



# Affordable apartment project under way

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By LEE IMADA - Managing Editor (leeimada@mauinews.com) , The Maui News

Ground was broken Friday for a four-story, 28-unit affordable rental project in Sand Hills.

Kahu Kamuela Rodrigues led the blessing of the Imi Ikena Apartments at 511 Imi Place, with county and state officials and representatives of the builders and lenders in attendance. The development is the result of a public-private partnership between Imi Ikena Housing Partners LLC and nonprofit affordable housing developer/manager EAH Housing, a news release about the blessing said.

"Affordable housing is crucial to our community. Through new workforce housing developments we ensure that men, women, children and the elders of Maui can remain in their community without worrying about the limited availability of affordable housing," said Council Member Mike Victorino.

The project, which will include two- and three-bedroom units, will cater to working families earning 30 to 50 percent of the area median income, a news release said.

The units will go for below market rental rates. Published reports have said rents will range from about \$450 to \$1,000 per month, with most units renting for about \$900 per month.

The two-bedroom units will be 981 square feet and the three-bedroom units 1,133 square feet, said Rothtana Ouch, communication specialist for EAH. The apartments sit on about three-quarters of an acre of land.

The \$12.6 million project is expected to be completed next September, Ouch said.

Imi Ikena Apartments would not have been possible without \$9.4 million of proceeds from Low Income Housing Tax Credits by the Hawaii Housing Finance & Development Corp. and an award of affordable housing funds from the County of Maui, the news release said.

The project has a \$2.75 million loan commitment from the county's affordable housing fund.

Four years ago, Imi Ikena Housing Partners LLC was formed for the sole mission of developing the apartments. The group is a joint venture between DBR Development LLC, Horizon Development Consulting LLC and Affordable Housing Specialists LLC.

Established in 1968, EAH develops and manages affordable housing on Maui, Kauai and Oahu. When development is complete, EAH Housing will manage the apartments, which will feature a tot lot and picnic area.

Building will adhere to green design principles using low volatile organic compound paints, solar water heating, water-conserving plumbing fixtures and Energy Star appliances and light fixtures. Units will have ceiling fans, built-in washers and dryers, and access to high-speed Internet.

Construction is expected to create to 70 to 80 jobs, the news release said.

Ouch said that there is an "interest list" for rentals. Interested parties may go to the website [eah.org/display.asp?catid=4,17&pageid=260](http://eah.org/display.asp?catid=4,17&pageid=260) or contact Priscilla Gallarde by phone at (808) 523-8826 or by email at [pgallarde@eahhousing.org](mailto:pgallarde@eahhousing.org).

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