



RESTORING A COMMUNITY PILLAR



Hilo Memorial Hospital, which is set to undergo renovation starting this year, is seen in this August 2025 photo. *County of Hawai'i photo*

Hilo Memorial Hospital to Begin New Life as Housing & Hope Hub

The old Hilo Memorial Hospital enters its next chapter this year as long-awaited renovations begin — restoring this beloved community landmark and transforming it into a vital hub for housing and homeless services in East Hawai'i.

Built between 1922 and 1929,

Hilo Memorial Hospital was once at the heart of healing in East Hawai'i. Generations of families walked through its doors for care before the hospital closed in 1961. In the decades that followed, the property took on many different roles — from hosting the Peace Corps to providing

office space for County programs. In 2019, it began a new service role as home to Keolahou, an emergency shelter, and Hale Kulike, a permanent supportive housing program operated by HOPE Services Hawai'i.

Now, thanks to \$16.6 million

See **RENOVATION** on Page 3



In Focus: Partnership Works Make Affordable Homeownership a Reality

County of Hawai'i and HALE O Hawai'i CLT advance innovative land trust model to keep homes affordable.

Learn more on Page 4



Apply Now: Section 8 Waiting List Open

The Waiting List for the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Section 8 Program will remain open until further notice.

Learn more on Page 3

KEYS TO A NEW BEGINNING

COUNTY OF HAWAII, HALE O HAWAII CLT PARTNER TO DELIVER AFFORDABLE HOMEOWNERSHIP

The dream of homeownership is now reality for the Uyeda 'ohana, which recently received the keys to their new three-bedroom, two-bathroom home in Hilo.

The handover ceremony and celebration on August 22, 2025, marked a milestone in the partnership between HALE O Hawai'i Community Land Trust and County of Hawai'i Office of Housing and Community Development (OHCD), advancing an innovative land trust model to keep homes affordable for generations to come.

"Today we celebrate not only the Uyeda 'ohana's new beginning, but also a new pathway for housing on Hawai'i Island. This partnership between the County and HALE O Hawai'i shows what is possible when we combine public resources with community stewardship. Together, we are building homes that will remain affordable for generations, strengthening the foundation for local families to thrive here at home," said Mayor Kimo Alameda.

The home was made possible through a collaboration that combines County support with the stewardship of HALE O Hawai'i. The project received \$300,000 from the Affordable Housing Production Program



TOP: Pete Hoffmann, President of HALE O Hawai'i Board of Directors, hands the keys to the Uyeda's new home to Robert Uyeda as his wife, Miki, and their two children look on. Also taking part in the handover celebration are Mayor Kimo Alameda (left), Housing Administrator Kehaulani Costa and Hale O Hawai'i Executive Director Loretta Wickenden.

ABOVE: The interior and exterior of the new home are pictured.

County of Hawai'i photos

in Fiscal Year 2023-24 and was developed on State-owned land conveyed to the County by Executive Order, then leased for 65 years to HALE O Hawai'i for this pilot project.

"This day is about more than one home — it's about building a model that will keep homes

within reach for local families," said Housing Administrator Kehaulani Costa. "By providing both the land and the funding, the County was able to seed this effort, helping HALE O Hawai'i grow its capacity to serve our community for years ahead."

See **LAND TRUST** on Page 4

Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) Waiting List Now Open

The County of Hawai'i Office of Housing and Community Development (OHCD) opened the Waiting List for the Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) Program at 9:00 a.m. HST August 1, 2025. The Waiting List will remain open until further notice.

The program provides rental assistance to eligible low-income individuals and

families, allowing them to rent safe, decent and affordable housing in the private market. To qualify, applicants may not exceed 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI).

Applications must be submitted electronically at <https://waitlistcheck.com/application/form.php?ID=2362-H1002>.

There is no cost to apply.

Only one application per family is allowed on the Waiting List.

If you have a disability or a barrier to completing the online application, you may request a reasonable accommodation by contacting the OHCD at (808) 959-4642.

For more information on the HCV Program, please visit www.housing.hawaiicounty.gov/housing-assistance

RENOVATION: Work to begin later this year

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in federal funding secured by U.S. Sens. Brian Schatz and Mazie Hirono, the County of Hawai'i Office of Housing and Community Development (OHCD) will begin the first phase of renovations this year. This work will include:

- Re-roofing the main structure
- Safe removal of hazardous materials
- Selective removal of invasive trees to protect the building's foundation

"This is more than a construction project," said Housing Administrator Kehaulani Costa said. "It's about restoring a place with deep roots in our community so it can once again be a

source of care, stability, and hope for the people of Hawai'i Island."

The OHCD has been working toward this milestone since 2022. Construction for Phase 1 is expected to take up to 12 months, and importantly, residents of Keolahou and Hale Kulike will not need to relocate during the process.

While Phase 1 is focused on repairs and stabilization, future phases will breathe new life into the hospital's interior and infrastructure. Planned upgrades include modernizing electrical and mechanical systems, installing fire safety measures, improving accessibility, repairing and painting exteriors,



From left: Kristin Alice, HOPE Services Hawai'i director of community relations; Kali French, HOPE Services Hawai'i COO; Rep. Kristin Kahaloa (HD6); Rep. Sue L. Keohokapu-Lee Loy (HD2); Rep. Chris Todd (HD3); Rep. Matthias Kusch (HD1); House Speaker Rep. Nadine Nakamura (HD15); and Hawai'i County Housing Administrator Kehaulani Costa talk story during a tour in July 2025 of Hilo Memorial Hospital. *County of Hawai'i photo*

and refreshing interior spaces.

The renovation of the old hospital supports the OHCD's long-term plan to establish a centralized service campus at 34 Rainbow Drive. Once complete, the site will serve as a coordinated

resource hub focused on housing stabilization, workforce readiness, behavioral health, and other wraparound services for long-term success.

For more information, visit www.housing.hawaiicounty.gov.

Home Improvement Loan Program (HILP) Helps Residents Make Essential Repairs and Upgrades

The County of Hawai'i Office of Housing and Community Development (OHCD) recently launched the Home Improvement Loan Program (HILP) — a new initiative designed to help local homeowners make essential repairs and upgrades to their homes.

HILP provides low-interest loans ranging from \$2,500 to \$50,000 at a 3% simple interest rate to eligible low- and moderate-income homeowners. The program is intended to help families

repair, improve, or modernize the homes they personally occupy as their primary residence.

HILP also provides special support for kūpuna and residents with disabilities. Homeowners who are 62 years or older, or who have a disability, may be eligible to have 50% of the loan's principal balance forgiven at the end of the 15-year loan period.

Eligible repairs include:

- Repairing termite or wood rot damage

- Fixing a leaky roof or drainpipes
 - Lead-based paint abatement
 - Upgrading faulty electrical wiring or plumbing
 - Connecting to sewer systems
 - Termite treatment
- Installing solar water heating systems
- Modifications to accommodate persons with disabilities

For more information, please visit www.hawaiicounty.gov/hilp.

LAND TRUST: Model ensures homes remain affordable in perpetuity

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Under the community land trust model, families purchase homes through a long-term leasehold arrangement. The land itself remains in trust, helping reduce the cost of homeownership while ensuring the property remains affordable in perpetuity. Immediate family may inherit the lease, strengthening generational housing stability.

Pete Hoffmann, President of HALE O Hawai'i Board of Directors, emphasized the broader impact: "If this is successful, it opens a tremendous opportunity to expand perpetually affordable housing across Hawai'i Island.

We are proud to see the Uyeda family step into a home created under this model."

In addition to the Hilo home, HALE O Hawai'i has completed construction of a second single-family home in Volcano that was also supported by \$300,000 in Affordable Housing Production Program fund. HALE O Hawai'i is in the process of finalizing the sale of the home and long-term leasehold arrangement with the qualified buyer.

Meanwhile, the County has finalized the 65-year lease of another State-owned parcel in Hilo conveyed to the County by Executive Order to HALE O Hawai'i to support additional

affordable housing on Hawai'i Island.

Supporting community land trusts is one part of the County's larger strategy to address Hawai'i Island's affordable housing shortage. Alongside efforts to increase affordable rentals, incentivize private development, and rehabilitate and preserve existing housing, land trusts provide a powerful tool to create and preserve affordable homeownership opportunities that last across generations.

For more information about HALE O Hawai'i Community Land Trust, including how to get involved, please visit www.haleohawaii.org.

UPCOMING OFFICE CLOSURES

Tuesday, November 11 — Veterans Day
Thursday, November 27 — Thanksgiving Day
Thursday, December 25 — Christmas Day
Thursday, January 1 — New Year's Day



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