

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: \_\_\_\_\_

Other names/site number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of related multiple property listings: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Location

Street & number: \_\_\_\_\_

City or Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_

Not For Publication          Vicinity

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this \_\_\_ nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

**national          statewide          local**

Applicable National Register Criteria:

**A          B          C          D**

_____ <b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b>		_____ <b>Date</b>
_____ <b>State or Federal agency/bureau of Tribal Government</b>		

In my opinion, the property ___meets ___does not meet the National Register criteria.		
_____ <b>Signature of commenting official:</b>		_____ <b>Date</b>
_____ <b>Title:</b>		_____ <b>State or Federal agency/bureau of Tribal Government</b>

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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

determined eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

Other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

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**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

Private

Public - Local

Public - State

Public - Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

Building(s)

District

Site

Structure

Object

**Number of resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed sources in this count)

	Contributing	Non-Contributing
Buildings	_____	_____
Sites	_____	_____
Structures	_____	_____
Objects	_____	_____
Total	_____	_____

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register \_\_\_\_\_

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

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**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

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**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of property: \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its locations, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

**Summary Paragraph**

### **Narrative description**

The Henry J. and Alyce Kaiser residence is a single-family dwelling. Located at 525 Portlock Road in Hawaii Kai, the Kaiser residence stands on the shoreline of East Oahu, with views of Diamond Head, Hawaii Kai, and the ocean waters of Maunalua Bay of the Kui Channel. The house still stands as it did in 1959 when it was originally constructed, amongst the various ancillary structures and landscape on the large seven-acre property. Over the years, some structures on the property have been removed and others built. Also, 1.8 acres of the original property to the north of the house was apportioned off to reduce the size of the land to five acres; yet, the residence's "village-like" atmosphere has not changed and the large natural water feature in the central area of the property is still intact. Kaiser's boathouse at the south edge of the property is also extant.

Today, the Kaiser Estate property is a five-acre subdivision property with three separated lots. The entire five-acre property is long and narrow, with a shoreline length of 700' and a width of approximately 300'. This subdivision lot which holds the Kaiser main house is 1.881 acres in total and includes the front entry gate to the north of the property, the curved sloped road that leads to the porte cochere, and the large front lawn along the ocean shoreline, a length of approximately 300'.

The site is slightly sloping towards the ocean shoreline throughout the property. However, the drop in grade from the road to the level area is over twenty feet. Large boulders and rock and retaining walls line the edge of Portlock Road. Entry onto the property is through a formal gated entry off Portlock Road, and down a curved drive that leads to a wide, covered porte cochere and entry lobby. The scale of this porte cochere is perhaps more fitting for a large hotel than a single-family residence. Water features and plantings line the outdoor entry hall as it did in 1959. The entry doors are a pair of doors, with an opening of 10' x 10'.

The house is a single-story, 12,155 square feet building. The house plan is in the general shape of an off-centered cross-shaped plan, with the entry hall at its center and each of the four legs, or wings, serving distinct functions. Each leg of the house can be described as such: the covered **porte cochere wing** runs perpendicular to the ocean shoreline; the **guest quarters wing** runs parallel to the shoreline off the kitchen; the **living, dining, and kitchen wing** runs perpendicular to the shoreline; the **master bedroom and library wing** runs parallel to the shoreline off the living room. The footprint of the house spans 240' x 185', with the longer length running parallel to the ocean shoreline. It is appropriate that the bedroom wings are parallel to the ocean to take full advantage of the ocean views and the living room has a corner view of the pool and ocean, while the kitchen is tucked away in the west end wing.

The house is an "International Style," with architectural elements made popular by Mies Van de Rohe: white floors, white ceilings, and Italian silver travertine stone with distinct striations; flat roof, huge expanses of glass sliding walls, and an open floor plan, 20-foot deep covered lanai along the edges of the living room and bedroom that results in a sizeable outdoor lounge area.

At the crux of the guest wing and living room wing is a large 25-meter swimming pool, the size of a “short course” competition pool, with the backdrop of the Pacific Ocean and Diamond Head. The shallow end of the pool is closer to the ocean edge, and is 3’-6””, gradually deepening until it reaches the depth of 10’. The pool walls and bottom are all original and are made of white Carrera marble from Italy with inlaid dark green marble to form the lines of the pool lanes. The pool surround is a white stone similar in color to the Carrera marble. Two changing/shower rooms dedicated to pool use are located off the pool deck along the guest bedroom wing.

A sunken round seating area having a 4’-10” radius is located just to the northwest corner of the pool. Originally it functioned as a sunken bar, but the bar top was in poor condition when the property was purchased in 1999 and it was removed. The seating area is in its original form and location.

The structural framework is organized on a 20’-0” grid, which brings order to wall locations and room sizes. Thus, the living room is forty feet wide by sixty feet long and the entry hall is twenty feet wide by sixty feet long. The structural components are steel and concrete. The steel roof web joists with a reinforced concrete top slab allows for the expansive open floor plan. The foundation is a concrete slab on grade. The steel columns in the form of a “plus” sign were created by using four right angled steel pieces welded together.

In plan and spatially, one does not feel transitions of structure or form while traversing through the wings of the house. However, the roof structure tells a different story with the structural web joists and concrete beams changing direction at major intersections of the roof. The roof over the porte cochere and entry hall is also a separate structural element. The roof was to be a functioning part of the house, with its planters and decks. It was laid with waterproofing underlayment and ceramic tile. These elements are no longer part of the roof; however, the original landing area for Henry Kaiser’s helicopter that took him to his projects in Waikiki, is still intact.<sup>1</sup> The rooftop was pioneering at the time—not only does it hold substantial weight, but it has a roof skylight, that is located along the juxtaposition of the living room and master bedroom wings; the angle of the skylight spans the stepped height between the two roof structures. The original skylight is still intact and forms the boundary between the living room and the library. A stream of light brightens the living room wall and fireplace below.

The exterior walls facing west and south towards the ocean and pool are virtually non-existent. Steel columns placed at 20’ intervals support the roof along this perimeter. Instead of walls, large 10’ x 10’ sliding glass bronze-framed doors provides views of the ocean from virtually every room except the bathrooms and laundry rooms. The large glass sliding door frames were originally made of thick aluminum, by Kaiser’s aluminum manufacturing plant, and were in working condition in 2000. The fact that they were still in useable condition after 60 years of salt air exposure is a huge testament to the quality of metals that Kaiser created. However their

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<sup>1</sup> Architectural Description of the Kaiser Estate by One of the Architects Who Worked on the Design Drawings with Henry Kaiser," interview by author, March 29, 2016.

condition was just fair and the owners decided to replace the aluminum with bronze, which is a longer lasting material that can withstand the corrosive effects of salt water. The new sliding glass doors size, thickness, and interior ball-bearing rolling mechanisms with flush-set bottom rails, were replicated to match the original.

The entry hallway wall from the porte cochere facing north is adorned with huge silver travertine slabs brought in from Italy.<sup>2</sup> The travertine panels in the porte cochere have distinct light colored stripes on them which were laid out such that two facing panels, each 2'-6" wide by 5'-0" high, formed a V-shaped pattern. These pieces of natural artwork are understandably meant to "wow" the invited guests.

The mauka (mountain facing) walls of the house facing southeast, run parallel to and face the large retaining wall along Portlock Road. They are largely opaque with a few full-length glass sliding doors for light and air. Along the guest bedroom wing, which fronts Portlock Road are concrete walls faced with travertine slabs, and are intermittently spaced with sliding glass doors. The outermost wall along the master bedroom wing faces a large retaining wall, between it and the retaining wall is a water feature that runs along its length.

One of the highlights of the house is a freestanding spiral staircase located at the very crux of the guest wing and living room wing which provides access to Kaiser's helicopter pad. The staircase has 21 risers, and is made of concrete. It was designed and constructed by an "old country" Italian artisan who was commissioned by Kaiser.<sup>3</sup> It is 10' in diameter. The handrail is a single uninterrupted elegantly curved 1" diameter round piece, with no balustrades.

### **Interior Building Description**

The interior of the building is divided into four main areas- the porte cochere/entry hall, the public spaces, the guest spaces, and the master bedrooms spaces.

The entry foyer is a separate room measuring 20' x 20'. Facing the ocean, to the right side of the foyer are two half bathrooms at either side and double-leaf entry doors to the master bedroom in the center. To the left of the entry foyer is the living and dining room.

The living room is a large rectangular space with sliding doors on both south and west exterior walls. The only built-in piece in the living room is the fireplace wall which is lined with 12, 2 ¼" thick by 17" wide and ten-foot high free-standing travertine slabs, similar to those at the entry hall, standing vertically, to form a gentle arced fireplace. Directly above the wall against the fireplace between the living room and library, natural light from the skylight above streams down and illuminates the walls and fireplace.

A library/media room (20' x 50') is located off the living room, separated by two pocketing doors. The library has a large Tiffany-style dome.

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<sup>2</sup> Architectural Description of the Kaiser Estate by One of the Architects Who Worked on the Design Drawings with Henry Kaiser," interview by author, March 29, 2016.

<sup>3</sup> Mark S. Foster, *Henry J. Kaiser: Builder in the Modern American West* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1989), pg. #244.

The dining area is one of the highlights of the house. Seventeen, 2 ¼” thick by 17” wide and ten-foot high free-standing travertine slabs, similar to those at the entry hall, standing vertically, form the shape of a half circle in plan view. This dining area is 20’-0” diameter, is open onto the south facing sliding glass doors with the pool in the foreground, and beyond, the view of Diamond Head. On the side of the dining room is a full-service bar and to the rear of this is the kitchen.

The kitchen measures 20’ x 30’ and has a central island with counter seating and large wrap-around counter areas similar to what is found in many residential kitchens today. It was originally a large commercial-style kitchen but has been changed to residential-style kitchen. Behind the kitchen is a maid’s bedroom and bathroom, and a laundry room.

The master bedroom wing measures 60’ x 40’, with the longer length running parallel to the ocean, is divided into three bays, each 20’ wide. The first bay is a large sitting room, the second bay is the master bedroom, and the last are the two master baths. Kaiser outfitted this wing with two separate bedroom suites- one for himself and one for his wife. Subsequent users found this to be unnecessary and modified the interior to function as one bedroom. In this latest remodel, the two areas are again divided, so that spatially, it is similar to the original plan, with the bathroom and dressing room functions on the east side of the wing, and the bedroom areas facing large glass sliding doors looking out towards the ocean.

The guest wing measures 100’ x 30’, running parallel to the ocean, and is lined with four large bedrooms and bathrooms. The three smaller bedrooms measure 20’ x 20’, following the structural grid lines. The bedrooms face the ocean and the bathrooms are on the opposite side. The corner bedroom is larger, with a separate seating area and an outdoor shower. A wide circulation corridor accessing the three bedrooms is along the mauka wall. The interior of this wing was rebuilt in the 2010-2016 renovation, and the walls in the servants/guest wing were moved and bathrooms were enlarged. However, the function of this wing as a guest bedroom wing has not changed. Though five servants’ rooms are shown on the original drawings, they were most likely not built as drawn. According to Benjamin Lum, one of the architects who worked on the design in 1959, these rooms functioned as guest rooms and bedrooms for Henry Kaiser’s second wife, Ale’s, son, as well as Henry Kaiser’s son and grandson. His grandson, Edgar F. Kaiser, Jr. then in his mid-twenties, recalled the hours spent with his grandfather as a key learning experience.<sup>4</sup> Many people used this wing as either temporary or more permanent abodes while staying with the Kaisers.

The floors throughout the public spaces of the living, dining, kitchen and pool deck are white stone flooring, called Miraa Beige. This floor is very similar in color and feel to the white Carrera marble of the pool interior, which is original. The flooring in the bedroom spaces are bleached walnut wood floors. The original floors throughout the building had been replaced in earlier years with shag carpet and brick flooring. The new owners have installed flooring similar the original, but with less of a slippery sheen.

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<sup>4</sup> Mark S. Foster, *Henry J. Kaiser: Builder in the Modern American West* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1989), pg. #279

The ceilings in the porte cochere and living, dining, and kitchen spaces are flat white 10'-0" high monolithic slabs. The sliding glass doors are at ceiling height. The ceiling in the master bedroom is 9'-0". The ceilings throughout were repaired and small LED recessed can lights were installed in the recent renovation.

Where important light fixtures existed, they have been reinstalled in place. Many of the light fixtures were painstakingly restored on site in the boathouse building. In particular, the large circular light fixtures at the entry hall and the glass hanging fixture in the entry foyer were repaired and replaced. The fixtures were labeled, removed, dismantled and cleaned. Many parts were remade, missing parts purchased, and metal re-galvanized and recoated. This process took years of labor because they were in poor condition due to years of neglect and abuse. The fixtures originally were made specifically for this house and brought from places like Italy and France. Bathroom light fixtures are not original, but are period-appropriate.

### **Outbuildings**

A new structure on the site is a two-story garage/guest house building across from the porte cochere. It is modestly tucked into the Portlock side of the property, where rock/retaining walls stand over twenty feet high. The roof top of the building is concealed from view from both the Portlock Road side as well as the ocean side.

### **Modifications over time**

A Tiffany-style stained glass domed skylight in the library was introduced by the second owners, the Goldman brothers. Originally, the roof had a round opening having a diameter of about 12', which was along the exterior perimeter of the house. However, in 1973, the opening was enclosed with a Tiffany-style glass dome and the walls were moved to enclose the area around the glass dome, enlarging the library. The Tiffany glass tells the history of Hawaii as an epic adventure of discovery. Designed by Stephen Chase, of Arthur Elrod Associates. It documents the accomplishments of King Kamehameha the Great, the warrior chief who united the islands into one Hawaiian nation.

The flooring around the pool is not original. The original pool surround was a gravel and stone blended epoxy resin flooring having a sand color. However, this surface was in poor condition, and the new owners decided to match the pool's white marble. It was laid by expert tile layers, with extremely thin grout lines, such that the pool surround, matching the pool inner surfaces.

From 2010 through 2016 the house underwent an extensive renovation. During the years the Goldmans owned the property, several changes were made that impacted the character-defining features of the original architecture and the house was also neglected and damaged during the later years of the 1980s as well. Most of the six years of renovation was spent on the repair and rehabilitation of the building. Due to years of neglect, much of the structural elements also needed replacement. Most of the steel components, including the steel web trusses and steel columns, were repaired or replaced with hot-dip galvanized steel or stainless steel. Other items

included the repair of the spalling concrete, replacement of the sliding glass doors along the oceanfront of the house; infrastructure upgrades such as plumbing and electrical, and reroofing of the building, were the major repair areas.

The front entry gate has been rebuilt in its original location, but has been enlarged and its angle changed to be perpendicular to the roadway. The gate itself was replaced many years ago and no longer exists.

### **Integrity**

This house has good integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. In the past few years, the building has undergone renovation and repairs yet it retains its “International Style” architectural honesty. The integrity of setting of the house is high as the neighborhood has changed little over the years and the shoreline of Maunalua Bay is largely unchanged. Although the area has been subdivided, the site conditions have not been altered much. Integrity of materials is high; physical elements of the home are intact and where needed, have been replaced in-kind.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of constructions or represents the work of master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

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**Period of Significance**

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**Significant Dates**

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**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

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**Cultural Affiliation**

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**Architect/Builder**

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

## Significance Narrative

### Criterion B

In this fragile and influential period of Hawaii, Kaiser set the ground rules for development in Hawaii, paving the path for how residential developments are done in Hawaii and established the boundaries of what we now known to be “Waikiki”. He also was the first to use television as a way to advertise Hawaii as a tourist destination- thus forever giving Hawaii its special allure as a magical beautiful tropical paradise. Among his achievements in Hawaii was the shaping of Waikiki, developing Hawaii Kai, creating local broadcast stations, giving local entertainment the limelight, and influencing the lifestyles of the local people of Hawaii, including bringing Kaiser Permanente to the islands.

This house was Kaiser’s permanent home in his final years. It was extremely pricey and artistic – a modern statement of its time. Kaiser enjoyed indulging his young wife and son. By 1961, he had poured nearly \$3 million into the estate, which included a dock and boathouse, dog kennels, guest houses, servant’s quarters, and assorted recreational facilities. For eight years, he lived in this house as his full-time residence, at a time when Hawaii was just being formed as the 50<sup>th</sup> State of the Union.

The parcel of land that is being nominated is especially important to its association with Henry J. Kaiser, as it holds his main residence where President Johnson, various ambassadors, entertainers, and the movers and shakers of Hawaii and abroad gathered and met.

This residence was Kaiser’s residence for eight of his final years as he work with ferocious speed to accomplish his work as a developer in Hawaii. The “old timers” know of the incredible life and work of Kaiser, and understand his broad influence on Honolulu. According to Eleanor Minatoishi, “Everyone knew Kaiser. He was a very big figure for Hawaii when I was young. He was a big image for Hawaii and there was respect and admiration for he and his work.”<sup>5</sup>

Kaiser lived in New York as a child, then Lake Tahoe, Ontario, Oakland California, and finally Hawaii; yet none of his other residences are listed on the Register of Historic Places. All but one has been demolished.

### Historical background for Criterion B

On May 9, 1882, in a small, unpretentious farmhouse in upstate New York, Henry John Kaiser was born. Raised in a home of a traditional shoemaker, he quit school and started working at the end of 6<sup>th</sup> grade to help with the family income. In 1899, Kaiser’s mother became gravely ill and the family could not afford private medical care. She died on December 1, 1899 at the age of fifty-two. This inability of his family to afford proper medical care profoundly affected Henry and fueled his determination to build what eventually became the Kaiser Permanente Medical Care Program.

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<sup>5</sup> Eleanor Minatoishi, "Kaiser Influence in Hawaii in 1960s," interview by author, April 23, 2016.

In 1914, at the outbreak of WWI, Henry Kaiser was in Vancouver where he launched a career in general construction. The business was moved to Oakland, California in 1923 and profoundly changed the Pacific Coast region. Over the next thirty years, he constructed dams, laid pipeline, built sand and gravel facilities, dug tunnels, and erected jetties. During these years, he introduced power equipment to construction, developing construction equipment by buying engineering patents and hiring engineers to designing better tools that reduced manpower and made work easier on the individual—all indications of his phenomenal industrial genius. Kaiser had enormous drive and energy from his earliest endeavors. His experience in road building provided many basic business lessons that served him well as he built his industrial empire.

Kaiser became a household name in America during WWII when Kaiser started the shipbuilding business and had record-breaking ship production in his shipbuilding plants of Richmond, Virginia and Portland, Oregon. Kaiser employed almost 200,000 people during the four years of war. Between 1941 and 1943 his yards added 1,490 vessels. They produced thirteen different types of ships. Most were merchant vessels, including 821 ten-thousand-ton “Liberty Ships” and 219 “Victory Ships”. They produced more ships faster than any other builder by changing the work area around the ship to give workers more room, and by incorporating pre-fabrication of sections of the ship into ship construction. Working eight-hour shifts around the clock, the men produced a ship in the incredible time of four days, 15 hours, and 26 minutes. Henry Kaiser became a national hero and arguably was one of the major contributors to the winning of the War. In 1944, “Kaiser for President” clubs were spouting up all over the country. President Roosevelt, then toward his fourth term, seriously considered Kaiser as a Vice-President running mate.

After the War, Kaiser produced steel, aluminum, and concrete. He battled the large steel manufacturers, lobbying for steel plants in the West. He faced great opposition by plants in the East but he worked with the unions to support Kaiser Steel. Between 1942 of the founding of Kaiser Steel and 1967, Kaiser Steel became the dominant integrated steel facility in the West. Aluminum was Kaiser’s biggest success. Kaiser became fascinated with light metals during WWII. Used primarily for building airplanes, jeeps and automobiles, he thought aluminum and other light metals could be used as basic building materials. Kaiser built a plant in Louisiana and had incredible output. Enthusiastic from the start; Kaiser believed aluminum was clearly the “metal of the future”. He opened fabrication plants in Ohio, and other areas and it soon become widely accepted for use in construction and applications in the home.

Kaiser entered the private home construction field after World War II, but he experienced housing construction well before this time. At his dam and shipyards sites in the 1930s and 1940s, Kaiser built thousands of dwelling units. In some cases, he also arranged for utilities, public safety, sanitation, and medical care. In 1945, Kaiser partnered with West Coast developer Fritz Burns. They were equal partners but their company name was Kaiser Community Homes. They planned to build low-cost housing for the middle and lower-income markets. He had grand plans for building 100,000 prefabricated homes, but the reality was much lower. Total output never reached 10,000. One reason Kaiser lost interest in the field was that by mid-century the

nations housing crises was rapidly abating. In 1950 alone, the nation's developers completed 1.4 million units.<sup>6</sup>

Toward the end of his life, Kaiser claimed that the Kaiser Permanente Medical Care Program, a prepaid health care system, would stand as his most significant achievement. He was right. He firmly believed that bringing affordable health care to millions by allowing for pluralism in health care financing and delivery could be a success. Kaiser work in healthcare began when he employed Dr. Sidney R. Garfield to work at Desert Center, near the site of the Hoover Dam in 1932. During the Hoover Dam project, when workers got injured or sick, the insurance company generally paid the doctor's claims but the serious cases were transferred to Los Angeles, denying Garfield more substantial fees that he might earn from these cases. By late 1933, Garfield was in deep debt and his three person staff had not been paid in months. Kaiser helped Garfield and the insurance companies develop a new medical plan that agreed to pay a fixed portion of the worker's compensation premium for all on-site services Garfield provided. Kaiser expanded this concept for the building of the Coulee Dam. The program was hugely successful. Garfield remained with Kaiser and Garfield then set up healthcare systems at the shipyards. Garfield then persuaded Kaiser to set up the Permanente Foundation in 1945 as a philanthropic enterprise to finance hospital construction.

Kaiser continued building his empire on the Mainland U.S., and remained influential after moving to Oahu in 1954 until his death in 1967.

After mid-century, Henry Kaiser was more personally involved with developing Hawaii than any other overseas venture. Prior to statehood, most Americans thought that Hawaii meant Pearl Harbor and pineapples; local hotels served less than 250,000 overnight guests in 1959. At the age of seventy-two, Henry Kaiser moved to Oahu in 1954, and launched a dazzling program of promotion and development. In addition to building hotels, he created beaches, expanded Honolulu eastward, and built a hospital, and cement plants. In his spare time, he expanded radio and television communication systems on the islands.

In contrast to local "big five" families such as Dillingham and the trustees of the Bishop Estate who pulled wires from off stage, Kaiser assumed a very high profile. Without question, he irritated some individuals. Hawaiians weren't used to his pace, and some believed he rode roughshod over local decision makers. But through his hard work and dedication Kaiser soon earned their admiration. Workers were grateful to him for creating jobs. Few business moguls ever enjoyed more productive retirement years. For Kaiser, they were joyful years and he remained busy to the end.

Until Kaiser began his renovation projects along Waikiki Beach late in 1954, he was unknown to many locals, but he had economic ties to the islands even before World War II. Military planners purchased and stored shiploads of Kaiser's cement at Oahu. Within days after the attack on Pearl Harbor, engineers were rebuilding with Permanente cement. In 1944 and 1945, he considered

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<sup>6</sup> Mark S. Foster, *Henry J. Kaiser: Builder in the Modern American West* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1989), pg. #134.

freight and passenger ship service in the Pacific; as well as tourism as a viable way to enhanced revenues.

When Kaiser and Fritz Burns formed a housing partnership in 1945, Kaiser stated that Honolulu would be a “likely spot” for several of their communities. He was a fairly frequent visitor in the late 1940s and Bess Kaiser, Henry’s first wife, loved Hawaii. Henry planned a Lafayette, California estate in a Hawaiian motif (no longer extant). Ale Kaiser, his second wife, loved Hawaii too. In early 1950, a local development group tried to persuade Kaiser to spearhead an ambitious program for economic growth.

Theories for the reason for Henry Kaiser’s decision to move permanently to Oahu vary. Alyce (Ale) theorized that corporate operations had grown so complex by the early 1950s that Henry sought new projects that he could control from the ground up. The couple certainly enjoyed the islands and made several visits in the early 1950s. Henry Kaiser was surprised that hotel space on Oahu was so limited. He and Ale solved their housing needs by purchasing a house on Kahala Beach, but Kaiser had larger plans. One of his first announcements after visiting Oahu was, “Its nonsense to say that there’s no room left to build more hotels on Waikiki Beach. Why not extend the world-famous beach and build a great vacation industry?”

In 1955 he bought the land under which is now the Hilton Hawaiian Village for \$1,262,500. He and Fritz Burns conceived an elaborate plan to build a lagoon. With his background in shipyard construction Kaiser scooped out a salt-water lagoon and built a 100-room hotel in eighty-nine days. Soon after opening the Hawaiian Village, Kaiser realized that his executives did not have the inclination or flair to manage the hotels successfully. Kaiser had Western International Hotels to run the day-to-day activities, and then sold half his interest to Conrad Hilton early in 1961 for 21.5 million dollars.

After the sale of the Hawaiian Village, much of his energy focused on a new residential city, Hawaii Kai, ten miles east of Honolulu. He imagined a community of 75,000 residents; in Kaiser’s last decade his vision and ambition grew exponentially.

Kaiser first broached the concept of Hawaii Kai with his financial advisors in Oakland, who shuddered at the capital that would be required before returns could be realized. This explains the reason for the sale of the Hawaiian Village, as it provided initial funding for the Hawaii Kai project.

On April 27, 1961, Kaiser signed a formal agreement with Bishop Estate to develop six thousand acres of property. But preliminary engineering work had begun two years earlier. Kaiser’s motto was “find a need and fill it.” Building Hawaii Kai met housing needs as well as employment needs. Kaiser assumed all of the development costs and was to receive most of the revenues. He announced that he was teaming up with Bishop Estate, to develop a billion dollar model city that should be designed as the world’s most beautiful and modern community. He believed it would be the climax of all his past accomplishments. He formed Hawaii Kai Development Company and started the planning of the community. He dredged Kuapa Pond and reinforced the banks

with semi-crushed boulders, thereby creating the Hawaii Kai Marina. He built a million gallon reservoir, widened Kalaniana'ole Highway, and built a sewage treatment plant next to a golf course- a sustainable design, as it was designed to use the treated water for irrigating the golf course. He developed the entire long-range development of Hawaii Kai and included areas for parks, open space, shopping center and schools. He even envisioned a restaurant at the top of Koko Crater.

In 1958, publicist Robert C. Elliott built a home miles beyond the Kahala district, along the slope of Koko Head, on Portlock Road. Construction of any sort interested Kaiser, and he visited Elliott's project frequently. He became enraptured with the spectacular view of the ocean and Diamond Head from this remote location and decided to obtain property nearby for his own home. The seven-acre site he wanted was owned by Bishop Estate. He signed the agreement of lease with Bishop on June 16, 1959, but had begun planning and construction well before the completion of the agreement. His partner, Fritz Burns, decided to live near Kaiser and purchased a lot at the end of Portlock Road, just adjacent to Kaiser.<sup>7</sup>

Alyce (Ale) Kaiser was largely in charge of the design and oversight of their new home. She hired architect George Wright, who was educated at the University of Illinois. He was a learned man, an intellectual, and cohered with an "artistic" crowd. According to Architect Benjamin Lum who worked with George Wright, George Wright traveled the world, was a bohemian, and a fine architect with perfect taste and understanding of art.<sup>8</sup> Wright was an employee of Kaiser while Henry Kaiser was alive and he continued to live in Hawaii after Kaiser passed away. He designed the Liberty House in Kailua and other buildings around Honolulu, though not much is known of him today. Ed Bauer's office was the local architecture firm that collaborated with George Wright and executed the working drawings.

Architect Ben Lum, who designed the Rainbow Tower at the Hawaiian Village, and was working on the plans of Hawaii Kai with Architect Art Mori, when they were working under Ed Bauer, designed the dog kennel/ racetrack and Art Mori designed the boathouse at the Kaiser Residence.

Business associates, friends, teenager, and servants passed through the gates, seemingly around the clock. Kaiser's longtime aide Handy Hancock, lived only a mile away in Hawaii Kai, and he spent several hours at the Portlock estate almost daily. Ale loved decorating and landscaping, and by the early 1960s, the home was one of Oahu's showpieces. The Kaiser's generally shunned Honolulu's "social whirl", but he regularly threw a New Year's Eve party with two hundred sit-down dinner guests. At he stroke of midnight, they put on a fireworks display that was enjoyed by residents all over Maunaloa Bay. During Kaiser's years in media, Hollywood celebrities were frequent visitors. Life was seldom dull at the Kaiser home. In 1966, U.S. President Lyndon B.

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<sup>7</sup> Architectural Description of the Kaiser Estate by One of the Architects Who Worked on the Design Drawings with Henry Kaiser," interview by author, March 29, 2016.

<sup>8</sup> Architectural Description of the Kaiser Estate by One of the Architects Who Worked on the Design Drawings with Henry Kaiser," interview by author, March 29, 2016.

Johnson arrived in Hawaii for a summit meeting with South Vietnamese leaders. It was reported that he held a meeting with his advisors and cabinet members at the Kaiser Estate.

Ale, a registered nurse who took care of ailing Bess Kaiser before marrying Henry Kaiser, was very much involved with the forming of Kaiser Permanente in Hawaii as well as nationally. They worked with Benjamin Lum to design the first Kaiser Permanente Hospital in Hawaii. The hospital was supposed to be a resort hospital for the rich, which is why it was located so close to Waikiki. The design was groundbreaking at the time—the circulation was wrapped around the perimeter of the building with a “sterile” doctors’ and nurses’ corridor down the center. Patients’ guests would access patients’ rooms via the exterior corridor, and the patient’s were able to see the spectacular views of the ocean. When Kaiser built this building, he designed the climbing crane which runs along the height of the building, floor by floor. Amazingly, this machine has changed little since he invented it and is still used today in construction.

Henry Kaiser was not interested in history much—he was interested in the future. The design of the house reflected Kaiser’s passion and love for the modern era. He lived a full life and worked with extra fervency towards the end of his life, as he knew it was drawing to a close. On August 1967, he slipped into a coma and close family members were summoned to Hawaii. On August 24, he died in his sleep, with Ale and “Handy” Hancock, his close friend and business associate, in his room.

### **Additional Property Information**

The property has been modified over the years since Henry J. Kaiser’s death in 1967. Originally, Kaiser leased seven acres (7.643 acres gross, 7.093 net) of beachfront land from Bishop Estate on June 16, 1959. As part of this lease, Kaiser was given permission to create a boat slip having a size of 60’ x 80’. After Henry Kaiser’s death, Alyce Kaiser transferred the lease to the Goldman brothers. In 1973, it was subleased to the Han family who subsequently subleased it to RMD Properties in 1976. This is when the property was first subdivided into five different lots. In 1988, Genshiro Kawamoto bought the entire lot for \$42.5 million, but could not keep up with payments and forfeited the property. Bishop Estate could not auction off the entire property so instead sold it in three parcels. Fred and Annie Chan purchased Lots 1 and 2 in years 1997 and 2000, adjacent to each other and the third parcel was sold to another party. In year 2004, Lots 1 and 2 were rejoined together through conveyance. In year 2016, the parcels were subdivided once again into three parcels, one of which is the area under and around which the Kaiser house is built.

Today, the Kaiser Estate property is a five-acre subdivision property with three separated lots. The entire five-acre property is long and narrow, with a shoreline length of 700’ and a width of approximately 300’. It still reads as one contiguous site as there are no dividing walls between the sections. It will remain as such because the covenant deed will restrict construction of walls and barriers. At its center it is a large water feature, partially natural and partially man-made, which drains into the ocean. At the top of the water feature is a 1000 SF structure which originally held the trophies for the dogs which is why it was called “Trophy House” but later was modified

architecturally in both style and function when it became a gazebo. *Mauka* of this Trophy House was the large kennel area for the dogs in the shape of a racetrack. The structures that were once built in the center of this racetrack are no longer extant but the low retaining walls of the track are still visible. The adjacent caretakers house is still extant. The structure of the boat house to the south of the property has been in a dilapidated state for many years and the original wooden shingled “top-hat” shaped roof of the structure is gone.

The following is the timeline which has been created by reviewing the deeds and conveyances associated with this property since Kaiser leased the land in 1959:

### **Timeline**

**June 16, 1959-** Bishop Estate to Henry J. Kaiser (TMK 3-9-026-005)  
(Liber 5426, page 291)

**September 8, 1971-** Alyce Amy Kaiser to Alfred D. Goldman for \$10.00

**November 19, 1973-** Goldman Trust to Thomas L. Han and Hinako Seki Han  
(Sublease January 31, 1974-January 31,1979) (Annual Rent of \$2117.78)  
(Entire Term January 1, 1973- January 1, 2014)

**June 28, 1976-** Thomas Han and Hinako Seki Han to R.M.D. Properties, Inc. (sublease) for a portion of the original piece of property. This appears to be when the Kaiser Property was first subdivided.  
(1<sup>st</sup> Div. 3-9-26-44,45,46)

**February 3, 1977-** R.M.D. Properties to Albert Christopher Ballard, Kelly Kathleen Ballard, Dana Lynn Ballard, Robin Diane Ballard, Katherine Kay Ballard, Scott Loyd Ballard, David Matthew Ballard, Daniel Richard Ballard, and Mary Lyn Ballard (sublease) TMK (3-9-026-044)

**March 14, 1978-** Ballards default on the loan and Bank of Honolulu takes over.  
Bank of Honolulu leases it to Lily C. Anderson (sublease) (Entire Term March 14, 1978 - January 1, 2014)

**December 16, 1980-** Lily Anderson fails to make payment, Bank of Honolulu takes over

**August 1984 -** Anderson defaults on loan, and goes to the bankruptcy court; Bank of Honolulu will take over property

**August 17, 1984-** Bank of Honolulu to Terry L. Day (Indenture of Lease) and Terry L. Day, Trustee for the Estate of Lily C. Anderson to H. Arthur Little, Trustee of the Goldman Trust

**September 13, 1985-** Goldman Trust to Monte Goldman (Sublease) (Entire Term September 13, 1985 - January 1, 2014)

**March 21, 1988-** Goldman Trust to Genshiro Kawamoto for \$42.5 Million (Buys all three lots)

**February 9, 1994-** Kawamoto fails to make payments, property is ceded to Bishop Estate.

**January 15, 1997-** After a failed auction attempt, Bishop Estate broke the property into three parcels. Divided into 3 different lots (see figure below)

**Lot 1.** (3-9-026-044,045,046) Deed # 8800002603

**Lot 2.** (3-9-026-047,048) Deed # 880004732

**Lot 3.** (3-9-026-005) Deed #8800047324

**November 4, 1997-** Fred and Annie Chan buys Lot 1 with the boathouse, a staff house and a greenhouse for \$5 million.

**March 20, 2000 -** Fred and Annie Chan buys Lot 2 (3.5 acre) piece containing the main house and pool for \$9.6 million. Third parcel is sold to founder of a downtown Las Vegas casino, Andre Tompkins

**November 17, 2004-** Fred and Annie Chan conveys lots 1 and 2 into one property. (Instrument # 2004-231104)

**March 30, 2004-** Tompkins dies, leaving behind a completed \$5 million mansion on his parcel.

**2005-** Tompkins's widow lists property (Lot 3) for \$26.5 million

**October 4, 2007 -** Jason Brand buys Tompkins's property (Lot 3) for \$15.9 million. (Instrument # 2007-177545)

**November 26, 2013-** Brand sells Lot 3 property to Ammai LLC for \$19.6 million (Instrument # A50840209)

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

preliminary determination of individual listings (36 CFR 67) has been requested  
previously listed in the National Register  
previously determined eligible by the National Register  
designated a National Historic Landmark  
recorded by:

Historic American Buildings Survey	#	_____
Historic American Engineering Record	#	_____
Historic American Landscape Survey	#	_____

**Primary location of additional data:**

State Historic Preservation Office  
Other State agency  
Federal agency  
Local government  
University  
Other (Name of repository): \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreege of Property** \_\_\_\_\_

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |    |                 |                  |
|----|-----------------|------------------|
| 1. | Latitude: _____ | Longitude: _____ |
| 2. | Latitude: _____ | Longitude: _____ |
| 3. | Latitude: _____ | Longitude: _____ |
| 4. | Latitude: _____ | Longitude: _____ |

**Or**  
**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927      NAD 1983

- |                |                |                 |
|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Zone: _____ | Easting: _____ | Northing: _____ |
| 2. Zone: _____ | Easting: _____ | Northing: _____ |
| 3. Zone: _____ | Easting: _____ | Northing: _____ |
| 4. Zone: _____ | Easting: _____ | Northing: _____ |
| 5. Zone: _____ | Easting: _____ | Northing: _____ |
| 6. Zone: _____ | Easting: _____ | Northing: _____ |
| 7. Zone: _____ | Easting: _____ | Northing: _____ |
| 8. Zone: _____ | Easting: _____ | Northing: _____ |

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title \_\_\_\_\_

organization \_\_\_\_\_

street & number \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

telephone \_\_\_\_\_

date \_\_\_\_\_

name/title \_\_\_\_\_

organization \_\_\_\_\_

street & number \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

telephone \_\_\_\_\_

date \_\_\_\_\_

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**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)