

Background and Origins of Hawaii 2050

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How did Hawai'i 2050 come about?

The 2005 Legislature expressed its belief that government is responsible not only for resolving daily and pressing issues and public needs, but also for providing guidance to assure that the preferred future of our state is met. Recognizing that present and subsequent generations must address sustainability issues essential to Hawai'i's quality of life, the Legislature enacted Act 8 (SSLH 2005), which provided for the development of a sustainability plan to address the vital needs of Hawai'i through the year 2050.

Act 8 established the Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Task Force (hereinafter "Task Force") to review the Hawai'i State Plan and the State's comprehensive planning system, and it required the Office of the Auditor to create the Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Plan (hereinafter "Hawai'i 2050").

Specifically, the purpose of Act 8 is to:

- Establish a Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Task Force to review the Hawai'i State Plan and other fundamental components of community planning, and to develop recommendations on creating the Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Plan; and
- Require the auditor to prepare the Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Plan to define and implement state goals, objectives, policies and priority guidelines, incorporating some or all of the recommendations of the Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Task Force to aid in the future long-term development of the state.

The 25 member Task Force has a mix of public and private sector representatives with a diverse range of experience. Its members include representatives appointed by or representing the Governor, Speaker of the House, Senate President, the Mayors of the counties of Hawai'i, Kaua'i, Maui and Honolulu, the director of the Office of Planning, the University of Hawai'i Department of Urban & Regional Planning, and the State Auditor.

Hawai'i at a crossroads

Creating Hawai'i 2050 comes as the state faces a growing number of pressing issues. The steady deterioration of public infrastructure, lack of affordable housing, continued reliance on a service-based economy, the vulnerability of Hawai'i in a volatile global energy market, possible interruptions in travel and critical food supplies, threats to our fragile island ecosystems, and the ever increasing numbers of residents and visitors all raise questions about the direction of our state, the long-term limits of growth on these islands and the need to plan and act now to assure that the preferred future for the people of Hawai'i is met.

The signs are evident. The average cost of a home is \$650,000, well beyond the means of most. The price of oil is heading towards \$100 per barrel.





We're sitting in traffic much too long. We can't find a parking space just to go to the neighborhood grocery store. Our options to care for the elderly are severely limited. In 2006, we were forced to dump 50 million gallons of raw sewage into the Ala Wai Canal due to old, cracked sewer lines. We are over-reliant on outside sources, importing about 85 and 95 percent of our food and fuel, respectively.

And, intuitively, these pressures are gnawing at us. Some are questioning whether our aloha spirit is eroding. Tempers are flaring a little more than they used to a decade ago. Comments that "Hawai'i is not what it used to be" are becoming noticeably more frequent. The disputes between the sectors are a bit more fierce, most recently with the Hawai'i Superferry incident where the issues of growth and access between our islands were in conflict.

Furthermore, no discussion of Hawai'i's future would be complete without addressing the most basic question we have in our island state: What is our carrying capacity? We anticipate thousands of new homes coming online, tens of thousands of additional residents to move here, millions of tourists every year, and yet no serious look at our overall capacity has been undertaken recently.

These concerns, observations and feelings all lead to the two most commonly questions asked: *Where are we going? What is Hawai'i's preferred future?*

Where are we going?
 What is
 Hawai'i's preferred future?





Before Hawai'i 2050: The Hawai'i State Plan

The predecessor to Hawai'i 2050 was the Hawai'i State Plan, Hawai'i's first attempt at comprehensive long-range planning for our islands. Conceived in the mid-1970s, the Hawai'i State Plan was developed under the leadership of Governor George R. Ariyoshi. It was a visionary effort to provide balanced guidance to government officials as well as the private sector in the use of our state's precious natural and cultural resources.

The Hawai'i State Plan was complemented by 12 functional plans that provided the vision and goals in priority areas for our state such as agriculture, conservation lands, employment, energy, health, higher education, historic preservation, housing, recreation, tourism, transportation and water resource development. As part of its development, citizens and public advisory committees were formed for each functional plan, engaging thousands of government, business and community leaders and public citizens who deliberated the future of Hawai'i.

The State Plan process resulted in many key directives for the state such as making Hawai'i a world-class tourism destination; investing in public infrastructure like airports, harbors and roads to support Hawai'i's development; expanding and strengthening the University of Hawai'i system; and implementing community initiatives like the Pre-paid Health Care Act which serves as the foundation for healthcare in Hawai'i. Hawai'i 2050 honors the work of the Hawai'i State Plan and builds upon its foundation for developing a strategic approach to Hawai'i's preferred future.

In the years after Governor Ariyoshi left office in 1986, the Hawai'i State Plan fell into disuse. Over time it has become outdated, and awareness of the State Plan and its goals has dwindled. The last comprehensive review and revision of the Hawai'i State Plan occurred in the mid-1980s. The State Functional Plans were last updated in 1991, and over the years, comprehensive statewide planning, which integrates all the disciplines of Hawai'i's long-range future, has languished.

Hawai'i 2050 is the most comprehensive statewide planning process conducted in over three decades.

Critical Concepts: A User's Guide to Hawai'i 2050

It is important that Hawai'i's community be engaged and committed to the concept of sustainability, and be an active partner in ensuring Hawai'i's sustainable future.

About the term Kanaka Maoli

Throughout this plan, you will see the term Kanaka Maoli. This term is a more appropriate description for Hawai'i's indigenous people – Native Hawaiians. This description of Native Hawaiians was suggested by Kanaka Maoli leaders who participated in the Hawai'i 2050 process, and subsequently was adopted by the Task Force.

Ahupua'a: An overarching metaphor

Our Hawaiian islands are blessed with a Kanaka Maoli tradition and heritage that make our state uniquely special. The Task Force is committed to integrate the values and principles of the traditional Kanaka Maoli concept of the ahupua'a resource and behavioral management system as a philosophical basis for a sustainable Hawai'i. The values of the ahupua'a system ensure that people respect the air, land, water and other scarce natural resources that make life sustainable from the mountains to the sea.

Education is key for a sustainable Hawai'i

A major premise of Hawai'i 2050 is that education and awareness of sustainability is essential to the plan's success. It is important that Hawai'i's community be engaged and committed to the concept of sustainability, and be an active partner in ensuring Hawai'i's sustainable future. Such public acceptance, including the need to change social behavior, requires an aggressive effort to educate Hawai'i's people on the value and necessity of sustainability.

The Task Force also recognized the need to educate Hawai'i's people by integrating the concepts of sustainability within Hawai'i's educational curriculum. This involves teacher preparation, professional development, curriculum development and assessment, and course requirements in sustainability. Such core concepts could provide the foundation for lifetime awareness about sustainability in the same way that Hawai'i's students learn about math, reading and history.

There may be important strategic actions not included in this plan

While Hawai'i 2050 consolidates key actions and indicators, we may have missed a few important elements or action items. We did our best to include those that were identified by the community, stakeholders and experts, but some may have been omitted. Likewise, some strategic actions may have been left out because they were not identified as a priority at this time. This plan is a beginning, not the end, of the conversation about strategic actions relating to Hawai'i's future. The intent is for this plan to be revised periodically, making it continually relevant and applicable in the years ahead.



Hawai'i 2050 provides over-arching State goals that the counties can use as a guide to further their sustainability efforts.

No plan can predict or control the future, so we must plan to adapt

In ten or twenty years, some of the strategic actions identified in this document may not fit because of changing priorities, technologies or other environmental, political or economic conditions, so we must be prepared for change.

What about other planning efforts? How does Hawai'i 2050 fit in?

There are many long-term strategic initiatives already in place, ranging from coastal zone and water resource management strategies, to county general and development plans, to economic development and visitor industry plans. Hawai'i 2050 is different from other government plans in that it creates a long-term action agenda for achieving sustainability for our state. Hawai'i 2050 consolidates into one document key goals and initiatives that will – over time – create a Hawai'i that is stronger, more diverse and resilient because of its balanced approach to implementing sustainability goals and strategies.

Hawai'i 2050 does not replace the Hawai'i State Plan. Similarly, Hawai'i 2050 does not “trump” other governmental plans, including the county general and development plans. The Task Force is respectful of and is cognizant that each county has its own comprehensive planning process and plans.

Hawai'i 2050 provides over-arching State goals that the counties can use as a guide to further their sustainability efforts. With representation on the Task Force by all four counties, Hawai'i 2050 has had direct input from county government officials and residents. Each mayor appointed three members from their county to be on the Task Force. Hawai'i 2050 is intended to augment and complement other existing government plans, and provides an action agenda that is oriented towards achieving sustainability goals and principles.

