

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Fire Stations of Oahu Thematic Resource

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Multiple

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Honolulu  
Island of Oahu

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First

STATE

Hawaii

CODE

15

COUNTY

Honolulu

CODE

03

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☐ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

☒ PUBLIC☐ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

## ACCESSIBLE

☐ YES: RESTRICTED☒ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

## PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☒ EDUCATIONAL☒ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☐ PARK☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☒ OTHER: Fire Station

Thematic group

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

1) State of Hawaii

2) City and County of Honolulu

STREET &amp; NUMBER

1151 Punchbowl Street

650 South King Street

CITY, TOWN

Honolulu

VICINITY OF

STATE

Hawaii

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Bureau of Conveyances

STREET &amp; NUMBER

1151 Punchbowl Street

CITY, TOWN

Honolulu

STATE

Hawaii

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Fire Station Survey 80-14-1346

DATE

1979

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

State Historic Preservation Office

CITY, TOWN

Honolulu

STATE

Hawaii

## 7 DESCRIPTION

### CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT  
☒ GOOD  
☒ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED  
☐ RUINS  
☐ UNEXPOSED

### CHECK ONE

☒ UNALTERED  
☐ ALTERED

### CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE  
☐ MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The seven properties in this thematic group were originally constructed to function as fire stations. Serving various communities on the island of Oahu, six of the stations are located in Honolulu and the seventh is in Waialua. Five of the structures, Kaimuki, Kalihi, Makiki, Waialua and Central, still operate as fire stations, while the Honolulu Ballet occupies the Kakaako Station and the University of Hawaii has plans to use the Palama Station.

Although designed by various architects, the seven fire stations are similar in character. All are two-story, masonry structures with prominent towers. The towers, which rise approximately sixty feet in height, not only aesthetically contribute to these buildings, but also function as a space in which to hang and dry the cotton sheathed rubber hoses. In the past year or two, nylon hoses, which need not be hung to dry, have begun to supplant the older hoses and thus certain departments no longer use their towers. All are box-like in plan, with the first story devoted to housing equipment and offices and second story serving as a dormitory for the on-duty firemen.

The buildings also are similar in style, with all, but the Central Station, being rendered in a Spanish Mission style. The 1934 Central Station employs moderne motifs. Also, all the stations, with the exception of the 1901 Palama Station, were erected within the ten year period of 1924-1934. Thus, the historic fire stations of Oahu present a consistent imagery of the Honolulu City and County Fire Department, and buildings of this type are readily recognized as "old fire stations."

The survey of Oahu's fire stations was conducted by Don Hibbard and Nathan Napoka, the architectural historian and historian in the State Historic Preservation Office. In performing this survey, they consulted Fire Department and County Building Department records and conducted on-site surveys of all buildings which were erected prior to World War II. The seven structures which retain their integrity were further researched and included in this nomination. One structure, the Waikiki Station on Kapahulu Avenue, was excluded as it received a sympathetic, but major, remodeling and addition in 1963. This excluded station was contemporaneous with the others, having been erected in 1927, but differed from the others in style, stressing Hawaiian elements over the Spanish Mission. Thus, this nomination encompasses all the fire stations on Oahu which meet the National Register criteria.

### The Inventory:

1. The Palama Fire Station was placed in the National Register on April 21, 1976. Constructed in 1901, this two-story brick building with a central tower at the rear is the oldest surviving fire station in Honolulu. Rendered in a Mediterranean Revival style, this building served as a prototype for those which were erected in the 1920's.

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Located at 879 North King Street, it encompasses the property described in 1979 by Tax Map Key: 1-5-05-14, which is approximately 1/4 of an acre.

UTM: Z4 E617120 N2358640

2. The Kaimuki Fire Station is a two-story, reinforced concrete building with a stucco veneer, rendered in the Spanish Mission style. Located at the head of Koko Head Avenue, the major cross street in the Kaimuki district of Honolulu, with the knoll-like summit of the small Kaimuki shield volcano as a backdrop, the station presents a dramatic vista for people traveling up Koko Head Avenue.

The building is distinguished by a truncated hipped roof of red tile and a tall tower which rises from the center of the rear of this box-like building. The roof has overhanging eaves with exposed rafters and diamond shaped reliefs under the eaves. The tower has on each side, a pair of long, thin louvers which run most of the tower's height. False gargoyles are located at the corners of the tower near the top of the thin louvers. Above the gargoyles is a set of three round arched louvers. The tower terminates with a cravetto and a red tile hipped roof. Due to the installation of a power winch to pull up the hoses, the tower has been weakened.

The facade of the building is dominated by a pair of entry doors for the fire engines. These portals have been modified. Originally, they were round arched with wood doors. Due to the increased size of today's fire engines, these openings were made square, the concrete hub guards were removed and sliding doors installed. The second story of the building has three sets of three jalousie windows. Originally, these were casement, but in 1968, jalousies were installed in all of Oahu's operational fire stations. The only stations included in this nomination which did not receive this alteration are the Kakaako and Palama stations. The only other exterior alterations are the removal of light fixtures which once flanked the front doorways and the removal of a round arched trellis which stood between the two doorways. The interior remains relatively intact, although modern plumbing and lighting has been installed.

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Designed by G. R. Miller, the Kaimuki Fire Station was erected in 1924. In 1931, a long rectangular kitchen-shop building was built to the left rear of the fire station. This building also has a stucco facade and a shake shingled hipped roof, but is not included in this nomination, as the Review Board decided not to include it.

Located at 971 Koko Head Avenue, it encompasses a portion of the property described in 1979 by the Tax Map Key: 3-2-36: 7, which is delineated by a dark line on the enclosed plat map labeled Kaimuki Fire Station.

UTM: Z4 E24295 N2353820

3. The Kalihi Fire Station, like the Kaimuki Station, was designed by G. R. Miller and erected in 1924. Its plan and construction is similar to that of the Kaimuki Station, although several exterior details differ. The red tile hipped roof has enclosed eaves, and the tower does not have false gargoyles. The tower is distinguished by a single long, thin louver on each side, and near the top of the tower on each side are a pair of round arched louvers with iron "balconies" below them.

The front doorways have been modified in a manner similar to that in Kaimuki and the light fixtures and trellis has been removed. The second story fenestration includes a round arched central window with a set of three rectangular windows on either side. An iron balcony extends from the round arched opening, which at one time contained a pair of French doors. Again, all windows are jalousie, and the interior remains relatively intact.

A kitchen-shop building, similar to the Kaimuki kitchen-shop building, is again situated to the left rear of the station. It dates from 1929 and differs from the Kaimuki Station kitchen in that it has a corrugated iron roof, painted red. It, too, is excluded from this nomination, as the Review Board did not deem it significant.

Located at 1742 North King Street, the Kalihi Station encompasses a portion of the property described in 1979 by the Tax Map Key: 1-3-05:22, which is delineated by a dark line on the enclosed plat map labeled Kalihi Fire Station.

UTM: Z4 E616300 N2360640

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4. The Makiki Station, although designed by Solomon F. Kenn in 1929, is in many ways similar to the Kaimuki Stations in appearance. It too is box-like in massing, constructed of reinforced concrete with a stucco veneer, has a green tiled hipped roof with overhanging eaves and exposed rafters and a rear tower which is located to the right of center. The tower has on each side a pair of long, thin, round arched louvers above which is a banding with disc ornamentation and a set of three rectangular louvers. The tower terminates with a green tile hipped roof.

The front doorways, which originally had elliptical arches and sliding doors, have been modified in a manner similar to the Kaimuki and Kalihi Stations with overhead sliding doors. The light fixtures and trellis have again been removed. A band molding with disc ornamentation separates the first and second stories. The second story has a set of four rectangular windows which are flanked on either side by a similar set of three windows. Again, all windows are jalousies.

The interior plan is similar to the Kaimuki and Kalihi Station, although the Makiki Station has a center brass pole to slide down, while the earlier stations have a pole in each of the front corners.

An outbuilding, constructed in 1931, which is similar to those at the Kaimuki and Kalihi Stations is directly behind this Fire Station. Again, this is not included in the nomination. Of all the stations surveyed, the Makiki Station is in the worst condition. All other stations are in good condition, but Makiki's second floor is in poor condition.

Located at 1202 Wilder Avenue, the Makiki Station encompasses a portion of the property described in 1979 by the Tax Map Key: 2-4-29:29 which is delineated by the dark line on the enclosed plat map labeled Makiki Fire Station.

UTM: Z4 E20125 N2356890

5. The Kakaako Fire Station follows the same plans as the Makiki Station and also was erected in 1929. The only differences between this building and the one in Makiki is that it retains its 6 x 1 double hung sash windows and rather than having overhead sliding doors, it has

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doors which slide to the side. Also, a ladder truck station built in 1930, is located to the right of the station and is connected to the station by a single-story stucco wall with a round arched entry and tile roof.

Located at 620 South Street, the Kakaako Station encompasses a portion of the property described in 1979 by the Tax Map Key: 2-1-31:18, which is approximately 6/7 of an acre, and delineated by the dark line on the enclosed Kakaako plat map.

UTM: Z4 E618040 N2356425

6. The Waialua Fire Station was designed by A. W. Heen in 1932. It differs from the other stations as it has a more horizontal thrust in its massing. The right half of the building is devoted to housing the fire engines and is distinguished by a shingled, double pitched, lateral running gable roof with overhanging eaves and exposed rafters, and a pair of doorways for the engines. The doorways were originally elliptical arched, but have been modified in a manner similar to the Makiki Station with overhead sliding doors.

The left side of the building has office space on the first floor and sleeping quarters on the second. Its stucco facade is three bays wide and is capped by a front facing gable with a round louver. The roof is double pitched, with overhanging eaves. Each bay has one rectangular window on the first and second stories, except for the bay closest to the fire engine section which has an outset entry on the first floor. All windows are jalousie. A flat roofed tower with round arched louvers on each side is to the rear of this section to the right of center. The interior of this station remains in good condition and features an open truss ceiling in the engine section and a brass pole and iron balcony in the center of the intersection between the dormitory and engine sections.

Although built in 1932, this building is included in the nomination as it is the last station to perpetuate the Spanish Mission style of the earlier stations and is the only surviving rural fire station of the pre-World War II period. As such, the building is an integral part of this thematic nomination.

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Located at 66-420 Haleiwa Road, the Waialua Station encompasses the front half of the property described in 1979 by the Tax Map Key: 6-6-13:3, which is approximately 1/6 of an acre, and delineated by the dark line on the enclosed Waialua plat map.

UTM: Z4 E591660 N2387710

7. Central Fire Station is a two-story reinforced concrete building which is rendered in the moderne style. Designed by Dickey and Young, this station was built in 1934, replacing the earlier Romanesque Revival blue stone station of 1897. Since the construction of the 1897 building, the Central Fire Station has served as the headquarters for the Honolulu Fire Department.

The building is five bays wide and dominated by the three middle bays with their one-and-one-half story Art Deco aluminum doorways which were constructed by the California Artistic Metal and Wire Company of San Francisco. Above the modestly designed doors are aluminum panels with linear designs with an octagon in the middle containing the letter HFD. Above each panel is a set of four windows. The end bays each contain a first story window and a set of three second story windows. All second story windows are jalousies, and the first floor windows are tinted plate glass. A decorative belt course bands the top of this flat roofed building. This banding employs the octagonal HFD motif of the door panels. An abbreviated tower of approximately thirty feet rises from the roof at the rear of the right bay. This tower has a pair of long rectangular louvers running its height, a decorative belt course repeating that of the building, and an inset top with three rectangular louvers on each side and a copper double pitched hipped roof. In 1949, a one-story hollow tile addition was erected at the rear to provide additional office space. The Ewa (northwest) side of the building features a balcony with geometric deco decoration. Behind the balcony is a set of three window with rectangular pillars between them.

Although not fifty years old, this building is included in this thematic group as the station has strong associations with the history of the fire department, having been erected and serving as the fire department's headquarters. Designed by architect, C. W. Dickey, and engineer,

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John M. Young, it displays a concise design and an effectively restrained use of moderne motifs. C. W. Dickey was one of the foremost architects practicing in Hawaii in the twenties and thirties. As such, the building is an integral part of this nomination.

Located at 104 South Beretania Street, the Central Fire Station encompasses the property described in 1979 by the Tax Map Key: 2-1-09:26, which is approximately 1/4 of an acre.

UTM: Z4 E618065 N2357410



# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1901-1934

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

See descriptions of individual buildings

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Like schools, fire stations are one of the more prominent and vital public institutions within a community, and as such their buildings, especially those which are historic, are important landmarks in an area. The Honolulu Fire Stations, with their tall towers, are distinctive and conspicuous elements within the architectural fabric of Oahu, and are historically significant for their associations with the Honolulu Fire Department.

No organized fire protection system existed in Honolulu until November 6, 1850, when the city's first volunteer fire brigade was formed. A month later, on December 27, 1850, Kamehameha III established by ordinance the Honolulu Volunteer Fire Department, and the 1851 legislature enacted the ordinance into law. In August 1851, a second-hand fire engine was purchased through public subscription and became the property of Engine Company No. 1. Within ten years, the city had four engine companies, including No. 4, which was composed exclusively of Hawaiians. Kings Kamehameha III, Kamehameha IV, Kamehameha V, and Kalakaua were all active members of this company, with Kamehameha V, as Prince Lot, playing an instrumental role in its foundation and Kalakaua serving as the company's secretary. Thus, the Honolulu Fire Department is perhaps the only fire department in the world to have the distinction of including monarchs as active members. In 1878, Engine Company No. 5, a Chinese company, was formed.

Each volunteer company had its own fire house and held regular meetings. The most substantial of the early firehouses was Engine Company No. 5's brick station on Maunakea Street. Erected in 1886, it replaced a frame building destroyed in the first Chinatown fire. Subsequently, the brick station was consumed in the Chinatown fire of 1900.

The volunteer fire companies, each with their fifty plus membership, were active and influential factors in various municipal activities, including politics. Thus, after Queen Lilioukalani was deposed in 1893, one of the first acts of the Provisional government was the disbanding of the volunteer fire companies and the creation of a full-time paid fire department. With regard to this action, the Honolulu Advertiser

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noted the volunteer system,

has become however, a rank political hotbed, and some of the companies were the center of a great deal of activity which had nothing at all to do with their duties as firemen. The abating of this nuisance will be regarded with a feeling of general satisfaction.<sup>1</sup>

Under the new system, the number of fire houses was reduced to three; these were the Chinatown station on Maunakea, Engine Company No. 1 on King Street, approximately where Hawaiian Electric is today, and Engine Company No. 2 on Union Street.

Due to the expansion of the city and the need for more adequate quarters, as the volunteer stations were not designed to stable horses or serve as dormitories for the men on twenty-four hour duty, new stations replaced the earlier ones. In 1897, the original Central Fire Station was erected on Beretania and Fort Streets, consolidating Engine Companies 1 and 2, and in 1899, a frame station was constructed on "the plains of Makiki" for Engine Company No. 3. In 1901, the Palama Station was built to replace the Maunakea Street Station. With the development of Kaimuki as a suburb, a frame station was built there in 1913. The frame stations and Central Station were eventually replaced by the more substantial buildings which are still in use today, and as the city expanded stations were erected in Kalihi, Waikiki and Kakaako, as well as in the country (Waialua). Such was the Honolulu Fire Department up till Pearl Harbor. With the war and the subsequent growth of Honolulu, numerous new fire stations have been erected, giving the island of Oahu a total of 37 stations today.

Architecturally, the fire stations are significant in that they display styles typical of their period. The Spanish Mission style was popular in Hawaii and the mainland throughout the twenties, and the moderne style has ready associations with the thirties. The fire stations, with their tall hose drying towers, are a readily recognizable building type in Honolulu, and are noteworthy architectural elements within their communities.

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<sup>1</sup>Honolulu Advertiser, February 28, 1893, p.2 c.1.

