



## THE COUNTY OF KAUA'I

DEREK S. K. KAWAKAMI, MAYOR

MICHAEL A. DAHILIG, MANAGING DIRECTOR

### News Release

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### **Mayor Kawakami outlines first 100 days in office, budget priorities in 2019 State of the County Address**

LĪHU'E – Mayor Derek S. K. Kawakami outlined his first 100 days in office as well the County's fiscal year 2020 budget priorities during his inaugural State of the County Address in Līhu'e on Thursday.

“Our island is at a crossroads. Our desire to keep our Kaua'i way of life must be met with a progressive approach as the world changes around us. We know the challenges. We have a growing population, overused infrastructure, and crowded roads,” Mayor Kawakami said in front of a crowd of about 150 people. “We must rise to the expectations of our community. We know that our first budget sets the tone for the next four years, so it's important to have a clear strategic direction.”

Mayor Kawakami highlighted that the fiscal year 2020 budget is balanced without a proposed increase in Real Property Tax rates and user fees, as well as keeps a minimum Reserve Fund of 30 percent of the prior year's General Fund Revenues – as set in the County's Long-Term Financial Plan.

“We want to ensure that a dollar earned is a dollar well spent,” Mayor Kawakami said. “Our goal is to invest every dollar toward bettering the quality of life for our residents, giving a top-notch level of service to our customers, and ensuring a world-class experience for our visitors.”



Mayor Kawakami addressed two guiding principles for his administration: guardianship, taking care of what we have; and innovation, finding new ways to modernize our systems or processes to create efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

“Our budget priorities reflect these two guiding principles, with an overall goal ensuring that every dollar earned is spent toward bettering the quality of life for our residents, providing a top-notch level of service to our customers, and ensuring a world-class experience for our visitors,” Mayor Kawakami said.

With that strategic direction in mind, Mayor Kawakami’s administration identified six keys to success: our mobility; our home; our connections; our money; our freedom; and our heart.

“Moving forward, each of our county’s strategic initiatives will work toward one of these six keys to success, with a focus on guardianship and innovation,” Mayor Kawakami said.

During his first 100 days in office, Mayor Kawakami’s administration conducted a housing summit last month, transmitted communication to the County Council for a request to conduct performance audits, and addressed the number one complaint voiced by customers who wait in line to pay for their motor vehicle registrations.

“In our first 100 days – with the help of our dedicated team – we changed the way people were waiting,” Mayor Kawakami said. “We created a numbering system, and now we have chairs where our kupuna, mothers and keiki can comfortably sit while they wait.”

Budget priorities for the 2020 fiscal year includes affordable housing, roads and transportation, and park improvements.

“Our goal is to have safe and decent housing for our local residents, where our public spaces are a welcoming, and inclusive gathering place for all,” Mayor Kawakami said. Moving from taking care of our neighborhoods to taking care of our public spaces, we must also care for our recreational areas. This is our collective responsibility. We all need to do better because our parks and our keiki deserve it.”



Photo caption: Mayor Kawakami addressed a crowd of about 150 people at the State of The County Address on Thursday.





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Photo caption: Mayor Derek S. K. Kawakami his wife Monica (middle) with their 'ohana from left to right: Pat Lizama, Fred DeBusca, Trudy DeBusca, Monica Enoka, and Anne Noguchi.



Photo caption: Budget priorities for the 2020 fiscal year includes affordable housing, roads and transportation, and park improvements.

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