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DHHL touts its 1st 'green' subdivision

Blessing in east Kapolei brings some ever closer to 'American Dream'

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Ground was blessed yesterday in east Kapolei for the first 111 homes in the Kanehili subdivision developed by the state Department of Hawaiian Home Lands.

Hawaiian Homes Commission Chairman Micah Kane hailed the project as its first "green" subdivision, with the capability for homeowners to save anywhere from 30 percent to 50 percent on their energy bills.

The subdivision is bounded by Kapolei Golf Course to the west; the upcoming University of Hawai'i-West O'ahu project to the north; North-South Road to the east; and Hale Kalaniana'ole, DHHL's new headquarters, to the south. It is also one block north of Kapolei Parkway.

Kanehili's Phase 1A is being developed for DHHL by Gentry Kapolei Development LLC. The first families are expected to move into their homes by early summer.

The subdivision is so "green" that homeowners will be able to plug their electric cars into their home's grid for charging.

The entire Kanehili project will consist of 403 homes.

Andrew Calpito and his wife, Gemini Ward-Calpito, were among the new, first-time homeowners taking part in yesterday's blessing.

Now living in a townhouse rental unit in Royal Kunia, the couple hopes to move into their two-bedroom, two-bathroom home by May.

"It's the American dream," said Ward-Calpito, a Department of Defense employee.

Lessees were required to go through the Home Ownership Assistance Program, which offers Native Hawaiian families homebuyer education, financial literacy training and one-on-one credit counseling.

Kane said a number of the families would not have been able to purchase a house at Kanehili without the program.

"It just shows what happens when you give people the opportunity, the tools and the incentives to change their lives," he said. "They step up to meet the challenge."

DHHL put in \$31.7 million for the development of roads, drainageways, sewers, water, electrical systems and other on-site infrastructure. DHHL also contributed \$26.3 million in off-site infrastructure such as the upcoming North-South Road as well as a 4 million gallon water reservoir and related work.

Low-income families are receiving subsidies from the Native Hawaiian Housing Block Grant — federal money administered by DHHL — that will enable them to purchase their homes.

The project will offer homes with two to five bedrooms and range in price from \$221,300 to \$295,300.
