



Office of Economic Development

Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report

July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023

**Nalani Brun
Director**

OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

I. MISSION STATEMENT

The Office of Economic Development (OED) works in partnership with the community to create economic opportunities toward the development of a healthy, stable, and balanced economy of the County of Kaua'i.

II. DEPARTMENT GOALS

The goals of this office are:

- A. Assist businesses of all sizes, emerging industries, and organizations in providing technical and possible financial support, as feasible, to provide full employment opportunities for all the County of Kaua'i's residents.
- B. Utilize the Guiding Principles of the Kaua'i Economic Development Plan – Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and other community plans to help improve and diversify Kaua'i's economy:
 - Economic Diversification: To strengthen selected industry clusters to minimize dependence on a single industry.
 - Economic Self-Sufficiency: To minimize imports and promote import substitution.
 - Economic Opportunity for all: To offer an appropriate education and training opportunities to give workers choices and to promote living wages.
- C. To work with the business community and partners to ensure Kaua'i's workforce meets their needs today, as well as in the future.
- D. Assist the business industries in growing their businesses to meet the needs of the island and beyond, through technical assistance, education and accessing resources.

Duties and Functions

1. *TOURISM*: Co-Lead and work on projects related to the Destination Management Action Plan which has replaced the Tourism Strategic Plan and cooperate with and support visitor industry partners.
2. *FILM*: Increasing film opportunities and supporting film partners on Kauai. Increasing other areas of Creative Industries including cultural and performing arts, emerging media, music, and entertainment industries.
3. *AGRICULTURE*: Increase agricultural products on Kaua'i, support agriculture partners, and monitor viability of the Sunshine markets.

4. *SUSTAINABILITY*: 1) to have county government lead by example by developing, adopting, and implementing sustainable practices and policies, and 2) to support and leverage community efforts that promote island sustainability.
5. *ENERGY*: The objective of the County's Energy Program is two-fold: (1) to manage, reduce, and facilitate the County's fossil energy use through increased efficiency in both facilities and fleets, and (2) to initiate, coordinate, and partner with stakeholders and the community on innovative programs and projects in the clean energy and transportation sector.
6. *WORKFORCE*: Support partners direct programs relating to workforce training and workforce programs as they relate to our Comprehensive Economic Development Plan.
7. *BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT*: Provide support to local business to grow, innovate and diversify in targeted areas of sectors.

III. PROGRAMS

GRANT PROGRAM (All sectors)

The OED grant program is generally a competitive awards program that supports sustainable economic development in agriculture, tourism management, film & creative industries, sustainability, business, and workforce capacity building. Proposals must address and support the chosen sector area program's goals and objectives. This fiscal year we continued to focus our efforts on larger grants of approximately \$50,000 for projects that helped move the needle on solving problems including those called out by our community in community plans. Staff are assigned grant funded programs monitoring by sector area of the program.

INNOVATION AND LINE ITEMED GRANTS:

A. Objective

- The objective of the grant program is to create funding opportunities that support partners in creating programming in the sectors of agriculture, sustainability, energy, destination management, product enhancement, creative industries, workforce, business support and special events.

B. Highlights: See listing of grants provided.

Table 1. OED Grant Program Data

FY2023		TOTAL: 2,247,726.50	
SECTOR	NON-PROFIT	Project Name	Amt funded
AG	Kauai Farm Bureau	2 Day Agricultural Festival	5,000.00
WORKFORCE	Dev-Island, Inc.	Digital Marketing Jumpstart Program	15,000.00
SMALL BUSINESS	Kauai Chamber	Hawaii on the Hill 2023	5,000.00
SUSTAINABILITY	Waiahuna Foundation	Farmers Mkt Compost Edu and Diversion	3,524.00
AG/BUSINESS	KEDB	Regional Food Center and 23 Data	122,000.00
ALL	KEDB	Economic Development Sectors	200,000.00
WORKFORCE	KCC	Workforce Training	35,000.00
SUSTAINABILITY	Aina Alliance	Off Grid Eco-Village	50,000.00
CTV Industries	GIRCD	Forest Calls - The Story of the Akikiki	50,000.00
AG	HAPA	Ai Pono Kauai Challenge	25,000.00
AG	Hoomalu Ke Kai	Fresh Kauai Oysters...	50,000.00
CTV Industries	Kamawaelualani Corp	Awakening of the Ancestors	35,000.00
ENERGY	Kauai Community Science	KCSC Climate Connect Virtual Reality Project	50,000.00
AG	Malama Kauai	Feed Grants - Farmers	50,000.00
AG	Malama Kauai	Kauai Farm to School Pilots	40,000.00
TOURISM	RCCA	Wailua Heritage Trail Enhancement	40,000.00
KEKAHA	E Ola Mau Na Leo O Kekaha	Kekaha College Financial Assistance Program	85,167.50
KEKAHA	Kaivin Farms	Kaivin Farm New Location	40,000.00
KEKAHA	Kekaha Hawn Hmstd	Keiki Christmas In Kekaha	6,300.00
KEKAHA	Kekaha PW Organization	Pop Warner Cheer and Dance Competition	10,000.00
KEKAHA	Waimea Project Grad	Waimea Project Grad 2023	20,000.00
KEKAHA	Westside Bball Club	Westside Basketball Club Equipment & Tvl	9,590.00
KEKAHA	Westside Bball Club	Westside Basketball Club Travel to Hilo	9,708.00
TOURISM	Kauai Visitors Bureau	KVB Consumer Promotion Grant 22-23	250,000.00
DIRECT	YWCA	Sexual Assault Treatment Program	70,518.00
DIRECT	YWCA	Family Violence Shelter	85,518.00

CTV Industries	KEDB	Film Marketing	182,000.00
AG	UH Manoa	GoFarm Agritourism	103,401.00
AG	KEDB	Sustainable Ranching Coop Pilot Program	100,000.00
PASS THRU	HCDC	Planning, Feasibility and Design for Kauai Sports Complex Anahola	500,000.00

* Indicates innovation grant and other is OED grant funds

Table 2. OED Grant Types

GRANT TYPES	TOTAL
Direct	385,524.00
Line Item	406,036.00
ARPA	385,401.00
Innovation	390,000.00
Kekaha HCB	180,765.50
State Pass Through	500,000.00

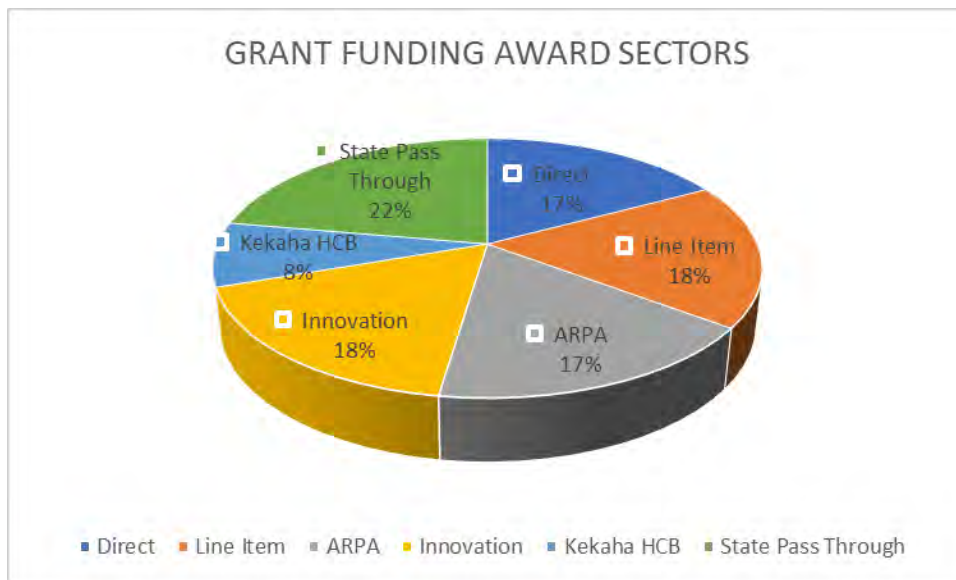


Figure 1. Grant Funding Award Distributions

ARPA PROGRAMS (\$1.5 million):

OED managed several ARPA funded programs during this fiscal year including:

- ARPA Sustainable Ranching Coop Project through KEDB

- ARPA Kauai Film Industry relaunch social media and Promotion campaign
- ARPA Ag-Tourism Cohort for Farms through GoFarm-UH

TOURISM: DESTINATION MANAGEMENT

During the FY2023, OED participated, along with the Kauai Visitor’s Bureau, the Kauai Community, and the Hawaii Tourism Authority in working on projects called out by the Destination Management Action Plan (DMAP) for the Visitor Industry which has replaced the work of the Tourism Strategic Plan (TSP). Many of the goals in the TSP were reiterated again in the DMAP. This allowed OED and partners to continue the efforts we had already been working on.

A. Objectives

- The objective of the tourism strategic plan is to refocus tourism to responsibly manage the economic activity of Kaua’i tourism in a sustainable manner while creating memorable experiences for visitors, improving quality of life for residents, and ensuring the stewardship of our natural and cultural resources.

B. Highlights

- Highlights include supporting the contracting of a consultant for the Coconut Marketplace Mobility Hub Plan which will be the first step in forming a comprehensive, multi-modal land transportations system for visitors; OED continues to participate in the DMAP-destination management action plan along with partners, Kaua’i Visitors Bureau, and the Hawai’i Tourism Authority; the website <https://kauaifestivals.com/> was relaunched this year with an upgraded back end. In conjunction with this website, the Kauai Festivals Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/KauaiFestivals>, is posting weekly; Funding originally slated for Hikinaakala Heiau was shifted and provided to a community group to help start the clearing of the area around the Malae Heiau which had never been done prior; and the Harbor Greeting program continued through the end of 2022. Funding was not obtained for entertainers for 2023 from the Hawaii Tourism Authority however, left over funds from 2022 were used to upgrade the look of the greeting area with a larger mural that provides AR digital interaction for education, and new plants for the area.

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES/FILM PROGRAM

A. Objective

- The Film Commission program’s objective is to increase film opportunities and other areas of Creative Industries including cultural and performing arts,

emerging media, music, and entertainment industries and to support our film community.

B. Highlights

- Film Commission program measures are based on economic impact through film production company expenditures and jobs created which are tracked on a Fiscal Year basis. The below figure represents the film production data for FY '22-'23
- CY2022 was a year of rebuilding for the film and television industry in Hawai'i as well as Kaua'i. Kaua'i still faced a lack of hotel rooms and cars to accommodate any large film crews without a lot of notice, however Kaua'i has sustained its core industry businesses of smaller commercials, wedding events, photography, and concerts.
- The Film Kaua'i website, [Kauai Film Commission \(filmkauai.com\)](http://filmkauai.com) and new film logo have been launched, and we have received many positive responses, especially on the film logo.
- The State has a renewed interest in diversifying the economy after COVID and has put a focus on the film industry to provide an alternative means to better jobs and opportunities.
- FOHI – The Film Office of the Hawaiian Islands has been reborn to attempt to re-collaborate the island film commissions into a cohesive unit. Our first FOHI sponsorship for marketing and advertising will take place in Santa Monica at the AFM Conference in November of 2023. AFM (the American Film Market) is a premier film acquisition, development, and networking event with more than \$1 billion in distribution and film financing deals are closed each year on films in every stage of development.
- The Kauai Creative Technology Center, headed by KEDB, secured a \$600,000 grant from the US Government via our congressional representatives. Funding included planning and building out of the space in the Waimea Technology Center and will include a Pearson Vue Testing Site.

Table 3. Kaua'i Film Industry

	# of Permits Issued	Filming Days	Approx. Spend	Hawaii Crew
Print or Digital Ads	7	30	206000	20
Documentary - TV or other	8	24	144000	12
Feature Film	0	0	0	0
TV Show/Series	2	20	250000	25
Music Videos	2	4	20000	7
Misc (Wedding, etc.)	19	30	110000	26
Totals	40	124	820000	81

AGRICULTURE

A. Objectives

- The Agriculture Program supports the viable growth of Kauaʻi's agriculture sector by working closely with agriculture producers, agriculture organizations, federal and state agencies, and other key stakeholders. To this end, OED supports various agriculture endeavors and participates in networking to match agricultural needs in the county with opportunities represented by state, federal, and educational agencies.

B. Highlights

- **Workforce Development:** In response to challenges in recruiting new interns, the summer internship program shifted to a work-based learning (WBL) format in conjunction with students' school year. OED partnered with the Kauai Employee Advisory Council and the Department of Education to develop a semester-long work-based learning program and opened the program to interested students from all career pathways. Students from all three high schools were invited to participate in the 2022-2023 WBL program. All three high schools initially participated; however, Kapaʻa High School had to withdraw due to unforeseen circumstances. Students from Waimea High School chose to focus on agribusiness and partnered with a westside orchard farmer to develop a marketing campaign. Kauaʻi High School saw one student participate in the program who elected to focus on veterinary science and spent the semester working with a southside rancher to learn and improve livestock herd health. The 2023-2024 year will see another shift in programming to strengthen the agricultural educational pipeline. OED, alongside education and industry partners, will focus on supporting and establishing collaborative efforts to institute Career and Technical School Activities (CTSAs) across the K-12 spectrum.
- **Kauaʻi Agritourism:** OED contracted the Research Corporation of the University of Hawaiʻi to develop a coordinated learning cohort of local farmers and ranchers interested and ready to expand farm operations to include an agritourism component. This project creates a structured and collaborative environment for businesses to learn, share experiences, and develop skills related to the intersection of agriculture and tourism. The project serves as an active platform for companies to expand their revenue and contribute to the growth and sustainability of agriculture as a sustainable business venture.
- **Strategic Agriculture Economic Development Plan:** OED partnered with the Kauaʻi Economic Development Board to develop a comprehensive agricultural economic development plan. The strategic plan envisions a Kauaʻi ag industry that is prosperous, resilient, and a global leader while honoring Kauaʻi's unique culture and past. The plan's mission is to sustainably produce

and promote world-class agricultural products to ensure the health and prosperity of Kaua'i and the planet. To this end, the strategic plan builds on four distinct goals: 1. Kaua'i's agriculture sector is sustainable, 2. Kaua'i's agriculture sector cultivates healthy and prosperous Kaua'i, 3. Kaua'i's agriculture sector produces world-class products, and 4. Kaua'i has worldwide brand recognition. After completing several developmental phases, the plan is on track for completion by fall 2023.

- **Legislative Support:** OED tracks and testifies on key State legislative measures that impact the Kaua'i agriculture industry. Additionally, we review and provide feedback on local government policies and proposed bills impacting the agricultural sector.
- **Groups, Networks and Affiliations:** The Agriculture Specialist participates in several networks. This participation is critical to supporting agricultural development by facilitating communication, collaboration, knowledge exchange and resource sharing amongst the various stakeholders in the local agriculture sector. In the past year, the Agriculture Specialist participated in the County of Kaua'i Resiliency Team - working to develop climate change adaptation and mitigation plans, Hawaii Food System Policy Network, Hawai'i Four County Sustainability Network, United Sustainability Directors' Network, Kaua'i Food Network, and Garden Island Resource Conservation and Development. OED staff also participates in several working and technical advisory groups, including but not limited to State Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission's Farming, Ranching and Food Systems Technical Working Group, and Biofuels and Land Use Technical Working Group; and the Kaua'i Rose Ringed Parakeet Working Group.

AGRICULTURE (County Sunshine Markets)

The Sunshine Market Program provides access for farmers to the public via produce sales events.

A. Objectives

- The objectives of the Sunshine Market Program include helping to promote and provide a venue for selling local farmers' produce.

B. Highlights

- Due to the increase in private markets, improved producer-to-market networking, and the aging farming population, the County Sunshine Markets have struggled to maintain vendor participation. We continue monitoring the two remaining markets to inform decision-making regarding whether to continue funding the Sunshine Market program.

Table 4. Sunshine Market Selected Statistics

Selected Statistics	CY 2020	CY2021	CY 2022
Sunshine Markets	2	2	2
Sunshine Market Farmers/Vendors	35	35*	20*
Sunshine Market Annual Revenue	\$148,479	\$160,153	\$110,587

*Due to COVID-19, most farmers have either retired or found additional venues where they could sell.

ENERGY PROGRAM

A. Objectives

- The objective of the County's Energy Program is two-fold: (1) to manage, reduce, and facilitate the County's fossil energy use through increased efficiency in both facilities and fleets, and (2) to initiate, coordinate, and partner with stakeholders and the community on innovative programs and projects in the clean energy and transportation sector.
- Goals for energy use reductions within County operations:
 - Electricity: Reduce County use by 30% by 2023 vs FY 2012 baseline (set in 2013)
 - Transportation: 100% renewable fuel use by 2035 (set in 2017)

B. Highlights

- **ETIPP:** The County wrapped up the Energy Transitions Initiative Partnership Project (ETIPP) in March 2023, having worked with the National Renewable Energy Labs and Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, and multiple stakeholders from the State, County, and private sector to support the Labs's work as they study Kaua'i's transportation landscape and provide recommendations for multi-modal shift and electrification of transportation. The Lab developed three major deliverables: 1. Mobility Data Analysis, 2. Travel Pattern Analysis and emerging transportation technology recommendations, 3. Electric Vehicle Charging Needs Map organized by TAZs. The County is in a better position to understand and validate travel patterns for both visitors and residents on the island and will use these deliverables to inform recommendations for future transportation solutions.
- **Electric Vehicle Chargers:** As we accelerate towards our goal of reduced carbon emissions in the transportation sector and support adoption of electric vehicles (EVs), the Office of Economic Development worked with the Parks Department to replace eight broken Level 2 EV chargers at the Līhu'e Civic Center. The County is also making progress on the Congressional Designated Spending (CDS) Project for Level 3 or DC fast chargers. While we anticipated procurement during the previous fiscal year, it took longer than expected to receive information to proceed; we are confident that during this

next fiscal year, we will procure the chargers and build out our charging network to include the first public Level 3 chargers on Kauaʻi.

- **Mobility Hubs:** Also, in the area of transportation transformation, OED is considering how we may facilitate increased multi-modal shift. As various departments work toward the goals outlined in the General Plan and Multi-Modal Land Transportation Plan, OED sees our role as a support in studying, identifying, funding, and partnering with the private sector for the build out of mobility hubs across the island. After a successful grant to the to the Royal Coconut Coast Association in summer 2022, who pursued a feasibility study for the Coconut Marketplace as a site for a mobility hub, the site owner was on board to initiate a Mobility Hub Plan.
- **Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Planning:** The Energy Coordinator works with colleagues from OED, the Planning Department, Mayor’s Office, and KEMA to create an island-wide climate adaptation and action plan (KCAAP). The Energy Coordinator and Sustainability Coordinator also work closely with Planning on the mitigation piece, supporting consultants, County agencies, and community on developing greenhouse gas reduction strategies for Kauaʻi. The Plan is expected to be ready for adoption in early 2024.
- **Clean Energy Wayfinders:** The Hawaiʻi State Energy Office is partnering with the respective County energy program managers on the Clean Energy Wayfinders Program. The Energy Coordinator works with and manages the Kauaʻi Wayfinder Intern, as they capacity and work on youth outreach for the Kauai Aloha+ Challenge, the upcoming Coconut Marketplace Mobility Hub Plan, the Kauaʻi Bus Hanapēpē/ʻEleʻele Shuttle Project, and State Energy Office Hawaiʻi Green Business Program.
- **Partnerships and Projects:** Beyond these highlighted projects, the Energy Coordinator utilizes Tableau Software to create data dashboards around County fuel use and electricity use, provides policy development around fleet and island wide vehicle electrification and charger expansion, supports the Kauaʻi Bus in their Zero Emission Bus Project, participates in the Build Back Better County Recovery Working Group, and works with the Solid Waste Division to explore energy projects related to our waste system. State-wide, the Energy Coordinator is part of the Hawaiʻi Climate Change Mitigation & Adaptation Commission Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Technical Working Groups, and partners with the Hawaiʻi State Energy Office on the Clean Energy Wayfinders Program and Good Jobs Challenge. Additionally, in conjunction with our CDS-funded fast charger project, we coordinate with the Hawaiʻi Department of Transportation Highways Division on meeting goals outlined in their National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Plan and our CDS Fast Charger Project.
- **Networking and Knowledge-Sharing:** Program staff are members of multiple nation-wide and state-wide collaborative networks, including the Urban

Sustainability Director's Network, the Four County Sustainability Network, Drive Electric Hawaii, and several project coordination efforts and convening's with the State Energy Office and four counties. These networks and partnerships allow our staff to remain engaged in state-wide initiatives, policy conversations, knowledge-sharing, and potential procurement opportunities.

- **KIUC Renewable Portfolio Standard:** A leader in renewable energy, Kaua'i Island Utility Cooperative (KIUC) continues to make significant progress of using renewable sources to generate the island's power. In 2021, approximately 67 percent of the electricity generated on Kaua'i came from a mix of renewable resources. KIUC's RPS for 2021 was more than double the State of Hawaii's current RPS requirement of 30%. Kaua'i's power generation mix for 2021 included 45% solar, 14% hydro, and 11% biomass. Rooftop solar from residential and commercial members accounted for one-third of all solar generation. Kaua'i can depend on 100 percent renewable energy during a few hours on much of our sunny days. KIUC's planned West Kaua'i Energy Project combines solar and hydro power with pumped hydropower and battery electric storage and would move Kaua'i beyond 80 percent renewable electricity generation. To date, KIUC has two solar plus battery storage facilities that allow the storage of solar power during the day and can provide forty percent of Kaua'i's evening peak load with dispatchable solar.
- We did not meet our 2023 efficiency goals: After five consecutive years of lower electricity use year over year, FY'20 was the first year where electricity use was higher than the prior year. Despite managing to get back to our previous trend and reduce electricity use in FY'21 by 8.55% from FY'20, in FY'22, we increased electricity usage again, by roughly 7.24% more energy from the previous FY. In FY'23, we managed to reduce energy usage slightly compared to FY'22, dropping by 1%, however, we are not near our 30% reduction goal by 2023 given we only used 2.81% less energy compared to FY'12.
- We will not make progress to reduce County electricity use by 30% by 2023 vs FY'12 baseline until there are additional efficiency projects funded and implemented by the County. The Police Complex (3990 Kaana) and at Līhu'e Wastewater Plant are two of the best candidates to deliver larger savings. The CIP team is working on a new project to replace the HVAC system at the Police Complex which is promising and should significantly impact energy use.

SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM

A. Objectives

- The County's General Plan promotes a sustainable island by, "growing responsibly to meet the needs of current and future generations without depleting resources." Working towards the goal of a sustainable island

requires a collective effort from both the county and the community. The primary objectives of the County's Sustainability Program are to:

1. Foster the concept of sustainable, long-term thinking that considers multiple impacts of actions on the environment, social equity, and the economy, into all county policies and activities. **Institutionalize sustainability as a county value.**
2. Help the County develop innovative, inter-departmental programs that save money, support local businesses, create jobs, improve quality of life, and protect the environment and public health.
3. Track improvements and successes for the government program over time using verifiable metrics. Improve the county's data collection system so progress can be measured.
4. Develop relationships between the county, non-profit organizations, and businesses to share sustainability practices, ideas, and opportunities for collaboration.
5. Conduct meaningful and equitable engagement to ensure programs and policies are inclusive of the many diverse voices on island.

B. Highlights

- **Kekaha Road Brownfields Study**: The environment provides the foundation for a sustainable community, which supports a sustainable economy. Cleaning up and reinvesting in brownfield properties offer the opportunity to improve and protect the environment. In October 2021, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) awarded the County a \$300,000 Community-Wide Brownfields Assessment Grant for the evaluation and preparation of a brownfields inventory, phase I and II environmental site assessments (ESAs), and remedial and/or cleanup plans for Kekaha. In December 2022, County staff released a Request for Professional Services to solicit qualified environmental professionals and secured a contract with Stantec Consulting Services, Inc. in April 2022. County staff is currently working on a Community Involvement Plan including a project website, compiling members for the advisory group, and meeting with stakeholders such as the Kekaha Host Community Benefits Committee, E Ola Mau o Kekaha, and Sugar Mill property owners. The consultant is developing a brownfields inventory with a focus on properties along Kekaha Road corridor between 'Amakihi Road and Pueo Road. The first advisory group meeting and interview with interested property owners are scheduled for Fall 2023. More information can be found at <https://kauaiforward.com/kekaha-brownfields-study/>.
- **Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Planning**: Several members from the Office of Economic Development are on the County Resilience team, working with the Planning Department, UH Sea Grant, Emergency Management Agency, and Mayor's Office to develop the Kaua'i Climate Adaptation and

Action Plan. The team, along with Raimi + Associates, hosted the second round of outreach from May to June 2023 to hear community members' opinions about potential climate adaptation measures. One virtual and five in-person workshops were held throughout the island and garnered about 170 participants. The scope of work recently expanded to include climate mitigation strategies and staff works actively to create a list of feasible actions for other County departments. More information can be found on the program website at <https://kauaiadaptation.com/>.

- **Active Communities and Play Streets Kaua'i:** Program staff is part of the Play Streets team which consists of OED's Agriculture specialists, the Hawai'i State Department of Health, the Planning Department, Get Fit Kaua'i, Na Lei Wili Area Health Education Center, and different community organizations. The goal of **Play Streets Kaua'i** is to connect communities through active play by improving community designs for safe, accessible, and equitable access to physical activity. Rural communities, like Kaua'i, face unique challenges promoting physical activity, including a lack of resources, sidewalks, playgrounds, and parks. One emerging strategy is to implement Play Streets, a place-based, low-cost, intervention that temporarily closes streets to create safe places and free opportunities for active play while promoting community connections. The first pilot event was successfully implemented in partnership with E Ola Mau Na Leo O Kekaha as part of the Kekaha Family Fun Day event on July 2nd. The Play Streets activities included a small skate park by the Kaua'i Skate Ohana, a fun ninja obstacle course by Toy Fit, pickleball play by the Pickleball Association Kaua'i, fishing clinic with throw-net, basketball play, and free play with bubbles, chalk, hula hoops, jumping rope, and soccer. The pilot was so well-received by the community that several more Play Streets events occurred this fiscal year including in Līhu'e at the Rice Street Block Party, Kaua'i Community College for Ho'olaulea No Ka Honua, and Anahola for Anahola Family Fun Day. Three more events are scheduled in Kekaha for Kekaha Family Fun Day, Kukui Grove for Back-to-School event, and the first standalone PlayStreets event in Laukona Park. A strategic planning meeting is scheduled for Fall 2023 to discuss future events, logistical and operational needs, and the sustainability of the PlayStreets program. More information can be found at www.playstreetskauai.com
- **Community Collaborations: Ho'olaulea no ka Honua:** Staff continues to build partnerships and collaborate on programs and events for the community. In celebration of Earth Day, OED's sustainability coordinator and agriculture specialist partnered with Kaua'i Community College and Kaua'i Economic Development Board to host Ho'olaulea no ka Honua, an event to honor community organizations working on sustainability and agriculture and aimed to improve long-term sustainability by familiarizing Kaua'i residents with island wide efforts that they can get involved in. The event was held on KCC's campus with more than 350 attendees. Participants had a chance to engage with more than 20 community organizations and enjoyed prizes, free chili bowls, and a create-your-own pizza station using fresh local toppings and KCC's woodfire pizza oven. Due to the success of the event, staff and partners

are expanding the event to be an annual occurrence. Staff will start preparing for Earth Day 2024 in January 2024.

- **Tracking Emerging Sciences and Opportunities:** Program staff are members of the Urban Sustainability Director's Network, the Four County Sustainability Network, Built Environment Task Force, and the HACBED Resilience Network. These networks allow staff to remain engaged in state-wide initiatives, policy conversations, knowledge-sharing, and potential procurement opportunities.

WORKFORCE Program

The Office of Economic Development and administration changed our relationship with the WIOA program that provides services to the workforce via the American Job Center. We assigned our portion of funding back to the WDC to be managed directly by the Workforce Development Division (WDD). We are providing space for the American Job Center which includes the WDD, partner work areas and computer areas for the public. Costs to maintain the space are being handled directly by the County of Kaua'i. Kaua'i maintains its seat on the Workforce Development Board that is a statewide entity.

B. Highlights

- The AJC continues supporting participants coming to the Job Center requesting services, seeking assistance with signing onto Hire-net, creating resumes and filling out job applications.
- Kaua'i welcomes Bennette Misalucha as the new Executive Director of the State Workforce Development Council and hopes to find ways to reengage in workforce development.
- OED Staff that worked at the AJC has transferred up to the main office to work on tourism and workforce. In FY 23, OED Staff coordinated one job fair in April of 20.
- OED worked with the Kaua'i Community College via a grant to provide Certificate courses and training. Highlighted programs included project management, forklift skills, security training, home health care and others.



BUSINESS INNOVATION AND SUPPORT PROGRAMS (Business)

KAUA'I MADE

The Kaua'i Made is a program created by the County of Kaua'i to officially represent products made on Kaua'i, by Kaua'i people, and are authentic to Kaua'i.

A. Objectives

- The goal of the Kaua'i Made Products sustainability program is to build upon the foundation of the program launch and establish priorities for the lasting success of this important program.
 - Increase the sale of products grown, created or manufactured in and by the people of Kaua'i; Increase the number and variety of products available on Kaua'i and elsewhere; Increase the visibility of the Kaua'i Made products in retail establishments and on the worldwide web; and to deliver information on how to purchase Kaua'i Products to visitors, residents and others through a variety of marketing vehicles.

B. Highlights

- Created a QR code for Kaua'i Made that takes viewers directly to the Kaua'i Made website.
- Continued partnership with Sheraton Coconut Beach initiating a last Friday of the month Kaua'i Made Product Fair for members only.
- Held an Annual Holiday Fair in December showcasing 43 members.
- Added an Easter Craft Fair event with outdoor games, Easter Bunnies, and Entertainment.
- Increased usage of online applications.

- Partnered with two new events-King Kamehameha Day Parade & Kōloa Plantation Days Hoolaulea covering fees and advertisement for members.
- Created partnership with A&B, owner of Hokulei Shopping Village hosting a Kaua'i Made Mother's Day Craft Fair at no cost to the members.
- Added a new "Event" listing on Kaua'i Made website that ties members to events.
- Kaua'i Made shopping guide continues to be printed quarterly with updated membership listing.
- Obtained the front cover of the Kaua'i Family Magazine's Holiday Issue promoting Kaua'i Made and our Annual Holiday Fair. 15,000 copies island wide distributed.
- Tapped into Taste of Hawaii congressional event in Washington, D.C. sending three Kaua'i Made Member' products to promote and share awareness about Kauai Made (Wailua Granola, Kauai Chocolate, Kiyomis' Sweet Treats).

BROADBAND

High-speed internet will benefit everyone on the island, including businesses, entrepreneurs, kupuna, and residents. There is a major effort to improve internet connectivity in Hawai'i (with the State receiving nearly \$500 Million in funding to improve infrastructure and digital equity); OED has taken on the responsibility of coordinating all the broadband efforts on the island to ensure that the County receives its fair share of the funding. These efforts have involved collaborating with state and federal representatives, the other three counties, internet service providers, and countless specialists with ties to broadband initiatives. The Business Specialist holds community outreach meetings, holds pop-up digital equity events at other community events, and collaborates on state and county broadband strategies.

A. Objectives

- Improve the broadband infrastructure in Kaua'i.
- Identify the underserved and the unserved.
- Increase digital equity.

B. Highlights

- Community outreach meetings were well attended and well received. Key influencers in the community were won over and will help spread the word.
- The County of Kaua'i's Broadband Story Map is a succinct outline of our current internet connectivity issues and our goals for the future. The story map can be found at bit.ly/kauaibroadband
- With collaboration from a community partner – Kauai Technology Group – we created Kaua'i's own speed test to gather and interpret internet speed data. This allows us better access to speed test data, since all other platforms

are proprietary and will not share their data with us. The speed test can be found at www.kauaispeedtest.com/ .

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The Business Specialist seeks to support abundant growth by nurturing entrepreneurs, innovators, and businesses. We are working to strengthen our cultural roots while also pollinating businesses with resources. The Business Specialist works with business-focused partners to build a vibrant business community that promotes opportunities for small businesses and cottage industries.

A. Objectives

- Provide tools to current businesses so they may continue to grow and prosper.
- Attract new and innovative businesses.
- Grow and upskill the workforce.
- Connect businesses with valuable resources.

B. Highlights

- **Business Retention & Expansion Program** - The Business Retention and Expansion Program is focused on stabilizing current businesses and setting them up for growth. This year's goals for the BR&E program are to visit 400 businesses in-person, and to provide resources, information, and assistance to help them solve their immediate needs. Most businesses in Kaua'i are so short-handed that they do not have time to look for resources, and many have no idea there is anyone at the County who cares about them. By visiting and offering them guidance, advice, and resources to overcome their challenges, we hope to make a lasting impact in the business community.
- **Social Media Management "Jumpstart" Program** – The Jumpstart program was born from insights shared from a struggling business and brought to life through a collaborative effort with the County of Kaua'i and Dev-Island, a local nonprofit focused on workforce development. The idea is that there are many businesses without the skills, time, or capacity to run an impactful and successful social media campaign – even though social media is a huge advertising opportunity. Because they are missing this advertising opportunity, they are missing out on sales. The program will train enterprising Kaua'i locals to become social media managers, and then will pair them with Kaua'i businesses. The business will get free social media management services for 5 months, and the manager will get paid experience. As part of the onboarding process, the business will decide on criteria for success. If those criteria are met by the end of the program, the business agrees to continue paying for the service for at least three more months. This program will build our workforce with skills which can be utilized on Kaua'i by Kaua'i

people, while also helping Kaua'i businesses increase sales and grow their business.

- **Enterprise Zone Program** -The Enterprise Zone (EZ) program is a State-County partnership lead by the State of Hawai'i Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism (DBEDT). The Business Specialist serves as the EZ Coordinator for Kaua'i and works with DBEDT to recruit businesses for the program. The program allows local businesses that are growing and creating jobs on island to benefit from tax savings.
- **Waimea Theater** - OED was given the task of ensuring the economic revitalization of the Historic Waimea Theater and has recently been tasked with managing the facility as well. Efforts are underway to resolve structural issues and other obstacles to ensure that the Theater can run in a more effective manner. After resolving some of the issues facing the theater, we will begin focusing on returning the theater to a state of full use, with a more robust offering of showings and other services. We will also explore opportunities for the theater to play a role in a larger transportation shuttle project for Waimea Canyon, as a waystation of sorts. Utilizing the theater as a part of a shuttle project would move visitors out of their cars and walking the streets of Waimea Town, where they will hopefully spend money on retail, and view informational/cultural videos at the theater during day hours.
- **Groups and Affiliations** - The Business Specialist also represents the County at various business-focused organizations. Regularly attending Chamber of Commerce meetings, and even serving as an Ex Officio Board Member for the Lihu'e Business Association are some examples of duties. The Business Specialist is a part of many committees that address workforce development, agriculture, green business, emergency response, housing, and more.
- **Legislative Support** - OED tracks and testifies on key State legislative issues that impact the economy and Kauai businesses. We review and provide feedback on local government policies and proposed bills impacting the economy.

KAUA'I FORWARD WEBSITE

The Kaua'i Forward Website was created by the Office of Economic Development to be a resource to the community during the COVID-19 pandemic. The website was meant to be a one-stop-shop for news, information, and resources. Over the last year, the site has shifted to focus on moving forward and spreading information on economic opportunities. It contains an expanded list of financial, food, health and other resources for residents and businesses and ties to our government site: <https://kauaiforward.com/>.

A. Objectives

- The objectives are to continue to provide timely and accurate information for Kaua'i residents regarding economic development for as long as the site is needed and used.

B. Highlights

- Revamp of the website to try to provide ease of use for residents.

IV. BUDGET

Expense Type	FY 2023 (Budget)	FY 2023 (Actual)
Equivalent Personnel	9	9
Salaries & Wages	1,010,451	904,891
Operations	1,580,530	1,559,874
Equipment	0	0
Total	2,590,981	2,464,765
Other OED Funds	FY 2023 (Budget)	FY 2023 (Actual)
Kaua'i Made	176,653	96,661
Kekaha Host Community Benefit	3,089,868	2,834,053
ARPA Funding	2,100,000	1,799,274
EPA Grant	300,000	4,040.06
DMAP Program Funds-Mob Hub	100,000	100,000
Harbor Funds-HTA	92,000	92,000

V. ACCOMPLISHMENTS/EVALUATION

The Office of Economic Development met together again this year to assess last year's efforts on projects for FY23 and compare it with goals and objectives for the next five years. Over the first year, OED called out 90 projects to work on. Of those, 51 were complete, 32 needed to be readjusted and 7 were put on hold. OED continues to use technology to track where we are with those project timelines.

OED launched another round of Innovation Grants that replaced the routine sector specific OED grant program. Once again, the goal of this specific grant program was to provide funding for innovative projects to generate short-term and long-term economic growth and diversification in Kaua'i. Grant applicants were required to have identified a partner to work with to complete the project. The funds distributed this year affected all sectors. We again utilized a public platform, Consider.it, [Consider.it](#) to engage the community in reviewing proposals. We received good feedback from the community, and they enjoyed seeing what innovation was out there. This process also helped engage possible applicants in the future.

OED, working in partnership with the Kauai Economic Development Board and the rest of the state completed the Statewide Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs), which will be reviewed for acceptance later in 2023. The six CEDs areas of focus for Kaua'i include: sustainable practices and technology; food and agriculture; health and wellness; visitor industry management including natural resources conservation and preservation; and science and technology.

We expect to continue building the capacity of our team to help our community rebuild an economy of balance. We will continue to work on projects that accomplish goals laid out in our county plans and generate new plans that pave the way for our community's priorities moving forward. We are grateful to the administration for the room to explore and test new innovative waters.