



# **Transportation Agency**

**Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Report**

**July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021**

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Executive

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## TRANSPORTATION AGENCY

### I. MISSION STATEMENT

To provide the Kaua'i community accessible transportation services with professionalism and the Aloha spirit.

### II. AGENCY GOAL

#### A. Duties/Functions

To operate a transit bus system that offers an alternative means of mobility for Kaua'i's rural community and a paratransit bus system that effectively serves the elderly and persons with disabilities.

### III. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

#### A. Program Objectives

- To provide leadership and administrative support to effectively accomplish agency goals and responsibilities.
- To provide a safe and reliable transport from bus stop to bus stop and door to door by managing daily transit operations including personnel, fleet repair and maintenance, routes, schedules, dispatching and adhering to all Federal, State and County rules and regulations.
- To formulate fixed-route bus schedules by addressing community need.
- To manage independent mobility for transit dependent individuals by assessing travel needs, arranging travel requests, providing travel training

#### B. Program Highlights



##### *Our Mobility*

##### Paratransit Software-Related Service Improvements

The Transportation Agency actively seeks ways to improve public transit service, enabling riders to have greater freedom of mobility. An opportunity arose that provided funding for the Agency to upgrade its transit operating software that greatly enhances the quality of service for Kaua'i Bus Paratransit service riders. Within several months, the Agency was able to upgrade its software system which includes several new features:

- The ability for drivers to send an automated phone call to riders. This feature is an improvement over the previous notification system. The rider now receives a phone call providing notice that the driver will be arriving for the pickup within a few minutes.

- Reservation scheduling software upgrade. Effectively scheduling reservations for paratransit pickups to successfully meet the needs of our customers while maintaining operational efficiencies to best utilize scheduled space on paratransit buses is challenging. The recent software upgrades implemented have provided improved tools to increase the effectiveness of scheduling trips for riders needing to get to critical medical appointments, work assignments, and other important commitments.



*Our Home...*

Community Support

Throughout the COVID pandemic, Kaua’i Bus team members participated in the various events provided in support of the community that included food drive collection and distribution points, as well as responding to transports for homeless members of our community for shelter relocation and disaster evacuation response.



*Our Connections...*

Agency Collaboration

The Transportation Agency has been working with fellow agencies to improve services to those in need of additional support with the use of public transit. One example of this collaboration is with the team at Friendship House who provides social rehabilitation and a supportive community for adults with mental illness. The Friendship House received funds this past year specifically to assist individuals with their transportation needs through bus pass purchases. The Transportation Agency team has been consulting with Friendship House staff to ensure all eligible individuals receive the appropriate pass or ticket. A total of 17 individuals with disabilities were assisted with getting an annual pass at no personal expense, and offered ridership training on the Kaua’i Bus!



## *Our Money...*

### Technology Advancements to Improve The Kaua'i Bus Rider Experience

The Kaua'i Bus had applied for and was provided federal funding to have all Kaua'i Buses equipped with a cradle point signal enhancement system that increased the effectiveness of data transmission to and from fleet vehicles, and also enabled each vehicle to sustain a wi-fi signal. The Kaua'i Bus has been offering free wi-fi service for its riders since December 2020, and can now serve as mobile internet access points during periods of emergency and disaster response.

In March of 2021, The Kaua'i Bus completed the installation of a significantly more powerful operating software program purchased through one of its Federal Transit Administration funding awards. The new program developed by GMV Syncromatics provides a smarter solution to address some of the connectivity and data management issues that have improved dispatch monitoring, passenger information maintenance, and reporting features to enable a better responsiveness to passenger needs and inquiries. The program upgrade also included the installation of automatic voice announcers, next stop signage, and live vehicle monitoring to greatly enrich the onboard rider's experience as well as provide real time information for public passengers by way of a new website located at [www.theKaua'i bus.com](http://www.theKaua'i bus.com). Additionally, a compatible system mobile app has been completed, and is scheduled to be released and available for download through Apple and Google play stores by late September 2021.

To invest in the quality of the Kaua'i Bus passenger experience, extensive training sessions were provided for all bus drivers and other Kaua'i Bus team members to gain proficiency with the software upgrades and operating the additional in-vehicle passenger information features. Training sessions also included reviews of mask requirements, carry on and service animal requirements, vehicle cleaning and disinfection, safety policy updates, tablet operation, customer service, and dealing with difficult passengers.

### Bus Stop Expansion and Improvement

The Eiwa Street bus stop expansion was completed, doubling the number of passenger shelters available for Kaua'i Bus riders, providing lighting, seating, and even a comfort station nearby.





## *Our Freedom...*

### Social Media and Web Info Improvements

The Kaua'i Bus continues to utilize social media pages to increase its effectiveness in providing the public with clear and timely information. By the end of June 2021, there were 600 followers on The Kaua'i Bus Facebook page that reached over 15,000 people to promote service adjustments, schedule changes, and policy reminders. The Kaua'i Bus social media page has experienced an increase of 54% in interaction from the same time last year.



### Modernization and Rebranding

The Kaua'i Bus has a deep historical presence on the island of Kaua'i. Its initial logo was created in the 1990's and paid homage to the sugar cane industry and the importance of laying a good foundation so that future generations could benefit for years to come. With that in mind, the re-design of The Kaua'i Bus logo and its meaning carries great importance for which a team was assembled to modernize the look of The Kaua'i Bus. The outcome was a sleek, crisp logo that included homage to the original design with the green font representing Kaua'i, the Sugar Cane fields, and the history of The Kaua'i Bus. The "wind" below illustrates movement from the Mauna or Mountain (tip) to the Makai or ocean (widest portion) and the many roads traveled on our beautiful island, all while serving our customers with safety, comfort, and Aloha! The Kaua'i Bus fleet will gradually be transitioning to the new logo over the next several years.



Investment in Safety and Professionalism

The Kaua'i Bus was provided funding to institute a new uniform policy for its team members, which was implemented in June 2021. The Kaua'i Bus is responsible for providing safe and effective transportation for members of the public, which prompts the need for riders to be able to readily identify employees of The Kaua'i Bus. The use of uniforms will help to promote and foster an environment of professionalism, safety, cleanliness and brand identification.



*Our Heart...*

Bus Pass Outreach Project

In FY2021, the Transportation Agency was provided \$25,000 in funds to be utilized towards helping outreach programs provide bus passes to their clients. Bus pass benefits were shared with a total of eleven agencies who serve various members of our community. The chart below details the type and number of passes provided for the needy through the County's coordination with each agency listed:

AGENCY	One-Day Passes	Monthly Passes	Annual Passes	Paratransit Vouchers
Easter Seals Hawaii				500
Catholic Charities of Hawaii		99		
Hale Opio		47		
Kaua'i Economic Opportunity		6		
Friends of the Kaua'i Drug Court		5		
West Kaua'i Ministries	1	22		
Malama Pono Health Services		27		
Women In Need (WIN)	3	27		
Friendship House		6		
YWCA	30	65	2	
Kaua'i Veterans Association		20		
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>500</b>

Kaua'i Bus Team Newsletter

The Kaua'i Bus is committed to improving its communication with the community as well as with its own team members, and therefore in April 2021, initiated a well-received employee quarterly Kaua'i Bus Agency Newsletter called "Along for the ride" that included our first ever Employee of the Quarter award program. The newsletter was put into place to highlight staff achievements, provide internal updates, share special appreciation and acknowledgement messages from customers, and promote upcoming employee events.

**IV. BUDGET**

Funding available in Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2021:

Funding Source	Funds Available	FY2021 Expense
County General Fund	\$ 385,340	\$ 327,704
County Highway Fund	\$ 6,291,681	\$ 4,500,048
County General Excise Tax Fund	\$ 6,288,974	\$ 6,288,974
FTA Section 5311 Program (Rural Operations)	\$ 2,078,668	\$ 1,779,743
FTA Section 5311 Program (CARES Funding)	\$ 4,453,300	\$ 775,276
FTA Section 5339 Program (Capital)	\$ 1,773,512	\$ 1,228,482
TOTAL	\$21,271,475	\$14,900,224

(FTA = Federal Transit Administration)

Revenue sources for Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2021:

Fixed Route & Demand Response Paratransit	\$ 537,397
Contract Services (Kupuna Care & Senior Centers)	\$ 87,148
Donations (Kupuna Care)	\$ 2,487
TOTAL	\$ 627,032

**V. ACCOMPLISHMENTS/EVALUATION**

	Fixed-Route	Paratransit
Total Passenger Trips	360,811	18,592
Average Unit Cost/Trip	\$8.73	\$34.15
Recovery Rate	14%	4%

Paratransit service provided 18,592 trips for the following programs:

Program	Trips	Active Riders
Demand-Response – ADA-qualified	13,797	812
Demand-Response - Seniors	662	173
Kupuna Care	4,133	111
Recreation Senior Centers (not in session)	0	N/A

Paratransit Service Types

Demand-Response (ADA-qualified & Seniors) Transportation Service

This transportation service offers door to door or curb to curb service for certified ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) and senior riders who are registered for service, and call ahead to reserve a time for being transported. Any and all trips requested including medical or agency appointments, employment, shopping, training, etc. are provided. Revenue collection is based on a per trip fare or ticket. Due to the COVID pandemic, there was a significant decrease in transports this fiscal year.

Kupuna Care Contract Transportation Service

This service is provided to seniors, certified by the Agency on Elderly Affairs as requiring door through door service for a variety of trip purposes including medical appointments, dialysis treatment, essential shopping and day programs. Revenues are based on a contract agreement with the Agency on Elderly Affairs and client donations. Due to the COVID pandemic, there was a significant decrease in transports this fiscal year.

Recreation Senior Center Contract Transportation Service

Transportation is provided for all nine senior centers island-wide to excursions, outreach and special events. Revenues are based on a contract agreement with the County Department of Parks and Recreation. Due to the COVID pandemic, senior center programs were not active during this fiscal year.

COVID-19 Impacts

Due to the pandemic, lower overall levels of ridership persist, however fixed route ridership has more recently been experiencing a partial recovery due to the increase in visitors’ use of public transit. This year’s trip counts reflect a 39% decrease in fixed route and a 65% decrease in paratransit ridership from last year. The Transportation Agency continues to consistently review ridership and conduct analyses in areas where it appears service may need to be expanded to reduce crowding on certain runs, and is committed to maintaining an acceptable level of service as we continue through this challenging time, and into the future.