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Alexander & Baldwin to install planters to retain monkeypod trees at Manoa Marketplace

Honolulu (Jan. 26, 2018) – Alexander & Baldwin today announced it will retain all of the 17 monkeypod trees at Manoa Marketplace while repaving the center’s parking lot to address safety concerns and provide a more comfortable experience for tenants and shoppers.

Some of the monkeypod trees were not planted appropriately when the shopping center was built in the mid-1970s. As a result, the aggressive root systems of those trees have broken through the pavement, making the area potentially dangerous to pedestrians. A&B will install new, or expand existing, planters around most of the monkeypod trees to contain further growth of their roots. The parking lot will be repaved to repair the damaged asphalt.

A&B will need to trim and prune the tree canopies to ensure the trees remain stable. With their roots contained within the planters, the trees may become unstable if their weight is not reduced and evenly distributed.

The roots of one monkeypod tree near the Woodlawn entrance are blocking the primary drain that collects water runoff from the parking lot. A&B will relocate that tree to the area alongside the Manoa Stream.

“We’re a local company and we take our commitment to our local communities very seriously. It is important to us to balance preserving the character of Manoa Marketplace and addressing these safety concerns,” said Chris Benjamin, A&B president and CEO.

Since October, A&B has been meeting with members of the community to discuss changes to Manoa Marketplace to address complaints the company had received about the safety of its parking lot. A&B recognized trees are an important part of the character of the shopping center. A&B’s initial plan called for retaining most of the existing monkeypods and replacing the others with a different species of tree better suited for the parking lot.

A&B received initial feedback from members of the community supporting the original plan, indicating they wanted a safer, more convenient parking lot. Through further engagement with Manoa and community stakeholders, however, it became clear retaining the existing monkeypod trees was a priority. A&B then determined the trees can be retained by installing new or expanding existing planters.

“We want to thank everyone who took the time to share their concerns and ideas. Throughout this process, it was clear that we all share the same goal of ensuring a safe, comfortable environment for everyone who enjoys Manoa Marketplace,” Benjamin said.

The parking lot improvements are part of an ongoing effort by A&B to address deferred maintenance issues at Manoa Marketplace, which it acquired in 2016. A&B also will be upgrading the air conditioning systems this year to improve performance and energy efficiency, and will make extensive repairs to the center’s roofs.

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