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COUNTY OF KAUAI
PLANNING DEPARTMENT
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LIHUE, KAUAI, HAWAII 96766
OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY CONTROL

July 29, 1996

Mr. Gary Gill, Director
State of Hawaii
Office of Environmental Quality Control
220 South King Street, Fourth Floor
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: Final Environmental Assessment/Negative Declaration
Pedestrian Walkway and Related Improvements
Sheraton Resort
TMK: 2-8-2-16:3, Poipu, Kauai

The Notice of Availability of the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the above referenced project was published in the OEQC Bulletin on May 8, 1996 and May 23, 1996, therefore, the 30 day comment period has elapsed. The comments received during the review period, and the applicant's responses are included as Appendix A of the enclosed four copies of the Final Environmental Assessment.

The applicant has revised the project to relocate that portion of the concrete walkway located on the sandy section of the site to mauka of the forty foot shoreline setback area (see attached July 24, 1996 letter to the Planning Commission). The County of Kauai Planning Department has reviewed the Environmental Assessment and the comments received during the comment period, and has determined that the project, as revised, will not have any significant impacts on the environment. Based on our determination we are filing a negative declaration for this project.

Findings and reasons supporting the determination:

1. The proposed project will not involve a loss or destruction of any natural or cultural resources.
2. The proposed project will not curtail the range of beneficial uses of the environment.
3. The proposed project will not conflict with the State's long-term environmental policies.

95

Mr. Gary Gill
July 29, 1996
Page 2

4. The proposed project will not substantially affect the economic or social welfare of the community or State, or public health.
5. The proposed project will not involve substantial secondary impacts, such as population changes or effects on public facilities.
6. The proposed project will not involve a substantial degradation of environmental quality.
7. The proposed project will not have considerable cumulative effects on the environment, or involve a commitment to larger actions.
8. The proposed project will not substantially affect any rare, threatened or endangered species of flora or fauna or habitat. No endangered species of flora or fauna are known to exist at the project site.
9. The proposed project will not detrimentally affect air or water quality or ambient noise levels.
10. The proposed project will not adversely affect an environmentally sensitive area such as a flood plain, tsunami zone, erosion-prone area, geographically hazardous land, estuary, freshwater area or coastal waters.

Please be advised that the foregoing action does not indicate the Planning Department's position on this proposal relative to the requirements of the County of Kauai Special Management Area Rules and Regulations, the County Shoreline Setback Rules and Regulations or Hawaii Revised Statutes, Chapter 205A. The requirements of these Rules and Regulations will be considered by the Planning Department during the permit review process.

Please contact George Kalisik of my staff at 241-6677 if you have any questions or comments regarding this matter.



Dee M. Crowell
Planning Director

enclosures
c: Gerald Park

96

1996-08-23-KA-PEA-Pedestrian Walkway and Related
Improvement Sheraton Report

AUG 23 1996

FILE COPY

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

CONSTRUCTION OF A PEDESTRIAN WALKWAY
Sheraton Kauai Hotel
Koloa, Kauai

Prepared in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
of Chapter 343, Hawaii Revised Statutes and
Title 11, Chapter 200, Hawaii Administrative Rules

Prepared For:

Obayashi Corporation
725 Kapiolani Boulevard
Fourth Floor
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Prepared By:

Gerald Park Urban Planner
1400 Rycroft Street, Suite 876
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-3021

July, 1996

PREFACE

Pursuant to Chapter 343, Hawaii Revised Statutes, the County of Kauai Planning Department has determined that an Environmental Assessment should be prepared for the construction of a pedestrian walkway to be located within the shoreline setback area fronting the Sheraton Kauai Hotel at Poipu, Koloa, Kauai.

In addition, a Special Management Area Permit and a Shoreline Setback Variance are required. Applications for these permits have been submitted and processing by the Planning Department will commence after the environmental assessment process has been completed.

SUMMARY INFORMATION

PROJECT: Construction of Pedestrian Walkway
Sheraton Kauai Hotel

APPLICANT: Obayashi Corporation
Honolulu, Hawaii

APPROVING AGENCY: Planning Department
County of Kauai

LOCATION: Koloa, Kauai, Hawaii

TAX MAP KEY: 2-08-16: 3

LAND AREA: 8.444 acres
Area of Use: 11,000 square feet

LAND OWNER: Eric A. Knudsen Trust and
Augustus F. Knudsen Trust

STATE LAND USE DISTRICT: Urban

GENERAL PLAN: Resort

ZONING: Open

SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREA: Within Special Management Area

EXISTING USE: Unused damaged pedestrian walkway

CONTACT PERSON: Dee Crowell, Planning Director
Planning Department
County of Kauai
4444 Rice Street, Suite 473
Building "A"
Lihue, Kauai, Hawaii 96766

Telephone: 241-6677

Note: Revisions to the text of the Draft Environmental Assessment appear in *bold italic* type. Deleted text is shown in brackets.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
SUMMARY INFORMATION	ii
SECTION 1 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT	
A. Purpose of the Proposed Project	1
B. Technical Characteristics	1
C. Economic Characteristics	2
D. Social Characteristics	[2] 2a
SECTION 2 DESCRIPTION OF THE AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT	
A. Existing Use	7
B. Landform	7
C. Flood Hazard	9
D. Drainage	9
E. Archaeological Features	9
F. Terrestrial Flora and Fauna	9
G. Land Use Controls	10
H. Ocean Activities	10
I. Utilities	11
SECTION 3 SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MEASURES TO MITIGATE ADVERSE EFFECTS	
A. Assessment Process	12
B. Short-term Impacts	12
C. Long-term Impacts	13
SECTION 4 ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED ACTION	
A. No Action	15
SECTION 5 LAND USE PERMITS AND APPROVALS	16
SECTION 6 AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS CONSULTED IN THE <i>PREPARATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT</i>	17
SECTION 7 DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE	18
REFERENCES	20
APPENDIX A <i>COMMENT LETTERS AND RESPONSES</i>	

LIST OF FIGURES

<u>Figure</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Page</u>
1	Location Map	3
2	Existing Site Plan	4
[3	Master Plan	5]
3	<i>Revised Master Plan</i>	5
[4	Section Through Walkway	6]
4	<i>Section Through Walkway</i>	6
5	<i>Walkway Detail</i>	6a

PHOTOGRAPHS

<u>Photograph</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Page</u>
1	Walkway and lawn area (west view)	8
2	Walkway around rocky point.	8
3	Top of sand bank (east view)	8

SECTION 1

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

Obayashi Corporation proposes to reconstruct a pedestrian walkway within the shoreline setback of a shoreline parcel located at Koloa (Poipu) Beach, Koloa, Kauai. The parcel is identified as Tax Map Key: 2-08-16: 3 encompassing an area of 8.444 acres. The subject property is shown in Figure 1.

A. Purpose of the Proposed Project

The purpose of the project is to restore a lateral pedestrian walkway that runs along most of the shoreline fronting the Sheraton Kauai Hotel. In 1992, Hurricane Iniki struck the State of Hawaii causing significant damage to the island of Kauai. The Sheraton Kauai Resort sustained considerable damage to its Beachfront, Oceanfront, and Garden facilities. Given its location along the shoreline, an existing concrete walkway as shown in Figure 2 was severely damaged by high waves and ocean surges. Reconstructing the walkway will restore shoreline access between the eastern and western ends of the property thereby making beach and ocean areas accessible to hotel guests and residents. The walkway will also further a County goal of creating a continuous system of public paths along the shoreline in the Poipu area.

B. Technical Characteristics

Obayashi Corporation (hereafter "Applicant") proposes to construct a 6-foot wide concrete walkway within the 40-foot shoreline setback area established for its shoreline property as shown in Figure 3. The ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) accessible walkway is to be constructed within a 6-foot wide pedestrian right-of-way that generally parallels the shoreline between the east and west boundaries of the property. The right-of-way is approximately 1,700 feet long.

The scope of the project entails repair work to existing sections of concrete walkway and construction of new sections of the proposed walkway. Although damaged by Hurricane Iniki, most of the existing 4 to 6-foot wide concrete walkway on the west side of the property remains intact and will be repaired. Repairs, and in some areas new construction, will be confined to the area between the existing Drum Lounge and the existing sewer pump station on the western end of the property. This section of the walkway is approximately 1,100 feet long and generally follows the meandering, rocky shoreline.

In some areas, cuts and depressions have been cut into the ground by hurricane generated ocean surges. These areas need to be filled, compacted, and raised to match the adjoining grade prior to walkway construction.

Near the western end of the Drum Lounge, the shoreline walkway will join a proposed mauka-makai walkway. This latter walkway is part of the master plan to expand the existing courtyard by demolishing a three story structure occupied by the hotel's Koloa

Wing and several commercial uses. Removing the structure creates a multi-functional landscaped courtyard and opens a view corridor from the hotel lobby area through the courtyard to the ocean.

This walkway was not identified in the original project description and a curving section of approximately 40 feet that parallels the shoreline encroaches into the shoreline setback. This walkway is approximately 5-6 feet wider than the shoreline walkway and will be constructed of poured in place concrete. Ancillary facilities such as ground lighting, luau torches, and landscape furniture will embellish the walkway.

A new concrete walkway will be constructed from the Drum Lounge to the east boundary of the property a distance of about 600 lineal feet. At one time, a walkway connected the Drum Lounge with the snack bar/pool deck fronting the Beachfront wing of the hotel. Generally aligned outside of the shoreline setback area this 300 foot section was severely damaged by Hurricane Iniki and will be replaced entirely. A walkway existed between the snack bar to the pedestrian easement along the east property boundary. The walking surface was a concrete footpath along the top of a sand bank overlooking Poipu Beach. This section was approximately 300 lineal feet.

Applicant proposes to realign the section of walkway overlooking Poipu Beach further inland and outside of the shoreline setback. This alternative is now possible because the density of the oceanfront wing has been reduced from 134 to 90 rooms and the number of proposed structures from five to four thus freeing up ground level space for ancillary facilities. A revised site plan and typical walkway section are shown in Figures 3 and 4.

The proposed walkway will be a floating concrete slab 4" thick (with an 8" thickened edge on its seaward side) and set at a grade that promotes comfortable passage. The walkway will not be built on a sub-structure and minimal excavation will be required. A walkway detail is shown in Figure 5.

Applicant also is proposing ancillary improvements along the shoreline to enhance the planned garden-like setting. These improvements include underground electrical conduits, low-voltage ground and tree lights, gas lines for luau torches, luau torches, irrigation lines, and landscape plantings and furniture.

No buildings or structures are proposed for construction as part of this proposal.

[The walkway alignment and a typical section are shown in Figures 2 and 3.]

C. Economic Characteristics

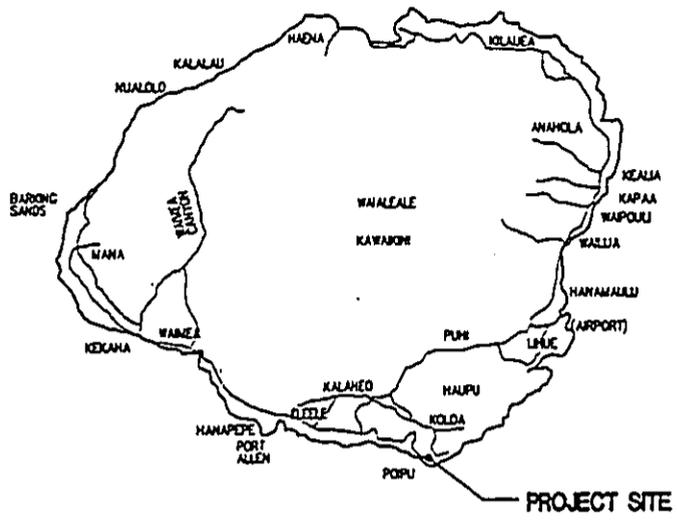
The cost of constructing the walkway is estimated at \$55,000-65,000.00 and will be funded by applicant. Construction should be completed within 4 weeks after start-up and

will be coordinated with the renovation of existing guestrooms and construction of new hotel facilities.

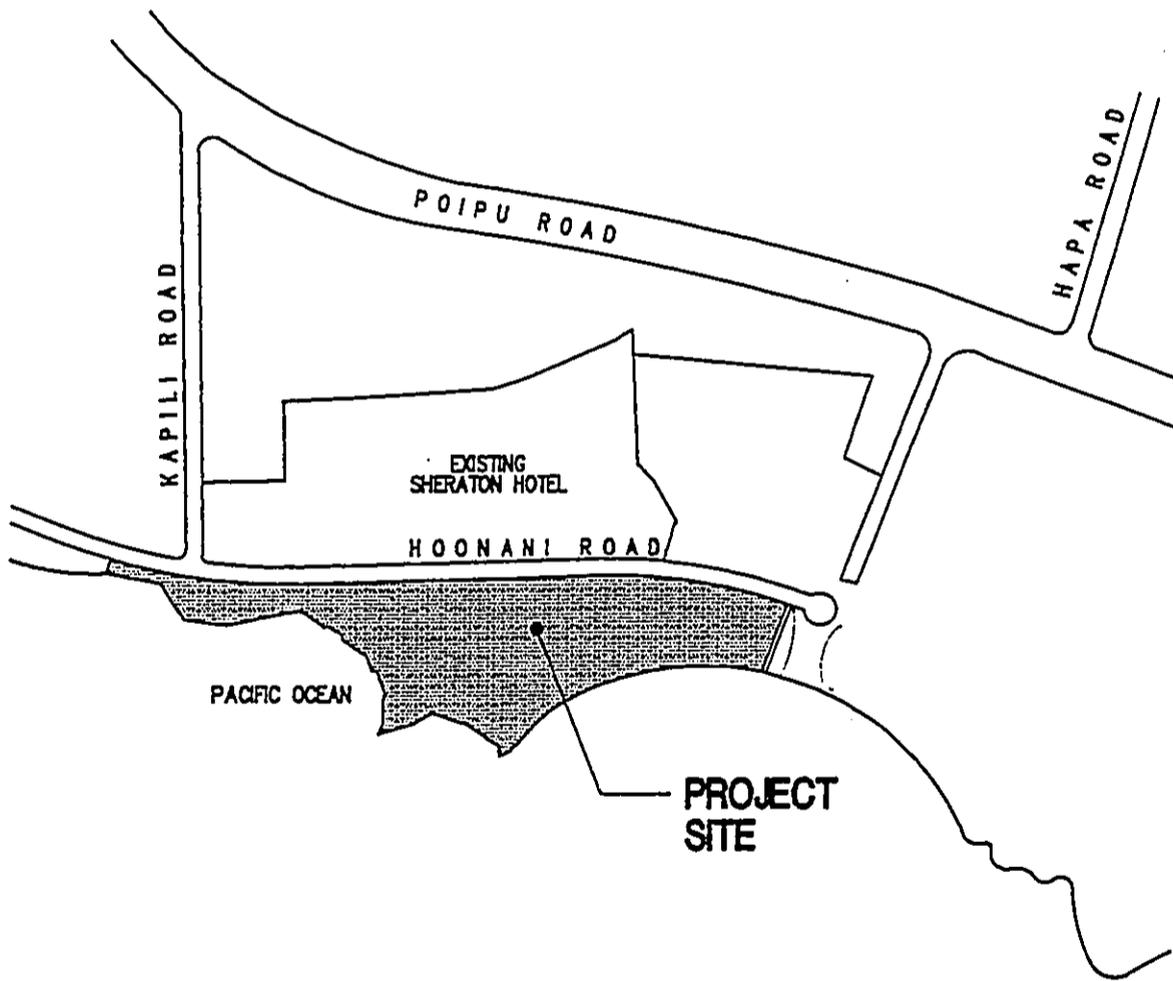
The property is owned by the Eric A. and August F. Knudsen Trust and leased to Obayashi Corporation.

D. Social Characteristics

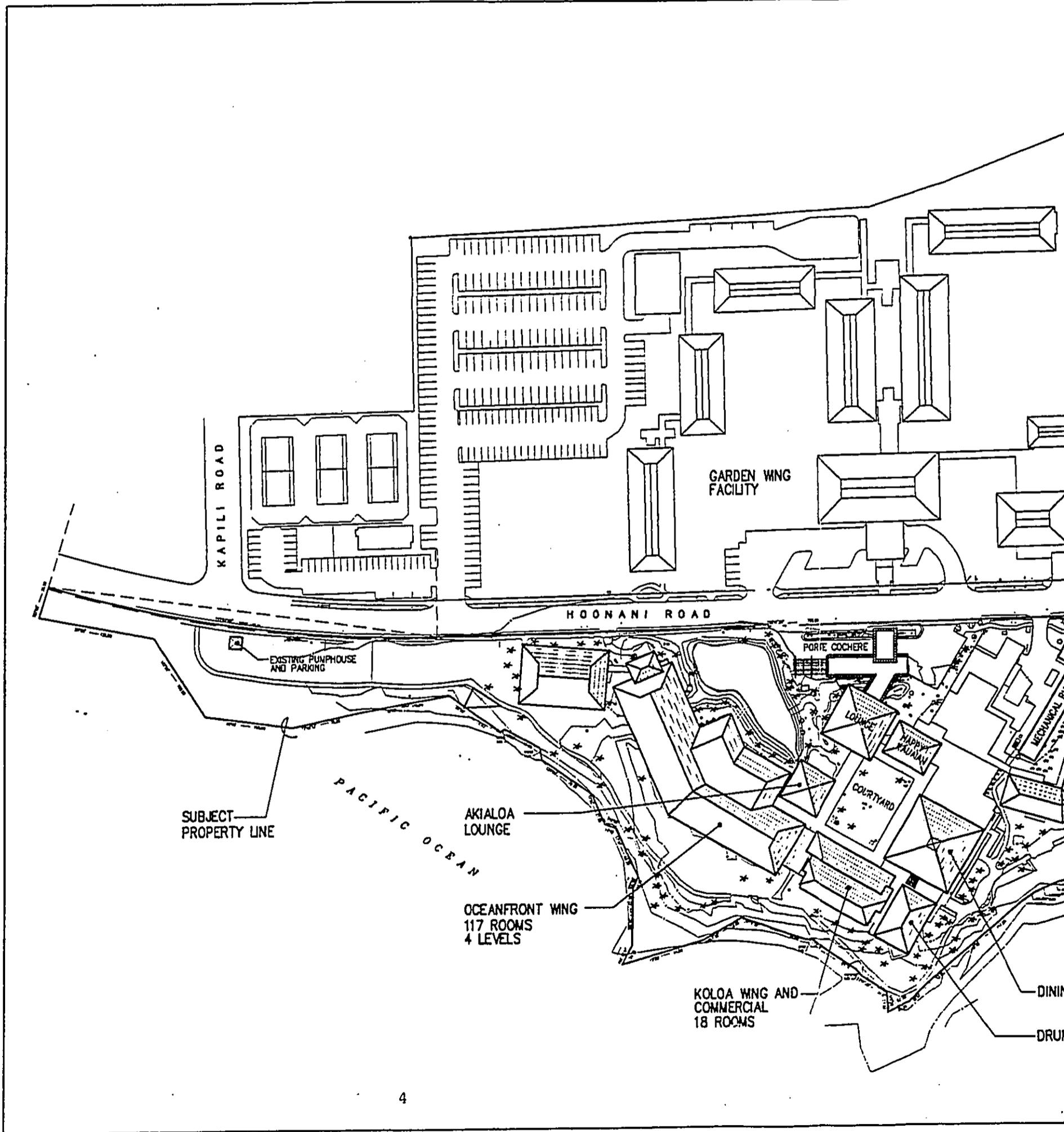
The proposed action will not displace any residents or commercial activities. Construction will be confined to the affected property but some spillover work is expected on adjoining lots to the east and west when working in those corners. During the estimated construction period of four weeks, the applicant will obtain the consent of abutting property owners for such work performed on the abutting lots. Construction may temporarily disturb recreational uses of the shoreline and beach area fronting the property.

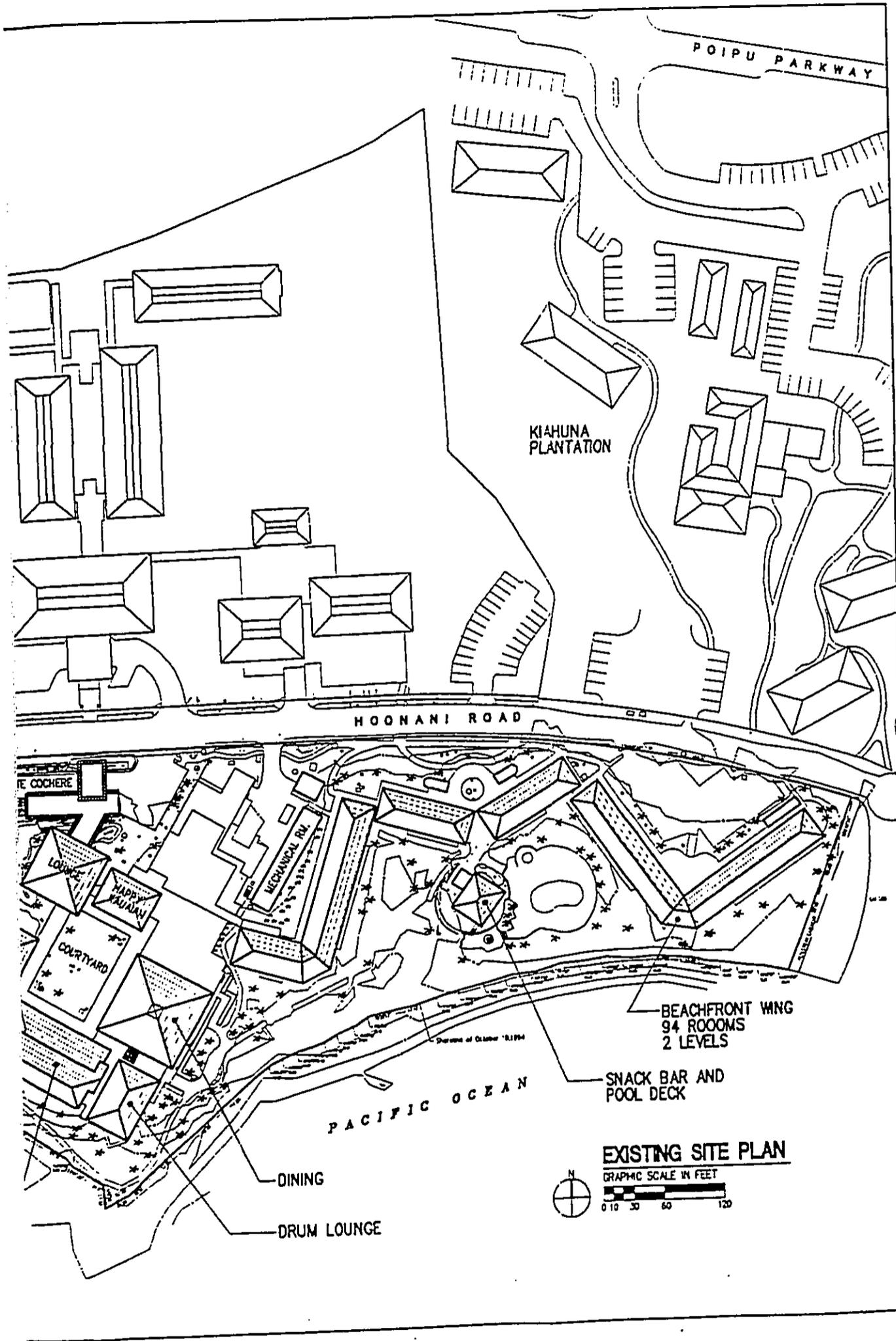


ISLAND OF KAUAI
NOT TO SCALE



LOCATION MAP
NOT TO SCALE





GYA ARCHITECTS INC.
A DESIGN CORPORATION

MAI
Wale Street Professional Center
Suite 303
2145 Wale Street
Honolulu, Man. Hawaii 96793
Phone (808) 242-4466
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Phone (808) 955-3009
Fax (808) 955-1035

**SHERATON KAUAI
MASTER PLAN
POIU BEACH KAUAI HAWAII
OBAYASHI CORP.**

EXISTING
SITE PLAN

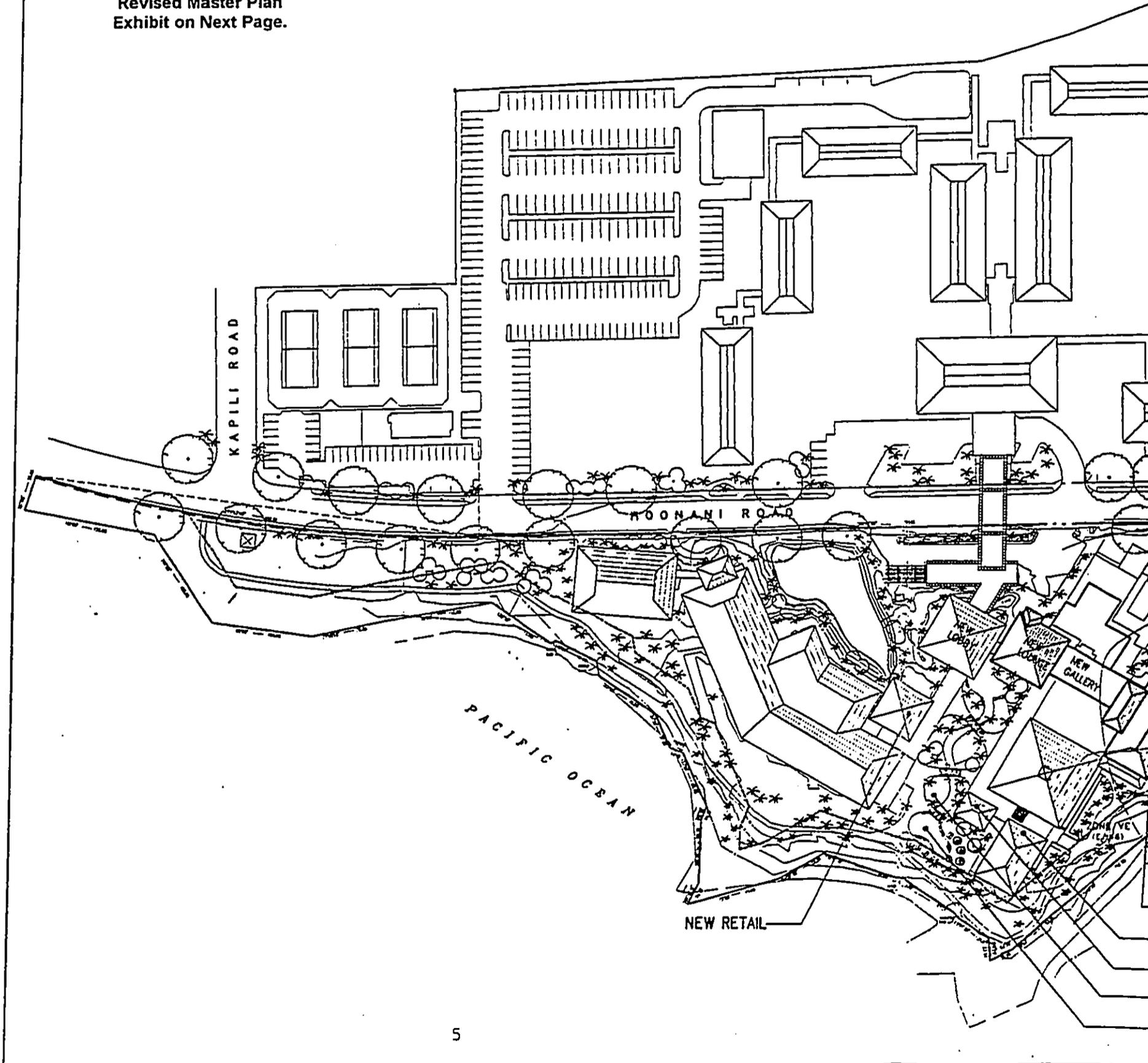
BEACHFRONT WING
94 ROOMS
2 LEVELS

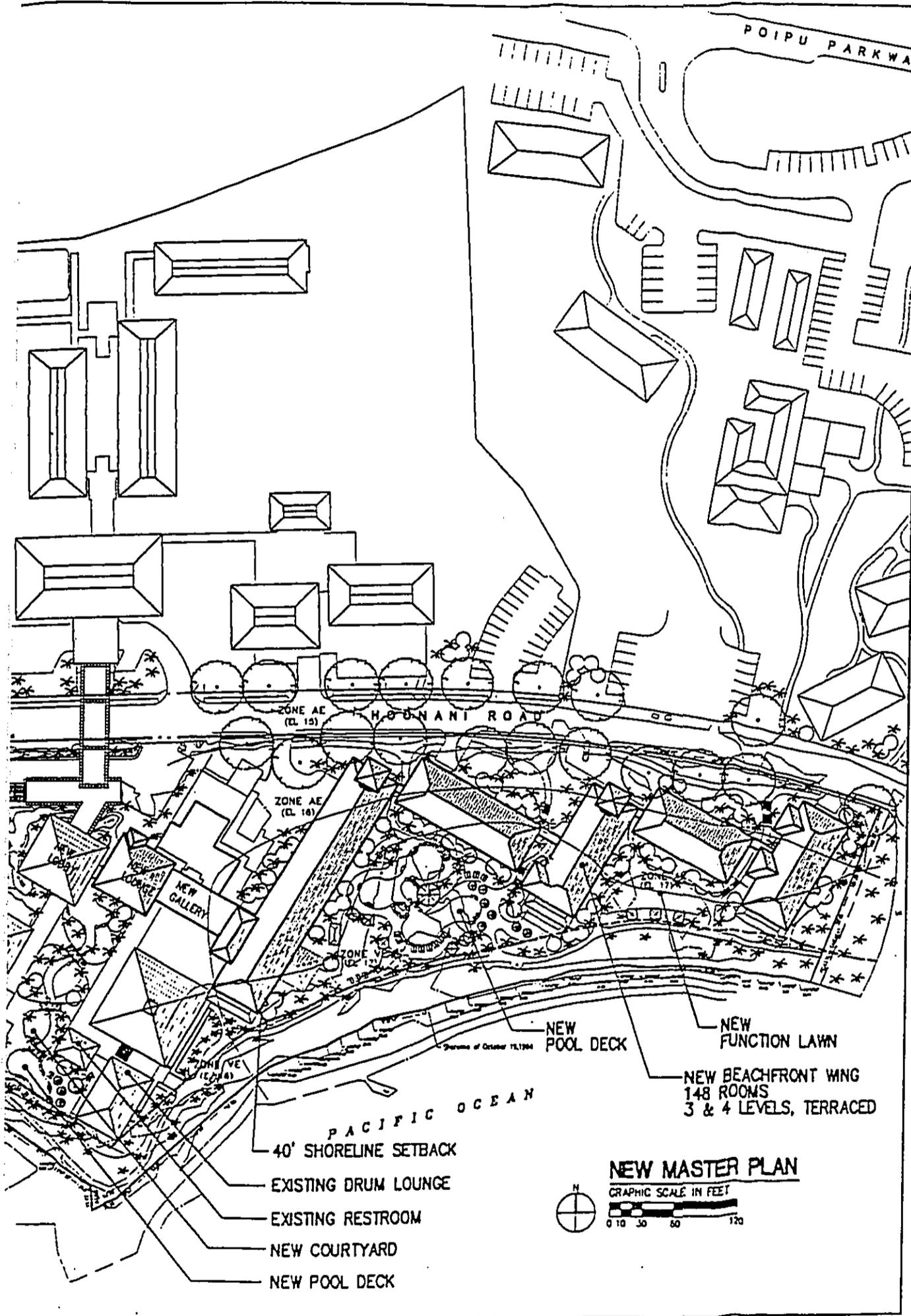
Checked by: MO/TS
Drawn by:
Project No. 93180.2
Date: MARCH 1, 1998
Sheet No.

FIGURE-2

SUPERSEDED

Revised Master Plan
Exhibit on Next Page.





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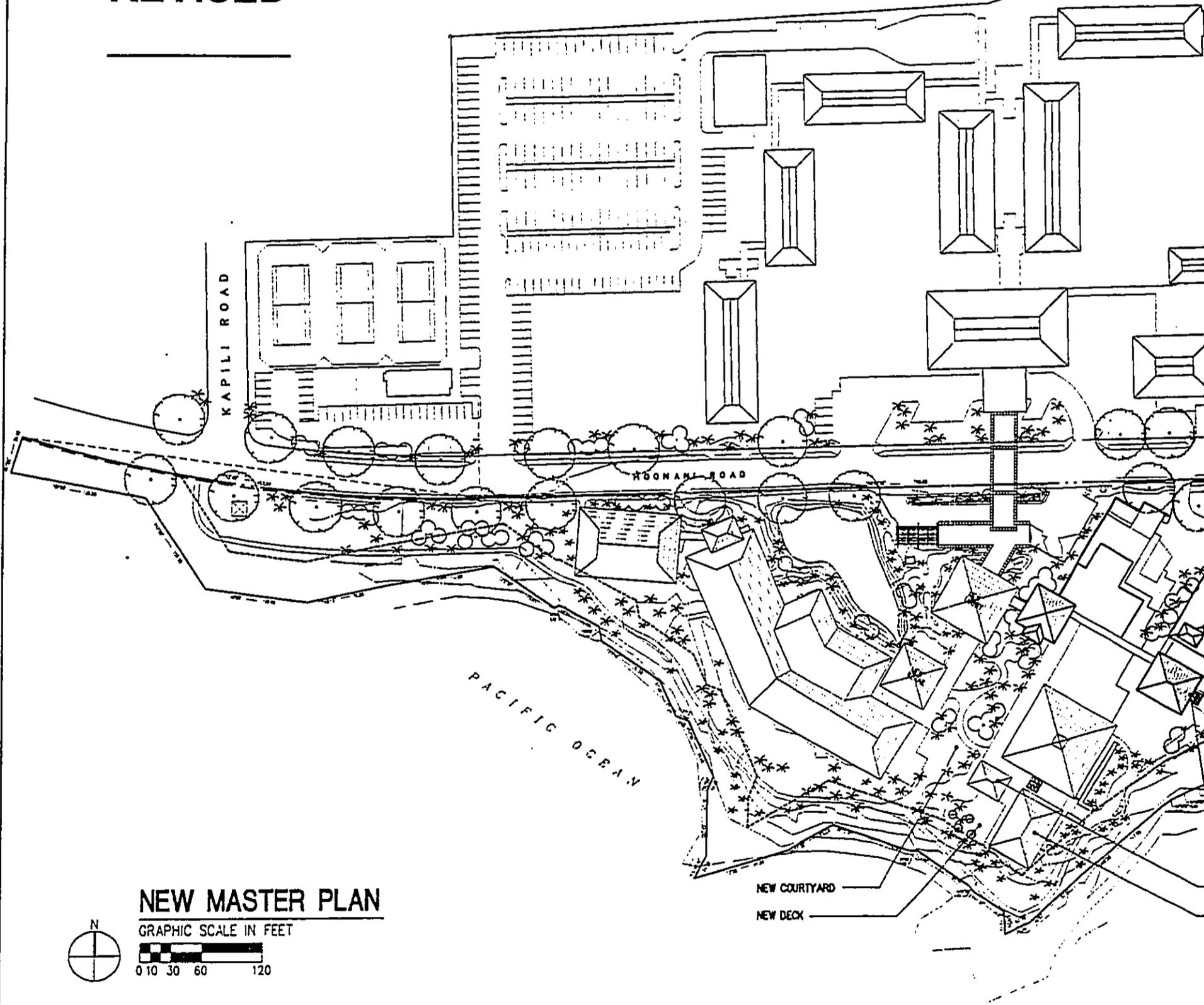
**SHERATON KAUAI
MASTER PLAN
POIU BEACH KAUAI HAWAII
OBAYASHI CORP.**

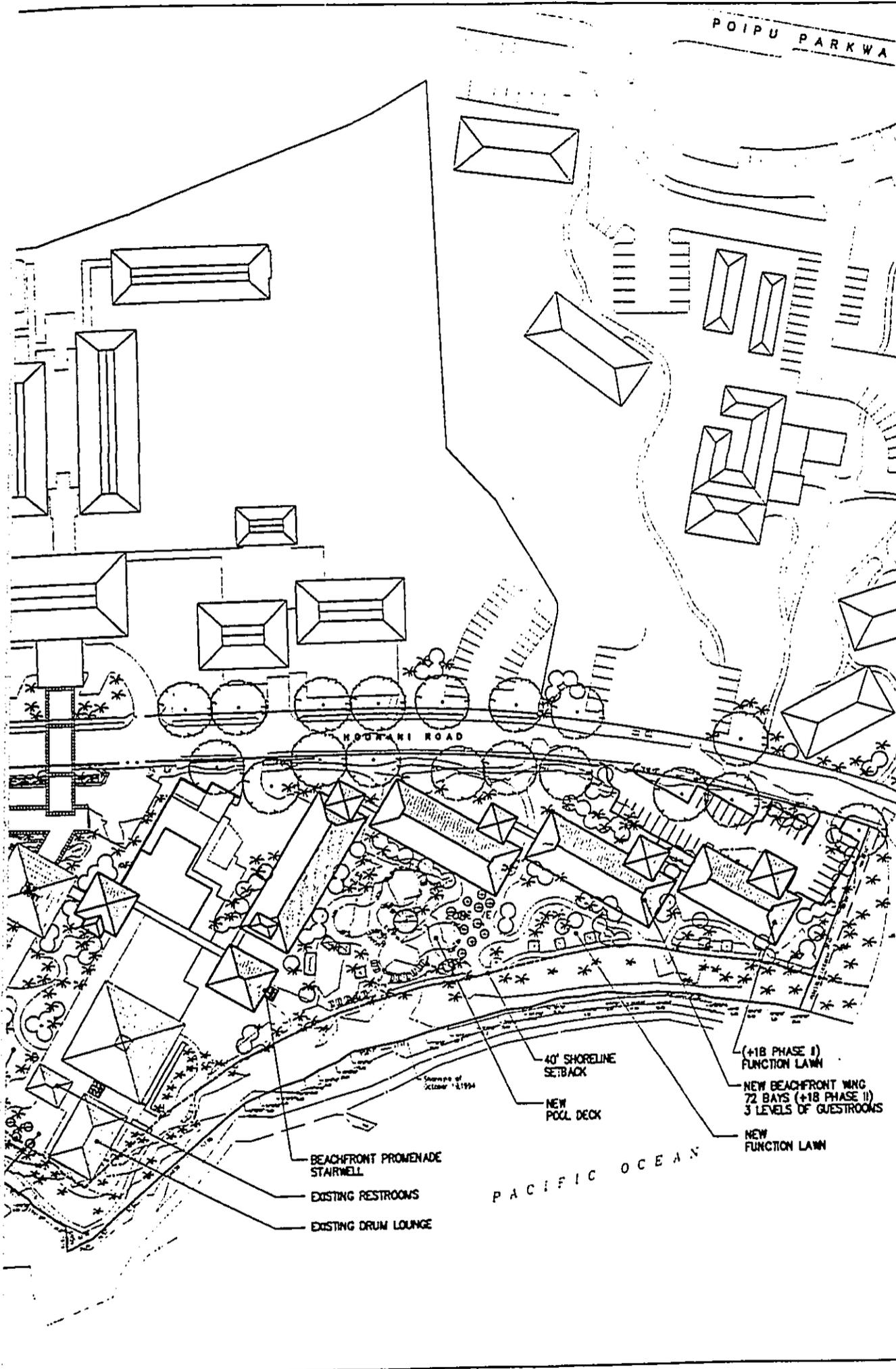
NEW MASTER PLAN

Designed by WD/73
Drawn by
Project No. 93180.2
Date: MARCH 1, 1996
Sheet No.

FIGURE-3

REVISED





GYA ARCHITECTS INC.
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MAUI
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Phone (808) 935-5000
Fax (808) 935-2005

SHERATON KAUAI
MASTER PLAN
POIPU BEACH KAUAI HAWAII
OBAYASHI CORP.

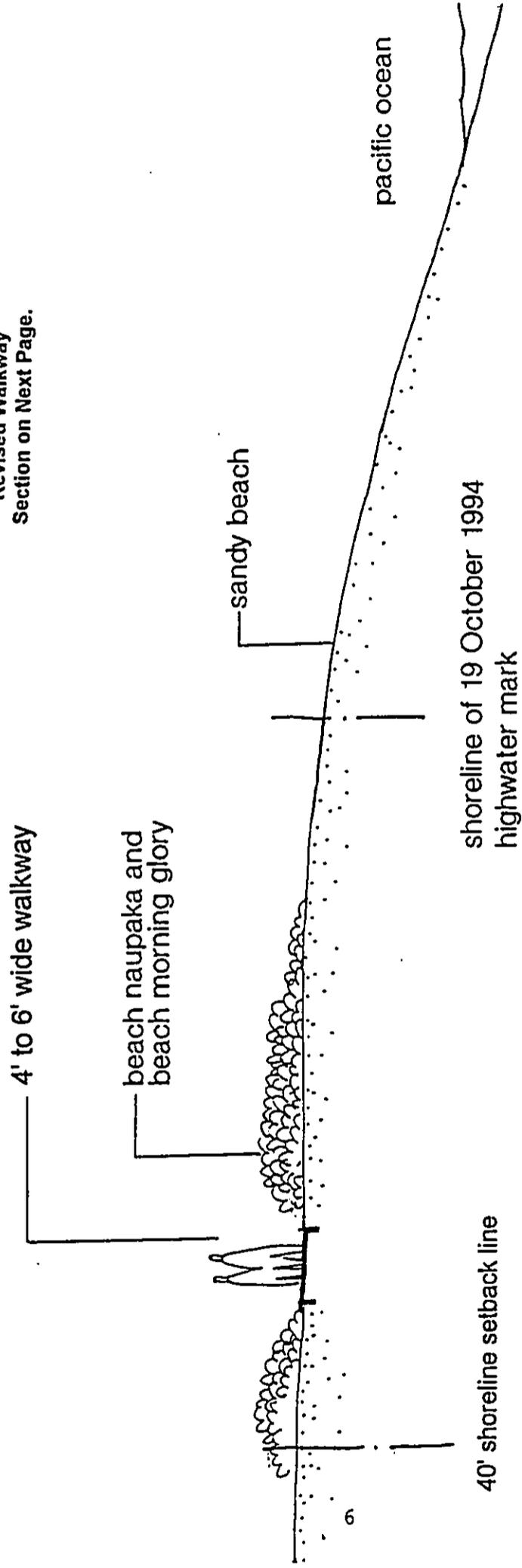
NEW MASTER PLAN

Drawn by	
Project No	89160.2
Date	JULY 15, 1994
Scale	

FIGURE-3

SUPERSEDED

Revised Walkway
Section on Next Page.

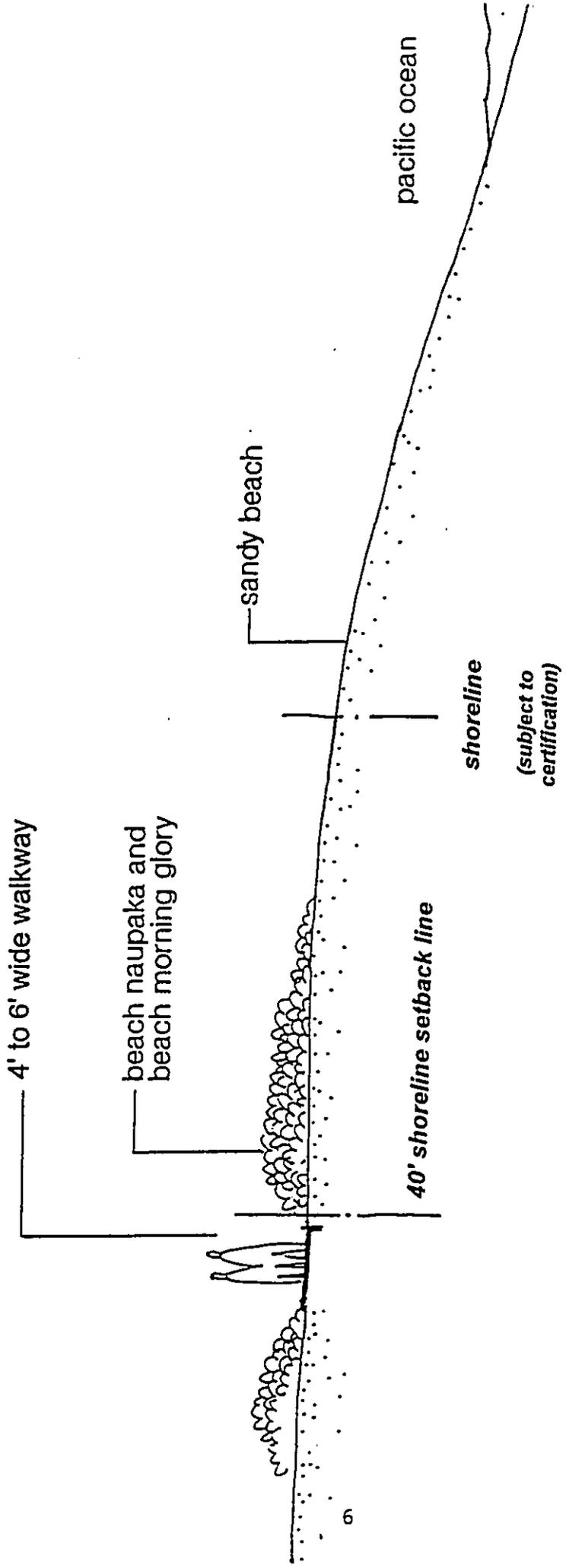


**SHERATON KAUJAI HOTEL
WALKWAY SECTION**

NOT TO SCALE

**WALTERS, KIMURA, MOTODA, INC.
4 MARCH 1996**

REVISED



SHERATON KAUAI HOTEL
WALKWAY SECTION

NOT TO SCALE

WALTERS, KIMURA, MOTODA, INC.



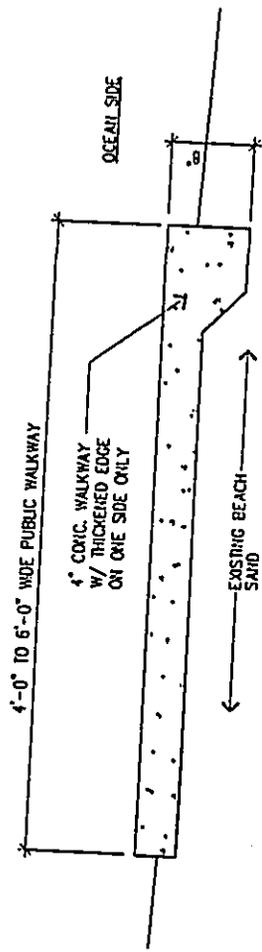
GVA ARCHITECTS INC.
A PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION
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Honolulu, HI 96813
Tel: (808) 943-8888
Fax: (808) 943-8889
www.gva.com

SHERATON KAUAI
MASTER PLAN
POPU BEACH KAUAI HAWAII
OBAYASHI CORP.

SECTION THRU
PUBLIC WALKWAY

DATE	10/10/07
BY	...
CHECKED BY	...
DATE	...

FIGURE-5



SECTION THRU PUBLIC WALKWAY
SCALE: 1"=1'-0"

A. Existing Use

The Sheraton Kauai Hotel, one of the major hotels in the Poipu area, has been closed since being severely damaged by Hurricane Iniki in 1992. Currently, most of the shoreline parcel is fenced and the gutted hotel buildings thereon stand vacant. On the west side of the property, debris covers what was once a broad, grassy lawn. Damaged plumbing fixtures such as counter tops with sinks and bathtubs lay neatly arrayed on the lawn and remnant sections of the former walkway.

Along the eastern shoreline, there is no open grassy area separating hotel facilities from the shoreline. The ocean dining room and Drum Lounge look over a rocky point and the swimming pool and snack bar and guestrooms in the Koloa Wing front stand above and open onto sandy Poipu Beach. The Koloa Wing and guest amenities will be demolished and this section of the hotel entirely rebuilt.

Remnants of the former 4 to 6-foot wide pedestrian walkway are visible amidst the debris. Near the oceanside dining room, the walkway has been finished with a slate-like surface and its width increased to +6 feet. Benches and planter boxes offered a place for sitting with panoramic views of Poipu Beach, the surf, and the rocky promontory jutting into the ocean. Although sections are still intact, it is unsafe and unusable for pedestrian access (See Photographs 1 and 2).

Along Poipu Beach, there is no improved walkway. Lateral access is routed along the top of a sand bank the mauka edge of which is generally defined by a row of beach naupaka and the exterior walls of guestrooms in the Koloa Wing (See Photograph 3).

Ten-foot wide pedestrian easements along the east and west property boundaries provide public access from Hoonani Road to the beach. Off street parking lots have been built in close proximity to both easements with parking stalls set aside for public use (eastern end: 7 stalls and western end: 5 stalls). The parking lot on the west end of the property is situated within the shoreline setback area.

B. Landform

The meandering coastline is a mixture of volcanic rock, limestone, and beach sand. The western half of the shoreline is entirely lava rock interspersed with patches of limestone cobbles. Although the shoreline remains in a natural condition, the backbeach has been modified to accommodate structural and landscaping improvements.



Photograph 1.
Walkway and lawn area
(west view).



Photograph 2. Walkway around rocky point.



Photograph 3.
Top of sand bank
(east view).

C. Flood Hazard

The Flood Insurance Rate Map for this area designates the entire property a flood zone. Two flood hazards are identified: the 100-year flood from overland sources and coastal flooding with wave action. The separation between flood hazard zones is delineated in an east-west direction across the middle of the parcel and generally paralleling Hoonani Road. All lands oceanside of the separation are in Zone VE which is defined as "coastal flood with velocity hazard (wave action); base flood elevation determined" (Federal Emergency Management Agency, 1995). The estimated flood heights (above mean sea level) range from 15 feet at the west end of the property to 17 feet at the east end.

All lands mauka of the separation up to Hoonani Road are designated Zone AE which is defined as "flood areas inundated by 100-year flood, base flood elevations determined". The base flood heights in this zone also range from 15 to 17 feet above mean sea level.

D. Drainage

The ground has been graded in the direction of the ocean and Hoonani Road. Local sources inform us that there ponding is not a problem because of the highly porous underlying lava. On-site drains collect and discharge runoff to drain lines in Hoonani Road. There are no drain lines that discharge runoff into the ocean; however, there is a 30" drain outlet connecting the ocean with the lagoon fronting the Ocean Front Deluxe Wing at the west end of the property..

E. Archaeological Features

No archaeological features were observed during our field investigation and none have been recorded on historic site maps and files at the Historic Sites Division, Department of Land and Natural Resources.

F. Terrestrial Flora and Fauna

Vegetation consists of common coastal plants and landscape plantings that survived Hurricane Iniki. These include coconut (*Cocos nucifera*), milo (*Thespesia populnea*), kamani, (*Calophyllum inophyllum*), beach heliotrope (*Messerschmidia argentea*), sea grape (*Coccoloba uvifera*), naupaka (*Scaevola taccada*), sisal (*Agave sisalana*), akulikuli-kai, (?*Lycium sandwicense*), Bermuda (*Cynodon dactylon*) or seashore paspalum grass (*Paspalum vaginatum*), wedelia (*Wedelia trilobata*), morning glory (*Ipomea sp.*), scattered koa haole seedlings (*Leucaena leucocephala*), and wayside weeds.

No terrestrial wildlife was observed and vector control measures were taken previously on the subject property.

G. Land Use Controls

The entire property is classified Urban by the State Land Use Commission, General Planned Resort by the County of Kauai, and zoned RR-20/Open. The proposed use is permitted in these land use districts and classifications.

In addition, the project is proposed within the County delineated Special Management Area and the shoreline setback. A Special Management Area Use Permit and Shoreline Setback Variance are required to implement the project.

Public access along the shoreline is specified in an Agreement for Public Access To and Along Shoreline executed by Ohbayashi-Gumi Ltd. (the former name of Obayashi Corporation) and the County of Kauai. Signed in 1979, the original agreement granted to the County of Kauai a 10-foot wide footpath along the west boundary of the property and a 5-foot wide path along the seaward boundary of the property. The Agreement was amended in 1987 at which time it was agreed that a 4-foot wide concrete walkway was to be constructed within a six (6) foot wide pedestrian right-of-way along most of the shoreline. Part of the walkway was to be a defined, grass, walkway from the bar/lounge area to the east boundary of the property.

A shoreline survey and certification was completed in October 1994. Shoreline certifications are valid for 12 months and the 1994 survey has since expired. Applicant is in the process of completing a new shoreline survey for submittal to the state surveyor for certification.

H. Water Resources

There are no fresh water lakes, streams, or estuaries on the premises. A man-made lagoon fronting on Hoonani Road adds a nice water feature to the Ocean Deluxe Wing. The lagoon functions as a water detention basin for road runoff. During our field survey, the lagoon was observed to be filled with brackish water.

Offshore waters are classified Class AA open coastal waters by the Department of Health, State of Hawaii. According to Health Department Water Quality Standards, "it is the objective of Class AA waters that these waters remain in their natural pristine state as nearly as possible with an absolute minimum of pollution or alteration of water quality from any human-caused source or actions" (Hawaii Administrative Rules, Title 11, Chapter 54).

Ocean waters also are categorized by bottom type. The bottom types for the Poipu area (in general) include 1) sand beach and 2) reef flats and reef communities. Both are rated Class II the objective of which is "to protect their use for propagation of fish, shellfish, and wildlife, and for recreational purposes" (Ibid).

H. Ocean Activities

The Sheraton Kauai Hotel fronts on the western half of sandy Poipu Beach. The beach is heavily used by sunbathers, snorkelers, swimmers, bodysurfers, bodyboarders, surfers, and windsurfers (Clark, 1990).

The fringing reef on the western half of the property is popular for shorecasting and net throwing. Beyond the reef, sailing and spear fishing are common pastimes. According to Clark (1990) "the surf that forms on the shallow reef fronting the point is regarded as one of the best bodysurfing and bodyboarding breaks on the south shore. The site is known as Cowshead".

I. Utilities

Underground irrigation lines, electrical conduits for tree and ground lights, and gas lines for decorative luau torches are located along the shoreline. With the exception of the 30" drain line and outlet and the sewer pump station, there are no major water, sewer, power, and communication lines in the shoreline area.

**SECTION 3 SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS
AND MEASURES TO MITIGATE ADVERSE EFFECTS**

A. Assessment Process

The scope of the project was reviewed with staff of Obayashi Corporation and GYA Architects, Inc., the consulting architect. State and County agencies were contacted for information relative to their area of expertise. Time was spent in the field noting site conditions and conditions in the vicinity of the Kauai Sheraton Hotel. Based on the *discussions and field investigations*, conditions and features were identified which could affect or be affected by the project. These conditions are:

No change in public use of the walkway is contemplated;

The walkway will be reconstructed on the site of and generally following the alignment of the existing walkway;

There are no rare, threatened or endangered flora or fauna on the premises;

There are no archaeological features on the premises; and

The shoreline area is a flood hazard area with high velocity waves.

B. Short-term Impacts

Construction is envisioned as a series of repeating activities---removing remnant sections of the walkway (and other debris), excavating for new walkway sections, filling washed out and eroded areas, forming work, pouring concrete, and restoring job areas to pre-construction or better conditions. The amount of walkway to be constructed at one time will depend on field conditions and the overall work and equipment availability schedule developed by the General Contractor.

Unlike improvements which are site specific, the new hotel wing for example, the walkway is route specific. Construction progresses from one location to another along a staked alignment. Thus over time and distance, constructions impacts are generally repetitive and temporary at only one location. Despite its temporal nature, construction is expected to preclude recreational use of portions of the beach or rocky shoreline until the section of walkway is completed. Warning signs will be posted to alert beach goers of impending construction and temporary fences erected around work sites.

All site work will be performed according to acceptable and County approved grading and erosion control standards. Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be implemented to prevent storm water discharge from construction activities from entering the ocean.

Fugitive dust cannot be avoided but can be controlled by sprinkling water over exposed areas or by employing other dust suppression measures stipulated in Chapter 60 (Air Pollution Control) of Title 11, Administrative Rules of the State Department of Health.

Temporary and unavoidable construction noises will occur during the 4 week construction period. Sound levels in the range of 80-90 dB(A) will be generated by heavy equipment, trucks, and hand operated power tools. Fluctuations in sound levels, frequency of occurrence, and duration can be expected during the different stages of walkway construction. Not many people should be affected by noise when the walkway is being built on the western and central portions of the property. This area fronts on a fringing reef and is frequented primarily by fishermen and divers.

Poipu Beach is one of the more popular recreation areas in Poipu and is heavily used by locals and visitors. Although no construction is proposed along the beach, construction noise will be audible to beach goers.

Should subsurface archaeological features be unearthed, work in the immediate area will cease and historic authorities consulted for proper disposition of the finds.

No rare, threatened, or endangered flora are found on the premises. All observed flora are common to Kauai and the State of Hawaii. The hotel grounds will be landscaped as part of the Master Plan for the property.

Significant increases in construction traffic to and from the site are not anticipated as a result of this project. However, reconstruction of the hotel, of which this project is a part, will contribute to vehicle traffic, parking shortages, and congestion in the vicinity of the hotel. Spillover effects, primarily increases in truck traffic and longer travel times, can be expected on the circulation system leading to Poipu and perhaps as far away as Kaumualii Highway. Appropriate scheduling measures will be taken to minimize traffic inconveniences.

C. Long-term Impacts

The proposed project does not introduce a new use or facility along the shoreline but restores what previously existed.

Restoring shoreline access to recreational uses of and along the shoreline is a desirable long-term goal of applicant, the Koloa community, and the County of Kauai. Currently, the entire property is fenced in order to avoid liability and personal injury and lateral access curtailed.

The at-grade walkway will neither reduce the amount of shoreline open space nor intrude into public views to and along the shoreline. Instead it will make shoreline areas accessible to all people and provide up-close viewing opportunities of the rocky shoreline, sandy beach, and surf.

Located in a flood hazard zone, the walkway could again be demolished by forces of nature.

SECTION 4

ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED ACTION

A. No Action

A no action alternative would preclude the occurrence of short and long-term, beneficial and adverse environmental impacts described in this Assessment. A no action alternative would not preclude public access to and along the shoreline but would hinder safe passage along the shoreline. This alternative is not a desirable course of action for the applicant and the County of Kauai who have agreed that pedestrian access is to be provided along the shoreline.

SECTION 5

LAND USE PERMITS AND APPROVALS

Permit/Approval	Authority
Environmental Assessment	County of Kauai Planning Department
Shoreline Certification	Board of Land and Natural Resources
Special Management Area Permit	County of Kauai Planning Commission
Shoreline Setback Variance	County of Kauai Planning Commission

SECTION 6

AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS TO BE CONSULTED

Notice of the Draft Environmental Assessment for the Construction of a Pedestrian Walkway, Sheraton Kauai Hotel was published in the Office of Environmental Quality Control Environmental Notice of May 8, 1996. Publication in the Environmental Notice initiated a 30-day public comment period which ended on June 7, 1996. An asterik identifies agencies and organizations that submitted written comments to the Draft Environmental Assessment. Comment letters and responses are found in Appendix A of the Final Environmental Assessment.

Federal

U.S. Army Engineer District, Hawaii

State of Hawaii

Department of Health

Department of Land and Natural Resources

* *Office of Environmental Quality Control*

County of Kauai

Department of Public Works

Engineering

Parks and Recreation

Others

Koloa Community Association

Knudsen Trust

Poipu Beach Resort Association

* *Tom Eisen*

* *Kaua'i Group of the Hawai'i Chapter, Sierra Club*

SECTION 7

DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

Chapter 200 (Environmental Impact Statement Rules) of Title 11, Administrative Rules of the State Department of Health, establishes criteria for determining whether an action may have significant effects on the environment (11-200-12). The relationship of the proposed project to these criteria is discussed below.

- 1) Involves an irrevocable commitment to loss or destruction of any natural or cultural resource;

No natural or cultural resources have been observed or is known to occur on the property.

- 2) Curtails the range of beneficial uses of the environment;

The purpose of the project is to reconstruct a pedestrian walkway that was demolished by Hurricane Iniki in 1992. The walkway will be rebuilt generally following the same route as the previous walkway and will restore lateral shoreline access for public use.

- 3) Conflicts with the state's long-term environmental policies or goals and guidelines as expressed in chapter 344, Hawaii Revised Statutes, and any revisions thereof and amendments thereto, court decisions or executive orders;

One of the policies of Chapter 344 is to protect the shoreline from encroachment of manmade improvements, structures, and activities. The proposed project may conflict with this policy but it supports another policy to establish, preserve and maintain scenic, historic, cultural, park and recreation areas, including the shoreline for public recreational, educational, and scientific uses.

- 4) Substantially affects the economic or social welfare of the community or State;

The project will not substantially affect the economic or social welfare of the community. The project is one action that will aid the County of Kauai and the Koloa community in achieving its recreational goal of providing continuous public access to and along the coastline in the Poipu area.

- 5) Substantially affects public health;

Public health will not be adversely affected.

- 6) Involves substantial secondary impacts, such as population changes or effects on public facilities;

Adverse impacts on population and existing public facilities are not anticipated.

- 7) Involves a substantial degradation of environmental quality;

The project will improve rather than degrade the quality of the shoreline. Debris and other materials either stored or scattered along the shoreline but confined inside the property by a chain link fence will be removed.

- 8) Is individually limited but cumulatively has considerable effect upon the environment or involves a commitment for larger actions;

The project does not involve a commitment for a larger action.

- 9) Substantially affects a rare, threatened or endangered species, or its habitat;

No rare, threatened, or endangered flora and fauna have been observed on the premises.

- 10) Detrimentially affects air or water quality or ambient noise levels; or

Fugitive dust and construction noise cannot be avoided. Fugitive dust can be controlled by measures specified in public health regulations. People recreating at Poipu Beach should not be directly exposed to construction noise because the concrete walkway will not be built above the sandy beach. Noise will be audible but should be attenuated partially by the distance between beach use areas and construction sites.

Best Management Practices will be implemented to prevent storm water discharge from construction activities from entering the ocean.

- 11) Affects an environmentally sensitive area such as a flood plain, tsunami zone, erosion prone area, geologically hazardous land, estuary, fresh water, or coastal waters.

The project will not affect an environmentally sensitive area. The walkway, however, is located within an identified flood zone and could again be damaged by high velocity waves. Although located in a flood zone, the walkway will not increase flood height elevations.

REFERENCES

Federal Emergency Management Agency. 1995. Flood Insurance Rate Map, Kauai County, Hawaii. Community Panel No. 150002 0194D.

Park, Gerald Urban Planner. 1996. Field Investigation.

Planning Department, County of Kauai. No Date. Beach Access Guide. Lawai to Poipu.

_____. Various Dates. Special Management Area Use Permit SMA (U)-86-10 and Class IV Zoning Permit Z-IV-86-41.

APPENDIX A
COMMENT LETTERS AND RESPONSES

22 May

Obayashi Corporation
725 Kapiolani Blvd., 4th Floor
Honolulu, HI 96813

Post-It* Fax Note	7671	Date	5/20/96	# of pages	1
To	G. PARK	From	AL		
Co./Dept.	FYI -	Co.	OBAYASHI		
Phone #	Loeferle	Phone #	593-0000		
Fax #	SKH-EA	Fax #	593-0777		

I have reviewed the draft environmental assessment (EA) prepared for the Construction of a Pedestrian Walkway at the Sheraton Kauai Hotel, in Koloa, Kauai, which was published in the May 8, 1996 issue of The Environmental Notice, and have the following comments.

Generally, the proposed project will be beneficial in that it will restore safe shoreline access along a widely used stretch of valuable beach. I believe the EA will be a more effective planning tool for the relevant decision-makers when the following two concerns are addressed:

- 1) Although no certified shoreline survey is included with the draft EA, the document draws reference to a shoreline of October 19, 1994. As you may know, official shoreline determinations are only valid for a period of 12 months. Since the proposed action will require a valid certified shoreline survey for the requested shoreline setback variance, a new shoreline determination may be required to accurately define the location of the setback. The final EA should reflect this fact.
- 2) Since very little information is provided that actually describes the structural aspects of the proposed walkway, it is difficult to predict what potential impact it could have on the littoral dynamics of this sand beach. In other similar cases, substantial foundations and footings of concrete shoreline walkways have acted as vertical seawalls, and adversely affected beach processes when wave run-up reached the concrete structure. Since erosion and beach loss are major coastal planning concerns, especially within the shoreline area of coastal hazard zones such as Poipu, efforts should be made to prevent any significant likelihood of erosion problems resulting from the proposed project. Thus, the final EA should more fully describe the structural aspects of the walkway, and should also consider other creative alternatives to achieve the objective of restoring shoreline access. For example, on page 10, the draft EA notes that part of the accessway was to be a grass walkway. Another possible alternative could be the use of modular wooden plank sections that could be easily moved out of the way during periods of erosion. These alternatives would not only prevent the problems associated with vertical seawalls, but also would prevent the undermining and collapse of concrete walkways that often occurs when they are built upon unconsolidated sand.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project.

Sincerely,

Tom Eisen
3850-B Round Top Dr.
Honolulu, HI 96822

cc: Kauai Planning Dept (Attn.: G. Kalisik)
Belles, Graham, Proudfoot, and Wilson (Attn.: M. Belles)
OEQC
DLNR/Land Management

CORRECTION

THE PRECEDING DOCUMENT(S) HAS
BEEN REPHOTOGRAPHED TO ASSURE
LEGIBILITY
SEE FRAME(S)
IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING

Post-It* Fax Note	7671	Date	5/20/96	# of pages	1
To	G. PARK	From	AL		
Co./Dept.	FYI -	Co.	OBAYASHI		
Phone #	LOEKE KE.	Phone #	593-0000		
Fax #	SKH - EA.	Fax #	593-0777		

Obayashi Corporation
725 Kapiolani Blvd., 4th Floor
Honolulu, HI 96813

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- 1) Although no certified shoreline survey is included with the draft EA, the document draws reference to a shoreline of October 19, 1994. As you may know, official shoreline determinations are only valid for a period of 12 months. Since the proposed action will require a valid certified shoreline survey for the requested shoreline setback variance, a new shoreline determination may be required to accurately define the location of the setback. The final EA should reflect this fact.
- 2) Since very little information is provided that actually describes the structural aspects of the proposed walkway, it is difficult to predict what potential impact it could have on the littoral dynamics of this sand beach. In other similar cases, substantial foundations and footings of concrete shoreline walkways have acted as vertical seawalls, and adversely affected beach processes when wave run-up reached the concrete structure. Since erosion and beach loss are major coastal planning concerns, especially within the shoreline area of coastal hazard zones such as Poipu, efforts should be made to prevent any significant likelihood of erosion problems resulting from the proposed project. Thus, the final EA should more fully describe the structural aspects of the walkway, and should also consider other creative alternatives to achieve the objective of restoring shoreline access. For example, on page 10, the draft EA notes that part of the accessway was to be a grass walkway. Another possible alternative could be the use of modular wooden plank sections that could be easily moved out of the way during periods of erosion. These alternatives would not only prevent the problems associated with vertical seawalls, but also would prevent the undermining and collapse of concrete walkways that often occurs when they are built upon unconsolidated sand.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project.

Sincerely,

Tom Eisen

Tom Eisen
3850-B Round Top Dr.
Honolulu, HI 96822

cc: Kauai Planning Dept (Attn.: G. Kalisik)
Belles, Graham, Proudfoot, and Wilson (Attn.: M. Belles)
OEQC
DLNR/Land Management



GERALD PARK
Urban Planner

Planning
Land Use
Research
Environmental
Studies

1400 Kalia Street
Suite 876
Honolulu, Hawaii
96814-3021

Phone/Fax
(808) 942-7184

July 18, 1996

Tom Eisen
3850-B Round Top Drive
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822

Dear Mr. Eisen:

Subject: Construction of Pedestrian Walkway, Sheraton Kauai Hotel
Koloa, Kauai

Thank you for commenting on the Draft Environmental Assessment prepared for the subject project. We offer the following responses to your comments.

1. A shoreline survey is being prepared for the project. This will be noted in the Final Environmental Assessment.

2. The purpose of the project is to restore a lateral pedestrian walkway along most of the shoreline fronting the Sheraton Kauai Hotel. The restored walkway will provide safe, barrier free access to hotel guests and the public.

A concrete walkway is proposed and for most of its length (about 1,100 LF from the western property boundary to the rocky shoreline fronting the Drum Lounge) it will be built on underlying lava. The walkway will be a floating concrete slab 4-6 feet wide, 4" thick (with an 8" thickened edge on its seaward side), and set at a grade that provides comfortable passage. The walkway will not be built on a sub-structure and minimal excavation will be required. This design criteria applies also to the section (about 600 LF) to be built on unconsolidated sand.

Applicant is aware that Poipu Beach is subject to seasonal sand movement and high surf which could undermine any structure placed near the ocean. Applicant is also aware that if the walkway was to be erected on a sub-structure near the ocean, the natural movement of sand or surf striking the structure could adversely affect beach processes. In our opinion this is not a desirable outcome for the applicant, the County of Kauai, and the public.

In discussions with the Planning Department, Obayashi has suggested moving the walkway inland away from Poipu Beach and locating it outside the shoreline setback area. This alternative is now possible because Obayashi has voluntarily reduced the density of the oceanfront wing from 134 to 90 rooms and the number of proposed structures from five to four thus freeing ground level space for accessory facilities.

The walkway design criteria and a revised site plan depicting the new walkway alignment shall be included in the Final Environmental Assessment.

Tom Eisen
Page 2
July 18, 1996

Your comment letter and this response will be included in the Final Environmental Assessment for the proposed project.

Sincerely,

GERALD PARK URBAN PLANNER

Gerald Park

cc: G. Kalisik, KPD
M. Belles, BGPW
A. Itamoto, OC
W. Deguchi, GYA

Obayashi Corporation
725 Kapiolani Boulevard 4th Floor
Honolulu, HI 96813

The Kauai Group of the Sierra Club offers the following comments on the Draft Environmental Assessment and the Shoreline Setback Variance application for the Sheraton Kauai Hotel's development at Poipu.

I. The Environmental Assessment Must Discuss All Related Projects.

Chapter 343 requires that a project's entire scope be reviewed. Environmental groups successfully sued the Department of Transportation when it attempted to segment its expansion of Kahului Airport. In Hawaii's Thousand Friends v. City and County of Honolulu, 75 Haw. 237, the Hawai'i Supreme Court held that the overall Kailua Beach Park project must be assessed and not just one component of it. There is a plethora of federal case law discussing the need to review the impacts of all related development.

This draft environmental assessment, however, only discusses the sidewalk reconstruction and not any of the other related proposals (new beachfront wing, pool decks, lobby, lounge, gallery etc.).

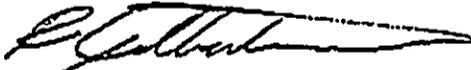
II. The Environmental Assessment Must Discuss the Impact of the Sidewalk on Beach Processes.

Although a sidewalk is not a seawall, it may have the same impact on beach processes. A hardened walkway prevents the renourishment of a beach from sources mauka of the walkway. It may also affect beach erosion if waves lap up against it.

While the Sierra Club enthusiastically supports public access along the shoreline, it may be possible to provide such access without a hardened structure that impacts on beach processes. Alternatively, such a walkway should be placed further mauka to protect beach resources.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,



K. CULBERTSON, CHAIR - KAUAI GROUP

cc: County of Kauai Planning Dept.

Bella, Graham, Front of Wilson



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Urban Planner

Planning
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Research
Environmental
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1400 Kapiolani Street
Suite 816
Honolulu, Hawaii
96814-3021

Phone/Fax:
(808) 942-7484

July 18, 1996

R. Culbertson
Kauai Group of the Hawaii Chapter
Sierra Club
Post Office Box 3412
Lihue, Kauai, Hawaii 96766

Subject: Construction of Pedestrian Walkway, Sheraton Kauai Hotel
Koloa, Kauai

Thank you for commenting on the Draft Environmental Assessment prepared for the subject project. We offer the following responses to your comments.

1. The Planning Department has determined that an Environmental Assessment should be prepared for the subject project.

2. Applicant does not plan to build a "hardened walkway" or one placed on top of a sub-structure. We agree that if such a structure was to be built near the ocean, the natural movement of sand or surf striking the structure could adversely affect beach processes along the entire shoreline. In our opinion this is not a desirable outcome for the applicant, the County of Kauai, and the public.

A concrete walkway is proposed and for most of its length (about 1,100 LF from the western property boundary to the rocky shoreline fronting the Drum Lounge) it will be built on underlying lava. The walkway will be a floating concrete slab 4-6 feet wide, 4" thick (with an 8" thickened edge on its seaward side), and set at a grade that provides comfortable passage. The walkway will not be built on a sub-structure and minimal excavation will be required. This design criteria applies also to the section (about 600 LF) to be built on unconsolidated sand.

In discussions with the Planning Department, Obayashi has suggested moving the walkway inland away from Poipu Beach and locating it outside the shoreline setback area. This alternative is now possible because Obayashi has voluntarily reduced the density of the oceanfront wing from 134 to 90 rooms and the number of proposed structures from five to four thus freeing ground level space for accessory facilities.

The walkway design criteria and a revised site plan depicting the new walkway alignment shall be included in the Final Environmental Assessment.

R. Culbertson
July 18, 1996
Page 2

Your letter and this response will be included in the Final Environmental Assessment for the proposed project.

Sincerely,

GERALD PARK URBAN PLANNER


Gerald Park

cc: G. Kalisik, PD
M. Belles, BGPW
A. Itamoto, OC
W. Deguchi, GYA

BENJAMIN J. CAYETANO
GOVERNOR



GARY GILL
DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY CONTROL

220 SOUTH KING STREET
FOURTH FLOOR
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
TELEPHONE (808) 588-4186
FACSIMILE (808) 588-4186

RECEIVED
6/8/96

June 7, 1996

VIA TELEPHONE FACSIMILE 808-593-0777

Obayashi Corporation
725 Kapiolani Boulevard, Fourth Floor
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Sir/Madam:

We submit for your response (required by Section 343-5(c), Hawaii Revised Statutes) the following comments on a March 1996, draft environmental assessment entitled *Construction of a Pedestrian Walkway, Sheraton Kauai Hotel, Koloa, Kauai*. The document was submitted by an April 19, 1996, letter to our office by the County of Kauai Planning Department. Notice of availability of this draft environmental assessment was published in the May 8, 1996, and the May 23, 1996, editions of the *Environmental Notice*.

- A. As noted in Section 1.B (Technical Characteristics, pp. 1-2), the project consists of a new 600 foot concrete walkway from the Drum Lounge to the eastern property boundary.

It is the policy of the State of Hawaii to avoid shoreline hardening (see enclosure). Among other things, sea level changes will inevitably lead to changes in the location of the certified shoreline. As such, the Office believes that a discussion of long-term impacts, alternatives and mitigation measures is in order for hard structures such as your proposed walkway in the shoreline setback area. Accordingly, the Office requests that you submit the following information to the County of Kauai Planning Department for their consideration/inclusion in the final environmental assessment and notice of determination for this project.

1. A Historical Shoreline Analysis of coastal erosion and accretion rates. This should include a description of all movements of the neighboring shoreline over at least the past 30 years. This analysis should be based, at least in part, on aerial photographs available through government agencies and private vendors. The analysis should provide a detailed history of erosion and accretion patterns using all available evidence.
2. A description of the nature of the affected shoreline, whether sandy, rocky, mud flats or any other configuration. The history and characteristics of adjoining sand dunes and reefs should be included.
3. Site maps that clearly show the current certified shoreline, previous certified shorelines, the private property line and the location of the proposed structure. Any nearby public access right-of-way should also be depicted.

Obayashi Corporation
Draft Environmental Assessment Comments for
Construction of Pedestrian Walkway, Sheraton Kauai
June 7, 1996
Page 2 of ?

4. Beach profiles that extend off shore at appropriate intervals along the beach indicating the width and slope of both the submerged and dry portions of the beach.
 5. An analysis of any existing nearby walls or revetments and their cumulative impacts on the shoreline.
 6. A description of structures and improvements (such as homes or swimming pools) on the subject property, their distance from the property line and shoreline, and how they may be affected by the construction of the proposed hardening project.
 7. A wave and storm frequency analysis for the area in question. This should include any relevant coastal processes such as longshore currents and seasonal wave patterns.
 8. An analysis that predicts the location of future shorelines with and without the proposed wall at least 30 years into the future or over the expected life of the hardening project.
 9. Photos of the site that illustrate past and present conditions and locate the proposed structure.
 10. All alternatives to shoreline hardening should be thoroughly researched and analyzed. These alternatives could include structures such as a wooden boardwalk, locating the boardwalk further inland, etc., and a no action alternative.
- B. The Office notes that the project's master plan as illustrated in Figure 3 shows new structures on site at the Sheraton Kauai such as a new lobby, lounge, gallery, new beachfront wing with 148 rooms, new pool deck and new function lawn. Section 11-200-7, Hawaii Administrative Rules requires that a group of actions proposed by an applicant shall be treated as a single action the component actions are phases or increments of a larger total undertaking. Please discuss the relationship of the proposed walkway as an integral part of these master-planned improvements and the direct, indirect and cumulative impact of these master-planned improvements.

Please transmit a copy of this letter and your response to the County of Kauai Planning Department for their inclusion in the final environmental assessment and notice of determination for this project. If there are any questions, please call Mr. Leslie Segundo, Environmental Health Specialist at 586-4185. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

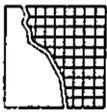


GARY GILL
Director of Environmental Quality Control

Enclosure

c: Michael J. Belles, Belles Graham Proudfoot and Wilson
Honorable Dee Crowell, Director of Planning, County of Kauai (Facsimile 808-241-6699)

~~_____~~



GERALD PARK
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96814-3021

Phone/Fax
(808) 912-7461

July 18, 1996

Gary Gill, Director
Office of Environmental Quality Control
State of Hawaii
220 South King Street, 4th Floor
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Mr. Gill:

Subject: Construction of Pedestrian Walkway, Sheraton Kauai Hotel
Koloa, Kauai

Thank you for reviewing the Draft Environmental Assessment prepared for the subject project. We offer the following responses to your comments.

A. We have consulted with the County of Kauai Planning Department about the shoreline issues you requested Obayashi comment on. Based on our discussions with staff of the Planning Department, Obayashi will submit the following documents, drawings, and responses to the items in question:

- a) A copy of the study "Aerial Photograph Analysis of Coastal Erosion on the Islands of Kauai, Molokai, Lanai, Maui and Hawaii" will be submitted to the Planning Department to fulfill with this item.
- b) A certified shoreline survey will be submitted at the time of building permit application.
- c) There are no nearby walls or revetments.
- d) A revised site plan will be submitted to the Planning Department (see also Item g. below).
- e) See Item 1.
- f) Photos will be submitted to the Planning Department.
- g) In discussions with the Planning Department, Obayashi has suggested moving the walkway inland away from Poipu Beach and locating it outside the shoreline setback area. This alternative is now possible because Obayashi has voluntarily reduced the density of the oceanfront wing from 134 to 90 rooms and the number of proposed structures from five to four thus freeing ground level space for accessory facilities. A revised site plan shall be included in the Final Environmental Assessment.

Gary Gill
July 18, 1996
Page 2

B. The County of Kauai Planning Department determined that an Environmental Assessment should be prepared for the subject project.

Thank you for participating in the environmental assessment review process. Your letter and this response will be included in the Final Environmental Assessment for the proposed project.

Sincerely,

GERALD PARK URBAN PLANNER

Gerald Park

cc: G. Kalisik, PD
M. Beltes, BGPW
A. Itamoto, OC
W. Deguchi, GYA