

Future of the Oahu Community Correctional Center

Vol. 34 – Construction Underway at Women’s CCC

July 2021

Hawaii Department of Public Safety

The Hawaii Department of Public Safety (PSD) is responsible for carrying out judgments of the state courts whenever a period of confinement is ordered. Its mission is to uphold justice and public safety by providing correctional and law enforcement services to Hawaii’s communities with professionalism, integrity and fairness. Currently, offenders are housed within State of Hawaii jail and prison facilities located within Hawaii, at the Federal Detention Center in Honolulu, and in private contractor facilities on the mainland.

PSD operates Community Correctional Centers (CCCs), widely known as jails, on the islands of Kauai, Maui, Hawaii and Oahu. Each CCC houses short-term sentenced felons, probation, and misdemeanor offenders; pre-trial felons and misdemeanor offenders; other jurisdiction; and probation/parole violators. CCCs provide the customary county jail function of managing both pre-trial detainees and locally-sentenced misdemeanant offenders and others with a sentence of one year or less. CCCs also provide an important pre-release preparation/transition function for prison system inmates who are transferred back to their place of origin when they reach less than a year until their scheduled release. Although some offenders will remain in prison for life, the majority (over 95 percent) will serve their sentences and be released, eventually returning to the community.

PSD is committed to providing a safe, secure, healthy, humane, social, and physical environment for inmates and staff. However, aged and obsolete CCCs have limited PSD’s ability to provide such environments. All jail facilities are antiquated with limited space for programs and treatment services. Improvement of the declining facilities (and replacing facilities when necessary) is a priority. Chief among such priorities is replacement of the existing Oahu CCC (OCCC) with a new facility at the Animal Quarantine Station (AQS) in Aiea/Halawa. Assisting with OCCC planning and development is the Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS) and a team of consultants (the “OCCC Team”).

Groundbreaking Held for WCCC Improvements

The Women’s Community Correctional Center (WCCC) located at 42-477 Kalia Highway in Kailua is the only facility in Hawaii specifically serving the needs of pre-trial and sentenced female offenders. On July 12, 2021, after years of planning, PSD held a ceremonial ground-breaking to mark the start of construction of important improvements to WCCC including:

- New 176-bed housing unit
- New administration building to replace the current obsolete structure
- New visitation/intake building
- Improvements to employee/visitor parking and access to/from Kalia Highway

In 2018, the Hawaii Legislature appropriated \$40 million for new consolidated housing and other improvements to WCCC to allow for the transfer of all female pre-trial detainees from the OCCC. Relocating females from OCCC to WCCC will improve living conditions, expand treatment and rehabilitation services for women, and increase opportunities for family visitation. Construction is expected to take approximately two years.



Pictured: Eric Tanaka (WCCC Warden), Calvin Pagharon (WCCC Chief of Security), Max N. Otani (PSD Director), Senator Clarence Nishihara, Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Representative Lisa Marten, Curt Otaguro (DAGS Comptroller), and Esther Kia’aina (Councilmember).

Groundbreaking Held for WCCC Improvements (Continued)

Currently, WCCC offers a 50-bed gender responsive, substance abuse therapeutic community called Ke Alaula. Other offerings include a cognitive-based curriculum, parenting and educational classes, domestic violence treatment, day reporting and electronic monitoring programs. Female offenders also have access to Project Bridge, a program designed to assist with transitioning back to society through employment, education and substance abuse after care treatment. In addition to in-facility programs, WCCC staff and inmates also participate in many community service projects for state, county agencies and non-profit organizations.

"This long-awaited project will provide women with better access to services and improved living conditions. The new addition will also help ease some of the overcrowding at OCCC. As the state's largest jail, OCCC's primary population is male pre-trial detainees, and it's a daily challenge to house females within the jail and provide program space," said Governor David Y. Ige.



"Improving WCCC to accommodate females from OCCC has been a goal of the Department for many years," said PSD Director Max Otani, "and today we're taking a giant step toward realizing that goal. An upgraded and expanded WCCC will help us house the current population while providing the critical space and resources that female offenders need to successfully return to their communities."

Max N. Otani, PSD Director

"This is the first major correctional facility construction project since the Halawa Medium Security Facility was completed in 1988," said Curt Otaguro, Department of Accounting and General Services Comptroller. "This is the first of several on-going projects that we are working on with the Department of Public Safety to address inmate overcrowding and to modernize infrastructure and security technology."

Curt Otaguro, DAGS Comptroller



"We have many friends and supporters of us here but without the key support of the funding we would never be where we are at and it's a great and grand opportunity for us," said WCCC Warden Eric Tanaka. "We (at WCCC) adapt to and we accept and move forward with 21st century positive correctional practices. We have people who think out of the box and work together. From our partners in programming, to our medical and mental health, food service and social work, everything across the board."

Eric Tanaka, WCCC Warden



WCCC inmates perform hula at the groundbreaking.



The event received a traditional blessing.

Local Firms Involved with Construction

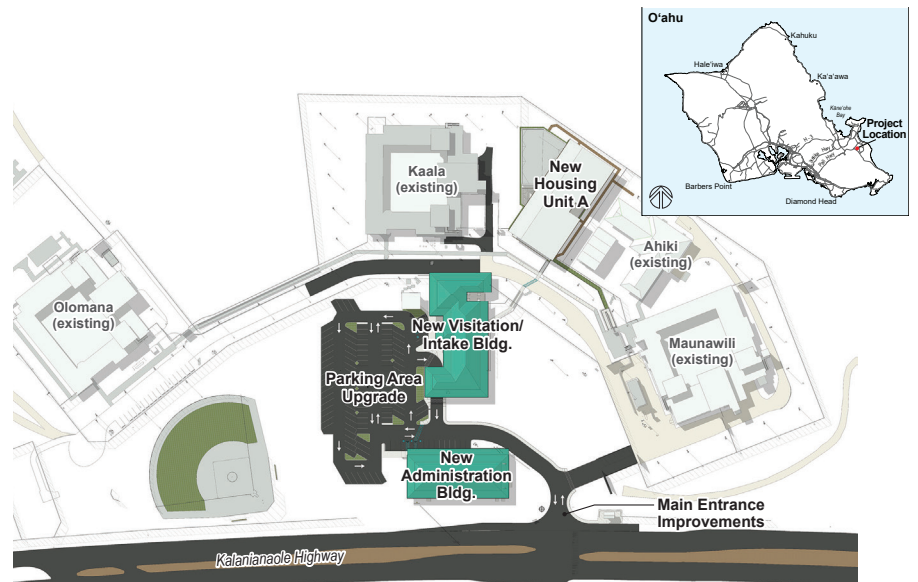
Construction of the WCCC improvements involves multiple contractors hired by DAGS including S & M Sakamoto, Inc. which was founded in 1940 and today is one of Hawaii's leading construction companies. S & M Sakamoto will be responsible for constructing the new housing unit, administration building, intake/visitor center and other on-site improvements. Ensuring that construction is completed according to plan, schedule and budget will be the responsibility of Rider Levitt Bucknall which will provide construction management services.



New Housing Unit A (Credit: CGL Companies)



New Administration Building (Credit: CGL Companies)



Credit: CGL Companies.



New Visitation/Intake Building (Credit: CGL Companies)



Old Pali Road from Honolulu over the Koolau mountain range to Kailua, c. 1900.

Upcoming Activities

The following activities are anticipated in the months ahead.

August 2021	<p>Provide status reports at Aiea Neighborhood Board #20 and Aiea Community Association meetings.</p> <p>Be present at Hawaii Correctional Systems Oversight Commission meeting.</p> <p>Continue public outreach, information, and engagement including publication of Newsletter Vol. 36.</p> <p>Look to OCCC Future Plans website for announcements, upcoming events, and recent activities.</p>
September 2021	<p>Review results of soil boring and sampling programs of new AQS site.</p> <p>Provide status reports at Aiea Neighborhood Board #20 and Aiea Community Association meetings.</p> <p>Be present at Hawaii Correctional Systems Oversight Commission meeting.</p> <p>Continue public outreach, information, and engagement including publication of Newsletter Vol. 37.</p> <p>Look to OCCC Future Plans website for announcements, upcoming events, and recent activities.</p>
October 2021	<p>Provide status reports at Aiea Neighborhood Board #20 and Aiea Community Association meetings.</p> <p>Be present at Hawaii Correctional Systems Oversight Commission meeting.</p> <p>Continue public outreach, information, and engagement including publication of Newsletter Vol. 38.</p> <p>Look to OCCC Future Plans website for announcements, upcoming events, and recent activities.</p>

Join OCCC Email List

Add your name to the OCCC email list to directly receive announcements, newsletters, and other project-related materials by sending your name, affiliation (if any), and email address to: robert.nardi@wsp.com.

Interested in Learning More?

For additional information visit <http://dps.hawaii.gov/occc-future-plans> or contact:

Toni E. Schwartz, Public Information Officer

Hawaii Department of Public Safety

Tel. 808.587.1358

Email: Toni.E.Schwartz@hawaii.gov

Robert J. Nardi, Vice President

WSP USA, Inc.

Tel: 973.407.1681

Mobile: 973.809.7495

Email: robert.nardi@wsp.com