



**Waimea Nui Regional Plan Update
Beneficiary Consultation #4
Kūhiō Hale, Waimea, HI
August 5, 2025, 6:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.**

Attendance

Participants: While a total of 21 attendees signed in at the beneficiary consultation, twenty-six (26) attendees were counted. Of the attendees that signed in, nine (9) self-identified as lessees of Waimea Nui, two (2) identified as both lessees and applicants on the waitlist, two (2) were potential successors, four (4) identified as “other,” and four (4) did not indicate their beneficiary status.

Project Team:

- Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL): Lillie Makaila
- Townscape: Rachel Kapule and Gabrielle Sham

Handouts Provided (attached):

1. Meeting Agenda
2. HOW TO: Comment on the Draft Plan
3. Slideshow Presentation
4. Priority Project Profiles

Agenda

1. Sign-in
2. Welina, Pule, & Introductions
3. Presentation – Draft Regional Plan Update
4. Large Group Discussion – Priority Projects
5. Closing & Next Steps

Presentation

Lillie Makaila opened the meeting by introducing herself and the consultant team. A pule was offered by an attendee to begin the meeting. After the pule, Lillie reviewed the meeting agenda, shared expectations for the evening, and gave a brief overview of the priority project voting results. She described the voting process, the total number of ballots received, and the breakdown of the results. These details are available in the attached slideshow accompanying these notes.

Discussion on Priority Projects

Following the presentation, Lillie facilitated a group discussion to review the top five priority projects selected by homesteaders. For each project, she outlined key issues and opportunities, described the desired outcomes, and identified potential implementation steps. Meeting participants shared questions and comments, which are summarized in the bullet points below. Responses from DHHL are included in *italics*.

- PROJECT #1: Waimea Nui Hawaiian Homestead Community Initiative
 - No questions or comments.
- PROJECT #2: Equitable and Sustainable Water Access
 - Who is Waiola Honokaia?
 - An entity that was started in 2006. They applied to operate and maintain a water system at Honokaia but are currently at a standstill.
 - Please remind DHHL that in order to operate the five million gallon water tank, DHHL allows HELCO to run powerlines to that tank. Not one drop of water comes to us. DHHL never conducted beneficiary consultations to allow that powerline to run through homestead lands. When water is needed at Pa‘auilo and Honoka‘a, water passes through DHHL lands from Waimea.
 - *DHHL Planning Office requested funding for planning for a standpipe in this fiscal year’s budget. I recommend reaching out to your commissioners. We need to get DHHL, DWS, and beneficiaries working together to find a solution.*
 - We are paying too much for water in Pu‘ukapu.
 - *DHHL Planning Office requested funding for this fiscal year to conduct a water rate study.*
- PROJECT #3: Strategize and Initiate Subdivision/Commencement Date
 - Please adjust the language in the Past Actions section so it doesn’t say “lease” commencement date. We were already awarded our leases, so the commencement date wouldn’t change.
- PROJECT #4: Homestead Safety and Security Improvement Program
 - No questions or comments.
- PROJECT #5: Waimea Nui Agricultural and Pastoral Pilot Program
 - No questions or comments.

After reviewing all of the priority projects, Lillie raised a question that had been brought forward by a beneficiary regarding the term “Waimea Nui.” Some community members felt the term was not fully inclusive and were uncertain which homesteads it encompassed. In response, the Waimea Hawaiian Homesteaders’ Association (WHHA) explained that the term originated about 15 years ago. Originally, this region was referred to within DHHL simply as Pu‘ukapu. However, a new term was needed to represent all the homesteads in the area. The initial suggestion, Kohala Waho, was not adopted because it traditionally included Kawaihae, but that community wanted to establish its own distinct region. WHHA ultimately chose Waimea Nui, meaning “the vast Waimea” or “the

greater Waimea,” as Waimea has always stood independently. Waimea is the only land in Hawai‘i considered a kalana, a district within a district, rather than an ahupua‘a within a moku (district).

Overview of Draft Plan Comment Period

Lillie resumed the presentation to outline the process for providing feedback on the Draft Plan. She announced that the Draft Plan would be posted on the project webpage on Monday, August 11, 2025, and described four ways to submit comments: by postal mail, through an online Google Form, via email, or by phone. Hardcopy comment forms will be available for pickup at the Waimea Hawaiian Homesteaders’ Association and Hui Aloha Pu‘ukapu for those submitting by mail. Lillie asked participants how much time they would need to review and comment, and the group agreed that two weeks would be sufficient. Accordingly, the comment period will close on Monday, August 25, 2025. This expedited timeline will allow the Final Regional Plan Update to be completed in September, positioning the community to apply for grants when they open in October.

Closing & Next Steps

To conclude the meeting, Lillie reviewed the next steps. She and the consultant team will post the Draft Plan and commenting instructions on the project webpage and will notify beneficiaries by email once the plan is available, including a link to the online document. She noted that the Draft Plan will be presented to the Hawaiian Homes Commission in August for information only, with the Final Plan scheduled for presentation in September for approval.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.



Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, August 5, 2025

6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

PURPOSE: To present the Draft Waimea Nui Regional Plan Update and gather comments from the community.

OUTCOMES: By the end of the meeting, we will:

- Review the Priority Project voting results;
- Gather feedback from meeting participants on the Priority Project Profiles; and
- Understand how to provide comments on the Draft Plan.

SCHEDULE:

- ❖ Sign-in
- ❖ Welina, Pule, & Introductions
- ❖ Presentation – Draft Regional Plan Update
- ❖ Large Group Discussion – Priority Projects
- ❖ Next Steps & Closing

This is the FINAL beneficiary consultation for the Waimea Nui Regional Plan Update. DHHL staff will present the Draft Plan to the Commission at the next Hawaiian Homes Commission (HHC) meeting on August 18/19. To request to testify visit:

<https://dhhl.hawaii.gov/hawaiian-homes-commission-2025-meeting-schedule/>



HOW TO: Comment on the Draft Plan

Comments will be accepted until Monday, August 25th.

There are four ways to submit comments:

- 1) Complete the hardcopy Comment Form and mail it in to Townscape, Inc. Our address is provided on the form. *A postage stamp is required.*
- 2) Comment online using the QR code at the bottom of the page or through the following link: <https://bit.ly/waimea-nui-comments>
- 3) Email your comments to Rachel Kapule at rachel@townscapeinc.com
- 4) Call-in your comments to Rachel Kapule at 808-550-3895

Starting August 11th

READ THE DRAFT PLAN

https://bit.ly/dhhl_waimea



SUBMIT COMMENTS

<https://bit.ly/waimea-nui-comments>





Submit
comments
online



HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS TRUST
DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS

Read the
Draft Plan
Starting Aug 11th



WAIMEA NUI REGIONAL PLAN UPDATE

Please use this form to submit any questions or comments you may have on the Draft Plan. Completed forms may be mailed to Townscape by **Monday, August 25, 2025**. You may also submit comments online using the QR code in the upper left. The Draft Plan will be posted on the project website on Monday, August 11, 2025.

To review the Draft Plan, please visit **https://bit.ly/dhhl_waimea** or scan the QR code in the upper right.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please note that comments must include a name & one form of contact to be included in the Plan.

Name: _____ Phone: (_____) _____

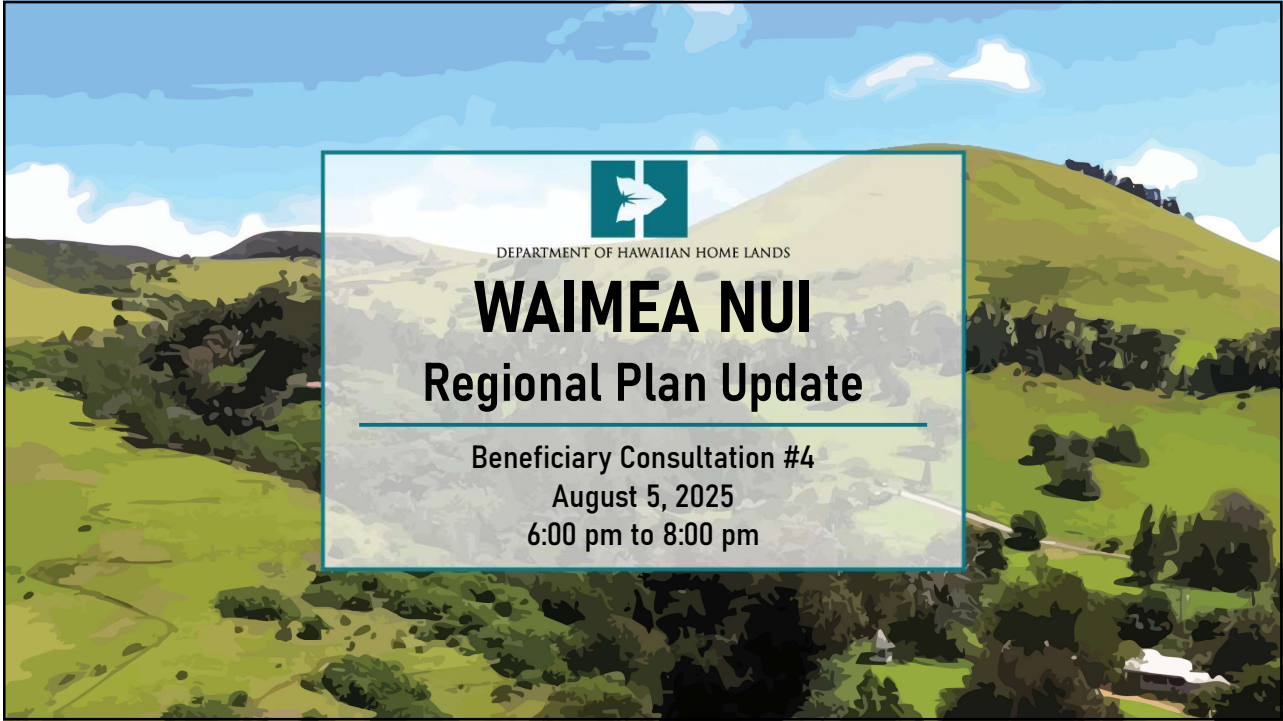
Address: _____ Email: _____

[Fold along lines, tape closed, add a stamp, and mail]

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

TOWNSCAPE, INC.

ATTN: Rachel Kapule
900 Fort Street Mall, Suite 1160
Honolulu, HI 96813



MEETING AGENDA



6:00 pm Welina, Pule & Introductions

6:15 pm Presentation - Draft Regional Plan Update

6:45 pm Large Group Discussion – Priority Projects

7:50 pm Next Steps & Closing



MEETING KULEANA

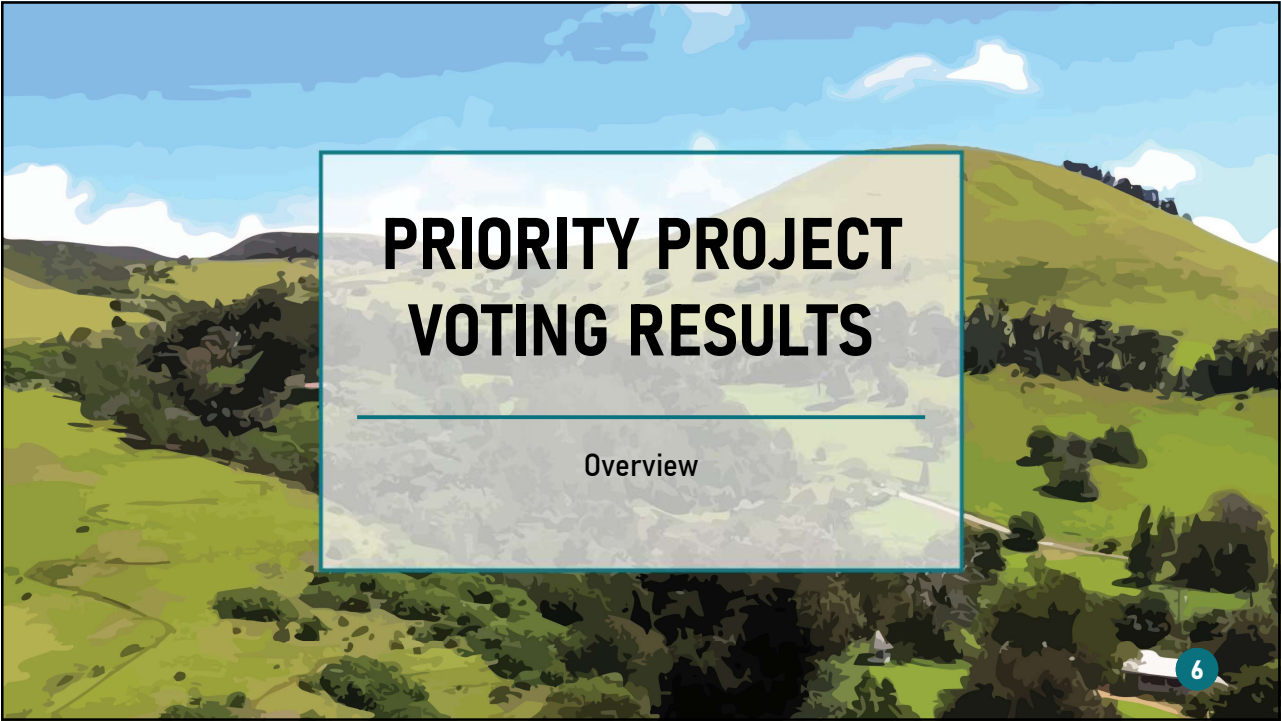
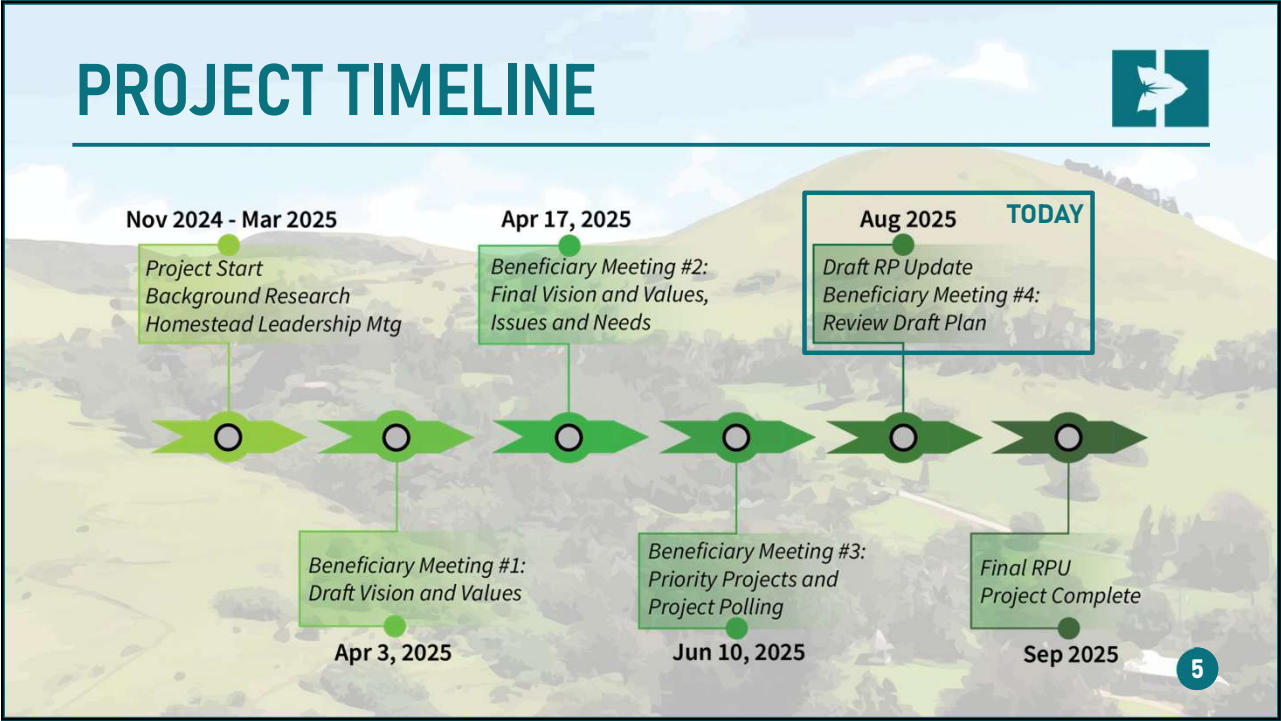


- **Be Open:** open your mind, ears and heart. Take home new ideas and information.
- **Be Comfortable:** move around and use facilities.
- **Be Respectful:** please do not interrupt the person that is talking, show aloha, treat others how you would like to be treated.
- **Cellphones off or on silent:** please take calls/texts outside.


MEETING OBJECTIVES



1. Review priority project voting results;
2. Discuss Priority Project Profiles; and
3. Understand how to provide comments on the Draft Plan.



PRIORITY PROJECT VOTING RESULTS



PROCESS

- BC #3 (June 10, 2025):** Finalized vision, values, and list of seven potential projects.
- Online Polling (Monday, June 16, to Monday, June 30):**
 - Voting notice posted on DHHL’s website and e-mailed/mailed to beneficiaries.
 - Beneficiary comments submitted via postal mail, Google Form, e-mail, and phone.


PARTICIPATION

- Ballots received:**

107 total	
– Lessees	35 (33%)
– Successors	42 (39%)
– Applicants	12 (11%)
– Other homestead members	18 (17%)

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PRIORITY PROJECT VOTING RESULTS



PROJECT	LESSEE VOTES	SUCCESSOR VOTES	APPLICANT VOTES	OTHER VOTES	TOTAL VOTES
Waimea Nui Hawaiian Homestead Community Initiative	85	144	27	22	278
Equitable and Sustainable Water Access	43	38	14	25	120
Strategize and Initiate Subdivision/Commencement Date	9	6	8	14	37
Homestead Safety and Security Improvement Program	13	7	3	13	36
Waimea Nui Agricultural and Pastoral Pilot Program	13	10	4	7	34
Homestead Community Benefits Program	7	3	1	5	16
Establish a Waimea Nui Advisory Committee	1	1	3	4	9

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PROJECT #1: Waimea Nui Hawaiian Homestead Community Initiative	
Issues & Opportunities	Desired Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kūpuna deserve support to age in place; existing homes are aging and hard to maintain and kūpuna housing is limited.• Establishing a homestead cemetery would allow families to keep kūpuna in Waimea after passing.• Dedicated, consistent spaces for classes and workshops would help preserve and pass down 'ike kūpuna.• Creating more opportunities for gatherings, events, and shared spaces can help homesteaders strengthen pilina across Waimea Nui.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build long-term care housing reserved for beneficiaries and provide in-home services for kūpuna in the homestead.• Create a homestead cemetery for beneficiaries in Waimea.• Construct/designate classrooms and spaces for cultural education.• Develop a multipurpose community complex with gathering spaces, recreation areas, farm lots, and commercial uses that support connection, food sovereignty, and economic self-sufficiency.

PROJECT #2: Equitable and Sustainable Water Access

Issues & Opportunities	Desired Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Consistent water access across homesteads is essential; some rely entirely on catchment (which have become unreliable during dry periods).Honokaia residents must haul water multiple times per week or pay high delivery costs when they were previously promised their own water system.Beneficiaries deserve fair water distribution; DHHL systems have pressure imbalances (some below 40 psi, others above 150 psi).Infrastructure (e.g., HELCO power lines, Ahualoa Well) running through DHHL land should contribute to homesteaders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provide reliable potable and non-potable water access across all Waimea Nui homesteads.Offer immediate relief for Honokaia through a nearby standpipe or DHHL-coordinated water hauling.Create a long-term regional water strategy with stable pressure, fill stations, and clear usage rights.Establish formal agreements to ensure utility infrastructure on DHHL land serves the trust and its beneficiaries.


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PROJECT #3: Strategize and Initiate Subdivision/Commencement Date

Issues & Opportunities	Desired Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Beneficiaries are waiting on a formal subdivision to acquire building permits, insurance, financing, and Tax Map Keys (TMKs).Homesteaders require addresses for effective emergency response and infrastructure.DHHL's attempts to initiate a new commencement date have not been fully supported by beneficiaries.Definitions of "commencement" differ amongst beneficiaries, DHHL, and the County.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Official subdivision and commencement date recognized by both DHHL and the County.Lessees can obtain permits, insurance, TMKs, and start the 7-year property tax grace period.Transparent, inclusive process that engages beneficiaries in decision-making.DHHL fulfills responsibilities tied to subdivision, including road and water system maintenance.

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PROJECT #4: Homestead Safety and Security Improvement Program



Issues & Opportunities	Desired Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Safety concerns throughout Pu'ukapu and other pastoral homesteads for emergency response and road maintenance need to be addressed.Traffic control measures are essential to deal with cars speeding and racing through homesteads.Homesteaders should not have to deal with trespassers, squatters, and unauthorized access to homestead lands and roadways.Improved coordination with law enforcement (HPD) and emergency responders would contribute to the safety of the homestead.Beneficiaries require improved signage and road conditions, as well as lot identification.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Install speed tables, security gates, and street cameras to improve safety.Develop a neighborhood watch program and emergency evacuation plan.Upgrade signage, communication systems, and address markers for emergency response.Improve road conditions using safer materials and establish a dedicated maintenance budget.

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PROJECT #5: Waimea Nui Agricultural and Pastoral Pilot Program



Issues & Opportunities	Desired Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Agricultural and pastoral lessees have very different needs that should be addressed individually.Providing new lessees with support would increase their success, as some are awarded lots without farming or ranching experience.Agricultural and pastoral lessees need access to resources, training, equipment, and funding.DHHL staff should have firsthand knowledge of agriculture and ranching challenges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Conduct needs assessments tailored to each homestead's agricultural or pastoral context.Provide technical assistance, training, infrastructure, and grant support.Strengthen food security and economic self-sufficiency for Waimea Nui and beyond.Create a beneficiary-led model that can be replicated across other homestead communities.

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NEXT STEPS



- Review the Draft Plan posted by Monday, August 11th
- Submit comments until Monday, August 25th
- To submit comments:
 - Complete hardcopy Comment Form
 - Complete online form: <https://bit.ly/waimea-nui-comments>
 - Email Rachel@townscapeinc.com
 - Call 808-550-3895

MAHALO

For more information, please contact:

Rachel Kapule, Planner
rachel@townscapeinc.com
(808) 550-3895



TOWNSCAPE, INC.
Environmental & Community Planning

Lillie Makaila, Planner
Lilliane.k.makaila@hawaii.gov
(808) 730-0352



DEPARTMENT OF
HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS

Or visit the project website at:
<https://dhhl.hawaii.gov/po/hawaii-island/waimea-nui-regional-plan-update-2025/>

Priority Projects

Following Beneficiary Consultation (BC) #3, Waimea Nui homesteaders were invited to participate in a poll to select the top five priority projects for the region from the list of seven project ideas identified at BC #3 and described in the section above. Attendees at BC#3 helped in creating the parameters for participating in the priority project selection as well. Based on that discussion, the following requirements were put in place:

- Waimea Nui homesteaders were able to vote via postal mail, an online form, e-mail, or phone.
- All participants were required to share their full name, a form of contact information, and their lot/lease number for their votes to be counted.
- All participants were asked to self-identify as a DHHL beneficiary (applicant, lessee, both or a potential successor) or as another member of the homestead (spouses or children in the homestead).
- Individuals could vote only once, ex: if an individual is both a lessee and an applicant, they may only participate once.
- Each participant was allocated a total of five votes and could vote for an individual project more than once.
- The poll was open from Monday, June 16, 2025 to Monday, June 30, 2025.

Notification and reminders of the voting process were e-mailed to Hui Aloha Pu'ukapu and the Waimea Hawaiian Homesteaders' Association for distribution within their membership and homestead networks. Information about voting details were also sent to beneficiary consultation attendees and posted on the project webpage hosted on DHHL's website. Additionally, a postcard notification was mailed to all Waimea Nui beneficiaries (existing lessees and applicants with Zip Codes in 96727 and 96743) directing them to the project webpage with instructions for participating in the poll.

As a result of this polling process, a total of 107 responses were collected. Not all participants used all five of their votes. Of those 107 individual participants: 35 identified as lessees, 12 as applicants, 42 as successors, with 83% of the participants being beneficiaries. A total of 18 individuals identified as other members of the homestead (i.e., children or spouses of beneficiaries) totaling 17% participation. The final voting results are displayed in the table below.

Project	Lessee Votes	Successor Votes	Applicant Votes	Other Votes	Total Votes	% of the Votes
Waimea Nui Hawaiian Homestead Community Initiative	85	144	27	22	278	52.4%
Equitable and Sustainable Water Access	43	38	14	25	120	22.6%
Strategize and Initiate Subdivision/Commencement Date	9	6	8	14	37	6.9%
Homestead Safety and Security Improvement Program	13	7	3	13	36	6.7%
Waimea Nui Agricultural and Pastoral Pilot Program	13	10	4	7	34	6.4%
Homestead Community Benefits Program	7	3	1	5	16	3%
Establish a Waimea Nui Advisory Committee	1	1	3	4	9	1.6%

NOTE: Those who selected “Applicant AND Lessee” were counted in the Lessee category and those who selected “Applicant AND Successor” were counted in the Applicant category.

Waimea Nui Hawaiian Homestead Community Initiative

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project expands upon the previously identified project of the Waimea Hawaiian Homestead Community Complex, which was selected as a priority in the 2012 Waimea Nui Regional Plan. It remains a top priority for the community today. Now called the Waimea Nui Hawaiian Homestead Community Initiative, this updated project incorporates key elements from the original concept, such as a community gathering space, cemetery, agricultural support facilities, and health services, while also responding to the updated needs in the region that have emerged over the past decade.

The community will continue phased development of the 191-acre parcel of land designated for Community Use, located in Pu'ukapu, south of Kūhiō Village and adjacent to the Pu'ukapu Agricultural and Pastoral homesteads. Existing facilities on this site include a 30-acre area designated to Kanu o Ka 'Āina New Century Public Charter School (K-12) and Kanu o Ka 'Āina Learning 'Ohana, a nonprofit that supports additional education programs on the parcel, such as Mālamapōki'i (early childhood education) and Kaho'iwai (adult teaching and learning). Hawaiian Homes Commission approval for the issuance of the General Lease to Waimea Nui Hawaiian Homesteaders' Association was previously approved and will be executed upon completion of the infrastructure development on the parcel. Infrastructure development is underway beyond the school's campus to expand the rest of the community complex on the remaining 161-acres.

In September 2023, DHHL received a grant from the Department of Defense, Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation for their Defense Community Infrastructure Program grant. Waimea Nui Community Development Corporation, the development arm of the WHHA, was selected as a subrecipient for this grant offering. A total of \$8.8 million dollars in funding was allocated to this project for infrastructure development and construction of an emergency operations center building, a hub to coordinate emergency response in the region to hazards such as wildfire. This grant includes \$6.3M in federal funds and \$1.5M in DHHL matching funds. Construction on roads was completed in Summer 2025. Water lines, installation of other utilities, and facility construction is a part of the next phase of the project. The entire project is expected to be completed in Summer 2026, as the grant period ends in December 2026.

Planned development for subsequent phases of the Community Initiative include: multipurpose spaces such as a Community Center for gatherings, workshops, and events; a Hawaiian cultural center with amphitheater for performances and events; a gym that also serves as an emergency shelter; and sports and recreation facilities such as a pool, track and field, baseball fields, walking paths, and a park. The plan includes an equestrian center and arena, a farmers' market, and a small-scale agricultural processing facility, along with a slaughterhouse and commercial kitchens to support food sovereignty and economic self-sufficiency. Commercial development such as a driving-range and other revenue-generating uses are also proposed to help sustain long-term operations. Additionally, the community is interested in exploring options such as a green waste digester, to produce their own energy and offset high electricity costs.

Additional components added to the Community Initiative Project reflect new priorities, particularly for kūpuna care. These include programs for in-home services such as roof repairs, yard work, grocery delivery, and outpatient medical assistance for kūpuna living in the homestead. Additionally, for those who may need assisted living and long-term care, the development of housing and facilities for kūpuna to age in place safely are critical. Dedicated spaces for cultural classes will provide opportunities to pass down ‘ike kūpuna and other place-based knowledge to the next generation. The project also includes programming and facilities that celebrate and perpetuate Waimea’s paniolo heritage. Dedicated space for equestrian facilities, livestock support facilities like holding pens for shipping cattle, and suitable space for paniolo events and heritage programs are vital to ensuring the legacy of the paniolo lifestyle in the region.

Lastly, the Community Initiative also contemplates homestead needs and concerns on Hawaiian Home Lands in Honokaia, Humu‘ula and Upper Pi‘ihonua. Homesteaders in Waimea Nui are interested in exploring opportunities for homesteaders to have more direct roles in stewardship and resource management in these areas. Homesteaders are also interested in exploring opportunities for capacity building, revenue generation, and photovoltaic energy initiatives.

PAST ACTIONS

- 2000 – Kanu O Ka ‘Āina New Century Public Charter School is constructed and open for enrollment.
- 2015 – HHC issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Waimea Hawaiian Homestead Association’s (WHHA) Environmental Assessment (EA) and granted a 65-year long-term land disposition to commence upon the completion of the infrastructure on the parcel. WHHA has completed the internal road network, and is progressing on finishing development of the remaining infrastructure.
- 2022 – HHC issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the KOKO Health Center Environmental Assessment (EA). WHHA secured funding for its initial development phase and is seeking more funding for future phases.
- 2023 to Present – Waimea Nui Community Development Corporation, with the assistance of DHHL, received federal funding for the development of critical infrastructure and construction of an emergency operations center to provide coordination and response for wildfire and other emergencies in the region. Construction began in October 2024, and is scheduled to be completed in Summer 2026, as the grant period ends in December 2026.

COMMUNITY INPUT

The Waimea Nui Hawaiian Homestead Community Initiative has been shaped by years of beneficiary input and continues to reflect the growing needs of homesteaders. At both Beneficiary Consultations #1 and #2, community members emphasized the urgent need for kūpuna care. Many kūpuna are aging in homes built in the 1950s and are struggling to keep up with the maintenance that homeownership requires. Additionally, some shared that they would rather remain in their

homes than be relocated to a care facility. One beneficiary pointed out that even if kūpuna wanted to move to a care facility, all the beds are full; “when a higher level of care is needed for our kūpuna, where do they go?” The community made it clear that long-term care options should be reserved specifically for DHHL beneficiaries and not open to the general public. Homesteaders in Waimea Nui want to be able to age safely in place and have the necessary support facilities to remain in the homestead as they age.

The desire for a cemetery where homesteaders can remain in Waimea even after passing was also a critical theme identified. Community members shared that honoring kūpuna in both life and death is an important value, and that having a designated resting place on homestead land was long overdue. Beyond a cemetery for homesteaders in Waimea Nui, the idea of creating reinternment sites for reburial of disturbed iwi kūpuna was also identified as important in the region.

In both consultations, homesteaders also highlighted the importance of passing down cultural knowledge, such as inoa ‘āina, pule, and oli, but noted that there have been significant challenges to access to consistent space to hold classes or community workshops. Cultural practitioners described being displaced from multiple venues throughout Waimea and shared that Kūhiō Hale, while used for hula and family parties, is not a dedicated space for beneficiary use. “It doesn’t feel like our space,” one participant said. Others expressed frustration that they have had events canceled to make way for DHHL’s use. The community called for dedicated facilities that can be accessed freely and consistently by beneficiaries, a reservation process that is more conducive to their needs, and priority for beneficiary use over other uses.

Building pilina was another strong theme expressed by beneficiaries at the meetings. Participants said they wanted more opportunities to gather and connect with one another, whether through an annual events, workshops, or homestead pā’ina. Some shared that they don’t know all of their neighbors and wanted more opportunities to strengthen relationships within the homestead and between other homesteads. The community identified the Community Initiative with its many components, as a critical opportunity to bring everyone together and restore that sense of connection across Waimea Nui.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this project is to create a thriving community complex that honors kūpuna, strengthens pilina, perpetuates cultural knowledge, and supports long-term self-governance for Waimea Nui homesteaders. By providing in-home services and beneficiary-reserved long-term care housing, the initiative fulfills the value of *Caring for the Wellbeing of Our Kūpuna*, allowing kūpuna to age in place with safety and support. Dedicated classrooms, gathering spaces, and programming will ensure that ‘ike kūpuna can be passed down to the next generation, reflecting the value of *Perpetuating our Cultural Traditions*. Through sports and recreation facilities, community events, and shared spaces for food production, the project fosters *Building Pilina* across the diverse homesteads of Waimea Nui. And by including agricultural processing, commercial kitchens, and energy independence strategies, it upholds *Being Self-Sufficient and Self-Governing*.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION STEPS

For programmatic components:

1. Secure funding.
2. Implement programs.
3. Operation and Maintenance.
4. Reporting and Monitoring.

For spatial components & facilities:

1. Secure funding for phases & components.
2. Planning and design.

If located on the Community Initiative parcel in Pu'ukapu:

3. Compliance with HRS Chapter 343 and Chapter 6E.

*may require HHC approval

4. Permitting and Construction.
5. Operation and Maintenance.
6. Reporting and Monitoring.

If located on other DHHL lands (designated for non-homesteading uses):

3. Land Use Request Application for a land disposition.

*For projects and their components identified and documented in the regional plan, the beneficiary consultation requirement has been fulfilled through the priority project selection process and additional consultation is not required.

4. Issuance of the Right of Entry for due diligence.
5. Compliance with HRS Chapter 343 and Chapter 6E.

*may require HHC approval

6. HHC approval for the issuance of the long-term land disposition.
7. Permitting and Construction.
8. Operation and Maintenance.
9. Monitoring and Reporting.

Equitable and Sustainable Water Access

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Waimea Nui beneficiaries have identified water access as a critical need in the region, including access to water for household use, agriculture, ranching, and the availability of water for fire suppression and response. This project seeks to develop more equitable and sustainable access to water for all homesteads across the region, ensuring an affordable and reliable supply of both potable and non-potable water to serve the homesteads. Beneficiaries have emphasized that current access is inconsistent, with some areas entirely reliant on rainwater catchment, a source that is diminishing as a result of climate change. Extended dry periods have made this system unreliable. Lack of water infrastructure for pastoral homesteaders across Waimea Nui, especially in Honokaia, forces lessees to haul water from the Waimea District Office multiple times per week or pay for costly deliveries. Past and on-going issues, including litigation, between homesteaders and the Department regarding water has increased tensions and exacerbated frustration with the Department for lack of progress, slow development, and broken promises.

This priority project seeks to implement the following:

- Address critical water needs in Honokaia.
- Provide affordable, safe, and reliable options for potable and non-potable water to all homesteads in Waimea Nui.
- Expand capacity for water access during emergencies.

The Honokaia Pastoral Lots were created in 2005 by DHHL and involve land that has been in continuous ranching use for two centuries. Subdivision into 42 lots was initiated, and a non-potable, gravity-fed water system was proposed to service all the homestead lots. Leases were issued between 2004-2007, including three lots that were awarded as additional acreage to existing Pu'ukapu pastoral lessees.

The idea of constructing a standpipe for access to water in Honokaia using the existing County DWS water system was suggested. This idea would relocate a portion of the allocation of water used at the water spigot at the WHDO to the proposed standpipe in Honokaia to relieve the burden of hauling water to Honokaia.

Across the Pu'ukapu water system users are experiencing pressure imbalances due to variations in elevation. In some areas, water pressure may fall below the Department of Water Supply's minimum standard of 40 psi, while other areas exceed 150 psi. Beneficiaries have asked the Department to take action to stabilize water pressure and ensure fair distribution of water across homestead lots. Beneficiaries are also interested in having the opportunity to operate the Pu'ukapu water system as they previously were a vendor for the water system operation and maintenance.

Homesteaders have a strong desire for the Department to improve transparency and access to information regarding water sources, water agreements, existing systems, and future water development plans. Homesteaders would like to see the Department take a more active role in advocating for interim in-stream flow standards, particularly in the Waimea Aquifer where County

and private water users take up much of the capacity in the region. Additionally, the project aims to address long-standing concerns about easements for utility infrastructure on Hawaiian Home Lands that does not directly benefit homesteaders. For example, HELCO currently runs power across homestead land to supply power to the Ahualoa Water system, even though the water infrastructure does not serve the homesteads. Beneficiaries have called for a formal agreement with the County and other utility purveyors to resolve these issues and ensure that infrastructure on Hawaiian Home Lands provides equitable benefit to the trust.

*Additional figures and data on the Pu'ukapu system will be incorporated from the FEA:

https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/erp/EA_EIS_Library/2010-03-23-HA-FEA-Puukapu-Hybrid-Water-System.pdf

*Additional figures and data on the proposed Honokaia Non-Potable Water System from the FEA:

<https://dhhl.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/G-1-FEA-Honokaia.pdf>

PAST ACTIONS

- 2009 – Honokaia 'Ohana along with a number of Honokaia lessees or individuals filed a complaint against the HHC, DHHL and Chairperson regarding the Department's failure to provide water to the Honokaia Pastoral Homestead.
- 2010 – HHC issuance of a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Proposed Pu'ukapu Hybrid Water System.
- 2013 – Settlement with Honokaia 'Ohana et. Al. including the agreement to develop a non-potable, gravity-fed water system for Honokaia Pastoral Homestead.
- 2014 – Construction of the Pu'ukapu Hybrid Water system to provide non-potable water for 184 ranch lots in the Pu'ukapu pastoral homestead including: pipelines, two reservoirs, four tanks for firefighting, two booster stations and a 12,000 gal pressure-breaker tank.
- 2015 – HHC issuance of a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Proposed Honokaia Non-Potable Water System.
- 2017 – Completion of a Cost of Water Study on existing DHHL water systems, including the Pu'ukapu Hybrid water system.
- 2020 – Approval of license to operate and maintain a non-potable stock water system pursuant to Honokaia 'Ohana et. Al. v Masagatani, et. Al., Civil No. 09-1-1615-07, a water system meant to supplement individual catchment systems with a 6-mi pipeline and 100,000 gal storage tank to serve 42 lots.

COMMUNITY INPUT

Access to water was consistently identified as a foundational need for the future any successful homestead in Waimea Nui. While not always the most talked about issue during discussions, community members agreed that without water, none of the other priority projects could move forward. The need was especially urgent in pastoral and agricultural lots, where beneficiaries reported ongoing struggles to access both potable and non-potable water.

Participants emphasized that water access should be equitable across all homesteads. One lessee shared that if one homestead has access to potable water or water hauling options, others should too. Fire prevention and emergency response were also noted as critical concerns, with several homesteaders stressing the importance of having water available for these purposes.

Some beneficiaries raised concerns about the extraction of water from local streams, noting that drying waterways not only harms ecosystems but also erases the living connection to place. One participant asked how they could teach their children the inoa 'āina of specific streams and areas if those features no longer exist.

Additional comments submitted during the project voting process further underscored the urgency of the issue:

- Honokaia needs water!!!
- Water is needed for ALL to function.
- Wai is Life. Without water, there is no self-sustainability.
- Honokaia residential primary lots need water, infrastructure, [septic], communications, and safety, to live.
- Date of water access? Need water NOW! Previous DHHL personnel did nothing to assist the ranchers with water. Many pleadings and begging went unheeded since 2006. Auwe.
- The HHCA establishes a fiduciary duty—meaning DHHL must act in the best interests of the beneficiaries, managing trust resources prudently; We cannot ranch without water.
- We all at Honokaia have been waiting many, many years for access to water for our lands, our animals, and ourselves. It has cost us so very much money and time to build water tank systems and to buy and/or haul water to those systems.
- For 18 years, since my great-grandfather was awarded our homestead, we still don't have water. And yet, DHHL allowed HELCO to install power lines on DHHL land right next to our property to operate the Ahualoa well! That well supplies water to everyone except Honokaia homesteaders. Infrastructure is literally passing through DHHL land, but beneficiaries are denied water.
- Section 101(b)(4) of the HHCA explicitly mandates the State to provide “adequate amounts of water and supporting infrastructure” for homestead lands, ensuring those lands are “usable and accessible.” This means DHHL is legally required to secure water rights—via licenses or eminent domain—and develop delivery systems to serve homesteads.
- It's so dry in Honokaia that we're hauling water twice daily—and it's getting pretty tough. The trailer full of water is so heavy that it has caused the ground to sink, so we're having to “lift” it just to get the water flowing into our temporary tanks. Definitely not easy or safe. We only have one truck, so while we're hauling, we can't use it for anything else. Because we're hauling so much, we have to leave the trailer parked, which risks it coming loose and rolling away. Bottom line: We need relief from DHHL: a pipe stand & 2500 gallon tank as an interim solution.

OBJECTIVE

By ensuring equitable and sustainable access to water, this project directly supports almost all of the community values of *Caring for the Wellbeing of Our Kūpuna, Creating a Safe and Secure Community, Perpetuating our Cultural Traditions, Building Pili*, and *Being Self-Sufficient and Self-Governing*. Water is essential, not only for drinking and daily living, but also for growing food, raising animals, and sustaining Waimea Nui's homesteads.

Reliable water access allows homesteaders to care for their land, support subsistence and agricultural practices, and protect their homes from fire. It is also foundational to developing the kūpuna housing and shared community spaces envisioned in other priority projects. Bathrooms, landscaping, and drinking water are all necessary for these spaces to function. And these spaces, in turn, will allow the community to come together, hold gatherings, and pass down 'ike kūpuna to the next generation.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION STEPS

HONOKAIA HOMESTEAD

Short-term:

1. Secure funding for interim water access for Honokaia Pastoral lessees via standpipe.
2. Create an agreement with County DWS to reallocate a portion of the water being used currently by Honokaia lessees who haul water from the water fill spigot at the WHDO to the new standpipe.
3. Compliance with Chapter 343 and Chapter 6E.
4. Construction of a water standpipe for existing pastoral lessees in Honokaia.
 - a. Site near existing DWS water lines.
5. Secure, operate & maintain.

Long-term:

1. Secure funding for the Honokaia Non-Potable Water System to serve the Honokaia lessees, a gravity-fed system with 6 miles of pipelines, a 100,000 gallon storage tank, and service to 42-parcels to be operated and maintained by Wai Ola Honokaia.
2. Construction of the planned Honokaia Non-Potable Water System.
3. Operation and Maintenance.
4. Monitoring and Reporting.

WAIMEA NUI REGION

1. Additional beneficiary consultation to discuss the full extent of water-related issues, challenges and opportunities in the Waimea Nui region.
2. Development of a plan of action to address the results of the beneficiary consultation.
3. Aggressive implementation and advocacy related to the DHHL Water Policy Plan, which includes maintaining the priority policies of:

- a. Expressly determine and plan for future water needs and actively participate in broader water management, use and protection efforts in Hawai'i in order to secure water.
- b. Aggressively exercise, reclaim, and protect Hawaiian home land water kuleana.
- c. Develop, manage, and steward water in a manner that balances cost, efficiency measures, and Public Trust uses in the short and long term.
- d. Affirmatively communicate our decisions, our reasoning, and our performance in managing, stewarding, and using water before and after making major water decisions.

Working towards the priority goals of:

- a. Affirmatively communicate with beneficiaries regarding water decisions, performance, and water rights on a regional and annual basis.
- b. Aggressively, proactively, consistently and comprehensively advocate for the kuleana of the beneficiaries, the DHHL, and the HHC to water before all relevant agencies and entities.
- c. Develop and manage a Water Assets Inventory (WAI).
- d. Support watershed protection and restoration on DHHL lands and source areas for DHHL water.

Strategize and Initiate Subdivision/Commencement Date with the County of Hawai'i

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Homesteaders in the Pu'ukapu Pastoral Lots have long faced challenges due to the lack of formal subdivision with the County of Hawai'i. This project seeks to initiate an inclusive process, with direct involvement from Pu'ukapu beneficiaries, to agree on the implementation of an amended lease commencement date which would include officially establishing subdivision boundaries, securing Tax Map Keys (TMKs) and physical addresses, and commencing the seven-year grace period for real property taxes on pastoral lots in Pu'ukapu.

Without full subdivision approval by the County of Hawai'i, lessees cannot obtain building permits for essential structures such as dwellings and agricultural buildings. This creates challenges for homesteaders in securing property insurance or accessing traditional financing for existing or planned improvements, leaving homesteaders vulnerable and limiting their ability to invest in or protect their property. The large, rural nature of the Pu'ukapu Pastoral homestead and expansive existing gravel roadway network complicates emergency response, making it harder for first responders to locate and assist homesteaders in emergency situations. Homesteaders have expressed concerns regarding the extreme dust on the roadways, shortened sight distances, hazardous road conditions, trespassing, speeding, illegal activity, and complex road maintenance and repair.

The maintenance of the road network is the responsibility of the Department, and is handled by the WHDO staff. Requests for budget for maintenance equipment and materials by WHDO have gone unfunded. Vacant positions have been hard to fill. Availability of preferred materials has been a challenge. Staff and homesteaders alike recognize that the existing road networks need improvement, and are working to prioritize the most hazardous areas. Previous studies identified a number of unsafe road conditions and proposed potential solutions to improve the conditions. Additional resources must be allocated to addressing these issues, including funding and technical assistance.

A core part of this project will be to understand the potential impacts of an amended commencement date on homesteaders who are living in the homestead. Currently, there is not pathway for Pu'ukapu pastoral homesteaders to build permitted structures in the homestead because of the lack of formal subdivision with the County. The first pastoral leases in Pu'ukapu were awarded in 1952. Some of the 180+ lots in Pu'ukapu have dwellings and agricultural structures built on them, and it is unclear if the County would be willing to offer permits to these structures that are already built.

This project is meant to address concerns with formal subdivision, amended commencement date for collection of real property taxes, and ability for homesteaders to build permitted structures on their lots. Implementation of this project will bring together DHHL, the County of Hawai'i, and Pu'ukapu homesteaders to ensure that DHHL beneficiaries can access the full range of benefits and resources to which they are entitled.

PAST ACTIONS

- 1952 – The first 12 pastoral lots were awarded in Pu‘ukapu.
- 1985 – DHHL launched the Acceleration Program to expedite awarding of homesteads even though site improvements were not provided .
- 1990 – Lot selection and awards for Pu‘ukapu pastoral, along with Humu‘ula and Kamā‘oa-Pu‘ueo held in Waimea. DHHL completed a “paper subdivision” of approximately 4,600 acres in Pu‘ukapu, dividing the area into 184 lots, including:
 - 97 leases - 10 acres
 - 54 leases - 15 acres
 - 17 leases - 20 acres
 - 8 leases - 100 acres
 - 8 leases - 200 acres
- 1991 – Lease signing and commencement.
- 1998 – Gravel/cinder road network completed.
- 2000 – WHDO staff met with County of Hawai‘i (COH) Planning Department to request consideration of subdivision approval for 184 lots. Preliminary approval of the paper subdivision.
- 2009 – The COH approved the Pu‘ukapu pastoral subdivision, created new county plat maps and individual tax map keys were assigned to 184 lots of record. Route slips to identify lessee and respective parcel number have not been issued to the COH.
- 2025 – HHC deferred the proposal to establish June 1, 2025, as the official lease commencement date following requests from beneficiaries for more consultation and clarity.

COMMUNITY INPUT

Homesteaders expressed frustration with DHHL’s March 2025 proposal to amend the lease commencement date to June 1, 2025, as beneficiaries feel that they were not adequately consulted despite asking to be included in the process on multiple occasions at past HHC meetings. Many of the beneficiaries who opposed the approval of the commencement shared concerns about what would happen to existing structures once commencement is approved. While there is broad support for establishing a commencement date, beneficiaries emphasized the importance of ensuring that the process is inclusive and transparent. They expressed a strong willingness to collaborate with DHHL on this and asked to be engaged moving forward. Beneficiaries have asked that issues regarding concerns about the road network, risks to safety, emergency response challenges, and impacts of commencement on existing structures be discussed more fully with beneficiary input prior to HHC action on subdivision and an amended commencement date.

OBJECTIVE

This project supports the values of *Being Self-Sufficient and Self-Governing, Creating a Safe and Secure Community*, and *Collaborating and Building Shared Kuleana with DHHL*. By implementing this project, beneficiaries will be able to secure building permits, begin their seven-year property tax grace period, and have their names recognized on the county real property documents as lessees. These are essential for building dwellings, agricultural structures, investing in infrastructure, and insuring their property. More broadly, this project reinforces the principle that beneficiaries should be informed, included, and supported in the various stages of homestead development that impact them, ensuring transparency, accountability, and shared kuleana across agencies.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION STEPS

COMMENCEMENT

1. DHHL staff to hold additional beneficiary consultation meetings with Pu'ukapu pastoral homesteaders to discuss issues, challenges and concerns with the proposed completion of the formal subdivision process (submittal of the route slip from DHHL to COH) and amended commencement date.
2. DHHL staff to research and identify potential pathways for addressing unpermitted structures either via County processes or via DHHL issuance of permits.
3. Once a pathway has a majority of agreement amongst homesteaders, DHHL will proceed with the formal subdivision process and amended commencement date, targeting the HHC meeting scheduled in West Hawai'i, likely May 2026.

ROAD SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

4. A working group of WHDO staff, DHHL Planning Office staff, Hui Aloha Pu'ukapu and Pu'ukapu pastoral lessees to identify priority road pilot projects for improvements using existing budget, staff and equipment to tackle the most critical road safety areas.
5. The working group will continue to identify priority road improvement areas and implement improvements.
6. DHHL and HHC to consistently allocate appropriate funding to road safety improvements and maintenance of the road networks.
7. DHHL staff to include updates on progress at the annual West Hawai'i HHC meetings and community meetings.

Homestead Safety and Security Improvement Program

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Homestead Safety and Security Improvement Program aims to enhance community safety across Waimea Nui by addressing critical issues such as traffic control, emergency response, fire prevention, and unauthorized access. This project includes the installation of speed tables, security gates, street cameras, and improved signage to reduce speeding, demarcate homestead boundaries clearly, and prevent trespassing. Signage will be strategically placed to avoid redundancy and visual clutter while effectively communicating that these are Hawaiian Home Lands.

Residents have reported speeding, street racing, and an increasing number of non-homesteaders using internal roads throughout the existing road networks. These concerns will be addressed through traffic calming measures, monitoring, and better collaboration with the Department and law enforcement. A neighborhood watch program, possibly supported by camera systems and rotating volunteer patrols, is also proposed to increase visibility and deter criminal activity.

To improve emergency preparedness, this project will develop a homestead-wide evacuation plan and ensure that lots are uniformly identified with addresses or location markers. Upgrades to communication systems will support faster, more effective emergency response. Modifying fire suppression systems to better accommodate wildfire response equipment and clarifying emergency access protocols, especially in gated areas such as Honokaia, will also be prioritized.

Risk mitigation will address ongoing issues such as loose dogs and livestock, squatters, and trespassers, particularly in areas with limited oversight. The program also emphasizes long-term infrastructure improvements, including the use of higher-quality, safer materials for road surfacing and/or other methods to reduce dust and improve health concerns for beneficiaries in the Pu'ukapu pastoral homestead. Finally, this project calls for a dedicated budget for ongoing road maintenance and better enforcement mechanisms to support a safe and secure homestead environment.

PAST ACTIONS

- N/A

COMMUNITY INPUT

Throughout beneficiary consultations, safety and security were major concerns. Many homesteaders spoke about fires, speeding, and road conditions, but also about how these issues made the community feel exposed and disrespected. Residents described non-beneficiaries racing through the homesteads, parking to walk their dogs, or using the area as a cut-through. "Cars drive 100 miles an hour past my house," one person shared, while others called for speed tables, gates, and cameras to help deter dangerous behavior.

In Honokaia, squatters and trespassers were a recurring issue. Homesteaders worried about increased foot traffic and theft, and shared frustrations about the lack of coordination with HPD and DHHL. Some expressed that they were taking safety into their own hands, locking gates and educating trespassers directly. There was also concern about signage being either ineffective or sending the wrong message, for example, the sign as you enter Honokaia that just says, “road closed.”

OBJECTIVE

This project supports the values of *Creating a Safe and Secure Community* and *Being Self-Sufficient and Self-Governing*. When roads are maintained, signage is clear, and emergency services can respond effectively, homesteaders can feel safe in their homes and confident in their ability to protect their families. Speed tables, gates, and cameras also give the community more control over their environment and help reduce unwanted activity. Through a neighborhood watch program and emergency evacuation plans, beneficiaries can protect themselves, their families, and their land without having to wait for outside support.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION STEPS

1. A working group of WHDO staff, DHHL Planning Office staff, and lessees to identify priority pilot projects for improvements using existing budget, staff and equipment to tackle the most critical road safety areas.
2. The working group will continue to identify priority improvement areas and implement improvements.
3. DHHL and HHC to consistently allocate appropriate funding to safety improvements and maintenance of the road networks.
4. DHHL staff to include updates on progress at the annual West Hawai'i HHC meetings and community meetings.

Waimea Nui Agricultural and Pastoral Pilot Program

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This pilot program aims to strengthen the success of homestead farmers and ranchers through a collaborative, place-based approach. Recognizing that agricultural and pastoral lessees face unique challenges that cannot be addressed through a one-size-fits-all approach, the project will bring together beneficiaries, DHHL, and other resource partners to identify and respond to the specific needs of each homestead area.

Key components of the pilot program include conducting a community-driven needs assessment, providing support for the development of critical agricultural infrastructure such as fencing, irrigation, and offering peer-to-peer and hands-on technical assistance and training to lessees. Support may also include land dispositions for siting facilities, as well as technical assistance in securing funding, accessing support programs or capacity building resources.

By investing in our agricultural and pastoral lessees, this project will strengthen long-term food security and economic self-sufficiency, not only for Waimea Nui, but for other homestead communities across Hawai'i. If successful, the pilot can serve as a replicable model for beneficiary-led agriculture and ranching statewide.

PAST ACTIONS

- 2025 – DHHL planning office hired an Agricultural Program Specialist to provide technical assistance to agricultural and pastoral homesteaders.

COMMUNITY INPUT

A common theme across all three beneficiary consultations was the frustration that agricultural and pastoral homesteaders are often grouped together, despite having very different needs. Beneficiaries emphasized that the challenges faced by farmers are not the same as those faced by ranchers, and that even within farming communities, needs can vary significantly from one homestead to another.

Several attendees also raised concerns that beneficiaries can be awarded agricultural or pastoral lots without having any prior farming or ranching experience. They emphasized the need for training opportunities, especially for new lessees. Participants also expressed that DHHL staff working with agricultural and pastoral lessees should have direct knowledge or experience in farming or ranching, so they can better understand and respond to the unique challenges these homesteaders face. In addition to technical knowledge, beneficiaries highlighted the importance of support in networking, accessing grants, equipment, and funding sources needed to get started and sustain their operations over time.

OBJECTIVE

This project aligns with the values of *Perpetuating our Cultural Traditions, Building Pilina, Being Self-Sufficient and Self-Governing*, and *Collaborating and Building Shared Kuleana with DHHL*.

Through farming and ranching, beneficiaries have the opportunity to pass down traditional practices and learn to view the 'āina in the same way as our kūpuna did. The pilot program fosters pilina by encouraging cooperation and shared learning amongst homesteaders. It supports self-sufficiency by helping homesteaders generate food and income from their lands. Lastly, it models partnership by allowing for open communication between DHHL and its beneficiaries.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION STEPS

For programmatic components:

1. Secure funding.
2. Complete needs assessment.
3. Implement programs.
4. Operation and Maintenance.
5. Reporting and Monitoring.

For spatial components & facilities:

1. Secure funding for phases & components.
2. Planning and design.

If located on the Community Initiative parcel in Pu'ukapu:

3. Compliance with HRS Chapter 343 and Chapter 6E.

*may require HHC approval

4. Permitting and Construction.
5. Operation and Maintenance.
6. Reporting and Monitoring.

If located on other DHHL lands (designated for non-homesteading uses):

3. Land Use Request Application for a land disposition.

*For projects and their components identified and documented in the regional plan, the beneficiary consultation requirement has been fulfilled through the priority project selection process and additional consultation is not required.

4. Issuance of the Right of Entry for due diligence.
5. Compliance with HRS Chapter 343 and Chapter 6E.

*may require HHC approval

6. HHC approval for the issuance of the long-term land disposition.

7. Permitting and Construction.

8. Operation and Maintenance.

9. Monitoring and Reporting.

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