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Company wins permit to build pumping station for Honolulu seawater air conditioning project

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HONOLULU — A Hawaii company that plans to pump cold water from the ocean to air condition downtown Honolulu office buildings has received a state permit to build a pumping and cooling station.

The permit also allows Honolulu Seawater Air Conditioning, LLC to install underground piping in Kakaako.

The company said in a statement Wednesday it received the special management area permit from the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism. The company expects to break ground during the first half of the year.

CEO William Mahlum says being granted the permit is a "major milestone" for the energy project.

Last year the state Board of Land and Natural Resources granted the company a conservation district use permit to build and operate the offshore portion of the system.