



Hawai'i Community Development Authority

Community Connection

March 2026

Board Calendar

April 1

The next HCDA Board meetings will be held. Agendas are available on the website the Thursday before the scheduled Board Meeting.

For more information about HCDA, its public hearings or board meetings visit <https://dbedt.hawaii.gov/hcda/>.



Kaka'ako Waterfront Park



Point Panic Stairs Repair

HCDA began repairs to the ocean access stairs at Point Panic near Kaka'ako Waterfront Park and Kewalo Basin Harbor in February 2026. It is a popular access point for body surfers and other ocean users. The work is being performed by Abhe & Svoboda, Inc. through a contract with HCDA.

The project includes repairing the stainless steel railing, welds and grout and portions of the stairway steps, as well as removing algae and barnacle overgrowth from the steps, to improve safety and extend the lifespan of this popular coastal access point.

Construction is expected to take approximately nine weeks, with completion anticipated by April 17, 2026, but weather permitting, it may be finished a couple of weeks early.

During construction, the stairs will be closed.

Ocean access will remain available via the city's Kaka'ako Waterfront Park stairs near the middle pavilion area along the promenade. See the photo.

"Kaka'ako Waterfront Park has long served as an important gathering place for the community and a valued access point to the ocean," said the HCDA Executive Director Craig Nakamoto. "These repairs reflect HCDA's continued commitment to maintaining safe, functional and accessible oceanfront and to working in partnership with the city to ensure these resources are preserved for residents and visitors alike."

Although Kaka'ako Waterfront Park was transferred to the City and County of Honolulu in 2019, HCDA continues to own Kewalo Basin Harbor and the Point Panic stairs leading down into the harbor channel.

HCDA appreciates the public's patience and understanding during construction and we look forward to reopening the stairs soon for public use.

Make Your Voice Heard in the Online Kaka'ako Makai Community Visioning Workshop

MAHALO to those of you who were able to attend our Community Visioning Workshop on Saturday, March 7, at the Barn at SALT!

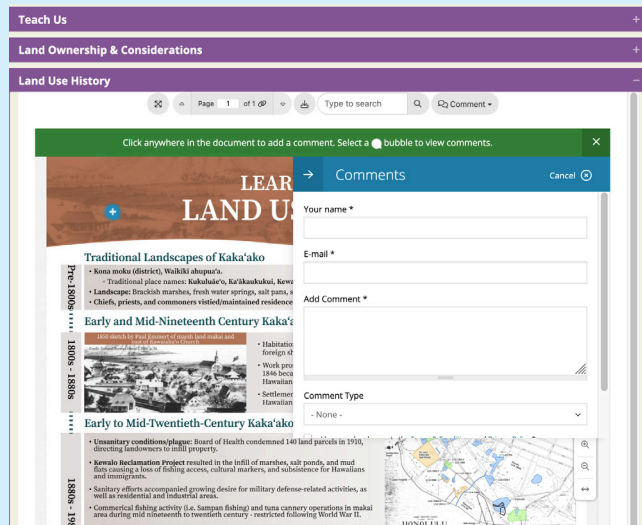
We welcomed about 150 attendees to participate in an interactive workshop to learn more about the planning process for the Kaka'ako Makai Area Plan update and share their mana'ō about the surrounding area.

If you could not attend, or if you have something additional to share, please visit the Online Community

Visioning Workshop page on the project website. This is another opportunity for you to help shape the future vision of Kaka'ako Makai, including priorities, land uses and development.

Comments will be accepted on the website until April 7, 2026. Comments received will be considered in drafting the plan.

Visit <https://sfrm.konveio.com/online-community-visioning-workshop>. Select a topic and the click on it to comment.





**Photo and Article from the HCDA Archives 1993
Kaka'ako Waterfront Park Grand Opening**



**Waterfront Renaissance:
A Gift to Hawai'i's People**

Of all of nature's gifts to the people of Hawai'i, the waterfront is a fabulous treasure. It's a special place where the harmonizing of land and sea offers an undeniable treat to the human soul. Its legacy can be as basic as providing a place where visitors can enjoy the serene beauty and tranquility of an area removed from urban madness. And the waterfront also contributes the potential to accommodate expanding recreational and cultural needs of Honolulu's residents, as well as serving the maritime and economic essentials of the state.

Recognizing the Honolulu waterfront as a remarkable resource with vast unrealized potential, the state administration in 1987 embarked on a mission to develop and improve the entire six-mile coastal stretch of the Honolulu Waterfront, from the Ala Wai Canal to the Honolulu International Airport.

"The time has come to again enjoy our waterfront as a people-oriented gathering place, to introduce new forms of life into our vital, yet dormant waterfront areas ... For the past 20 years, there has been talk of harvesting the fruits of waterfront development. The time has come to turn those dreams into reality," said Governor John Waihe'e. With these words, the Governor in September 1987 launched the state's waterfront revitalization program, setting forth a dynamic vision and aggressive strategy to capitalize on the enormous potential of the Honolulu waterfront to accommodate a variety of new recreational, cultural and commercial activities.

One important part of this vision was the reopening of major portions of the waterfront that had for years been neglected or closed to public access. The Kaka'ako Waterfront, the area between Ala Moana Beach Park and Pier 4 in Honolulu Harbor, was recognized as the centerpiece of this unprecedented redevelopment effort. The HCDA, therefore, played a key role in this concerted effort. After the Master Plan for the Honolulu waterfront was completed, the Authority (HCDA) in 1990 adopted its Kaka'ako Makai Area Plan, which regulates the renewal of the area makai of Ala Moana Boulevard to the Kaka'ako waterfront shoreline. Taking its direction from the state's waterfront Master Plan, the Kaka'ako Makai Area Plan attempts to accommodate

the ever increasing recreational, cultural, commercial and maritime needs of Honolulu's population. Intrinsic to the goals of the plan is the importance of attracting Hawai'i's residents back to the waterfront by reviving and transforming the area into a vibrant people-oriented gathering place. The emphasis is on creating an exciting and convenient site where people can enjoy recreation, entertainment and cultural activities in a park-like setting.

Strong legislative support enabled the HCDA to embark on an accelerated program to transform the Kaka'ako waterfront into an alluring, new "Central Park" for Honolulu. The cornerstone of the transformation of the Kaka'ako Waterfront was laid in 1990 when HCDA completed the four-acre Kewalo Basin Park, located in Kewalo Basin. This scenic shorefront park has become a favorite picnic spot for Honolulu's residents. The park's pedestrian promenade and observation areas offer breathtaking views of Ala Moana Beach, Magic Island and Diamond Head.

In November 1992, an estimated 15,000 people took part in the Grand Opening festivities of the Kaka'ako Waterfront Park. Speaking at the opening, then-Governor Waihe'e exclaimed, "We are going to have a wonderful waterfront that will rival anything any city has in this world. But more importantly, it will bring out people to their own ocean." Visitors to the day-long event experienced the park's magnificent landscape and views, as well as jazz, Hawaiian and children's entertainment, boat cruises and keiki rides. The day came to a stunning climax with a colorful aerial fireworks display.

Reclaiming of the Kaka'ako Waterfront for the use and enjoyment of Hawai'i's residents is a fitting conclusion to the historic progression of uses that have occurred in the area. The park site once served as an inland waterway for ships which would anchor in the area now occupied by Queen Street. From 1927 through most of the 1970s, the site was operated as a depository for ash from municipal trash incinerators and a dump for excess debris. The site was closed as a municipal landfill in 1987, but it continued to attract rubbish and other debris until it was redeveloped by the HCDA.

