'i. The timing of Traphagen's move was fortuitous, sandwiched between the overthrow of the Hawaiian Monarchy, and the annexation of the former kingdom by the United States. With the nation now under control of American interests, business investment and construction was in a period of growth. Traphagen was guickly engaged in projects, beginning with the Judd Building on Fort and Merchant Streets. He went on to design a number of prominent hotel, mercantile and other buildings in Honolulu and Hawai'i during his nine years practicing in the islands. Extant examples include Moana Hotel and Kakaako Pumping Station; Traphagen designed buildings that are no longer extant in Hawai'i including the Haleiwa Hotel, Hackfeld and Company Building, and an assortment of buildings on downtown Honolulu's most prominent streets: Fort, Merchant, Nuuanu and King. Residential work for prominent residents was also a part of Traphagen's portfolio, with homes for August Drieron, George R. Carter, and James B. Castle. Traphagen left Hawai'i in 1907, moving to Alameda, California where he continued to practice (including designs for Dole Hall at Punahou School campus, and for a large Bishop Estate building that does not appear to have been constructed) until his retirement in 1925. He died in California in 1932.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> "Court House and Jail," *Hilo Tribune*, March 20, 1903, p. 2. "At Loggerheads over Jail Site," *Hilo Tribune*, October 4, 1904, p. 6

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup>"Plans for Hilo Jail," *Hawaiian Star*, September 30,1904, p. 2. Jami Wallace *O.G. Traphagen FAIA: A Biography*, 1979.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> "Seven-Story Block for Bishop Park," Commercial Advertiser, February 1, 1913, p. 1

Bids for the construction contract included tiers of building options, beginning with the core building only, and up to two wings of cells. With the total planned expenditure of \$16,000 for land, architectural services and construction, contractor L.M Whitehouse's bid of \$13,895 for the construction with two wings of cells was the winning tender. Ultimately it appears that the amount allotted did not cover all construction expenses, and only the central portion of the jail was constructed. Not only this, but rather than using stone quarried on site, the jail was constructed of brick likely imported from the continental United States. <sup>6</sup>

When the first section was complete in September 1906, the jail contained 16 cells, and had no dining or cooking facilities. Plans were made to deconstruct a structure from the former Jail in downtown Hilo that contained those facilities, and reassemble it at the new location.<sup>7</sup> It appears that the additional sections were not added as planned. Nonetheless, the robust brick building projected the newly created Hilo County's growing authority.

As early as 1910, complaints of overcrowding were being made about the jail, with up to 107 inmates at some points during the year, in contrast to the 22-30 the jail was intended to accommodate.<sup>8</sup> By 1911, allegations were made of underfeeding leading to Beriberi, a disease brought on by lack of proper nutrients.<sup>9</sup> By 1913, the jail and its jailer were the focus of investigations for its treatment of prisoners, sending prisoners to work on public roads and projects without clothing, or to work on private projects, as well as at least one death from Beriberi.<sup>10</sup> An appropriation of \$20,000 to enlarge the jail was made in 1913, though it is unclear if this work was ever accomplished.<sup>11</sup> At some point between 1954 and 1964 a new wood cell block was added to the rear of the brick building.<sup>12</sup>

In 1967, a new Hawaii County Jail site was planned farther outside of downtown Hilo, in Panaewa, and it was anticipated that the inmates would be moved out of the Wainuenue Street building between 1970 and 1971. The inmate population had diminished from approximately 50 some years earlier to only 14 at the time of the decision.<sup>13</sup> In 1978, a new building was constructed on the site, and 32 prisoners would be moved from the old jail building into the new building, where "[t]here also are individual toilets with running water instead of buckets that are emptied once a day."<sup>14</sup> It is unclear if inmates were housed in the old building

<sup>12</sup> Aerial images: USN V VJ 61, October 14, 1954. Hawaii State Archives, folder PPA-14-3, photo 8-07; and USDA Flightline 62, image no. 5409 (EKL-6CC-13), January 16, 1965, available at:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> "...material to be used in the construction of the Hilo Jail has arrived from the mainland." *Hilo Tribune* October 3, 1905. p. 4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> "Moved to New Hilo Jail," *Hawaiian Star*, September 21, 1906, p. 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> "Hilo Jail Now Has Standing Room Only," *Commercial Advertiser*, November 27, 1910, p. 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> "Prisoners Show Effect of Apparant Lack of Food While in Hilo Bastile," *Commercial Advertiser,* November 29, 1911, p. 11.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> "Japan's Consul-General Takes Up Hilo Jail Scandal," *Commercial Advertiser,* January 16, 1913, p. 9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> "Hiloites Score School System," *Honolulu Star-Bulletin,* February 17, 1913, p. 8.

http://magis.manoa.hawaii.edu/remotesensing/GeoserverFiles/ShpFiles/Hawaii/062/jpegs/5409. Accessed July 17, 2018.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Walt Southward, "Hilo Jail to Move From Downtown to Panaewa Site," *Honolulu Advertiser,* June 29, 1967, p. C-14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Hugh Clark "Good news: a new jail; bad news: it's too small," *Honolulu Advertiser.* May 5, 1978. p. A-3.

after this time. As of 2018, the brick jail building, wood cell annex and shed addition were used for maintenance activities and storage. The second floor of the brick building had been damaged by a fire in 2017 that scorched the walls and ceiling, and destroyed ceiling-hung light fixtures.

The brick building has not been significantly altered since construction, with the most noticeable alterations the cell block and shed additions to the rear. The cell block is also historic, despite not being part of the original construction. At some point, likely the 1930s, a hipped roof was added over the original flat roof with parapet that had initially been roofed with "felt, pitch and gravel."<sup>15</sup> Glass jalousies have also been installed in several windows. At the interior, alterations include replacement doors at most upstairs cells, installation of two sinks and one toilet, addition of composition tile to some floors on the first floor, and installation of a raised wood floor in one first-floor room. Some of the cells retain their original metal doors with face-height hatches (some barred), exterior latch-type locking mechanisms and oversized hinges. Sometime between 2010 and 2012, much of the wooden cell annex was demolished. The portion that remains retains historic features including double-thickness wood-plank cell doors with face-height hatches.

## Sources:

- Clark, Hugh. "Good news: a new jail; bad news: it's too small." *Honolulu Advertiser*, May 5, 1978: A-3.
- Commercial Advertiser. "Hilo Jail Now Has Standing Room Only." November 27, 1910: 1.
- Commercial Advertiser. "Hilo Jailbirds Interest Keefe." December 19, 1910: 9.
- Commercial Advertiser. "Advertisement." August 6, 1911: 15.
- Commercial Advertiser. "Prisoners Show Effect of Apparant Lack of Food While in Hilo Bastile." November 29, 1911: 11.
- Commercial Advertiser. "A Pest Hole, is the Hilo Jail." January 8, 1913: 9.
- Commercial Advertiser. "The Hilo Jail Scandal." January 15, 1913: 4.
- *Commercial Advertiser.* "Japan's Consul-General Takes Up Hilo Jail Scandal." January 16, 1913: 9.
- *Commercial Advertiser.* "Concentrated Lye, Sulphuric Acid and Cyanide to Clean up Hilo Jail." January 28, 1913: 9.
- Commercial Advertiser. "Prison Reform Legislation." February 9, 1913: 4.
- Hawaiian Gazette. "Bad Conditions in Big Island Coop." December 2, 1910: 5.
- Hawaiian Star. "Moved to New Hilo Jail." September 21, 1906: 5.
- "Hilo" *Google Earth* 5Q 279974.64m E 2181692.44m N. December 11, 2010 and May 13, 2012, accessed July 17, 2018.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> "Tell Your Roof Troubles to Peter Higgins" (Advertisement), *Honolulu Advertiser*, August 6, 1911, p. 15.

Hilo Tribune. At Loggerheads over Jail Site. October 4, 1904. p. 6.

Hilo Tribune. "Whitehouse Lowest Bidder." July 25, 1905: 2.

Hilo Tribune. "Condensed Local Items." August 1, 1905: 5.

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O'Brien, Tom. "Hilo Chief Urges 'Dirty' Jail Probe." *Honolulu Advertiser*, August 20, 1947: 1.

Pacific Commercial Advertiser. "A Cement Scandal over Hilo Jail Specifications." October 28, 1905: 1.

Pacific Commercial Advertiser. "Notice to Intending Bidders." June 12, 1905: 7.

Pacific Commercial Advertiser. "Items." October 30, 1905: 8.

Southward, Walt. "Hilo Jail to Move From Downtown to Panaewa Site." *Honolulu Advertiser*, June 29, 1967: C-14.

United States Department of Agriculture Photograph. Flightline 62, image no. 5409 (EKL-6CC-13), January 16, 1965. http://magis.manoa.hawaii.edu/remotesensing/GeoserverFiles/ShpFiles/H awaii/062/jpegs/5409.

United States Navy Photograph V VJ 61, October 14, 1954. Hawaii State Archives, folder PPA-14-3, photo 8-07.

Historian(s): Lesleigh Jones, Architectural Historian, Mason Architects, Inc. March 2018.

Project

Information: This report is part of the requested documentation for a property identified as incurring an effect with proposed mitigation from the Hawai`i State Historic Preservation Division (SHPD). In late 2017, Hawaii County/the State Historic Preservation Division (SHPD) received a submittal from the Hawaii State Department of Public Safety related to a demolition permit request. The project scope of work includes the demolition of the brick jail building, and attached wood-frame cell block on the property. The report was prepared by Mason Architects, Inc under contract to Okahara and Associates, Inc. The field work for this report was conducted in April 2018, and the initial report prepared in June 2018. The report was finalized in July 2018.

# Location Map (U.S. Geological Survey 1995, Hilo)

