

## SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Project Overview

The County of Kauaʻi proposes to develop a shared-use path to connect Nāwiliwili and Ahukini. The project is a key segment of the 16-mile Nāwiliwili to Anahola Bike and Pedestrian Path proposed in the 1994 State of Hawaii *Master Plan – Bike Plan Hawaiʻi*. The primary path corridor follows the coastline between Nāwiliwili Park and Ahukini Point. Secondary pathways are also considered in the plan to provide connections into the Līhuʻe Civic Center. Path development will consist of a 10-foot wide concrete shared-use coastal path constructed of various low-maintenance materials. Bike lane and sidewalk improvements to existing and planned street corridors will provide additional connectivity through urban areas. The project will benefit residents and visitors to Kauaʻi by preserving coastal access and supporting alternative modes of transportation to connect important destinations including residential communities, commercial centers, parks, and the airport and harbor. See Figure 1-1: Project Location.

### 1.2 Purpose and Need of Project

The purpose of the project is to support transportation alternatives to the automobile, to provide non-motorized path facilities for pedestrians and cyclists for recreation and fitness, and to preserve coastal areas and access. In addition, the project is being developed to enhance the quality of life for Kauaʻi's residents by providing a safe and enjoyable place for families, friends, and individuals to play and socialize.

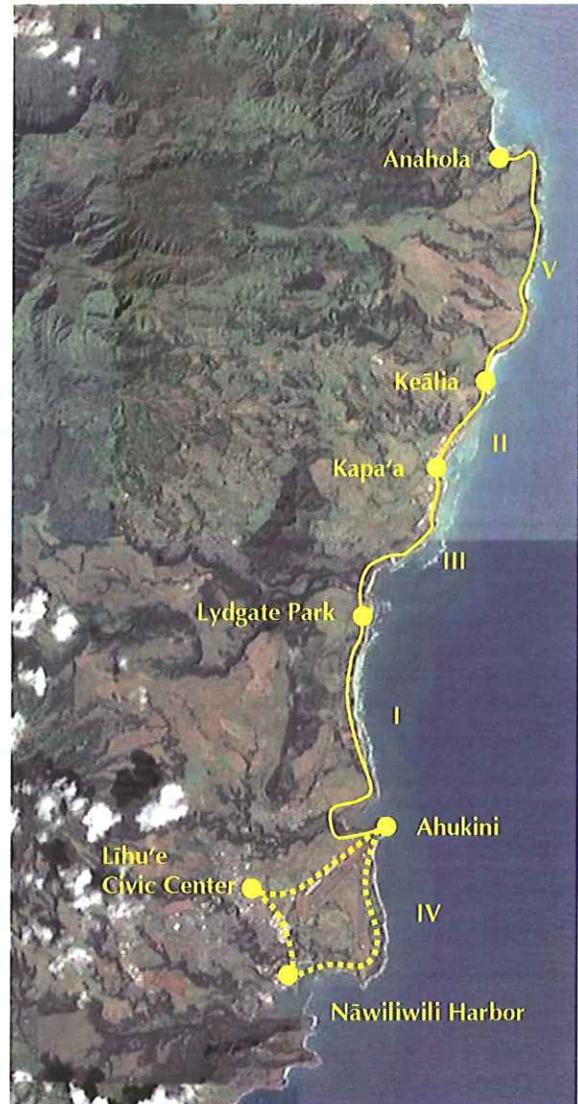
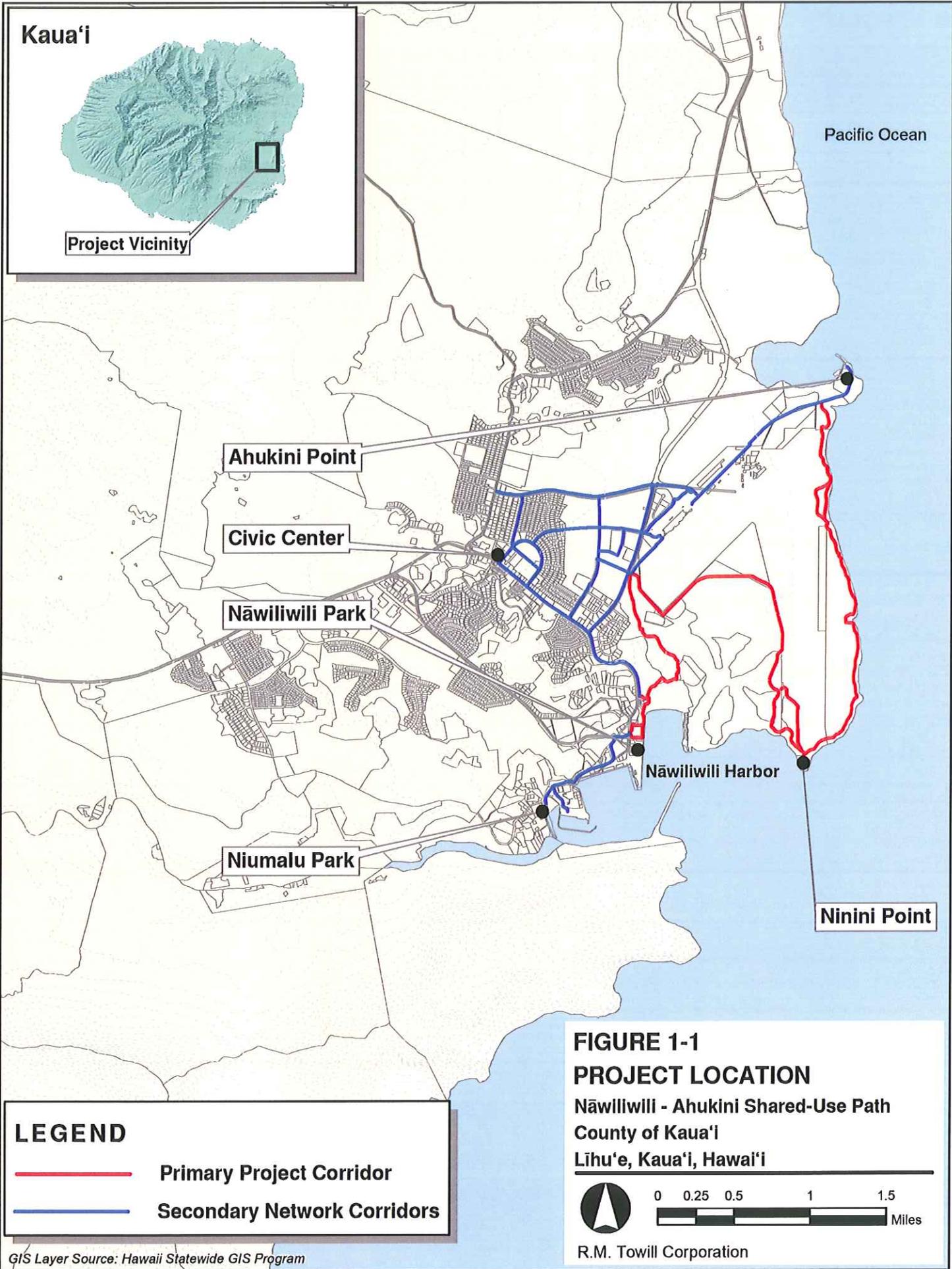


Photo 1-1: Nāwiliwili to Anahola Bike and Pedestrian Path – Phases of Development.



**Kaua'i**

**Project Vicinity**

Pacific Ocean

**Ahukini Point**

**Civic Center**

**Nāwiliwili Park**

**Niumalu Park**

**Nāwiliwili Harbor**

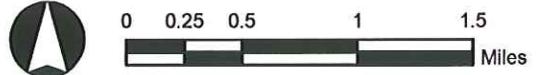
**Ninini Point**

**LEGEND**

- Primary Project Corridor
- Secondary Network Corridors

**FIGURE 1-1  
PROJECT LOCATION**

Nāwiliwili - Ahukini Shared-Use Path  
County of Kaua'i  
Lihu'e, Kaua'i, Hawai'i



R.M. Towill Corporation

*GIS Layer Source: Hawaii Statewide GIS Program*

### **1.3 Purpose of the Environmental Assessment**

Federal, State of Hawai'i and County of Kaua'i lands and funds will be used for the proposed project. Segments of the path may also fall within the Shoreline Setback Area as well as the Conservation District. This project, therefore, is subject to preparation of environmental documentation in accordance with the National Environmental Protection Act, Chapter 200, Title 11, Hawai'i Administrative Rules (HAR), and Chapter 343, Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS).

### **1.4 Project History**

The vision for a shared-use pathway connecting the towns along the east coast of Kaua'i originated in the early 1990's through the efforts of a citizen advisory committee convened by the County Council. During that time, the era of plantation agriculture was coming to an end on Kaua'i. The departure of sugar cane cultivation opened up large tracts of prime, coastal agricultural land to potential development. This historic change in land use presented unique opportunities for adaptive reuse of the former cane haul roads as bicycle and pedestrian pathways. The name chosen for the citizen advisory group reflects this opportunity, Ke Ala Hele Makalae, which translates as "the path that goes along the shore".

Ke Ala Hele Makalae's early work dovetailed with a state-wide bike plan then being prepared by the Department of Transportation (DOT). Through the participation of Ke Ala Hele Makalae members, the resulting 1994 *Bike Plan Hawaii* contained the proposal for a coastal bike path to connect Kaua'i's primary civic center in Lihue with the town of Kapaa, approximately 10 miles up the coast. The 2003 Bike Plan update carried the vision of the path further north to Anahola for a total length of approximately 16 miles.

The path's origins in community advocacy and planning found further outlet in improvements at Lydgate Park along the path corridor. Park improvements, including construction of Kamalani playground and bridge, were achieved primarily through community volunteer labor and material donations. The sweat-equity value of this effort, credited at over one-half million dollars, was used to unlock over two and one-half million dollars in federal grant money for additional improvements and path construction through Lydgate Park. The Lydgate Park improvements, completed in 2003, reinvigorated the County and community's resolve to fulfill the coastal path vision.

Since the successful completion of the Lydgate Park improvements, the County, with the participation of Ke Ala Hele Makalae, has continued to plan and build the Nāwiliwili to Anahola coastal path in segments:

- Lydgate Park – Ahukini: 4.0 mile segment. Environmental Assessment nearing completion.

- Kapa‘a – Keālia: 2.3 mile segment completed and open for public use. Additional 1.8 mile segment under construction.
- Lydgate Park – Kapa‘a: 2.1 mile segment. Construction to begin in 2009.
- Nāwiliwili – Ahukini: Approximately 5.0 mile segment. Currently in the Environmental Assessment phase. Final alignment not determined.
- Kapa‘a – Anahola: Approximately 3.0 mile segment. Currently in the Environmental Assessment phase. Final alignment not determined.

In each of these projects the County is working with the community and the private sector to find opportunities to create local value matches to unlock transportation grant money. Further, the grassroots energy that created Ke Ala Hele Makalae has found additional life in Kaua‘i Path, Inc., a community organization dedicated to the vision of preserving, protecting, and extending access island-wide through the design, implementation and stewardship of non-vehicular paths. Kaua‘i Path, Inc. manages a variety of path programs, including Path Ambassadors, Friends of the Path activities, fund raising for path planning, development and maintenance, and other volunteer activities.