



**For Immediate Release
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WAIKIKI COMMUNITY CELEBRATES THE GROUNDBREAKING OF LONG-AWAITED CENTENNIAL PARK

WAIKIKI — A vision to transform a vacant lot in the heart of Waikiki to a community park is coming to fruition. The Rotary Club of Honolulu Centennial Park Committee today held a formal groundbreaking ceremony. County officials, local Rotarians and community members were among those gathered to mark the momentous occasion.

The 35,480 square-foot property at Aloha Drive and Seaside Avenue has remained undeveloped based on strong community desire for a public park at the site. In 2016, the City & County of Honolulu engaged in a public-private partnership with the Rotary Club of Honolulu to make the park a reality.

The name Centennial Park honors over 100 years since the establishment of Hawaii's first Rotary Club in 1915, and the Rotary's continued commitment to strengthen and uplift the Hawaii community.

"Centennial Park is an opportunity to provide a space of joy and relaxation for the community and we look forward to seeing that completed," said Rotary Club of Honolulu Centennial Park Committee Chairman Rob Hale.

Mayor Kirk Caldwell praised the Rotary Club for its steadfast commitment and work. He credited the public-private partnership as an example for improving public facilities. "It's the future and I believe it's something we should embrace and not oppose —today it is about embracing," stated Mayor Caldwell.

Councilwoman Kymberly Pine, who introduced the bill allowing nonprofit groups, businesses and private citizens to sponsor city assets, echoed the hope of Centennial Park serving as a model for future community-developed projects focused on improving public facilities, parks, programs and equipment.

"I had this dream that we would go back to the old days of how we did things in this city where the parks weren't just done by government, it was really done and taken care of by the people," said Councilwoman Pine. "There was love in all our public places."

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Since formalizing their sponsorship, the Rotary Club of Honolulu has raised over \$500,000 for the park, according to Honolulu Rotary President Paul Saito. Donations from prominent Hawaii businesses and Rotarians across the state will contribute to the making of Centennial Park.

Centennial Park's first phase is expected to be completed by summer 2020. It will include elevated grass areas to allow for performances, cultural exchanges and educational activities. Signage showcasing the history of Rotary International in Hawaii will also be featured throughout the park for residents and visitors to read.

For more information about the Centennial Park of Waikiki, visit centennialparkwaikiki.org.

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