News Release
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COUNTY OF KAUA’I
KAUA’I POLICE DEPARTMENT
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Kaua’i police initiate public safety efforts with new project

KAIKEA – In alignment with Kaua’i Police Chief Todd G. Raybuck’s Crime Reduction Goals, Project Kaikea Barriers was recently initiated in an effort to make the southbound shoulder of Kūhiō Highway, above the north end of the Kaikea Lookout parking lot, safer.

“Over the past several months, KPD has been receiving numerous complaints about a growing houseless camp located within an area of overgrown foliage near the south end of Kealia Kai,” said KPD Detective Barry DeBlake who was instrumental in implementing the project. “One of the main complaints was that the camp was situated on a blind turn where people would drive their vehicles straight onto Kūhiō Highway. Vehicles merging and vehicles traveling southbound would not have enough time to see each other, thereby increasing the likelihood of a crash.”

The objective of Project Kaikea Barriers was to block vehicular traffic to the houseless camp and reduce the chances of a serious and/or fatal vehicle crash occurring.

In order to accomplish this, KPD’s Acting District Commander (Kawaihau/Hanalei) Jason Overmyer, who is a former KPD Traffic Safety Unit Sergeant trained in traffic crash reconstruction, assessed the area in order to determine that vehicles merging onto the highway posed a high risk.

“We then enlisted the help of the County of Kaua’i’s Roads Division Assistant Chief Scott Suga and his work crew, who did everything from supplying the big trucks to transporting the cement jersey barriers and heavy equipment, to clearing the southbound shoulder and setting the barriers,” said
DeBlake. “Moreover, due to the location of the houseless camp right next to Kūhio Highway, we also received support from the Hawai‘i Department of Transportation’s Homeless Coordinator Jun Yang, along with the support of the DOT Highways Kaua‘i District, District Engineer Larry Dill, and staff, and DOT supervisors Willy Ortal and Jason Fukino.”

Additionally, HDOT and DOT Kaua‘i played a significant role in the success of Project Kaikea Barriers by having their staff, big trucks, and heavy equipment readily available in the unlikely event other assistance was needed.

“They also sent out the Grace Pacific Traffic Cone Crew, who was able to set up traffic cones so that normal traffic would not be interrupted during the project,” said DeBlake. “Without everyone’s help, including all KPD officers who assisted, we would not have been able to accomplish this mission.”

As of this week, due to this collective effort of several entities, the cement jersey barriers have been installed and now permanently prevent vehicles from accessing the area.

Please note that this project was specifically focused on traffic safety concerns and because of the pandemic, no houseless subjects were forced to leave the camp.
Courtesy of KPD: Photos of cement jersey barriers being installed at Kaikea to prevent vehicles from entering and leaving the area, therefore, decreasing the chances of a traffic crash.

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