



Office of Housing and Community Development NEWSLETTER

Housing Hawai'i Island: 2023 in Review



Kahu Kealoha Sugiyama blesses Waikoloa Family Affordable as Coalition for Specialized Housing President Jeff Emerson looks on. County of Hawai'i photos

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CRITICAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECTS COMMENCED, SCORES OF UNITS DELIVERED

2023 was a big year for the County of Hawai'i Office of Housing and Community Development (OHCD).

During the 365-day period, the OHCD saw the completion of scores of affordable housing units and the start of work on dozens more, administered millions of dollars via two new local funds aimed at addressing homelessness and housing, and provided rental assistance to over 2,300 households on Hawai'i Island, among many other highlights.

Here's a look back at the year 2023:

HOUSING DELIVERED

In 2023, 159 affordable housing units were completed and ready for occupancy providing homes for over hundreds in the community.

The largest chunk of those units came online in July with the completion of the Waikoloa Family Affordable project. Located at the bottom of Waikoloa Village, Waikoloa Family Affordable features 110 one- and two-bedroom units reserved for



The Alfonso 'ohana poses for a photo during a dedication ceremony for the first phase of the 'Ainaloa Mutual Self-Help Housing Program.

households earning up to 60% of Area Median Income (AMI).

Other projects finished in 2023 include: The first phase of 10 three-bedroom homes in the 'Ainaloa Mutual Self-Help Housing Program led by the Hawai'i Island Community Development Corporation



Looking Ahead

A MESSAGE FROM HOUSING ADMINISTRATOR SUSAN KUNZ

Warmest greetings and Happy New Year!

As we embark upon 2024, the Office of Housing and Community Development (OHCD) welcomes the opportunities the new year brings to continue to build on our successes as we face new challenges.



Kunz

Looking back, 2023 was a momentous year for the OHCD staff with the rollout of two local funds aimed at addressing homelessness and affordable housing on Hawai'i Island, continued efforts to update the County of Hawai'i Affordable Housing Policy, and the completion of scores of affordable housing units.

In 2024, the OHCD is committed to building upon these efforts as we work to ensure all Hawai'i Island residents have a safe and decent place to call home.

The work of the OHCD will remain guided by the County of Hawai'i Strategic Roadmap for Housing Development and Strategic Roadmap for Homelessness and Housing.

We're going to stay focused and the team remains committed to the OHCD's mission to provide for the development of viable communities through decent housing, suitable living environments and expanded economic opportunities.

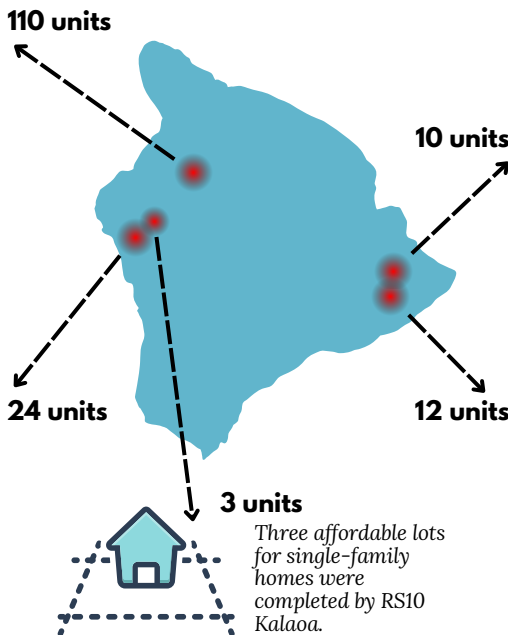
AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS COMPLETED IN 2023



Waikoloa Family Affordable 110 units + manager unit Targeting households earning up to 60% of AMI



Ikaika Ohana completed 24 single-family homes at the Department of Hawaiian Homelands La'i 'Opua Village 4 Akau in Kona.



The HICDC completed 10 self-help homes in Ainaloa for families earning up to 80% of AMI.



HOPE Services Hawai'i Inc. completed 12 modular studio units for veterans and kupauna at its Sacred Heart Housing Project in Pahoa.

IN REVIEW:

Continued from front

(HICDC); 12 studio units with supportive services for homeless kupauna and veterans led by HOPE Services Hawai'i, Inc. at its Sacred Heart Affordable Housing Project in Pahoa; three affordable for single-family homes in Kailua-Kona; and 24 three- and four-bedroom homes at the Department of Hawaiian Homelands La'i 'Opua Village 4 Akau in North Kona.

PROJECTS COMMENCED

Despite the lingering impacts of the coronavirus pandemic and the impacts of market volatility and increasing interest rates seen in 2023, the OHCD saw much-needed projects get off the ground.

The first came in late January, with the blessing and groundbreaking for site work and access road for the first phase of the long-awaited Kukuiola Emergency Shelter and Assessment Center. State and County funds are covering the tab of site preparation while the first phase will be funded primarily by a \$10 million federal grant. Vertical construction of the first 16 units is targeted to start this spring. Additionally, 46 safe overnight parking stalls will be

provided in the first phase for unsheltered individuals living in vehicles.

A second phase will add at least 48 permanent housing units with supports. A third phase tentatively includes long-term rental housing.

Other projects that got underway in 2023 include: The 91-unit Hale Na Koa 'O Hanakahi project for veterans, surviving spouses and other income-qualified seniors in Hilo; the 99-unit Kaloko Heights Affordable Housing Project off Hina Lani Street in North Kona; and the second phase of 10 homes of the Ainaloa Mutual Self-Help Housing Program in Puna.

PIPELINE BOOSTED

While marking milestones with project starts and ends, staff were working hard to grow the Affordable Housing Pipeline, which reached a high of over 6,800 units by the start of 2024. That's up about 470% from 1,200 units in December 2020 when Mayor Mitch Roth's administration took the helm.

The pipeline includes all affordable housing units in various stages of development - from proposal to nearly complete - on Hawai'i Island. By continuing to fill the pipeline with viable projects, the OHCD is ensuring units will continue to be placed into the



Construction progressed quickly in 2023 at the Kaloko Heights Affordable Housing Project in Kailua-Kona. County of Hawai'i photo

housing stock for years to come.

FUNDING ADMINISTERED

The OHCD in 2023 was tasked with administering two funds aimed at addressing homelessness and housing on Hawai'i Island. That's in addition to the millions of dollars of federal and state housing and homelessness monies administered each year by the OHCD.

The Affordable Housing Production Program ramped up in 2023 with the completion of administrative rules and an electronic application program followed by a Request For Proposals (RFP) for over \$17.3 million in available funding.

A selection committee reviewed, ranked, and rated the



FSS & HOP Programs Now Have Dedicated Specialists

The Office of Housing and Community Development is pleased to announce its Family Self-Sufficiency Program and Home-ownership Option Program each now has a dedicated coordinator to assist Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) participants in achieving their goals of self-sufficiency and/or homeownership.

Maile Martinson, a four-year veteran of the OHCD, leads the Homeownership Option Program (HOP) while Jenny Suefujii, who has been with OHCD for over 17 years, oversees the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program.

HOP allows first time homeowners to use their rental assistance to help pay for monthly homeownership expenses. Under the HOP, monthly subsidy is paid to a mortgage lender instead of a landlord.

FSS enables families to achieve financial independence and eventually move out of public housing or off rental assistance. The voluntary program is open to Housing Choice Voucher participants and has two main features: Case management/coaching services and a financial incentive.

For more information, call (808) 959-4642 or send an email to fsshopin@hawaiicounty.gov.

MESSAGE:

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To keep up-to-date on housing-related news and happenings on Hawai'i Island, follow the OHCD on Facebook and Instagram @hawaiicounty.officeofhousing or visit www.housing.hawaiicounty.gov.

On behalf of the OHCD, I wish you a happy, healthy, and successful 2024.

Families At Na Kahua Hale O Ulu Wini Receive Donated Laptop Computers

Twenty-five Dell laptop computers were recently distributed to families with school-aged children at Na Kahua Hale O Ulu Wini thanks to a donation from non-profit Vibrant Hawai'i.

To ensure the laptops went to families that needed a computer most, property manager Mark Development, Inc., reviewed its tenant list and identified which families at the Kailua-Kona affordable housing complex had children attending school and did not have a computer in the home.



Families who reside at Na Kahua Hale O Ulu Wini received donated laptops from Vibrant Hawai'i. Courtesy photo

HALE NĀ KOA 'O HANAKAHI ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR NEW AFFORDABLE SENIOR HOUSING IN HILO

EAH Housing is accepting applications to be included in a random lottery drawing to determine priority order for units at Hale Nā Koa 'O Hanakahi off Kawili Street in Hilo.

Hale Nā Koa 'O Hanakahi is a 62-year-old or older senior community with a preference for veterans and surviving spouses of veterans. The units will serve households at or below 80% Area Median Income (AMI), with approximately 12

units targeting 30% AMI, 38 units targeting households at or below 50% AMI, 31 units targeting 60% AMI, and 10 units targeting households at 80% AMI. There will be one unrestricted unit for the manager. The 50 units serving households at or below 50% AMI will receive project-based Section 8 assistance through the Hawai'i County Housing Agency. Applications will be accepted February 12 to 29, 2024. Applications may be obtained

online at eahhousing.org/apartments/hilo, or via U.S. mail or in-person at Hale Nā Koa 'O Hanakahi, c/o EAH Housing Management Office, Honolulu Office, 1103 Liliha St., #102, Honolulu, HI 96817 or by appointment at the Hilo Temporary Office (date and address to be determined).

To obtain an application packet in the mail, call (808) 466-8615 or email HN-Management@eahhousing.org. TDD: (877) 447-5991.

2023:

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proposals and awarded the available funding to seven proposals impacting 1,167 units in the Affordable Housing Pipeline.

The OHCD also oversaw the award of over \$17.2 million in Homelessness and Housing Fund monies in 2023 through two RFPs guided by the Strategic Roadmap for Homelessness and Housing developed by the public in 2022.

The OHCD is working to launch in March an online dashboard to report performance outcomes.

RESIDENTS SERVED

In 2023, the OHCD's Existing Housing Division issued over 2,200 Section 8 (housing assistance) vouchers to Hawai'i Island families resulting in the County of Hawai'i utilizing 100% of the \$29 million allocated for rental subsidies by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Of those vouchers, 300 were designated as "special purpose" in that they provide unique opportunities to target rental assistance resources to specific populations, including U.S. veterans, foster youth reaching adulthood, persons experiencing homelessness or fleeing domestic violence and

other situations.

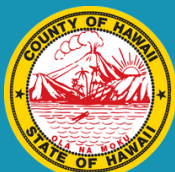
The OHCD is also proud to report its Landlord Incentive Program, which offered a monetary bonus to landlords who lease to a Section 8 participant, was a success. Over 130 new units were leased to voucher recipients because of the federally funded program.

Meanwhile, staff worked with over seven dozen Section 8 families via the OHCD's Family Self-Sufficiency Program and Homeownership Option Program.

The programs empower recipients to reduce their dependency on welfare assistance and rental subsidies, and ultimately move up the economic ladder.

UPCOMING OFFICE CLOSURES

- Monday, February 19 — Presidents' Day
- Tuesday, March 26 — Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana'ole Day
- Friday, March 29 — Good Friday
- Monday, May 27 — Memorial Day



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