

# State of the County

*2005 – The Year in Review*

*2006 – Looking Forward: Projects and Issues*

Office of Aging

*Alan Parker, Executive on Aging*

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In keeping with our mission to establish a comprehensive and coordinated system of services in Hawaii County which enables older people to live independently and with dignity, the Hawaii County Office of Aging placed heavy emphasis in 2005 in the areas of planning, advocacy, service coordination, and training.

In an effort to **improve services** to our islands caregivers, the Office of Aging is pursuing creation of resource centers for caregivers and seniors capable of providing, in a one-stop setting, information and counseling on long term care issues. The purpose is to establish a non-threatening environment where any caregiver or senior, regardless of income and/or background, will feel comfortable going to for needed assistance, information, and training. As many services as possible should be there or brought there, to eliminate the need for referral to numerous agencies. Follow up and continuous monitoring of cases should be a part of this service structure.

In looking at ways to expand on this concept, the Office of Aging entered into a partnership with the State Executive Office on Aging, and is a major beneficiary of a federal grant to enable establishment of Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) in the State of Hawaii. The first center being planned for in Hilo will be the state's first, and a model for future centers in the state. The office is simultaneously negotiating with land owners in Kona, and the County is seeking state funding to build a Multi-Purpose Senior/Aging & Disability Resource Center in Kailua-Kona. These efforts will continue to be priorities in 2006.

In the area of **advocacy**, the Office of Aging culminated several years of work on the part of the Hawaii County Committee on Aging, and Office of Aging Partners in Eldercare Community Councils, to arrive at priority issues for Hawaii County to take before the 2005 White House Conference on Aging. The top overlying issues for Hawaii County ascertained by this process are: 1) access to high quality and affordable services (transportation #1); 2) affordable and accessible housing; 3) access to comprehensive and accurate information.

In the areas of service coordination and training, the Office of Aging coordinated with numerous agencies and programs to sponsor needed training dealing with various issues from domestic violence in later years to workshops on Medicare. The Office also collaborated with the American Association of Retired Persons, Hawaii Medical Services Association, and Alu Like Inc. to provide two caregiver conferences to provide training and support for caregivers of older adults.

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Civil Service

*Michael Ben, Director of Personnel*

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**Recruitment.** The low unemployment rate has caused a tight labor market and has made it difficult for us to fill many vacancies, especially for our lifeguard and police positions. As a result, we have had to develop better “marketing” strategies to reach out to all segments of the employable population.

These strategies included “pau hana informational recruitment sessions” around the island; having a “County Jobs” booth at the Hawai`i County Fair and attending job fairs on Oahu; placing cinema ads at the various Hawai`i Island theaters, recruiting for fire, police and lifeguard positions; extending our newspaper advertising to include publication in state-wide newspapers; increasing the number of our radio ads on various radio stations on our island; and placing our police officer recruitment ads on the world wide web.

In 2006, we will continue to consider and develop additional innovative strategies to recruit persons to apply for our lifeguard and police officer vacancies including a professional marketing video to use in the high schools, colleges, job fairs, and television; advertisements in national law enforcement publications and mainland movie theatres; and increased advertisements on the internet.

**Equal Opportunity.** The County of Hawai`i believes that access to public facilities, including roads, and programs must be provided to all persons. Thus our Equal Opportunity Officer (EOO) delivered specialized classes on the Americans With Disability Act (ADA) to our Police personnel and assisted the state Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) in delivering 5 ADA courses to County employees. These classes focused on effective communications and the delivery of services to persons with disabilities. The same focus applied to the EOO’s presentation to Cabinet Members and select County employees on aspects of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Also, our EOO facilitated the resolution of expressed concerns regarding pedestrian access during the construction of the Kuakini Highway. In still other matters, our EOO responded to 52 inquiries concerns from the public regarding applications of the ADA, both by the County personnel and private businesses.

Our EOO is currently providing Anti-Discrimination and Harassment training to all County managers, supervisors and human resources employees. This educational initiative will continue through 2006 for all other County employees. These sessions are important both from the perspectives of employment and provision of services to solidify and deliver upon our commitment to Equal Opportunity.

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Corporation Counsel

*Lincoln Ashida, Corporation Counsel*

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The Office focused on training for our County clients during calendar year 2005.

Attorneys from the Counseling and Drafting Division participated as panelists, presenters and facilitators for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Statewide Municipal Attorneys Training Conference sponsored by our office, the Hawai'i Water Works Association annual conference in October, and the Statewide Liquor Conference. For our own County employees, training sessions for the fire captains on HIPPA were held, recall training for the MICTS, police recruit training, training on ethics and gift rules for liquor investigators and administrators (in the wake of the problems experienced in the City and County of Honolulu), training on conducting contested case hearings and Sunshine Law for our board and commission members and numerous in-house trainings for our own legal clerks.

The Division also focused on collections. The County has always actively and consistently pursued collection of delinquent real property taxes. In 2005, the Division stepped up collection efforts on delinquent solid waste, waste water and water bills. Last year, over \$50,000 in lump sum payments on these delinquent bills was collected. This does not include all payment arrangements negotiated with homeowners and businesses.

There are many other “daily” but important things our attorneys assist with . . . from facilitating the acquisition of beaches and parks across the island to assisting the police with the new telecommunications system.

The Litigation Division also spearheaded training for our County clients. Examples include training for the Police recruits (Civil Rights and Liabilities) and supervisors (recall trainings), and the Prosecutor's Office. The Division also presented a Flood Litigation Workshop.

Litigators continued open communication with County agents, employees, officials, heads, the Mayor and his staff, and the Hawai'i County Council and their staff, who were involved in claims (including workers' compensation), arbitrations (grievances and interest arbitration concerning wages and non-cost items for collective bargaining agreements) and lawsuits.

The County's total settlements and judgments in litigation for 2005 were far below both the total claims made against the County in the year and the amount budgeted by the County for the year.

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## *2005 – The Year in Review and Looking Forward: Projects and Issues*

Data Systems

*Clayton Yugawa, Director*

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### **FRESH (Fiscal Resources Enterprise System for Hawaii County):**

Data Systems staff is working with the Depts of Finance (Accounts, Treasury, Budget and Purchasing), Planning, Environmental Management (Wastewater and Solid Waste) and Civil Service on the implementation and support of their respective FRESH modules. All modules scheduled for completion by the end of 2005.

### **Fiber Network:**

Utilizing a contract agreement with Oceanic Time Warner, the County of Hawaii installed fiber connections to the following locations, with little or no cost to the County:

- Civil Defense
- Aupuni Center
- State Office Building
- Office of Housing and Community Development
  - o Wailuku Drive
  - o Kinoole Street
- Central Fire
- Corporation Counsel

### **Disaster Mitigation and Recovery:**

With the activation of the Oceanic Time Warner Fiber connections, the County is able to strategically place backup servers in secure locations that will allow the continuity of local government, in the event of a catastrophe.

### **Geographic Information Systems (GIS):**

Data Systems GIS Personnel coordinated and/or assisted in the following projects:

- Completion of the County of Hawaii Hazard Mitigation Plan;
- Completion of the County of Hawaii Internet Mapping site for County agencies;
- Completion of historical natural hazards database;
- Addition of a GIS office to West Hawaii;
- GIS Server in East Hawaii for access by all County employees to current data;

### **Future: Web Payments:**

Hawaii Information Consortium (HIC) will be submitting the Statement of Work and timelines for implementing a payment-over-the-web application for the County of Hawaii. Web applications will include:

- Sewer payments
- Real Property
- Motor Vehicle Registration

Hawaii Information Consortium is currently working with the Counties of Maui, Kauai and City and County of Honolulu on the same internet applications.

HIC will develop, house and track on-line transactions at no cost to the County of Hawaii.

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### Environmental Management

*Barbara Bell, Director*

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#### **2005 in Review**

##### Wastewater:

- Agreed on a timeline with US Environmental Protection Agency for Large Capacity Cesspool closures. This maintains compliance for this federal mandate.
- To aid in the collections of sewer fees, property owners are now ultimately responsible for sewer bills at their property.

##### Solid Waste:

- The Bottle Bill began January 1, 2005. Our County has the highest redemption rate, around 60%, which is excellent for the first year of the program.
- We secured a US Environmental Protection Agency Brownfields grant for an island-wide inventory and assessment. This will help to catalogue potentially contaminated sites around the island, and then prioritize for clean up and re-development actions.
- Landfill diversion increased from 15.7% to 20% from July 2004 - June 2005. This is 1,457 tons/month. July through October, 2005 landfill diversion was 26%.
- We received US Environmental Protection Agency funding for Kona Recycles at Kealakehe. You are consistently recycling about 50 tons/month of cardboard, newspaper, glass and plastics, about 5 ½% of the trash at that Transfer Station.
- As of July 1, 2005, we began the Derelict Vehicle Amnesty Pilot Program to remove up to two vehicles on private property. This is in addition to the current abandoned vehicle disposal program that handles removal of vehicles from public roadsides.
- Fall of last year, we instituted recycling collections at transfer stations. We expect this to help our landfill diversion and provide convenience to residents. For more information, please call the Recycling Division at 961-8942.

#### **Looking Forward**

The following actions are being taken to prevent the possibility of trucking East Hawai'i trash to Kona:

- Applying for expansion of the Hilo landfill, through slope steepening. We expect the Department of Health to approve; this allows approximately two to four years of additional use at the Hilo landfill.
- Recent affirmative vote (last vote coming February 1) by Council for funding of the Reload building, at the proposed Sort Station Complex. This helps with waste screening and adds another 2% landfill diversion.
- Our procurement for a waste-to-energy facility is on track.
- If necessary, we will consider shipping East Hawai'i trash off island for disposal as an intermediate measure.

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Finance

*William Takaba, Director*

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**Real Property Tax Changes.** The Real Property Tax division implemented several real property tax changes that provided tax relief to homeowner-occupants, and began implementation of the approved changes:

- Limited the growth in assessed values in the homeowners class to 3% until the property is sold or transferred;
- Provided an additional homeowners exemption at 20% of the property's assessed value, up to \$400,000 (\$80,000 exemption); and
- Reduced the dedication period of the non-speculative residential dedication program from 10 years to 5 years.

The result was that most qualified homeowners experienced a reduction in their real property tax bill for 2005-06, even as property values have continued to increase.

**Risk Management.** With the assistance of the Corporation Counsel and other departments, the Finance Department developed the framework for a new Risk Management division. The division will provide risk assessment and related services for all departments of the County. A Risk Manager will be hired in February 2006.

**CIP Planning Group.** The Finance Department established a CIP Planning Group in January 2005 to better plan, coordinate, and fund capital improvement projects. We believe that our process is now more efficient and realistic. The Finance Department can plan its borrowings well in advance and Departments can be assured that money will be available when needed. The Group meets monthly.

**Bond Issuance.** As the result of CIP planning, the Finance Department recommended in late 2005 that the County issue \$25M in new construction bonds. The Department of Water Supply requested \$25M for water projects, to be issued in conjunction with the County bonds. New bonds will be sold in February 2006. Department representatives recently discussed our current financial condition and fiscal policies with the rating agencies, including Moody's Investors Services who upgraded the County from A1 to A2 in 2004. We look forward to their ratings reports within the next couple of weeks.

**Property Management.** In June 2005 the County Council created the Public Access, Open Space and Natural Resources Reservation Commission supported by the Finance Department. The commission has been actively pursuing their responsibility to identify lands worthy of preservation. Also, the department continues to market properties in Hamakua that were forfeited by the former Hamakua Sugar Co. for non-payment of property taxes. Sales generated \$1.5 million in revenues in 2005. The Finance Department is developing a property management division to provide support to the commission and to handle the many other responsibilities related to acquisition, management and disposal of property for the County.

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Fire

*Darryl Oliveira, Fire Chief*

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The following are some of the significant program highlights during 2005.

**Recruitment.** Successfully completed the recruitment and hiring of 38 fire fighter recruits. By maintaining our aggressive recruitment and hiring plan, it is expected that all current and anticipated vacancies will be filled by early 2007. The department has hired a record 205 fire fighter recruits over a period of nearly four years.

**Grant funding.** Federal and state grants totaling over \$750,000 were obtained to purchase:

- **live burn fire trailer**, to support delivery of hands on live fire training to personnel around the island including our partner agencies;
- **vehicle emission control systems** for all fire stations to improve the working conditions for employees and minimize the exposure to vehicle emissions; and
- **spinal immobilization boards** to be utilized to provide emergency care associated with trauma incidents as well as to create an equipment exchange program in partnership with the water safety officers at beaches.

In addition, the federal Office of Domestic Preparedness provided funding for two replacement rescue boats and five utility vehicles that are scheduled for delivery in early 2006. Also funded by ODP and received during the year was a hazardous material response vehicle for West Hawai'i and two command vehicles.

**Fire Science program.** A partnership was established with the Honolulu Community College and Hawai'i Community College to re-establish a Fire Science program on the island of Hawai'i. It is hoped that this partnership will continue to develop and expand to eventually offer a full course line up and an associate degree program.

**New Kalaoa Fire Station.** Presently efforts are being focused on identifying the feasibility of remaining with the original planned site versus considering alternatives that will support the establishment of a sustainable and effective facility. The goal is to establish a new facility that will meet current as well as projected service delivery needs for fire protection, hazardous materials response, and emergency medical services.

**Dispatch.** Successfully recruited and hired new Fire Radio Dispatchers to fill existing and created vacancies to improve operational effectiveness.

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Housing and Community Development

*Ed Taira, Administrator*

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**HUD Programs.** The OHCD administers HUD programs, including the CDBG (approximately \$2.4 million a year grant), HOME (approximately \$900,000 a year), and Section 8 Rental Assistance (approximately \$9 million a year), and also administers several other Federal, State and County programs, including the Workforce Investment Act, and several other smaller programs.

The OHCD has 1600 Section 8 vouchers under contract and has initiated the HUD Section 8 Family Self Sufficiency program with 46 families participating. We are finalizing the implementation of our Section 8 Homeownership program.

**Waikoloa.** UniDev, LLC, a Maryland company, was selected to develop the Waikoloa Employee Housing project. We are in the pre-development stages, design, engineering site improvement and finalizing financing. We anticipate construction of 900 to 1,000 homes, a mix of rental and for sale units, multi- and single family, on the 268 acre site at the end of Paniolo Drive. The site plan accommodates a 12 acre school site, several parks and a community center that will be made available for use by Waikoloa Village residents.

**Workforce initiatives.** We are working closely with the Mayor's workforce task force to initiate housing, transportation and other related initiatives to increase the availability of workers in West Hawai'i. One initiative is to seek shelter for workers so they would not have to commute daily; another is to ask Real Property Tax to allow renting a room in an owner-occupied unit so that the owner does not lose his homeowner status and exemption.

**Affordable housing.** We are also working with the State's Housing and Community Development Corporation of Hawai'i, Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, other State and County departments to develop affordable housing units in **Keahuolū** in Kailua. In addition, the OHCD is coordinating the development of affordable housing units with developers in East and West Hawai'i who have affordable housing conditions to satisfy.

**Homeless.** We continue to work with the homeless coalition for creative solutions to homelessness, including development of a 32-bed overnight program in West Hawai'i, and renovations to the Kawaihae Transitional Shelter, until a more permanent shelter site can be found. A one-stop service center for the homeless will open in early 2006 on County-owned land in the Kailua industrial area.

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Mass Transit Agency

*Tom Brown, Administrator*

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## **2005 milestones**

New Buses – Bids were accepted for the purchase of ten new accessible buses with bicycle racks. Buses were received in January, 2006. Bicycle racks were also received and will be installed on the remainder of the transit fleet.

Island-wide Kokua Zones – The Administration and County Council established the entire County of Hawaii as an island-wide Kokua Zone. Passengers on the Agency's regularly scheduled bus routes may now ride free of charge.

Park and Ride Lots – Funding was obtained to establish park and ride lots around the island.

New routes – New bus routes between Kau and South Kohala, Hilo and South Kohala, and Kau afterschool service were established.

Rural Paratransit Plan – Study was completed in September, 2005. Proposed plan will establish door to door paratransit service in Kona and Puna.

Bus Stop program – Working with the Police Department and Public Works, agency has begun formulating a plan and site selection for the establishment of official bus stops in various areas around the island. Bus stops will include "pull-outs" where they can leave the main road when stopping so as not to impede traffic.

## **Future Plans**

New routes – New and increased service are planned within Kona and Hilo, round the island service, and from Ka'ū and Hilo to Kona and South Kohala.

Bus stops and park ride lots – agency will continue working on the implementation of these projects.

New buses – agency will purchase additional vehicles to expand its transportation service. Federal funding has been obtained for the purchase of new buses.

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Mayor's Office

*William P. Kenoi, Executive Assistant*

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## **2005 in Review**

### **Drugs & Substance Abuse Programs – Hawaii County**

- Over 38 youth served at Wahiola'onaopio Adolescent Residential Treatment Program in Papaaloa, an 8 bed substance abuse residential program for boys.
- Over 86 Community Based organizations and associations funded through the Healing Our Island grants program administered by the Hawaii County Resource Center for anti-drug programs targeting youth and families.
- ICE Task Force in East and West Hawaii, ICE Prosecutors in East and West Hawaii, and an Interdiction Unit in West Hawaii have been successfully arresting and dismantling drug operations Island wide in record numbers.
- Continued Federal Funding for the third consecutive year for the Hawaii Island Meth Initiative to support anti-drug efforts including grants to expand treatment and prevention programs for youth and adults.

### **Coqui Frog Programs**

- Implemented Coqui Frog Incident Action Plan that focuses on Eradication & Control, Research, and Community Education and Awareness.
- Funds allocated include: \$1,000,000 (County), \$200,000 (Federal), and \$100,000 (State)
- Coqui Community Grants distributed to over 30 community organizations Islandwide to address coqui infestations
- Coqui coordinator hired to ensure federal, state, county, private industry, and community cooperation.
- Legislative Package submitted for 2006 Session addressing community concerns raised at 13 Coqui Community Meetings held Islandwide.

### **Other Projects:**

- **Lehia:** Transition of over 40 Homeless Families and removal of over 400 tons of trash, clean up and restoration of a 40+ acre shoreline park that will open to the public within the next month or two.
- **Kawaiahae Transitional Shelter:** Public & Private partnership to ensure emergency housing continues for Hawaii families while at the same time implementing a process to ensure continue availability of transitional housing for Hawaii County in 2 years.

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Mayor's Office

*Roy Takemoto, Executive Assistant*

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The Mayor's goal is to make the Big Island a better place to live (and thereby making it also a better place to visit). But how does that goal translate into action? It requires focused attention (so that assignments do not fall through the crack) and coordination (because projects usually involve the interaction of multiple departments). My job is to focus and coordinate the following priority projects to make these happen:

**Kona road projects.** There are several road projects in Kona intended to relieve congestion and improve connectivity. These projects involve coordination among the Department of Public Works, Planning Department, Finance Department, State Department of Transportation, affected landowners, and of course the community. The planned outcome will be to achieve as appropriate for each project, one of the following targeted stages: plan-ready, design-ready, construction-ready, or actually constructed. Maps are available showing the 3-year goal for each project.

**Affordable housing.** With the housing market fueled by a high external demand for second homes, the cost of housing is soaring out of reach of the local residents. Government does not pretend to be the answer or have the answers to this complex problem. The challenge is for government to work in partnership with the private sector, nonprofits, and others within a coherent framework. In coordination primarily with the Office of Housing and Community Development and the Planning Department, the planned outcome is to develop an overall strategy.

**Community and infrastructure planning.** Directing growth to existing urban areas and away from sensitive environmental and cultural areas, ensuring that infrastructure (e.g., roads, water, drainage) and public services (e.g., fire, police) are adequate and keep pace with growth, and paying attention to our quality of life are some of the issues and objectives of the general plan and community development plans. The Planning Department in coordination with the Department of Research and Development are attempting to develop plans that are action-oriented, use state-of-art technology to analyze and visualize change, and meaningfully involve the community in a way that builds the community's capacity to participate effectively in decisionmaking and to be more self-reliant

**Multi-hazard mitigation.** The Big Island is unique in its exposure to all of the major natural hazards: tsunami, hurricane, earthquakes, lava flows, flooding, wildfires, and drought. We take pride in the teamwork system, preparedness, and training of the multiple agencies involved in hazard response spearheaded by the Civil Defense Agency. But we can and need to do more to mitigate risks and educate the public. The planned outcome is to effectively leverage available funding to "harden" our critical facilities, provide adequate emergency shelters, and to have the most educated and prepared public that calmly responds to emergencies.

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Parks and Recreation

*Patricia Engelhard, Director*

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## **Accomplishments for West Hawaii in 2005**

- More than 10,000 people attended the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Cherry Blossom Festival in Waimea.
- Many volunteer parks improvement projects; notably, the work by West Hawaii Veterans groups, partnering with West Hawaii developers in the beautification of the West Hawaii Veterans Cemetery and the reforestation of the pu'u above the cemetery, the completion of the Lifeguard Tower at Kahalu'u Beach Park by Territorial Builders and the work by groups, headed by Robin Lamson, at Kahuku Park in Hawaiian Ocean View Estates.
- The acquisition and maintenance of Waiaha Beach Park (Honl's) with help from County Planning, Ed Rapoza and the Friends of Waiaha Beach Park.
- Kalai Iki Youth Baseball Camp with 300 participants at Kailua Park with the help of Kukio Foundation, the Kanuha Foundation, Jack Gifford Foundation and several mainland and Hawai'i college coaches.
- Resurfacing of Higashihara and Kailua Park Tennis Courts and Kailua Playground Courts as well as Waimea Park Tennis Courts.
- Completion of Greenwell Park ADA and baseball field improvements including lights.
- Completion of improvements to the historic Waimea Corner and old Kohala Courthouse re-roofing.
- Continuation of several popular youth events such as the Novice Swim program at Kona Community Aquatics Center and the Kohala Pool, the Junior Lifeguard Programs at Hapuna and Kahalu'u and the Exponent Track meets at Konawaena in preparation for the Hershey Track Meet.
- Continuation of programs for older adults including Kupuna Softball at Kailua Park, Senior Olympics in Kohala, the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Kupuna Hula Festival at the King Kamehameha Hotel and Senior Bowling.

## **Future Projects for West Hawaii**

- The completion of the restrooms at Higashihara Park by the Kona Lions and the repainting of Yano Hall Roof.
- Three new outdoor basketball courts at Kailua Park by Tinguely Development.
- Hawaii County Centennial Exhibit will be coming to the King Kamehameha Hotel for three weeks starting on February 13, 2006. Some of the interesting components include ledgers from West Hawaii County from 1905/06.
- Schuler Homes should be turning over Lunalilo Playground at Pualani Subdivision soon, at which time it will be open to the public.
- Lokahi Makai development anticipates turning over their new 5-acre park in North Kona during 2006. This will also be a public park
- With the new CIP funds, we should be starting the planning for Alii Kai subdivision park.
- ADA improvements should be started by year-end at Kailua Park, Higashihara Park, Kamehameha Park, Pu'unui Street Park in Waikoloa and Hale Halawai.

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## Planning

*Christopher Yuen, Director*

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Long-range planning efforts (objective is to manage growth and channel it to suitable areas):

- Worked with Council to enact new County General Plan
- Prepared interim General Plan amendments and held workshops on them
- Started Kona and Puna Community Development Plans
- Completed Envision Downtown Hilo 2025 Plan, which was adopted by Council (this will be a template for public participation and renewing urban areas)

Infrastructure planning/financing:

- Puna Regional Circulation Plan
- Waimea Circulation Plan
- CIP coordination with Public Works
- Started study to lead to impact fee ordinance

Affordable housing:

- Worked with Council and Office of Housing and Community Development to reform County affordable housing ordinance
- Worked on planning for major public affordable housing projects in Waikoloa and Keahuolu
- Made recommendations on major rezoning actions such as Suffolk and Pua'a rezonings in Kona; made sure that they included affordable housing and road improvements

Environmental and cultural heritage:

- Adopted rules for the use of county shoreline public accesses
- Reviewed and analyzed water quality data that had been collected by West Hawaii resorts over the last 15 years

Improved customer service:

- Made zoning and other land use information available to public on CD

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Police

*Lawrence Mahuna, Police Chief*

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**In 2005, the Police Department implemented a modern integrated Records Management System that will enhance public safety** by making more timely, accurate, and complete information available to police personnel; increase productivity by reducing/eliminating redundant or unnecessary tasks; improve management and public policy decision making by increasing the ability to analyze law enforcement data; and protect the rights of people and the interest of the County with a proper security of confidential information. This has been the first phase of enhancing our department technologically, and **future projects include the wireless application of the system for use by our officers in the field.**

**The Department continued our emphasis on enforcement efforts to target the distribution and use of Crystal Methamphetamine (ICE), through our ICE Task Force and Drug Interdiction Units.** The primary goal of these units has been to identify, dismantle, disrupt, arrest, and prosecute street, mid and upper level drug trafficking organizations and organized crime groups involved in methamphetamine distribution, methamphetamine manufacturing, and money laundering. Our efforts thus far have disrupted the activities of several organizations in the County of Hawaii and have led other organizations to alter their operations. Feedback from community groups indicates that enforcement efforts mitigated their concern of blatant drug activity occurring in their neighborhood. In addition, during 2005, we finalized an agreement with the Hawai'i Community Foundation to continue grant funding for the ICE Task Force and Drug Interdiction Units. This has resulted in the current positions being grant funded through June 2006, after which the positions will be funded by the County to continue our enforcement efforts.

**During 2005, collaborative efforts between our Department and participating HIDTA partners** (Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), and the U.S. Attorney's Office) **successfully disrupted several large organizations directly responsible for the importation and distribution of large quantities of crystal methamphetamine here in Hawaii County.** Seizures included: 23.92 pounds of crystal methamphetamine, whose street value exceed \$1,000,000; 43.8 grams of cocaine; 31 firearms; \$429,471 U.S. currency seized for forfeiture; 39 arrests (12 indicted federally) and 44 search warrants.

**Future projects** for the department include our new microwave system that will become a reality in October 2006. This new system will vastly improve the communication infrastructure and lead into the next phase, which will address the improvement of mobile radio coverage and interoperability among the county agencies and others.

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Public Works

*Bruce McClure, Director*

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## **Completed**

- Waikoloa Road Right Turn Lane at Queen Ka'ahumanu Highway (In-house)
- Hinalani Road Right Turn Lane at Queen Ka'ahumanu Highway (Contract)
- Nana/Holoholo Connector Road (Private)
- Palani Road Resurfacing (In-house)
- Kaiminani Road Right Turn Lane at Queen Ka'ahumanu Highway (In-house)
- Revised Fuel Tax Distribution Formula - \$3.35 Million/Year with ½ → resurfacing (\$403,098 → \$642,640; + 59%) (\$102,318 → \$163,121; + 59%)

## **Under Construction**

- Hinalani/Hawaii Belt Road Traffic Signal (Contract – Complete 3/06)
- Kuakini Highway Widening (Contract – Complete 10/06)
- Lako Street, Mauka (Private)
- Pu'ulani Estates Connector Road (Private)

## **Under Design**

- West Hawaii Civic Center (Contract – Est. Start Fall '06)
- Palani Road/Highway 180 Intersection Improvements (Contract – Est. Start 3/06)
- Kaiminani Left Turn Pocket/Hawaii Belt Road, Highway 190 (Contract – Est. Start Fall '06)
- Palani Road Left Turn Pocket at Kamakaeha (Contract – Est. Start Fall '06)
- Palani Road/Kealakaha Intersection (Contract – Est. Start Fall '06)
- Mamalahoa Highway – Honalo to Captain Cook (Contract – Est. Start Summer '06)
- Keanalehu/Manawalea (Contract)
- Coastview/Palisades Connectors
- Ali'i Parkway

## **In Planning**

- La'aloa Avenue Extension
- Lako Street - Makai
- Kamanu Street Extension
- Hienaloli Extension Corridor Study
- Kuakini Widening Phase II

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## Research and Development

*Jane Testa, Director*

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**Agriculture:** Awarded a total of \$135,000 to 28 organizations for marketing and promotional programs, research projects, and agricultural extension programs. The County continues to participate in the discussion of Important Agricultural Lands.

**Economic Development:** Continued to provide assistance in administering the DBEDT's Enterprise Zone program. As of June 30, 2005, 54 Big Island businesses are participating. A total of \$65,215 has been awarded to 12 organizations toward community based economic development endeavors.

**Energy:** Launched an economic cost benefit study to explore the feasibility of direct uses for geothermal energy, i.e. post harvest treatment and value added processing, via a \$105,160 USDE grant. Also, the County, with the help of Senator Daniel Inouye, received \$347,200 from the US-EPA to further develop of an Environmental Impact Statement for a project to eventually provide irrigation water to 1,000 acres of Honomalino agricultural land

**Film:** Provided support services to over 100 productions companies. Continues to market Hawai'i Island as a film destination. Represented the County at trade shows, festivals and conferences around the world. Is completing the development of a digital imaging system including a relational, searchable database for the film office website.

**Hawai'i County Resource Center (HCRC):** Submitted a total of \$880,000 in grant applications to benefit the island. Awarded a total of \$193,591 in Healing Our Island grants to 103 community groups for anti-drug endeavors. Provided a total of 12 capacity building trainings for community groups. Assisted in training 25 facilitators in Kona toward the Kona Community Development Planning process and will have completed about 100 grassroots meetings by January 31, 2006. Continues to help develop the Community Readiness Program and the HCRC Grantsmanship Program. First in the State to purchase the eCivis Grant Locator program for County and community groups, designed for easy access to grant sources nationwide.

**Information Resources:** Completed and published the 2004 County of Hawai'i Data Book while fielding 2,600 information inquiries and maintaining the County Library Information System.

**Tourism:** Provided a total of \$821,000 to 59 organizations to enhance the island's cultural and visitor experience, support festivals and sporting events, and produce marketing and advertising campaigns. Over 55% of that benefited West Hawai'i. An increase in funding from the Hawai'i Tourism Authority is expected for 2006 which could bring our total tourism program dollars to over \$1,000,000.

# State of the County

*2005 – The Year in Review*

*2006 – Looking Forward: Projects and Issues*

## Water Supply

*Milton Pavao, Manager*

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The Department's priorities during 2005, as in previous years, were to develop additional water supply sources and develop ways to transmit the water to where it's needed. In addition, our efforts were aimed at supplementing the water supply source from our Kahalu'u Shaft in efforts to reduce the chloride content of this source. Projects that were on going in 2005 included Waiaha Production Well and 2.0 MG Reservoir, Mamalahoa Highway Waterline Improvements, Pua Puaa 2.0 MG Reservoir and Kuakini Highway 16-inch Waterline Improvements. Projects currently in the design phase include Hina Lani Transmission Line and Reservoir, Keei No. 3 1.0 MG Reservoir, Palani Road Waterline Replacement, Mamalahoa Highway Waterline Improvements, Phase 2, and Keopu-Puuhonua Production Well and 0.5 MG Reservoir. Also in 2005 the Department was active in developing partnerships in similar efforts to bring water to where it's needed. These included mauka to makai waterline corridors near Keahole Airport, Hina Lani Drive, above Kailua and above Keauhou. We are also in negotiations to develop water sources above Keauhou and transmit it down to our Kahaluu Shaft 1.0 MG Reservoir. 2006 will see the construction activities of both the projects currently in design and hopefully the results of our partnerships.

The water system of Kona 15 years ago relied of mid-level wells to provide water at lower elevations and to boost the water up to higher elevations. Due to the limited rainfall in Kona, the wells could not produce a large volume of water without affecting the chloride levels. However, approximately 15 years ago high level water was discovered at the higher elevations of Kona, namely above elevation 1700 ft. This discovery changed the way water system were designed and operated. No longer was it a makai to mauka delivery. It has become a mauka to makai delivery. This change however has caused operational concerns because of the high horsepower motors necessary to lift the water up 1700 ft. Motors and pumps operating at these conditions do not have a very long run life.

The attractiveness of Kona, the prosperous economy and the high demand for housing and other developments will continue to challenge our department in 2006. Equitable policies will have to be implemented to balance the increasing developmental need for water while maintaining the level of service the residents of Kona deserve. We will continue to implement source and transmission improvements as fast as we possibly can while also maintaining our replacement and repair programs.

The year 2006 will definitely be an interesting year; we also hope it will be a very productive year.