



Ke Ala Hele Makalae Trail



Pedestrian and Bicycle
Information Center

Problem

The Kauai County Government and a group of concerned citizens wanted to ensure that public access along Kauai's southeastern coast remained open to the public.

Background

Kauai is the most northwestern of the main islands of Hawaii and has a population of slightly less than 60,000. An economic transformation away from sugar plantations left vast amounts of barren agriculture land throughout Hawaii. A large portion of this land was being purchased by private land owners. In order to guarantee public access to the coast for current and future residents, private landowners and city officials worked together to develop a multi-use path along Kauai's southeastern shore.

Solution

Ke Ala Hele Makalae, which means “the path that goes by the coast” in Hawaiian, began in the 1990s with the Ke Ala Hele Makalae Committee. This committee was formed by a group of concerned citizens to assure community oversight of the pathways' development and culture. Their vision of the path was able to become a reality through the support of the community and elected officials, and a large land donation to the county from a pair of developers. The land donation, valued at \$7.5 million, secured an area for the path to be built and qualified the county to request federal funding to match the land's value. The federally matched funds and the land donation allowed plans for the Ke Ala Hele Makalae Path to expand and flourish into the current 17 mile blueprint of a coastal trail from Nawiliwili to Anahola.

The construction of the trail is divided into six phases: phases I and II are already complete, and the remaining four phases are at varying levels of completion. There currently is not a projected date when all six phases will be completed. Phase I is a 2.5 mile trail around Lydgate Park that opened in 2003. Phase II opened in February 2008 and is a 4.5 mile trail north of the park. Phase III is currently under construction and will be a 1.8 mile trail that connects the two already completed trail segments. Environmental assessments are being completed on each of the trail segments before construction begins.

To maximize safety, enjoyment, and functionality for users, the linear park designs will meet all mandatory and advisory standards as identified by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials.



People enjoying the path on a sunny day.



A group of mothers using the path for exercise.

Results

Since the opening of phase I in 2003, the Kauai Path has seen several positive results and continued support from the community. On the second Saturday of every month a “Second Saturday Sweep” is organized to clean up portions of the path. The clean up and potluck lunch afterwards show the communities’ support and gratitude for the trail.

Contact

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