Community Connection

On the calendar

Feb 5 at 9:00 a.m.
A Public Presentation Hearing will be held. The Hawai'i Community Development Authority is working with stakeholders and the community to draft administrative rules for the Ninety-Nine Year Leasehold Program, established by the Hawai'i State Legislature, through Act 97 (Session Laws of 2023). The purpose of this program is determining the feasibility of developing low-cost leasehold residential condominium units on non-ceded state-owned land located near public transit stations for Hawai'i residents. March 5 will be the Decision-Making Hearing.

Feb 5
The next HCDA Board meetings will be held following the public hearing. For more information about HCDA, the public hearings or board meetings visit https://dbedt.hawaii.gov/hcda/.

Kamake'e Street view.

Preserving views in Kaka'ako
While building housing and preventing urban sprawl

Wahipana, or sacred sites were celebrated places, often with distinct land features. They were legendary not only for their location but also for what was done there and what could be seen from there.

"From a placemaking standpoint, we are utilizing Hawaiian practices and principles of being able to look up in order to understand what's going on, on the ground," said Hawaiian cultural practitioner Ramsay Taum.

"The ability to see. The view plane is always important," Taum explained. In part, the selection of many traditional Hawaiian sacred sites was the view provided at certain locations and the ability to see certain things. For example, traditional Hawaiian navigation methods of analyzing natural elements such as the sky, the wind, and the tides at sea or the sky, mauka and makai views on land helped with navigating to the desired destination.

A view corridor street is a thoroughfare where special design and development standards are required to protect the view of the mountains (mauka) and the ocean (makai), according to the 2024 HCDA Mauka Area Rules for Kaka'ako.

On January 3, 2025, Governor Josh Green, M.D., signed the current Mauka Area Rules, which were codified as an amendment to the Hawai'i Administrative Rules, Title 15, Chapter 217. Any part of a building taller than 65 feet and fronting a view corridor street shall be set back from the lot line abutting the view corridor by 50 feet. Awnings, trellises, and canopies are prohibited along the promenade and view corridor streets.

Six view corridors have been established in Kaka'ako to preserve the mauka-to-makai views: Punchbowl, South and Cooke Streets, Ward Avenue, Kamake'e Street, and the 'Ewa (west) side of Pi'ikoi Street.

Preserving the 'Ewa-to-Diamond Head views, there are two view corridors - Ala Moana Boulevard and Queen Street.

South Street view.

To provide needed housing and walkable communities while preventing urban sprawl and reducing the rapid development of our rural areas, vertical growth was encouraged near downtown Honolulu, when the Kaka'ako Community Development District was established by the State Legislature.
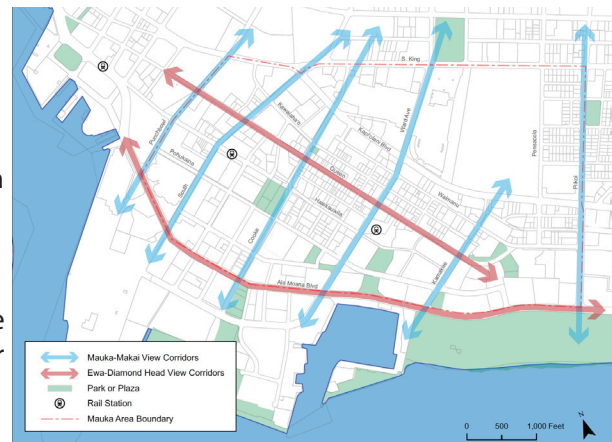
The Mauka Plan and Rules are HCDA's guidelines for responsible development of the area with the intent to offer people a range of housing opportunities with parks, recreational areas, shopping, dining, workplaces and commuting options that make life more convenient and comfortable.

To learn about the new developer incentives or view the full plan and rules visit https://dbedt.hawaii.gov/hcda/kakaako-plan-and-rules/.

Building community in He'eia
With aloha, sustainable agriculture and healthy green infrastructure

The focus of Kāko'o 'Ōiwi is to restore and maintain the HCDA He'eia Community Development District for agriculture and the native wetland bird and plant habitat, as well as to provide ecosystem services. These include floodplain restoration work integrated with indigenous, traditional Hawaiian knowledge, and providing educational opportunities on Hawaiian natural resource management techniques.

Agriculture
In 2024, Kāko'o 'Ōiwi produced approximately 50,000 pounds of food including kalo and kalo products, like poi, kūlolo, Kūlolo Crunch and lau (kalo leaves), for the community. "We're looking to increase that with contracts and other opportunities," said Kanekoa Schultz, the executive director of Kāko'o 'Ōiwi. "At the end of these three years, there will be about 180 acres in production, which should be about a third of the entire kalo production in the entire state of Hawai'i."

Kāko'o 'Ōiwi built a new Department of Health certified soil-less imu, which has been used to help the community with fundraising for school sports and other community projects.

Native bird and plant habitat
The eradication of mangrove in the He'eia district has returned 51 acres of wetland habitat for native Hawaiian plants and birds such as the 'alae'ula (endangered Hawaiian mudhen) and ae'o (endangered endemic Hawaiian silt bird).

"Focusing on native birds, we have about 14 native 'alae'ula nests," said Schultz. "There's only about 400 of those left in the world. And so, when we have 30 on our property, that's a significant amount. They are important because they were the keepers of the fire." Hawaiian mo'olelo (stories) tell of how the red-billed 'alae'ula shared fire with humans.

Ecosystem services
He'eia is one of the larger green infrastructures in the state of Hawai'i. Fishponds and taro patches can impound water, greatly protecting the bay from sediment and the nearby residential area with flood control and detention during rainy seasons.

"We recently got notice from the USDA that our lands are no longer zoned as wetlands," explained Schultz. "They are zoned as cropland. They are still wetlands, obviously, but from the federal USDA perspective, it opens the area up now to USDA support because it's designated cropland."

Kāko'o 'Ōiwi usually sells fresh produce and kalo products on Fridays and Saturdays to help support its efforts and offer fresh-grown food to the community. To learn more, visit https://kakoooiwi.org/.