

Mana i Mauli Ola

OHA's 15-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2020-2035

*Revised 2026: Revisions approved by the OHA Board of Trustees
on June 25, 2026*

OHA's Strategic Plan "Mana i Mauli Ola" (Strength to Wellbeing) is grounded in three foundations essential to Native Hawaiian wellbeing: 'Ohana (family), Mo'omeheu (culture), and 'Āina (land and water). These foundations guide OHA's work across four strategic directions – Education, Health, Housing, and Economic Stability – to improve the conditions and collective wellbeing of Native Hawaiians.

At the center of this work is ea.

Ea is the living expression of Native Hawaiian self-determination—the ability of the lāhui to sustain and govern itself across generations through the interconnectedness of people, 'āina, culture, knowledge, and governance.

When Native Hawaiians are rooted in culture, connected to 'āina, equipped with knowledge and resources, and empowered to shape their futures, collective wellbeing and intergenerational abundance grow.

Like the wayfinders and navigators who charted courses across our ocean highways, we journey toward our destination by observing the conditions around us, drawing upon ancestral knowledge, and adapting our course as circumstances change. Different journeys may require different pathways and guides, but our destination remains constant.

Mana i Mauli Ola charts OHA's course toward ea and a thriving, abundant lāhui.



OUR 3 FOUNDATIONS



‘Ohana | ‘Ulu

‘Ohana is represented here with ‘ulu (breadfruit). According to mo‘olelo, the god Kū fell in love with a human woman. He married her and together they raised a family until a time of terrible famine. Driven by love for his ‘ohana, Kū transformed himself into an ‘ulu tree so they would not starve. That was the first ‘ulu tree; all ‘ulu trees are descended from Kū.



Mo‘omeheu | Palapalai

In the time before, our kūpuna had no written language. The ‘ike and mo‘olelo of our people were passed from one generation to the next through oli and hula. Palapalai was one of the plants kapu to Laka, the goddess of hula. Palapalai is often worn by dancers or used to adorn the hula kuahu (altar). Because of this connection, it has been chosen to represent culture.



‘Āina | Kalo

According to tradition, Wākea and Ho‘ohōkūkalani had a stillborn son they named Hāloa. The grieving parents buried their child and from that spot the first kalo plant began to grow. They later had another, healthy boy, who they also named Hāloa. He became the first Hawaiian, and thus, kalo is considered the older brother of the Hawaiian people. Today, Kalo has become a modern symbol of mālama ‘āina.

OUR 4 DIRECTIONS



Educational Pathways | Kukui

In traditional times, the oily kernel of the kukui nut was used for lamps. Indeed, “kukui” also means lamp, light or torch, and because of this, the kukui tree has long been a symbol of enlightenment. Education is a path towards enlightenment; acquiring ‘ike (knowledge) and no‘eau (wisdom), learning to think critically and to apply what is learned - these skills are critical to moving our lāhui forward.



Health Outcomes | Noni

Noni is a “canoe plant” brought to Hawai‘i from the South Pacific by the earliest Hawaiian voyagers specifically for its numerous medicinal properties. While its taste and smell are rather unpleasant, noni was known to boost the immune system and to purify the blood. It was used to treat diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, and as a poultice to treat various skin diseases.



Quality Housing | ‘Ōhia

As beautiful as they are strong, ‘ōhia lehua are the first trees able to grow on barren lava fields and reclaim the land. It is a dominant tree of the Hawaiian rainforest, and considered a manifestation of the god, Kū. While the tree’s delicate blossoms and liko (leaf buds) are used to fashion lei, ‘ōhi‘a wood is exceptionally hard and was used traditionally for many purposes, such as framing houses.



Economic Stability | Wai

Pure, fresh water (wai) is the essence and source of all life. The word “wai” also means to retain, leave or earn, while “waiwai” means wealth, emphasizing the value of water. Our kūpuna understood that this precious resource was a gift to be carefully managed and shared. Wai flowed down from upland rainforests, nourishing the lands below which led to abundance and prosperity that enriched the entire community.

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Our Mission

To mālama Hawai'i's people and environmental resources, and OHA's assets, toward ensuring the perpetuation of the culture, the enhancement of lifestyle and the protection of entitlements of Native Hawaiians, while enabling the building of a strong and healthy Hawaiian people and lāhui, recognized nationally and internationally.

Our Vision

Ho'oulu Lāhui Aloha

OHA's vision statement (To Raise a Beloved Lāhui) blends the thoughts and leadership of both King Kalākaua and his sister, Queen Lili'uokalani. Both faced tumultuous times as we do today, and met their challenges head on.

"Ho'oulu Lāhui" was King Kalākaua's motto. Aloha expresses the high values of Queen Lili'uokalani.

Our Roles



ADVOCATE

As an advocate, OHA speaks, writes, and acts in favor of effective policy development, including changing of laws and strengthening implementation of policies and practices that impact the foundations and directions outlined in the organization's strategic plan. Advocates also monitor and evaluate policies and garner public support for causes through community outreach efforts, identifying potentially harmful or ineffective policies and laws, and supporting initiatives that enable communities to advocate to improve the conditions for Native Hawaiians.

RESEARCHER

As a researcher, OHA serves by gathering, compiling and analyzing data that identifies issues important to the Native Hawaiian community including policies and practices, making observations and recommendations, informing the organization and communities' advocacy efforts, evaluating policies, programs and practices, providing and ensuring that the actions and initiatives undertaken inform actions by OHA, beneficiaries and communities as a whole.

COMMUNITY ENGAGER

As a community engager, OHA works collaboratively with the Native Hawaiian community and general public by sharing information through multiple communication channels that connect the organization with beneficiaries, communities and networks.

ASSET MANAGER

As an asset manager, OHA makes mindful investment decisions that help maximize the value of the organization's portfolio. These fiduciary duties and responsibilities include managing financial, land, and community property assets prudently, and preserving and perpetuating legacy land holdings.



Direction:

Educational Pathways

DIRECTIONAL OUTCOME:

Strengthened and integrated community, culture-based learning systems.

STRATEGY 1 | Support development and use of educational resources for all Hawaiian lifelong learners in schools, communities and ‘ohana.

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STRATEGIC OUTCOMES:

- 1.1.** Increase number or percent of Native Hawaiian students who enter educational systems ready to learn;
- 1.2.** Increase number or percent of Native Hawaiian students graduating high school who are college, career, and community ready;
- 1.3.** Increase number of Native Hawaiians engaged in traditional learning systems (e.g., hale, hālau, mua, hale pe‘a) that reestablish/maintain strong cultural foundations and identity;

- 1.4.** Increase number, reach, and/or accessibility of Native Hawaiian knowledge sources, and media productions, resources (print, broadcast, radio, and digital) grounded in Hawaiian worldview, including OHA's flagship digital resources: Papakilo, Kīpuka, Native Hawaiian Databook; and

- 1.5.** Increase the number of Native Hawaiian leaders completing leadership development, good governance training, government transparency, and/or capacity-building programs, and track their placement and advancement into leadership roles across sectors.

STRATEGY 2 | Support education through Hawaiian language medium and focused charter schools.

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES:

- 2.1.** Adequately resource Hawaiian-focused charter schools and Hawaiian-medium schools, including funding of transportation, special education, facilities and meals, and availability of qualified teachers;
- 2.2.** Increase availability of Hawaiian-focused charter schools and Hawaiian-medium schools; and
- 2.3.** Establishment of a Native Hawaiian charter school and Hawaiian-medium system.



Direction:

Health Outcomes

DIRECTIONAL OUTCOME:

**Strengthened ‘ōiwi (cultural identity), ea (self-governance),
‘āina momona (healthy lands and people), pilina (relationships),
waiwai (shared wealth), ke akua mana (spirituality).**

STRATEGY 3 | Advance policies, programs, and practices that strengthen Hawaiian wellbeing, including physical, spiritual, mental, and emotional health.

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES:

- 3.1.** Increase availability of and access to quality, culturally based, and culturally adapted prevention and treatment interventions in ‘ohana, schools, and communities; (E Ola Mau a Mau);
- 3.2.** Establish a fully functional, high-quality, culturally adapted, primary Native Hawaiian Health System which coordinates effective wellness activities/ programs; (E Ola Mau a Mau);
- 3.3.** Decrease the number / percent of Native Hawaiians in jails and prison; and
- 3.4.** Increase the number of cases, sites, and processes in which Native Hawaiian burial protection laws (including HRS 6E) are effectively implemented and increase the capacity and resourcing of Island Burial Councils.

STRATEGY 4 | Advance policies, programs and practices that strengthen the health of the ‘āina and mo‘omeheu.

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES:

- 4.1.** Preservation and perpetuation of Hawaiian language, culture, traditions, identity, and sense of lāhui;
- 4.2.** Increase Native Hawaiian stewardship and protection of Hawai‘i’s natural resources, cultural sites (wahi pana), and protected areas, including Papahānaumokuākea, that foster connection to ‘āina, ‘ohana, and communities;
- 4.3.** Increase restoration of Native Hawaiian cultural sites, landscapes, kulāiwi and traditional food systems;
- 4.4.** Increase the number of formal engagements, partnerships, and representation of Native Hawaiians in international arenas and collaborative initiatives with Pacific Island nations and Indigenous communities;
- 4.5.** Increase Native Hawaiian voter participation rates and the number and proportion of Native Hawaiians serving in decision-making roles across federal, state, and county government bodies; and
- 4.6.** Establish and increase the number of Native Hawaiian data governance policies, agreements, and datasets that are owned, managed, or controlled by Native Hawaiian entities to support decision-making and self-determination.



Direction:
Quality Housing

DIRECTIONAL OUTCOME:

Strengthened capability for ‘ohana to meet living needs, including stable and affordable housing, through effective implementation of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act and advancement of aligned housing policies, programs, and partnerships.

STRATEGY 5 | Strategically deploy financial, land, and programmatic resources to improve outcomes for Native Hawaiian communities. This includes stewarding strategic investment alignment, program investments, and partnering with public, private, and community organizations to advance initiatives that strengthen housing stability, economic opportunity, education, and wellbeing.

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES:

- 5.1.** Increase the number and percentage of Native Hawaiian households able to access and maintain stable, safe, and affordable rental housing through policy advocacy, strategic investment alignment, and partnerships supported by OHA;
- 5.2.** Increase the number and percentage of Native Hawaiian ‘ohana achieving sustainable homeownership through aligned housing policies, programs, financing tools, policy advocacy, and strategic partnerships supported by OHA that reduce strategic and systemic barriers to housing stability; and
- 5.3.** Strengthen statewide housing systems that support Native Hawaiian ‘ohana by advancing policies, cross-sector partnerships, and institutional changes that expand equitable housing pathways and reduce systemic barriers to long-term housing stability.

STRATEGY 6 | Support and advance implementation of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act and aligned housing initiatives through land activation, infrastructure coordination, policy advocacy, and increased housing production benefiting Native Hawaiian ‘ohana.

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES:

- 6.1.** Increase affordable non-traditional housing options (e.g., accessory dwelling units/tiny houses, large multi-generational lots, or homes) in communities of ‘ohana’s choice;
- 6.2.** Increase housing opportunities (or pathways) on Hawaiian Home Lands in partnership with the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands through policy advocacy, infrastructure coordination, strategic investments, and strategic partnerships that advance implementation of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act;
- 6.3.** Statewide Housing Supply Alignment: Strengthen statewide housing supply benefiting Native Hawaiian households, including those not residing on Hawaiian Home Lands, through policy leadership, funding alignment, and strategic partnerships that support housing production across state and county systems; and
- 6.4.** Decrease the number or percent of Native Hawaiian ‘ohana experiencing housing instability or displacement due to housing affordability constraints, and reduce housing-driven displacement through policies, funding alignment, and strategic partnerships that address affordability and housing supply.



Direction:
Economic Stability

DIRECTIONAL OUTCOME:

Strengthened economic capability and resilience for ‘ohana, Native Hawaiian communities, and Hawaiian-owned businesses to build and sustain generational wealth and economic systems that are regenerative, sustainable, and reflective of ‘ike kūpuna.

STRATEGY 7 | Advance policies, programs, and practices that strengthen ‘ohana’s ability to pursue multiple pathways toward economic stability.

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES:

- 7.1.** Increase number/percent of Native Hawaiian ‘ohana who are able to provide high-quality keiki and kūpuna care;
- 7.2.** Increase access to capital and credit for community strengthening Native Hawaiian businesses and individuals;
- 7.3.** Increase number of Native Hawaiian ‘ohana who are resource stable (e.g., financial, subsistence, other); and
- 7.4.** Increase Native Hawaiian employment rate.

STRATEGY 8 | Cultivate economic development in and for Hawaiian communities.

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES:

- 8.1.** Increase the number of successful, community strengthening Native Hawaiian-owned businesses;
- 8.2.** Establish new markets for Native Hawaiian products (e.g., kalo, loko i’a grown fish) that can provide Native Hawaiian producers a livable wage; and
- 8.3.** Establish and operationalize an Indigenous economic system consistent with Native Hawaiian knowledge, culture, values, and practices.

ABOUT THE ARTWORK

Upland rain provides life-giving water that sustains the 'āina, mauka to makai. Captured in the watershed of mauka rainforests, the wai flows down into lush valleys and onto vast agricultural plains, touching and nourishing all within the ahupua'a as it journeys to the sea. The artwork for OHA's new strategic plan reflects this journey, with each element representing a foundational or directional aspect of the plan as we move collectively toward a more vibrant future.



NELSON MAKUA



Nelson Makua has been an artist for nearly 40 years. Although classically trained, he has focused on digital art for over 20 years. Nelson specializes in image development and logo design and has clients in Hawai'i, on the continent and in Japan. Nelson's accolades include a Pele Award for best illustration from the Hawai'i Advertising Federation for his 2008 Merrie Monarch Festival poster design, and two Nā Hōkū Hanohano awards for best graphic design. He co-owns Nā Mākua Original Hawaiian Designs with his son, Kainoa. Nelson lives with his 'ohana in Puna on Hawai'i Island.

