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Big West Oahu mall plan moving ahead

Pacific Business News (Honolulu) - by [Janis L. Magin](#)

The developer of a new regional mall in West Oahu plans to select a general contractor for the \$500 million project in the next 90 days.

DeBartolo Development received proposals from three Hawaii-based construction companies and is in the process of selecting one to build the regional shopping mall in East Kapolei that will be called Ka Makana Alii, according to Erin Nellis, DeBartolo's western region development officer.

Nellis, who spoke to the West Oahu Economic Development Association's annual membership meeting at Ko Olina Resort on Wednesday, told PBN that the company expects to break ground on the 1.5 million-square-foot project by the end of 2010, and will phase construction through 2013.

The project will create an estimated 21,000 construction jobs over more than three years, and between 3,000 and 5,000 permanent jobs, she said.

The mixed-used, open-air shopping center will include a department store anchor, an entertainment anchor that will most likely include movie theaters and possibly a bowling alley, restaurants, a fitness center, two business hotels with a total of 300 to 500 rooms and 200,000 square feet of office space, along with more than 4,000 surface and underground parking spaces on 67 acres.

The land, which is being leased from the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, is at the corner of the new North-South Road, which will connect the mall with the H-1 Freeway, and Kapolei Parkway, both under construction. It is also along the proposed route for the city's rail transit system currently being planned.

The project will also include a neighborhood center component, with a supermarket, drug store and national home improvement store, Nellis said. Tampa, Fla.-based DeBartolo was negotiating with the anchor tenants, whom Nellis declined to name.

Nellis said Hawaii is still a very attractive market to retailers, and noted that the weekend openings of Target, Petco and Sports Authority at nearby Kapolei Commons drew large crowds of shoppers.

"We feel like that our timing is really perfect," Nellis said, noting that the company is planning and securing approvals during this year and next, and that retailers are not looking to expand until the economy improves. "They're looking to 2011," she said.

Some 90 percent of the companies working on the project will be Hawaii companies, Nellis said. A local architect will be chosen to work with a Mainland-based master planner, she said.