



Bon Dance in Puhi, Lihu'e District

SECTOR: X. OPPORTUNITY & HEALTH FOR ALL

The General Plan's goals include Kaua'i being a place with healthy and resilient people, and to be an equitable place with opportunity for all. These goals mutually reinforce and are essential to the overall 2035 Vision.

Quality of life is impacted by the built environment. Environmental factors include the affordability of housing; the ability to walk or bicycle to key destinations; the safety of streets, parks, and schools; access to health care and public services; the availability of healthy foods and quality education; and access to recreational areas that support active lifestyles. When improving the built environment it is vital that the wellbeing and health of vulnerable populations, such as our keiki and kūpuna, are considered.

This section addresses Social Equity, Access to Quality Education and Training, Community Health, and Access to Recreational and Subsistence Activities. These issues touch all of society across different communities, generations, and ethnicities. They are crosscutting by nature, and have far-reaching impacts on our lives. The proposed actions are focused on increasing community resilience and bettering health outcomes through improving the natural, built, and social environment.

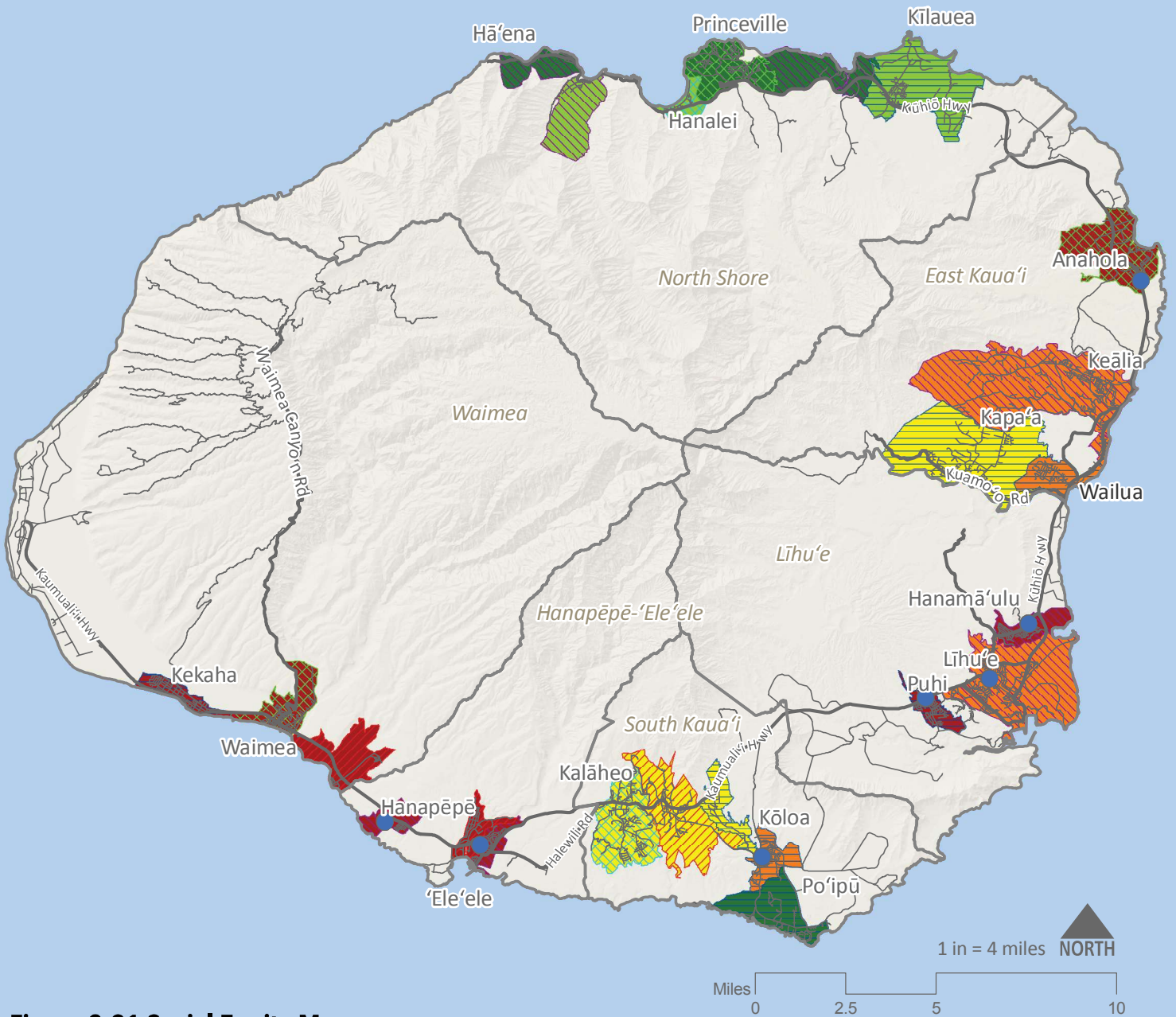
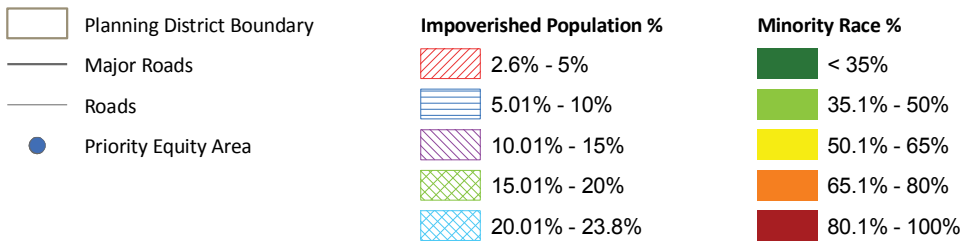


Figure 3-21 Social Equity Map



1. SOCIAL EQUITY

Social equity is critical in promoting healthy and diverse communities on Kauaʻi. We can achieve this by expanding access to economic opportunity, quality education, affordable housing, and health services, and ensuring that no racial or income group is unfairly disadvantaged.

Objective: To recognize and address inequities in health and well-being among Kauaʻi's diverse ethnic, racial, and income groups.



1.1 Celebrating Kauaʻi's Diversity by Addressing Equity Issues

Recognizing, celebrating, and serving all forms of diversity contributes to a sustainable society. Kauaʻi has an extremely diverse population by national standards with 67 percent of the population identified as a minority race.⁵³ Demographic shifts are also occurring, with changes in household composition and increases in the percentage of the population aged 65 and older. As a multiracial community, Kauaʻi values its diversity and recognizes the need to embrace all cultures. However, there are still inequities in health, economic status, and access to housing, education, jobs, and services. Moreover, some of these inequities are concentrated in specific communities.

Given these inequities, the County should ensure equitable access to housing, transportation, parks, and facilities. By increasing investment and focusing improvements in disadvantaged communities, overall community wellbeing and health will improve. This also means expanding choices and services to those with limited options. In addition to infrastructure investment and services, the County should look for ways to increase community engagement in disadvantaged communities and with groups not well represented in planning processes.

1.2 Caring for Our Most Vulnerable

The General Plan prioritizes the needs of those that are the most vulnerable and marginalized through identifying priority equity areas around the island (Figure 3-21). The map shows the priority equity areas, and the Census Designated Places with high percentages of minority households and households experiencing poverty.

- Līhuʻe-Puhi-Hanamāʻulu (Līhuʻe District)
- Anahola (East Kauaʻi District)
- Kōloa (South Kauaʻi District)
- Hanapēpē-ʻEleʻele (Hanapēpē-ʻEleʻele District)
- Kaumakani (Waimea-Kekaha District)

1.3 Strengthening Community Networks

Strong community networks are essential for healthy and resilient communities. This means individuals, organizations, and businesses that know and take care of one another in the spirit of kākou. It means a healthy ecosystem of non-profit and community-based organizations that can strengthen and enhance government efforts to address social issues through partnerships. It also means healthy individuals and families that can meet their basic needs so that they can care for one another and their greater community.

Conditions such as poverty, lack of education, crime, homelessness, discrimination, and violence erode our community relationships. Sprawling growth that moves people and businesses away from town centers weakens rural communities. Weaker social networks and less cohesive neighborhoods are associated with higher rates of violent crime and health issues including depression, smoking, and alcohol and drug abuse.

Vibrant, cohesive neighborhoods provide people with opportunities to gather, meet, and converse in public places. This includes venues for art and culture, ample public spaces, pedestrian-oriented streets, and community events that bring people together and inspire civic pride. Strategies to support this are included in the sector actions for Housing, Shared Spaces, Transportation, and Heritage Resources.

53 U.S. Census Bureau, 2010

1.4 Protecting Native Hawaiian Rights

There is a statewide movement to restore Native Hawaiian rights and lands, to obtain reparations for past and ongoing use of trust lands, and to attain a sovereign Native Hawaiian government. It is important to set forth Native Hawaiian rights and to define the role of the County government in this movement. Under the State Constitution and the County Charter, the County of Kaua'i is empowered to promote the health, safety, and welfare of all inhabitants without discrimination as to ethnic origin. As part of carrying out its responsibilities under the Constitution and the Charter, the County recognizes the rights of Native Hawaiians and laws concerning lands and waters that have been established through the State Constitution, State and Federal laws, and State and Federal court decisions. No County ordinance or rule shall modify or diminish these rights:

- Native Hawaiian water rights provided under the State Water Code, Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS) Chapter 174C.
- Kuleana lands, water rights, and access rights provided under the Kuleana Act of 1850,

as recognized in current statutes, rules, and court decisions. For example, the County must allow construction of a house on kuleana land, regardless of County zoning.

- Konohiki and hoa 'āina fishing rights provided under the 1839 Law of Kamemeha, as modified by subsequent legislative acts and court decisions.
- Traditional and customary rights of Native Hawaiians, such as for access and gathering, provided under the State Constitution and HRS, and as interpreted by the courts.
- Burial rights provided under the Hawai'i Historic Preservation Act and the Federal Native American Graves Repatriation Act.



Keiki at a May Day celebration

A. PERMITTING AND CODE CHANGES

1. Limit the proliferation of predatory lending establishments through licensing and zoning powers.
2. Expand and preserve affordability in neighborhood centers around the island through zoning, incentives, and development.
3. Provide affordable housing in proximity to community resources and services.
4. Mitigate impact to Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices and the resources they rely on through district boundary amendments and zoning amendments.

B. PLANS AND STUDIES

1. Complete a study to establish ratios for different categories of housing for workforce (less than 140 percent of median income), elderly, and disabled.

C. PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS

1. Develop funding sources to expand, improve, and maintain high-quality transportation, water, parks, broadband, and other infrastructure in underserved neighborhoods.
2. Leverage infrastructure investments to bring jobs and housing opportunities to underserved communities.
3. Increase access and affordability of public transit for youth and other transit-dependent populations.
4. Ensure all residents have an opportunity to have a voice in County initiatives by making special efforts to reach low-income people, youth, non-English speaking immigrants, people with criminal records, and other traditionally underserved groups.
5. Establish health and opportunity criteria for prioritizing County programs and policies.
6. Establish community standards for wages and



Keiki sporting event at Hanalei Bay, North Shore District

benefits, ensure fair scheduling, and support worker organizing.

7. Ensure fair hiring, equal pay, and equitable promotion opportunities within the County workforce.
8. Reduce barriers to employment and services, such as credit checks and criminal history questions on applications for jobs and housing, in both the private and public sector.
9. Target economic development efforts to encourage high-opportunity industries that have potential for growth and to create jobs for people with less than a four-year degree.
10. Leverage the County's procurement and contracting to assist minority and female entrepreneurs and triple-bottom-line businesses such as social enterprises, cooperatives, and B Corps.

D. PARTNERSHIP NEEDS

1. Ensure low-income students receive quality public education through strategies including comprehensive, place-based cradle-to-career initiatives.
2. Support reform to school disciplinary policies to keep youth in school and on track to graduate.
3. Partner with Kaua'i Community College for workforce development and training programs and apprenticeships.
4. Foster racially and economically integrated neighborhoods.
5. Require applicants to demonstrate knowledge of Hawaiian land and water laws as a prerequisite for licensing or professional registration with State boards and commissions that license professions relating to transfer of land ownership or land development. These include the Real Estate Commission, Board of Registration for Professional Engineers, Architects, Surveyors, and Landscape Architects.

2. ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The policy to nurture our keiki demands a strong, comprehensive, and quality education system. A positive educational experience encourages children to become lifelong learners who contribute to their communities and the world. Ultimately, education must provide our children, teens, college students, and adults with the knowledge and skills needed to obtain a well-paying job on Kaua'i.

Objective: To support educational programs that foster cultural knowledge, employability, and civic participation of local residents.



2.1 Increasing Access to Early Education and Care

Accessible daycare and preschool is a significant community need. In 2015, there were 27 licensed preschools and 36 licensed family child care homes on Kaua'i. The combined capacity of these facilities is 1,100 children, which contrasts with Kaua'i's population of approximately 4,400 children under five years old. Most preschools and child care homes have a long waitlist. Exacerbating the demand for preschool is a change in State law that raised the age limit for Kindergarten.

2.2 Providing Quality Education and Facilities from K-12

The Kaua'i District's 14 public schools are administered by the State Department of Education (DOE), which controls budgeting, administration, standards, and curricula. The State DOE began a strategic planning process in 2012. The 2017-2020 Strategic Plan for the State DOE is focused on making students ready for college, career, and community life. School performance is measured through reports, which consider test results, attendance, safety, and many

Table 3-4 Hawaiian Immersion Charter Schools

Name	Grades	Type	Description	Location
Ke Kula o Ni’ihau	K-12	Public Charter	Emphasis on perpetuating the language and culture of Ni’ihau.	Kekaha
Kula Aupuni Ni’ihau a Kahelelani Aloha (KANAKA)	K-12	Public Charter	Emphasis on acquisition of English and functional skills while sustaining Ni’ihau language for native speakers.	Kekaha
‘Aha Pūnana Leo o Kaua’i	Pre-K	Private	Immerses 3-4 year-olds in Hawaiian language and provides curriculum through a cultural- and ‘ohana-oriented context.	Puhi
Kawaikini New Century Public Charter School (NCPCS)	K-12	Public Charter	The school’s vision is “a thoughtful, knowledgeable, and healthy community where the language, beliefs, and practices of the indigenous people of Hawai’i have become instinctive.”	Puhi
Kanuikapono	K-12	Public Charter	Provides programs designed to improve the educational achievements of youth and families through Hawaiian culture and nature-based programs.	Anahola

others. Between 2000 and 2015, Kaua’i public school enrollment declined by 1,400 students – making current enrollment far below the projected increase in the previous General Plan. Despite this decrease, the State DOE estimates that enrollment will increase from approximately 9,300 in 2015 to 11,500 by 2035.

School facilities also serve vital community functions, such as being venues for public meetings, religious services, and events. In many cases they function as public shelters in the event of hurricane and tsunami events.

In addition to public schools, Kaua’i has a number of small but active private and charter schools. Some of these schools are based on religious belief while others provide alternative educational experiences. Kaua’i’s four Hawaiian immersion schools help sustain the Hawaiian language and culture.

The County’s main role is to coordinate with the State DOE over siting of new schools and to help guide facility expansion in the case of new development. This includes ensuring there are proper and supportive land uses and safe transportation networks adjacent to schools.

2.3 Improving K-12 Education beyond the Classroom

As supported in the State DOE Strategic Plan, schools should serve the community by graduating students who are ready to become positive and contributing community members. This includes reducing bullying and preparing youth for careers. The Keiki to Career Program is a network of 40 community organizations that collaborate to strengthen families, reduce bullying, and assist schools with real-world relevancy, financial literacy training, and career preparation. In addition, more lifelong learning and inter-generational education is needed, particularly for developing stronger and more supportive parenting.

The County and Kaua’i’s business community should work in concert with local K-12 schools to better prepare the next generation of the 21st century workforce. In an effort to produce high school graduates with fundamental workforce-ready skills, local businesses and employers will partner with educators to provide teachers and students with training opportunities outside of the classroom. Also, educators should coordinate with local businesses and entrepreneurs to incorporate Kaua’i-specific learning opportunities

into their DOE-approved curricula. This would expose high school graduates to the local job market and help develop interest in working and remaining on island. By establishing these types of working relationships between K-12 programs and the economy, students can be encouraged to enter the local workforce and improve upon it.

2.4 Supporting the Kaua'i Community College and Increasing Training Opportunities

Kaua'i Community College (KCC), part of the University of Hawai'i system, is Kaua'i's only post-secondary educational facility and offers several associate degree programs. In addition to academic training, the college provides technical, vocational, and cultural learning programs. Sustainability, agriculture, and science have become a focus of recent programs and initiatives at KCC. The college is undertaking a master planning effort to increase student enrollment and guide facility development.

'A'ohē o kāhi nānā o luna o ka pali; iho mai a lalo nei; 'ike i ke au nui ke au iki, he alo a he alo.

The top of the cliff isn't the place to look at us; come down here and learn of the big and little current, face to face.

Many community members were concerned that the lack of a university on Kaua'i forces keiki to seek their bachelor's and advanced degrees off-island, which results in a "brain drain" of local talent. On-campus housing would encourage neighbor island and out-of-state enrollment, and support the students and faculty who otherwise have long commutes. Although KCC has considered expanding its capacity with respect to on-campus housing and four-year university accreditation, there are no plans to pursue such changes in the near future. Nonetheless, the potential for expansion shall remain given the recent establishment of the University Zoning District in the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance and the SLUD boundary amendment from Agriculture to Urban. Given its location in Līhu'e, a major growth area, there is room for the campus to develop and expand needed facilities. Additionally, as more infill development and missing middle housing occurs in Līhu'e, this will increase the range of housing types available to students. To support this, the Future Land Use Map designates the campus area as "University," a new designation in the General Plan intended to facilitate the growth and development of KCC.

2.5 Supporting the Language, Culture, and Knowledge of Kaua'i

The number of public charter schools in Hawai'i is growing as parents look for alternatives to public school curriculums. Charter schools are smaller in size, provide for multiple-grade level integration, multiple-discipline projects, and place-based learning. Many are focused on the Hawaiian language and culture.

It is said that understanding the language of a place allows one to see life through the eyes of its original people. In this context, schools that focus on the Hawaiian language and culture provide children with a way of understanding and interacting with the world and people around them in the same way ancestors of our island were able to. It is typical for Hawaiian language-based schools to include the learning of moon phases and agriculture as part of science and math education. Field trips take classroom lessons outdoors to learn about nature and caring for the land. Older children are made responsible for younger ones while younger children are in turn given responsibilities in keeping with their role in the 'ohana or society. Learning English and "western concepts" are usually integrated at some level at all schools. For children who are native speakers, there are schools that specialize in improving English skills and the understanding of western concepts in order to increase their success in college and future careers.

On Kaua'i, there are several private and public charter schools (pre-K to 12) whose curriculum is rooted in Hawaiian language, culture, and values.

Enrollment of Hawaiian language and culture-based schools has steadily grown across the State since the establishment of the very first Hawaiian language school, 'Aha Pūnana Leo on Kaua'i in 1982. Table 3-4 lists Hawaiian Immersion Charter Schools on Kaua'i. As the schools grow and graduate more speakers of Hawaiian language and students of Hawaiian culture, it will be important to continue support of integration of language and culture in all aspects of community, in order to perpetuate the identity of Kaua'i and support communities and jobs stemming from this knowledge base.

A. PERMITTING AND CODE CHANGES

1. For large residential projects and in new communities, ensure the development of adequate school facilities, either at existing schools or at new school sites.
2. Have developers pay their share of all costs needed to provide adequate school facilities for the children anticipated to live in their development.
3. Support the use, expansion, and development of family childcare homes, preschools, parent/child kindergarten readiness programs, and charter schools.

B. PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS

1. Prioritize pedestrian, bicycle, and road safety improvements around and adjacent to schools.
2. Prioritize the development and improvement of play areas or tot lots for small children in areas with high concentrations of family care homes, such as Līhu'e and Kapa'a.

C. PARTNERSHIP NEEDS

1. Treat schools as community resources for learning about specialized environmental, cultural, and historic subjects pertinent to Kaua'i.
2. Support community use of schools during non-school hours, such as recreational centers, meeting facilities, and emergency shelters.
3. Design school facilities to facilitate community use during non-school hours.
4. Retrofit existing facilities and design and construct new schools to serve as hurricane shelters.
5. Support the Keiki to Career Kaua'i programs and activities.
6. Continue and expand the Safe Routes to School program to encourage healthy, safe, and active living.
7. Support increased enrollment at Kaua'i Community College and the development of supportive housing, transportation, and facilities for students, staff, and faculty at the Puhi campus.
8. Support both public and private educational programs that emphasize the Hawaiian language and Native Hawaiian culture, science, and practices.

3. COMMUNITY HEALTH

Community health is improved when the built environment supports active lifestyles and when people have access to the resources and information they need to make healthy choices and manage their health.

Objective: To improve community health through a "Health in all Policies" approach.



3.1 Improving Community Health through Planning and Collaboration

A healthy and resilient people is one of the General Plan's overarching goals. While Hawai'i typically ranks high in national health surveys, Kaua'i faces serious public health issues.⁵⁴ For example, the rates of obesity, teen births, suicide, and motor vehicle crashes are either increasing or above the State average.⁵⁵ Moreover, these impacts are inequitably distributed across Kaua'i's diverse racial and ethnic groups. On Kaua'i, the lead public health agency is the Kaua'i District Health Office of the State Department of Health. Its role includes chronic disease management and control, communicable disease control, developmental disabilities, environmental health, and family health services.

However, on Kaua'i and throughout the world, traditional concepts of public health have evolved to bring new partners to the table. Given the importance of the physical environment and social determinants on health, a new approach called "Health In All Policies" (HIAP) seeks to integrate health and equity considerations into policy and systems. For example, a growing body of scientific evidence has correlated the design of the built environment with public health outcomes.⁵⁶ It is now a best practice in planning to support land use and community design strategies that encourage physical activity and reduce automobile dependency. On Kaua'i, the State's

54 Gallup-Healthways, 2017

55 Kaua'i Community Health Needs Assessment, 2013

56 CDC Task Force on Community Preventative Services, 2004

Physical Activity and Nutrition Plan (2009) has brought planners, public health professionals, and community members together to develop active living strategies through Get Fit Kaua'i – the Healthy Eating, Active Living (HEAL) Community Coalition of Kaua'i County.

Ua ola loko i ke aloha
Love gives life within.
(Love is imperative to one's mental and physical welfare.)

The work of promoting active community design has been reinforced through the Kaua'i Community Health Improvement Initiative (KCHII) (2013), which established a health improvement framework for Kaua'i. The KCHII utilizes the ahupua'a model to recognize that the "upstream" and "midstream" influences of health include socioeconomic conditions, health care, and the built environment. The five priority themes include community design and planning, housing, health and wellness, medical care, and education and lifelong learning. These themes informed the objectives and actions of the Housing, Shared Spaces, and Opportunity and Health for All sectors.

3.2 Improving Access to Health Care and Preventative Services

Access to health care means ensuring all of Kaua'i's residents, even in rural areas, have convenient access to health clinics, acute care, and emergency services. Kaua'i is currently served by three hospitals: Wilcox Medical Center in Lihu'e, Samuel Mahelona Memorial Hospital in Kapa'a, and the Kaua'i Veterans Memorial Hospital in Waimea. All three facilities provide 24-hour emergency care. The facilities at Wilcox are privately run, while the Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation manages the other facilities. The North Shore will be served by an urgent care clinic that is currently under construction.

Preventative care is another facet of overall wellness. Many chronic diseases can be prevented through upstream interventions including screening, early detection, and management of diseases such as breast cancer, cervical cancer, diabetes, elevated cholesterol, hypertension, colorectal cancer, and HIV. Access to reproductive health services is another need given the higher than average teen pregnancy rate and a high unintended pregnancy rate among the general population.



A Kaua'i Surfer

3.3 Advancing Native Hawaiian Health Equity

Native Hawaiian health has been a long-standing equity issue in Hawai'i. Recorded health disparities led to the enactment of the Native Hawaiian Health Care Act of 1988 which established Papa Ola Lokahi in Hawai'i, including Ho'ola Lahui Hawai'i, which is Kaua'i's Native Hawaiian Health System. One of their programs, Malama I Na Pua Program, raises health awareness among Native Hawaiian youth who attend a Hawaiian Language Charter School. In 2013, continued health equity concerns led the State Legislature to establish a Native Hawaiian Health Task Force to improve the health of Native Hawaiians. The work of the task force will also impact other Pacific Islanders and the community as a whole.

3.4 Addressing Substance Abuse

Life Choices Kaua'i was created in 2003 to deal with Kaua'i's substance abuse issues. Since then, headway has been made in certain areas. For example, the number of drug-related offenses by adults has dropped from 290 in 2010 to 58 in 2014.⁵⁷ However, many community members feel the increasing use of meth and other serious drugs is a top community issue, especially for youth. The *2015-2020 Kaua'i Drug Response Plan* calls for a continuum of on-island treatment facilities and services. For example, the County has a need for a residential treatment facility. It is expensive to send those in need to O'ahu, especially as treatment is often a lengthy process. An adolescent treatment and healing center is being planned for Kaua'i that would provide residential substance abuse treatment and healing services.

3.5 Anticipating Future Threats to Community Health

In 2015, a legislative report acknowledged that climate change will intensify existing and cause new health threats, including acute and chronic disease, stress and mental health issues, and dengue fever and other vector diseases.⁵⁸ These impacts will more heavily fall on vulnerable populations, including the elderly and households experiencing poverty.

The following actions are comprehensive in nature and address broad community health needs.

A. PERMITTING AND CODE CHANGES

1. Provide access to frequent and convenient public transit near major job centers and health care facilities.
2. Ensure community design supports healthy and active lifestyles.
3. Consider zoning options that limit new fast food restaurants close to schools, daycare centers, or parks.
4. Support the built environment and land use recommendations provided by the Native Hawaiian Health Task Force and similar community health initiatives.

B. PLANS AND STUDIES

1. Include community health concerns in community planning.
2. Implement and update the *Kaua'i Community Drug Response Plan*.
3. Implement and update the *Kaua'i Plan on Aging*.
4. Implement and update the *Kaua'i Community Health Improvement Initiative*.

C. PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS

1. Prioritize sidewalk and bus stop improvements for accessibility near major health care facilities and group homes.
2. Improve the connectivity of essential services, including emergency response.
3. Ensure that low-income neighborhoods have high-quality parks, playgrounds, and green spaces.
4. Leverage Federal resources such as community development block grants and neighborhood-focused programs to create opportunity-rich neighborhoods.
5. Adopt policies for smoke-free cars with keiki, beaches, parks, and condos.

57 2015-2020 Kaua'i Drug Response Plan

58 Climate Change and Health Working Group Report, 2015

D. PARTNERSHIP NEEDS

1. Implement and update the *State Physical Activity and Nutrition Plan*.
2. Support pilot programs for community gardens and nutrition education programs.
3. Provide anti-tobacco education in schools.
4. Increase access to programs that provide reproductive health and family planning education and services.
5. Support programs to increase participation in vaccination, disease screening, and early detection and management of chronic disease, such as the “Better Choices, Better Health” Program.
6. Support healthy food options in underserved communities by:
 - a. Increasing the visibility of healthy food in stores, particularly those that accept Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) and electronic benefit transfer (EBT) purchases.
 - b. Allowing the use of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits at farmers markets.
 - c. Encouraging fast-food restaurants to offer healthy options and improve labeling.
 - d. Increasing access to nutritional counseling.
 - e. Taxing sugar-sweetened beverages.
 - f. Eliminating the General Excise Tax on purchases of fresh fruits and vegetables.
7. Support programs that improve Kauaʻi’s ability to respond to and recover from public health threats such as infectious disease and mosquito-borne disease outbreaks.
8. Anticipate and plan for the health impacts of climate change.
9. Increase access to mental health services and the availability of mental health providers.
10. Support the Malama I Na Pua health and wellness program for Native Hawaiian youth.

4. ACCESS TO RECREATION AND SUBSISTENCE ACTIVITIES

Some of Kauaʻi’s most unique and treasured areas are either located on or accessed through privately owned property. Access to these areas for both recreational and cultural purposes, including subsistence activities, is important to the community. At the same time, access should be balanced with education and stewardship. The State and County regulatory system protects and creates public access through the subdivision, shoreline setback, and SMA laws. However, many feel access is greatly restricted and declining in certain areas through limited parking, lack of signage, no maintenance, and inconsistent enforcement – the effects of which are compounded by increased resident and visitor use. There is also concern regarding restricted vehicular and pedestrian access to the shoreline and other places locked by privately owned land, such as waterfalls.

Objective: To actively protect, restore, and increase access to the places where recreational and subsistence activity occurs.



4.1 Improving Access to the Shoreline

By law, the shoreline is accessible and held in trust for the benefit of the public. State law protects lateral shoreline access, which is also referred to as a public beach transit corridor that exists seaward of the shoreline. Shoreline vegetation, when unmaintained or manipulated by private landowners, can restrict lateral access. Access concerns are also compounded by beach narrowing from erosion, whose rates are anticipated to increase as sea level rise occurs. Additionally, another concern was the lack of signed public accessways to the shoreline (versus access along the shoreline) and inadequate parking at popular access points. In some cases, public access

is not allowed or desirable due to environmental, public safety, and other concerns. On the beach near and adjacent to PMRF, national and U.S. Department of Homeland Security laws preempt State laws and public access is restricted. However, the overall need is for increased and improved public access to the shoreline.

4.2 Protecting Native Hawaiian Access Rights

Protecting access for Native Hawaiian traditional and customary gathering practices is guaranteed in the Hawai'i State Constitution. In addition to protecting development and private property interests, agency decisions must make specific findings related to the identification of traditional and customary practices in existence on land proposed for development and potential impacts of any proposed development. Decisions should include actions to reasonably protect cultural rights to the extent feasible. Case law, including the Pele Defense Fund v. Paty case; Public Access Shoreline Hawai'i, also known as PASH; and the Ka Pa'akai O Ka 'Aina cases reaffirm the State's duty to protect access to traditional and customary rights, such as gathering rights on the shoreline and upon land.

4.3 Increasing Access to Privately Owned Recreational Space

There are many valued recreational, cultural, and scenic resources that are privately owned or accessed through private property. Privately held recreational space include waterfalls and undeveloped coastal areas including Kīpū Kai and Māhā'ulepū. Such areas are used for hiking, hunting, gathering, swimming, and other reasons. These areas also include wahi pana, such as heiau and known burial sites. Unfortunately, the trend is toward lessening public access to these areas due to liability concerns, desire for privacy, and other reasons. For example, many waterfalls that were previously popular swimming holes are now closed, including Kīlauea, Kīpū, and Ho'opi'i Falls. When such resources become popular, especially with the rise of social media, they are vulnerable to overuse, vandalism, and littering, as well as increased risks of user injury and death. These concerns often spur private landowners to restrict access. Liability concerns can be addressed through a variety of legal and land use tools. However, the use of these tools requires specialized knowledge and a willingness on behalf of the landowner to protect and improve access. Public land trusts, such as the Hawaiian Islands

Land Trust, exist to support partnerships and solutions to increasing access.

4.4 Improving Access through County Initiatives

In 2002, the County's Public Access, Open Space, and Natural Resources Preservation Fund Commission was established to manage the "Public Access, Open Space, and Natural Resources Preservation Fund." This commission is commonly referred to as the Open Space Commission. The fund is intended for property or easement acquisition for access to beaches and mountains, preservation of cultural and historic sites, and other conservation purposes. In Fiscal Year 2017-2018, the fund earned 0.5 percent of the County's real property tax revenue. Priority projects are updated and discussed in the Commission's annual report. Given the limitations of the fund, there is also an opportunity for the Commission to work with the State and non-profit organizations, such as land trusts, and on collaborative projects that will increase public access to Kaua'i's special places.

A. PERMITTING AND CODE CHANGES

1. Require a minimum accessway width of 10 feet and locate accessways at convenient intervals.
2. Protect and preserve mauka and makai access for traditional Hawaiian cultural practices.
3. Require identification and mitigation of potential impacts of subsistence activities and resources when reviewing development permits.

B. PLANS AND STUDIES

1. Maintain, inventory, and provide information on legal public accessways to beaches and inland recreation areas. Conduct research on easement documents that have been executed or signed but not recorded.
2. Create regional networks of public trails. Partner with private landowners for missing connections via managed access.
3. Explore solutions for protecting access to recreational opportunities, including fishing, hunting, surfing, hiking, and other activities in community planning.

C. PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS

1. Acquire priority projects identified by the Open Space Commission.
2. Pursue easements, acquisitions, and landowner agreements to expand trails, access, open space, protection of coastal lands, and wilderness areas.
3. Establish a task force including landowners, land trust experts and attorneys, the Open Space Commission, and others, to study and recommend legal and land use measures to address and ameliorate liability on lands dedicated to managed public uses.

D. PARTNERSHIP NEEDS

1. Inventory and improve hunting access to Forest Reserves and government trails.
2. Seek funding for trail acquisition, development, and maintenance through the Nā Ala Hele Program and the Hawai'i Tourism Authority.
3. Focus trail acquisition in areas with a low number of public trails compared to the population, including South Kaula'i, Līhu'e, Anahola, and Hanapēpē-'Ele'ele.

4. Improve public access to landlocked State land that is managed by DOFAW. Increase recreational opportunities in these areas.
5. Use surfing reserves to protect access to surf breaks, improve parking for surfers at key surf destinations, and provide appropriate signage.
6. Increase opportunities for access to subsistence hunting, fishing, and gathering.
7. Manage lateral shoreline access concerns, including vegetation that encroaches on the beach transit corridor.
8. Develop more ATV, motorcycle, and mountain bicycling facilities so such activity is focused in areas not vulnerable to environmental damage.
9. Develop a public shooting range.
10. Promote access with kuleana through stewardship agreements, work days, jobs, and other means, to engage community members in caretaking.



Miloli'i Ridge Trail, Waimea-Kekaha District

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Aerial view of Kaua'i mountains

The ten sectors represent important areas to be addressed when planning Kaua'i's growth and development.