

## HAWAII NEWS

# Koa Ridge to finally offer homes for sale in July

By [Andrew Gomes](#) • June 28, 2020

COVID-19 is depressing Hawaii's housing market, but the developer of Koa Ridge in Central Oahu is very eager to sell homes after more than 20 years of planning the new community.

Castle & Cooke Hawai'i is preparing to start sales before the end of July for an initial 37 residences in the planned 3,500-home project beginning to take shape on former pineapple plantation lands.

The offering is an unusual one for a new suburban community because Castle & Cooke hasn't even poured foundations for the houses yet or paved any streets.

Model homes, which typically help entice buyers, won't be done until next year — after initial residents move in.

"We've really compressed it, because it's taken so long," said Harry Saunders, president of the Hawaii subsidiary of California-based Castle & Cooke Inc.

Koa Ridge has been planned since the mid-1990s, but the project contested by community and environmental groups took three tries to obtain state land-use approvals while also enduring two Hawaii Supreme Court challenges.



Since breaking ground in late 2017, Castle & Cooke has spent about \$70 million on construction that includes installing storm drains, water pipes, sewer lines, underground electric cables and other infrastructure within much of a lower quarter of the 576-acre site between Waipio and Mililani.

A current construction workforce of about 150 people is expected to grow to about 1,000 in six months as home production ramps up.

When the first homes are done, which is expected by the end of the year, about \$100 million will have been spent on the \$2 billion project, Saunders said.

The first offering of homes is slated to be 37 single-family houses on condominium land lots with starting prices in the high \$800,000s, followed quickly by 10 duplex homes starting in the low \$700,000s.

Castle & Cooke plans to open a temporary sales office in a nearby Waipio industrial park complex in late July, and then relocate that operation to Koa Ridge around March when model homes should be done.

The coronavirus pandemic, which has caused wage or job losses for around 250,000 local residents, has reduced the pool of homebuyers. Still, Saunders is confident that strong demand exists based on an interest list Castle & Cooke has maintained for Koa Ridge over a decade.

More than 1,000 people, Saunders said, have reiterated their interest in the past month.

“We’re really excited,” he said. “Overnight success after 23 years.”

Castle & Cooke projects having all 47 single-family and duplex homes completed and sold by the end of the year.

Next year, the company expects to build about 200 homes at Koa Ridge, including an initial installment of around 100 townhomes that satisfy a city affordable-housing requirement.

These townhomes, with prices starting in the low \$400,000s, are expected to become available in April and be finished by the end of next year.

Of the 3,500 homes slated for Koa Ridge, 1,050 — 30% — must be affordable to moderate-income households.

Other planned components of Koa Ridge include stores, restaurants, a medical center, a hotel, parks, a 7.5-mile pedestrian trail, an elementary school and a light industrial park.

The site for retail uses should be ready for development next year along with an initial park and sites for the medical center and industrial park.

Finishing Koa Ridge is estimated to take about a decade.