

# “Kaua`i: Sustainable, Prosperous\* and Living Aloha” A Vision

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**Clear, Life-Supporting Values.** It is the year 2035. Our island community values and protects our land and natural resources, beauty, and culture because we understand how they nurture and sustain our bodies, spirits and livelihoods. We *malama* (take care of) this “natural capital,” knowing that all that we love will be diminished or destroyed if we don’t. We take responsibility for ourselves and our community by self-assessment and participation. Sustainability is the framework for all that we do. Our policies and practices embrace the good of all people because we know that by doing so we are caring for ourselves and generations to come.

**Compact Towns Served by Complete Streets, Transit-Friendly Highways, and Convenient, Reliable Bus Service. Affordable Infrastructure and Government.** Our population lives mostly in compact towns where services and goods (mixed uses) are within walking or biking distances. Because biking, bus riding, and walking are as convenient and reliable as the car, total vehicle miles traveled (VMT) has remained at 2010 levels. As a result, household gasoline bills are manageable even as the cost of gas rises. The community is more resilient, and Kauaians are becoming more fit and healthier. The County and State budgets are not strained by the huge costs of low-density sprawl or the high medical costs of an unhealthy people.

**No Traffic Congestion.** Our towns are connected by a reliable, convenient, energy-efficient public bus system powered by renewable energy and conveniently linked to other modes of transportation by park and ride facilities; safe, convenient, and accessible bus shelters; bike racks on buses; and frequent stops at the airport and harbors. The Kaua`i Bus is the preferred mode of transportation for many, resulting in fewer cars on the road. Large projected road expansion projects have become unnecessary. Delivery trucks, construction workers, emergency vehicles and other necessary vehicles are able to utilize the road more easily.

**Permanently Affordable Housing That is Sturdy, Attractive, and Energy Efficient.** Kauaians at or below 120% of median income pay no more than one-third of their household income for shelter costs. Developments are required to provide a percentage of permanently affordable, sturdily and attractively built, energy-efficient homes onsite, or provide equivalent land with off-site infrastructure. Close to workplaces and/or transportation routes, these homes result in: 1. integrated communities rich in vitality, human activity and relationships where families of all incomes live together and enjoy a high quality of life, and 2. an island inventory of affordable houses that grows over time to meet the needs that cannot be met by the market.

**Schools of Excellence—A Strong Foundation for Our Community.** Our children attend public and private schools of excellence that celebrate each child’s uniqueness and help each child reach his or her potential. Our young people develop into confident, competent, healthy and caring citizens, parents, employees, entrepreneurs and leaders—the foundation of a good community.

**Affordable, Efficient, Clean, Renewable Energy.** The rapid increases in household and commercial electricity bills are a thing of the past because of the “post-Sputnik like” effort and investment to wean Kaua`i from fossil fuels. Kaua`i is 75% energy self-sufficient in electrical generation, drawing its new energy from two basic sources: 1. reduced demand due to green building and retrofit and energy conservation, and 2. renewable energy sources such as hydroelectric and solar power, including biomass. Most of liquid fuels used are from renewable sources. Consumption of fossil fuels by the transportation sector has gone down due to stabilization of VMT, biofuels, and the increase in fuel-efficient vehicles and electric cars.

\* thriving, flourishing, bearing fruit, rich

**Flourishing Agriculture.** Both large scale and small scale agriculture are flourishing, and the island is covered again with wide expanses of cultivated green: biofuels for both electrical generation and transportation needs, and a broad diversity of food and fiber crops from vegetables and feed corn to honey and herbs to dairy and hemp. Farming is an honored profession and business. A food shortage in 2020

due to global oil shortages made everyone realize the value of farmers and their know-how. A vast amount of support was allocated on Kaua`i to building healthy food and fiber production capacity.

**A Zero Waste Place.** Knowing wisely, like many other communities across the nation, that waste is not waste but a resource, the County of Kauai has adopted and implemented a zero waste policy that focuses on “Reduce, Re-Use and Recycling. It achieved its goal of 70% diversion by 2023 (Resolution 2011-73, Draft 2) and 90% diversion by 2035. This policy has made Kauai more sustainable by increasing the life of the new landfill, decreasing the cost and environmental impacts of land-filling, creating jobs and businesses through recycling, re-use and reducing, and transforming Kauai from a buy-throw away-bury island to reduce-reuse-recycle society.

**Flourishing Arts and Culture.** We celebrate life and express our deepest yearnings through a richness of song, dance, poetry, visual arts, music, and drama—and through the perpetuation and sharing of the various cultures that have taken root on Kaua`i. Kauai’s artists have found ways to leverage their craft into money-generating businesses that give them both right livelihoods and contribute to the economic sustenance of Kauai.

**A Sustainable and Prosperous Economy.** In a sustainable community, there are many thriving jobs and businesses because living sustainably requires many services. Conversion to renewable energy, protection against invasive species, building of affordable housing provides many jobs. Agriculture and food processing has expanded. Kauai’s aging population has given rise to many businesses such as in-home services for the elderly, consultants on down-sizing and transitions, etc. At the same time, visitors abound and our visitor industry is strong. Given reasonable costs of energy, health care, housing and transportation, and because the community’s infrastructure (transportation, sewers, parks, solid waste etc) functions smoothly, well-run businesses prosper on Kaua`i, and employees don’t have to work 2 or 3 jobs each to make a decent living.

**Harmony with the `Aina.** Recognizing that by nature’s laws there are limits to growth, the island has wisely set limits to the number of visitor units allowed on Kaua`i for a certain planning period, thus alleviating the pressure on visitor and local sites. Public access to the coast and the mountains allows us to enjoy our aina as well. The growing resentment by residents that their island was being over-run by visitors is being replaced with returning aloha and goodwill. By providing for a sufficient number of permanently affordable houses that allow persons of moderate and low incomes to live on the island comfortably, a wonderful diversity of culture and population remains.

**A Community That Knows How to Live in Peace.** Over the last ten years, Kaua`i has achieved many levels of success in resolving difficult and complex community issues through nonviolent communication and conflict resolution. It has discovered the power of creating consensus using a transparent, inclusive process and skilled facilitators. When unity in diversity is reached through such a process, genuine progress is unstoppable.

**A Model for the World.** Living from aloha, pono, and sustainability, Kaua`i has become a living demonstration and a model for the world. Our prosperity is measured not only in material wealth, but by the quality of our lives—in the richness of our public places, the effectiveness of our infrastructure, the wealth of culture and arts, and the presence of aloha. A new kind of tourism flourishes on Kaua`i. People from all over the world come to Kaua`i to be inspired and informed so they can establish aloha, pono, and sustainability in their hometowns and communities.

Acknowledgements: To the people/group who coined the phrase, “Living Aloha”, I thank you for your profound thinking and sharing. I acknowledge that I have borrowed this phrase and am not in any way attempting to claim it as my own.

10-4-16