

Executive Summary

We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do... other things, not because they are easy but because they are hard, because that goal will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills, because that challenge is one that we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone, and one which we intend to win.

—President John F. Kennedy, in his speech on the Nation's Space Effort, Rice University, September 12, 1962. Kennedy pledged that the goal was to leave the Earth's atmosphere and land on the moon, which inspired many people around the world that day. Although Kennedy was assassinated the following year, on November 22, 1963, his dream of winning the space race was fulfilled on July 20, 1969, when NASA's Apollo XI mission successfully landed the first men on the moon.

What do the people of Hawai'i want for the future of our islands in the 21st century? What is the community's will for the future of our economy, society and environment? What steps can we take now to achieve that preferred future for our children and their children?

In 2005, the Hawai'i State Legislature sought answers about the long-term future of our state. In the past, state leaders and decision makers have been ably guided in these matters by the Hawai'i State Plan. But with a new century comes a new generation, new opportunities and new challenges. A new plan is needed.

In response, the Legislature created the Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Task Force, a group of 25 citizens with a diverse range of experience in planning, community, business, the environment and government. They were charged with developing the Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Plan, the State's first long-range plan in 30 years. In creating the plan, the Task Force placed the wisdom of our communities first. The Task Force initiated and implemented one of the most comprehensive and inclusive planning processes in our state's history.

A community-based planning effort

A two-year planning process engaged thousands of residents through multiple rounds of community meetings on every island, Internet outreach through a website and online surveys, and dozens of focus group meetings with stakeholders and experts. More than 10,500 participants provided input on the Hawai'i 2050 Plan.

Data was also collected through public opinion polls and the Hawai'i 2050 Issue Book, which contains extensive research on many aspects of sustainability such as natural resource use, population, economic development, water and social issues.

The Task Force used its resources to gather the mana'o of everyone with a stake and an interest in Hawai'i and to include their voice in the conversation.

What did the Task Force find? What is Hawai'i 2050?

The State's first definition of sustainability

A Hawai'i that achieves the following:

- Respects the culture, character, beauty and history of our state's island communities
- Strikes a balance among economic, social and community, and environmental priorities
- Meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs

This definition is the foundation of Hawai'i 2050. It is the beginning of a shared vocabulary about sustainability and the future of our state.

The five goals for Hawai'i 2050

The Hawai'i 2050 goals are integrated philosophies that express the sustainable future of Hawai'i. They reflect a deeply held sense of where Hawai'i should be headed.

- Living sustainably is part of our daily practice in Hawai'i.
- Our diversified and globally competitive economy enables us to meaningfully live, work and play in Hawai'i.
- Our natural resources are responsibly and respectfully used, replenished and preserved for future generations.
- Our community is strong, healthy, vibrant and nurturing, providing safety nets for those in need.
- Our Kanaka Maoli and island cultures and values are thriving and perpetuated.



Strategic actions to implement these five goals, and indicators to measure success or failure

More detailed strategic actions and indicators are contained in Hawai'i 2050. They serve as a guide towards meeting our sustainability goals.

Priority actions: Intermediate steps for the year 2020

Once this planning and community engagement process was complete, the Task Force recognized that while the community respected the vision of 2050, residents also wanted a sense of urgency. People desire tangible targets and benchmarks. In response, the Task Force established priority actions for the year 2020 in these areas:

1. Increase affordable housing opportunities for households up to 140% of median income.
2. Strengthen public education.
3. Reduce reliance on fossil (carbon-based) fuels.
4. Increase recycling, reuse and waste reduction strategies.
5. Develop a more diverse and resilient economy.
6. Create a sustainability ethic.
7. Increase production and consumption of local foods and products, particularly agriculture.
8. Provide access to long-term care and elderly housing.
9. Preserve and perpetuate our Kanaka Maoli and island cultural values.

The Sustainability Council would help to promote sustainability, determine intermediate and long-term benchmarks, measure success, coordinate cross-sector efforts and dialogue, and report to government and private sector leaders on progress.

NEXT STEPS: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Focus on priority actions

The Hawai'i 2050 planning process unveiled nine (9) priority actions that need to be addressed immediately. These action items were identified through an extensive community engagement process, and are needed to kick-start Hawai'i's sustainability process. Take action on those items, and we're on our way toward a sustainable future.

Establish a Sustainability Council

The Task Force recommends that an implementing entity – the Sustainability Council – be established to implement Hawai'i 2050. This is critical to the success of this plan. This non-regulatory government body would be in charge of coordinating, marketing and implementing Hawai'i 2050 initiatives and recommendations. Similar in concept to the State's Council on Revenues, it would help to promote sustainability, determine intermediate and long-term benchmarks, measure success, coordinate cross-sector efforts and dialogue, and report to government and private sector leaders on progress.

Develop sustainability indicators

Hawai'i 2050 indicators would be an annual aggregation of the data that will tell us how we are doing. While our state measures its economic position mostly by tax revenues, building permits and visitor arrivals, Hawai'i 2050 indicators will be the primary measure of the overall progress of our society. There are 55 recommended indicators to measure Hawai'i's overall economic, environmental, community and cultural characteristics.

Report on progress

We need to be held accountable to these goals and objectives, so we recommend an annual report card be produced by the Sustainability Council and presented to government and other leaders.

What's next?

In January of 2008, Hawai'i 2050 will be submitted to the Hawai'i State Legislature. We recommend the immediate establishment of the Sustainability Council and statutory guidelines for its role. By law, the Task Force ceases to exist in the summer of 2008, so the Sustainability Council must be given the authority to continue these efforts by the end of the 2008 session.

Through Hawai'i 2050, we have developed the most comprehensive, forward-looking, data-driven guide to achieve Hawai'i's preferred future.

