



On the calendar

October 1

The next HCDA Board meetings will be held. Agendas will be posted on the website the Thursday before the meeting. For more information about HCDA, the public hearings or board meetings visit <https://dbedt.hawaii.gov/hcda/>.



Kāko'o 'Ōiwi

Saturday community workdays occur in the lo'i at Kāko'o 'Ōiwi on the first Saturday of each month, from 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. Tasks include weeding and maintenance of lo'i and 'auwai. To learn more and to sign up online visit <https://kako'o-iwi.org/volunteering/for-a-workday>.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Hawai'i

There's been a lot of optimism and hype about AI. It promises to boost productivity by automating repetitive tasks, enabling advanced problem-solving and making technology accessible to everyone.

However, concerns about AI persist. While people are amazed by its abilities, some describe it as unsettling or creepy. Questions remain: Will AI eliminate jobs or contribute to misinformation?

"A tool and an enabler - it doesn't replace people by any means. It's really there to help people do their jobs better and more effectively," said Christine Sakuda, the state's Chief Information Officer, at the Fourth Annual Hawai'i AI and Cloud Innovation Summit in September. The summit, cosponsored by DBEDT (Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism), Google Public Sector and TRUE (Technology Readiness User Evaluation), focused on practical uses for AI and implementation strategies.

Over 500 attended the bustling free summit with pre-registration required. Attendees varied from students to well-seasoned government professionals, all curious to learn more about AI.

The keynote, "Hawai'i's Roadmap to a Technology-Enabled Government," highlighted how state agencies can modernize through AI, cloud solutions and streamlined, data-driven operations.

Speakers addressed job displacement concerns, noting that about 30% of state government jobs are vacant, but Hawai'i's unemployment rate remains low (2-3%). Many vacancies are unlikely to be filled. Training current staff to automate routine tasks using AI can free up time for more important work. AI can help draft documents, though human review and editing are still essential. Increased productivity



through AI can lead to improved compensation for workers.

For government, there's both pressure and guidance to modernize, investing in secure infrastructure, updating AI policies and staff training.

Businesses have new opportunities with the growing demand for AI, cloud and security solutions, especially if they align with government needs. Partnerships with the public sector could lead to new contracts.

Education and workforce training in Hawai'i should expand to include AI literacy, relevant technical and soft skills, as well as applications for creative industries.

Ensuring open access to data, tools and knowledge is essential to foster innovation not only in major tech hubs but across all communities.

"The summit isn't just about hype, but identifying gaps and actionable progress," said James Kunane Tokioka, DBEDT Director. "AI and cloud technology are changing the way we do business."

Collaboration across government, business, academia and nonprofits is crucial. The best outcomes will come from working together.



Ka La'i o Kukuluāe'o

New Park Opens in Kaka'ako

On September 17, Kaka'ako's newest public green space opened, Ka La'i o Kukuluāe'o Park (Ka La'i Park), adding nearly 26,000 square feet of landscaped open space.

"Ka La'i Park will play a meaningful role in the day-to-day life of our community," said Doug Johnstone, president of the Hawai'i region for Howard Hughes. "Together with the upcoming opening of our workforce housing project, Ulana Ward Village, just next door, and the completion of Victoria Ward Park Mauka later this year, these milestones advance our commitment to cultivating an integrated, connected neighborhood."

In a bustling urban environment like Honolulu, green space is not just aesthetic. It contributes to quality of life, climate resilience (shade, stormwater management, etc.), neighborhood identity, health and community connection. Ka La'i Park adds both functional amenities and a symbolic reminder of the natural environment and cultural landscape that preceded today's development.

The name Ka La'i o Kukuluāe'o, meaning "the calm of Kukuluāe'o," honors the historic coastal wetlands of the area and native stilt bird (the kukuluāe'o), which once thrived here.

Ka La'i Park repurposes what were once aging buildings and paved surfaces, converting them into welcoming, carefully landscaped areas designed for both functionality and beauty.

Native plants and trees line the newly redone streets and a Biki Bike station. In the cen-

ter of the park, a water refilling station promotes sustainability.

There are pedestrian pathways and generous seating areas, but a visual focus and what promises to be very popular is the new interactive play structure for children.

The children's playground at Kolowalu Park, in Kaka'ako, has been incredibly popular.

Ka La'i Park links with other public spaces in the neighborhood. Steps away is the Victoria Ward Park makai of Auahi Street, which leads to the Ala Moana Boulevard Pedestrian Bridge and waterfront beaches and parks.

These connections are meant to reinforce walkability, peaceful gathering and a strong sense of place.

Ward Village isn't just building residences, it is also investing in public amenities and environmental design. The park was developed in collaboration with Hawaiian Dredging Construction, Architects Hawai'i Ltd., PBR Hawai'i & Associates and Wilson Okamoto Corporation.

The park hours are from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m.



Photos courtesy of Ward Village