

<https://www.staradvertiser.com/2021/10/12/hawaii-news/local-investment-group-to-buy-royal-lahaina-resort/?HSA=f2f848e529198ee713b18ac4e2f57f8216481f43>

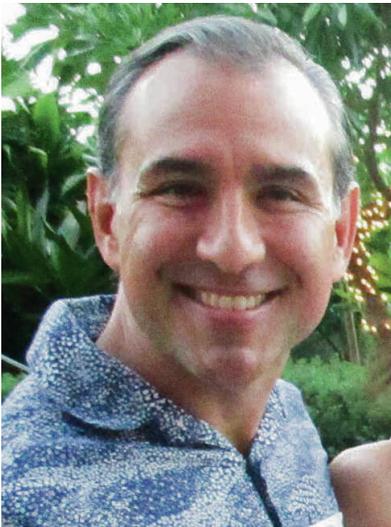
HAWAII NEWS

Local investment group to buy Royal Lahaina Resort

By [Allison Schaefer](#)s

October 12, 2021

Updated 11:05 pm



STAR-ADVERTISER / 2016

“The Hogan family has been an incredible steward of the iconic Royal Lahaina Resort on Maui for generations, and we are honored to carry that legacy forward.”

B.J. Kobayashi

The Kobayashi Group

Hawaii real estate firm BlackSand Capital has reached an agreement to buy the Royal Lahaina Resort, one of the original properties that helped establish Kaanapali as a beachfront resort destination on Maui’s west coast.

BlackSand, led by B.J. Kobayashi, purchased the property for an undisclosed price from the Hogan family, who founded what is now known as Pleasant Holidays.

The Kobayashi Group also will have a stake in the deal. The family-owned, Hawaii-focused real estate development and investment firm has developed over \$4 billion in property in Hawaii. In addition to B.J. Kobayashi, other Kobayashi Group partners include Patrick Kobayashi, Alana Kobayashi Pakkala and Bert A. Kobayashi Sr.

B.J. Kobayashi said in a statement, “The Hogan family has been an incredible steward of the iconic Royal Lahaina Resort on Maui for generations, and we are honored to carry that legacy forward. We share many of their values in terms of being deeply involved in the community, giving back, and our love and respect for all that makes Hawaii such a very special place.”

Previous Kobayashi Group neighbor island investments include Kukio Golf and Beachclub and Four Seasons Hualalai on the Big Island and Hyatt Andaz Maui at Wailea Resort on Maui.

Real estate analyst Stephany Sofos said BlackSand and Kobayashi Group have extensive experience with developing world-class properties in the Hawaii market, where they understand the market and the people.

“The property definitely needs an innovative renovation, and if anyone can do it, these companies can do it,” Sofos said. “With everything emerging from COVID, now is the time for developers to renovate and rebrand.”

BlackSand did not immediately provide information about planned upgrades or other changes for the property, which opened in the early 1960s as a collection of beachfront cottages and grew substantially in the 1970s when a 12-story hotel tower added more than 300 rooms to the 27-acre property. The Hogan family spent hundreds of millions in the mid-2000s renovating the property far beyond its moderately priced roots, which appealed to package tour customers.

“BlackSand’s investors are composed primarily of people who live in or have a deep connection to Hawaii — including beneficiaries of local retirement funds and endowments,” B.J. Kobayashi said. “We are proud to be locally owned and it is important to us that most of our investment dollars stay in Hawaii and make it a better place to live and work.”

Pleasant Travel Service will continue to operate the resort until the change of ownership is finalized and BlackSand becomes the owner and operator. The transaction is expected to close Dec. 8, according to a Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification submitted to the state Oct. 4 by May Sato, the Royal Lahaina Resort’s director of human resources.

In the WARN, Sato said Royal Lahaina Resort would terminate all 420 of the hotel’s employees upon closure of the sale. The notice said that the hotel’s hourly workers, who are represented by ILWU Local 142, do not have bumping rights. BlackSand declined to answer whether the employees will be able to reapply for their jobs.

ILWU Local 142 did not provide immediate comment.