



A VISION FOR KA'AHUMANU AVENUE

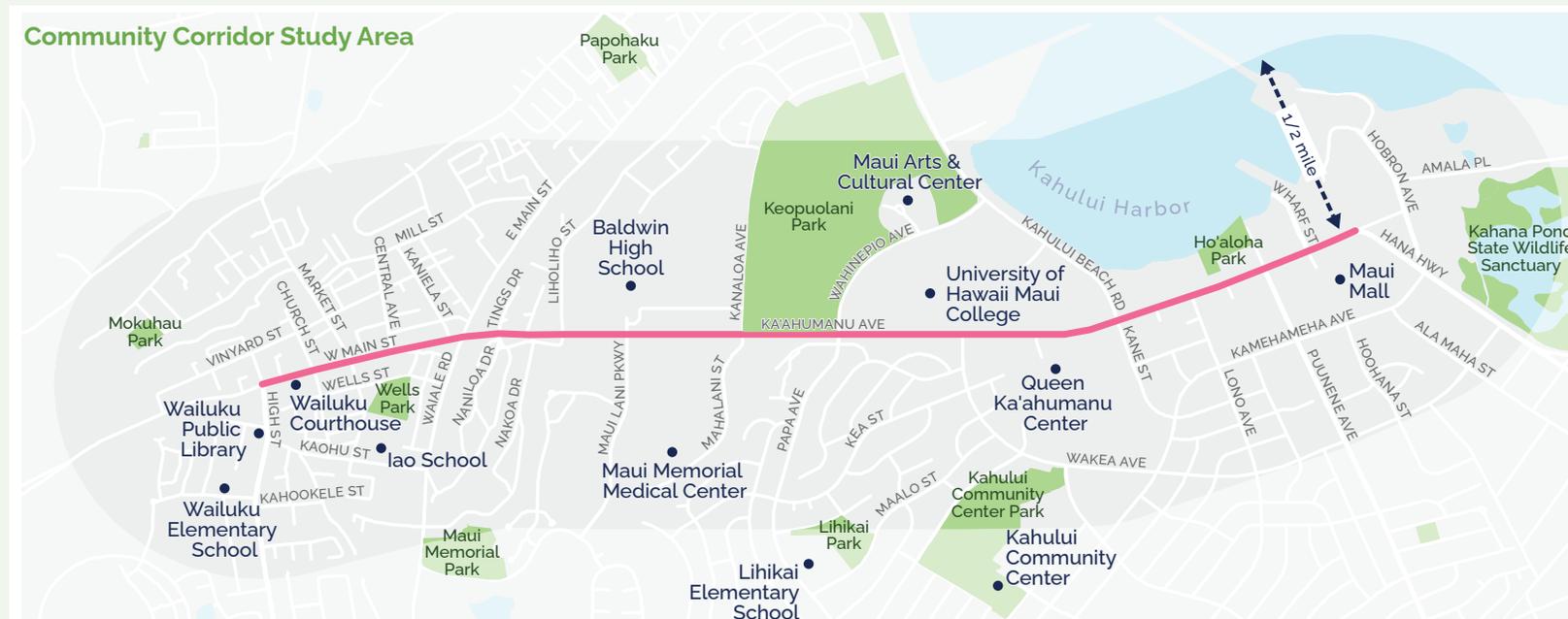


Shaping the Vision

What is the Ka'ahumanu Ave Community Corridor?

Ka'ahumanu Avenue and Main Street link Kahului and Wailuku, connecting people who live in Central Maui and across the island to jobs, schools, healthcare, shopping, and recreational activities. The half-mile around this critical corridor is home to one in five Maui residents, is our major employment center, and offers services that are not found anywhere else on the island.

Like many parts of Maui, the Ka'ahumanu Avenue area faces the challenges of limited affordable housing, high development costs, and vehicle-dependent transportation networks. To explore the future of land use and transportation in this area—and to begin addressing the challenges of growth, affordability, accessibility, and sustainability—Maui County received a grant from the State of Hawai'i to fund the Community Corridor study.



Our Work

LEARN August 2020–January 2021

PURPOSE

- Understand the history and current conditions of the study area
- Explore potential for economic development and affordable housing
- Develop future opportunities based on our needs



Maui's past planning efforts have laid the groundwork for this study to focus on the future of the Ka'ahumanu Avenue area. The Ka'ahumanu Ave Community Corridor study starts with an understanding of needs and opportunities, is guided by the vision outlined in this document, and will result in an action plan that identifies and prioritizes a set of achievable and aspirational recommendations.

VISION February 2021–June 2021

PURPOSE

- Establish a vision for the future of Ka'ahumanu Avenue
- Identify areas for affordable and workforce housing
- Focus on connections between people, places, and transportation modes



These recommendations will include land use and transportation strategies to make living, working, and playing in the Community Corridor area—and traveling to, from, and along Ka'ahumanu Avenue and Main Street—safer, more comfortable, and more enjoyable for all Maui residents.

ADVANCE July 2021–December 2021

PURPOSE

- Make recommendations for priority projects and programs
- Identify costs and potential funding sources
- Pursue partnerships to support making the vision a reality



What is a Community Corridor?

A “community corridor” is a place that makes it easy for people to take the bus and to walk, bike, and roll. It is also a place that has many different types of affordable housing options; provides connections to schools, services, and jobs; and includes great community spaces that are welcoming and fun.



A mural by Antonio Segura on the Wailuku Texaco building helps to create a vibrant community.

Source: Pamela Eaton, Maui County

Why a vision?

There is much to celebrate in the Ka'ahumanu Ave Community Corridor area. We have a rich history, an entrepreneurial spirit, tremendous resiliency, and strong communities and neighborhoods. We value our natural resources and open spaces. We want to create jobs, support small businesses, and establish a thriving economy to support all Maui residents. And we want to create a corridor that works for our keiki and kupuna, including opportunities to learn, to grow, and to age comfortably with easy connections to the places we need to go.

These desires are the heart of what we seek to nurture and improve through the Ka'ahumanu Ave Community Corridor study and the vision for this area. The vision represents hope for the future, especially as we emerge from COVID-19. It expresses our intent to reinvigorate our community and our economy, to support people of all ages, to create affordable and accessible opportunities to succeed, and to connect our communities with sustainable transportation options. This vision seeks to protect our environment and culture, preserving our history while looking to the future.

How have you shaped this vision?

Since August 2020, we've connected with thousands of Maui residents, sharing information about the Ka'ahumanu Ave Community Corridor study and gathering your feedback through surveys, a virtual town hall and community meetings, and small group conversations. You've told us what's working, what could be improved, and what you hope to see in the future, shaping the vision and guiding principles shared in this document.



170

focus group and town hall participants



35,000+

Facebook ad impressions



705

survey respondents



21

scavenger hunt participants



200+

photos submitted



2,700+

visits to the project website



40+

businesses reached through door-to-door canvassing



60

online map comments from more than 200 visitors



12

virtual community briefings



A fall 2020 scavenger hunt captured strengths of the Community Corridor.

Photos by Essie Alexander (top) and Hinano Iguchi (bottom)

Defining the Vision

What is our vision for the corridor?

The Ka'ahumanu Ave Community Corridor is welcoming, connected, and vibrant. It is home to people of all ages, abilities, and incomes, providing access to jobs, schools, restaurants, shops, parks, and services within a short walk or roll, bike ride, or bus trip.

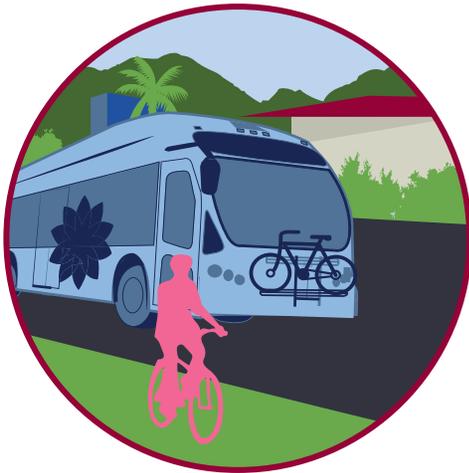
The Community Corridor is full of choices, including safe and convenient transportation options, housing for different phases of our lives, and local businesses that provide good jobs and needed services. It reflects our history and responds to the realities of the present, addressing our changing climate, protecting our heritage, and encouraging innovation to prepare for the future.

As the heart of Central Maui and our island, the Ka'ahumanu Ave Community Corridor offers something for everyone. From arts and cultural events to the County Fair, from affordable starter homes to senior living facilities, from medical centers to County and State office buildings, from local restaurants to ports of entry, from elementary schools to UH-Maui College, and from connected sidewalks to fast, frequent bus service, the Ka'ahumanu Ave Community Corridor connects Wailuku and Kahului—and all of Maui—in ways that meet our changing needs.

How will this vision come to life?

This vision is expressed through our core values and aspirations for the corridor. Building from past planning efforts, input from the community, and technical analysis, these become the principles that will guide recommendations for the Ka'ahumanu Ave Community Corridor.

Connected, Safe, and Convenient



Rooted in Our History



Beautiful, Comfortable, and Welcoming



Vibrant and Economically Diverse



Affordable and Accessible for all Ages and Incomes



Sustainable and Resilient to a Changing Climate





Ka'ahumanu Avenue was designed to move large numbers of vehicles and provides limited facilities for people walking, rolling, and biking.

Source: Maui County

Connected, Safe, and Convenient

As a state highway, Ka'ahumanu Avenue was designed to move large numbers of vehicles—carrying people and goods—between Kahului and Wailuku and across Maui. Today, it is a congested road that has growing maintenance needs and provides limited options for traveling without a car. Additionally, connections to the neighborhoods surrounding Ka'ahumanu Avenue are challenging, with long distances between intersecting streets.



Main Street in Wailuku is challenged to meet the needs of all travelers within a narrow right-of-way.

Source: Maui MPO

Fast-moving vehicles and limited facilities for people walking, rolling, biking, and taking the bus makes non-driving trips on the Community Corridor feel slower, less comfortable, and more dangerous than driving. Ka'ahumanu Avenue is very wide, making it difficult to cross, especially for older and younger residents and people with disabilities. Although Main Street has a different character, it is also challenged to meet the needs of all travelers within its narrower right-of-way.

Looking to the future, the Ka'ahumanu Ave Community Corridor will balance the needs for different types of movement and feature safer, more convenient ways of getting around, particularly for shorter trips. Prioritizing people walking and rolling, biking, and taking the bus will improve connections to important community destinations and encourage more active ways of traveling.

A Community Corridor with buses that come every 10-15 minutes will connect people to jobs and services and provide convenient options for many trips. Managing vehicle speeds and providing separate facilities for people walking, rolling, and biking will support Maui's Vision Zero initiative and make Ka'ahumanu Avenue easier for everyone to use.

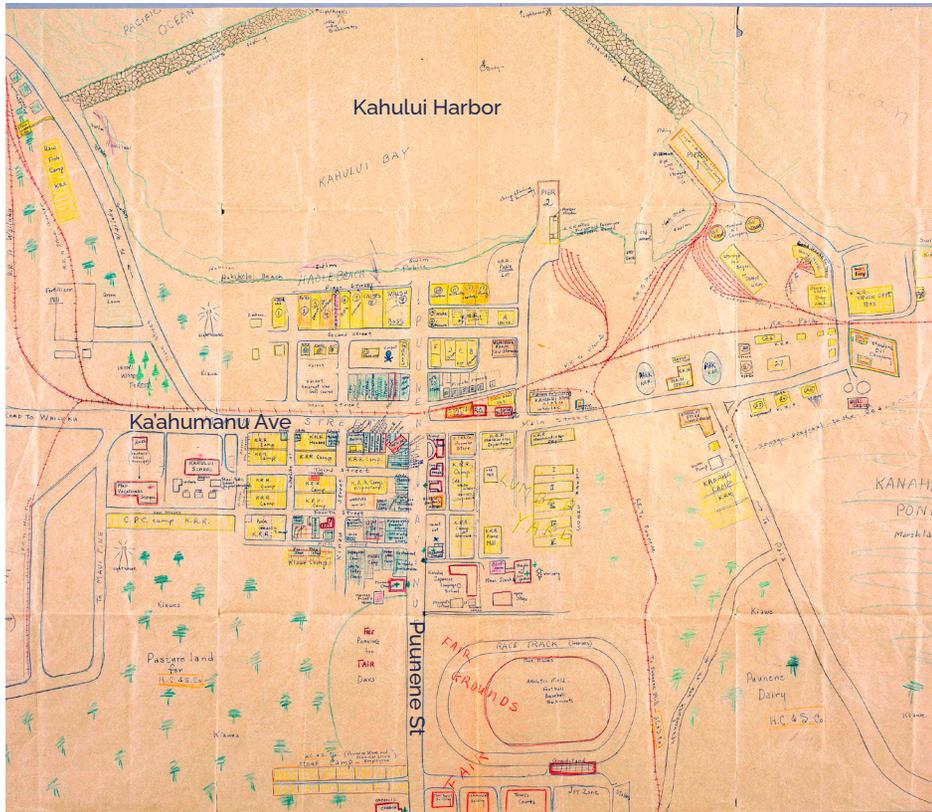
"We need dedicated bike paths that are off the roadway so people can safely bike around town. Ka'ahumanu Avenue does have bike lanes, but mixing bicycles with vehicle traffic doesn't work and isn't safe."

- Ka'ahumanu Ave Vision Survey Comment



Prioritizing people walking, rolling, biking, and taking the bus will improve connections and encourage more active ways of traveling. This separated multi-use path in Kihei is safe and comfortable for people of all ages and abilities.

Source: Nelson\Nygaard



A historic hand-drawn map shows Kahului in the 1930s.

Source: Romanzo Adams Social Research Laboratory

Rooted in Our History

The Ka'ahumanu Ave Community Corridor is a special place, steeped in culture and tradition. Wailuku and Kahului—connected by Main Street and Ka'ahumanu Avenue—have a rich history that extends from the first Polynesian settlers to the growth of the sugar plantations in the 1800s to the rise of the tourist industry in the 1970s.



The historic I'ao Theater in Wailuku opened in 1928 as a movie and vaudeville house.

Source: Maui Historical Society

Situated at the foot of the I'ao Valley, the area's natural environment and landscape have shaped the Community Corridor and will continue to do so. Our future growth must respect and complement the natural environment. We must also preserve the historic small-town character of Wailuku Town and Main Street, maintaining our connection to the past while looking ahead to the future.

Strategies and recommendations for the Community Corridor will be tailored to Maui's unique needs and will reflect the community's desires. Infrastructure will incorporate work by local artists to link to the area's past while expressing a vision for today and tomorrow. Plantings will be native but appropriate for the busy corridor. New businesses and homes will be designed to match the local context, providing support for growth while preserving the character that makes the Community Corridor so special.

The Ka'ahumanu Ave Community Corridor presents opportunities to express Maui's history and culture and to prepare for growth and change.

“Maui's small-town feel is part of our identity. We don't want to lose that. Views are also super important coming down Ka'ahumanu Ave, both looking mauka toward I'ao Valley and makai toward the harbor.”

- Ka'ahumanu Ave Vision Survey Comment



Recommendations for the Community Corridor will reflect Maui's culture and history, supporting local art and music.

Source: David "Meggs" Hooke



Street painting for a safety project to improve pedestrian visibility at intersections is one way to express Maui's culture and history.

Source: Maui MPO



Ka'ahumanu Avenue offers little shade for people walking and rolling.

Source: David Yamashita, Maui County

Beautiful, Comfortable, and Welcoming

Maui is known for its temperate climate, but the Community Corridor doesn't benefit from cooling tradewinds or shady forests. Rather, Central Maui is quite warm, and stretches of Ka'ahumanu Avenue can leave people who are walking, rolling, or biking feeling both hot and vulnerable due to a lack of shade, fast-moving vehicles, and little separation from traffic.

To create a comfortable environment, a street should feel like an outdoor room, surrounding travelers with space that is welcoming and functional. This is possible even on a street



Market Street in Wailuku is designed at a comfortable, walkable scale and provides shade with trees and awnings.

Source: Nelson\Nygaard

as wide and busy as Ka'ahumanu Avenue, although it takes creative strategies and investment from both public and private partners.

Increasing tree canopy coverage is a great place to start for Ka'ahumanu Avenue and Main Street. Planting trees and drought-tolerant landscaping will help make the corridor more beautiful, comfortable, and welcoming. National studies have shown that, regardless of their travel mode, people prefer shady streets. Bringing some of Market Street's energy onto Main Street in Wailuku is one way to do this.

Beyond vegetation, the way buildings relate to the Community Corridor can help to create a sense of enclosure and comfort. Streets should be defined by buildings of an appropriate height for the street. Furniture, art, amenities, and lighting also play a critical role in establishing a beautiful and well-designed street.

The Community Corridor will include projects and programs that make Ka'ahumanu Avenue and Main Street inviting for people of all ages and abilities. With strategies to provide shade, lighting, places to rest, and new open spaces, the Ka'ahumanu Ave Community Corridor will transform into a place to be—a place to spend time, to relax, and to be part of the community—rather than just a place to move through.

“If I could change one thing about Ka’ahumanu Avenue, it would be making it shadier. It’s so hot and unpleasant to walk here. We also need benches by the harbor so we can watch the canoe races and practices.”

- Ka'ahumanu Ave Vision Survey Comment



Providing high-quality bus stops with benches, creating informal seating areas with walls, and making good use of existing shade trees are low-cost strategies to improve the Community Corridor

Source: Maui MPO



Lighting above Market Street creates a festive and welcoming environment.

Source: Maui Redevelopment Agency



The Maui Sunday Market is an avenue for small and local businesses to grow their customer base.

Source: Maui Sunday Market

Vibrant and Economically Diverse

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Maui was one of the most expensive places to live in the United States. During 2020, household income declined for 45% of Maui residents, which had a profound impact on all aspects of people's lives. We are now seeing signs of economic recovery as visitors return and people head back to work. However, the pandemic illustrated the importance of diversifying our economy to increase our resilience to future local, national, and global events.



Maui small businesses are recovering from the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

Source: Maui Sunday Market

Diversification will take time, and tourism is likely to remain Maui's most important industry. However, the Community Corridor presents an opportunity to support innovation and promote mixed-use development, particularly as we think about the future of large retail spaces in Kahului and ways to support small local businesses.

Encouraging redevelopment of empty storefronts could support existing and new small businesses, serving as incubators for Maui residents to test ideas and explore new

markets. And strategies that increase the mobility of our workforce by providing high-quality and frequent bus service, and encourage private sector entrepreneurship can help to create a more vibrant Ka'ahumanu Avenue.

Investing in the Community Corridor—and making physical improvements to Ka'ahumanu Avenue and Main Street—can create jobs to support our community as we rebuild our local economy. Making improvements that connect people to local businesses, including complete sidewalks and bikeways and better Maui Bus service, will help to establish a more active corridor.

“We need to plan our communities to be what we want them to be. . . Where are all of our kupuna going to be and how are they going to be taken care of? Maybe our economy is going to be more about healthcare and taking care of the older folks. Maybe it isn't going to be so much about the hotels. We need to build with an eye toward the future. We want to build more complete communities so people don't have to go from Central Maui to West Maui for work.”

- Ka'ahumanu Ave Vision Survey Comment



The pandemic left many vacant storefronts in Wailuku, which present opportunities for new types of businesses.

Source: Maui County



Maui Candy Company “popped up” over the holidays in a vacant storefront at Maui Mall, helping to activate the space while generating new opportunities for the local business.

Source: Maui Now



Kahului Lani, a senior affordable housing development, broke ground in summer 2020 and will add 83 units to the existing 81 units.

Source: Maui County

Affordable and Accessible for All Ages and Incomes

The Ka'ahumanu Ave Community Corridor is home to a fifth of Maui's population and to a quarter of Maui households below the poverty line. Maui is facing a significant housing shortage for its current and growing population and cannot meet the demand for a range of housing types and prices.

Much of Maui's housing market has been focused on providing single-family homes that meet the needs of families with children. However, household sizes are declining—many new households on Maui are one- and two-person households of college students and young professionals or empty nesters and retirees. They have different needs and are often seeking less space, pointing to a need for many types of housing.

While availability is a pressing need, housing affordability is a long-standing challenge on Maui. The median price of a single family home topped \$1 million in May 2021, and nearly 45% of Maui renters spend more than a third of their income on housing. These households are “rent burdened” and may not have enough income remaining after paying for housing to cover necessities like food, utilities, health care, or transportation.

But housing affordability goes beyond just housing costs and income. It is directly connected to where homes are located and the associated transportation costs of getting around. People living in low-density housing rely almost exclusively on private vehicles as their primary mode of transportation, often traveling many miles to work or for everyday needs.

These households are particularly vulnerable to fuel price increases and traffic delays and have few options for affordable transportation. A 2015 Harvard study found access to reliable transportation to be the single biggest factor in the odds of escaping poverty and avoiding homelessness.

By increasing transportation and housing options to address changing needs, Maui can begin to address its affordability and accessibility challenges. The Ka'ahumanu Ave Community Corridor will include strategies for increasing housing availability and affordability and will improve accessible and affordable travel options, including free and low-cost options like walking, biking, and taking the bus.

“The pandemic has exacerbated the housing affordability problems we already had. There are more and more people who need both support services and places to live. Improvements in this area need to start with affordable housing.”

- Ka'ahumanu Ave Vision Survey Comment



Much of the housing in Central Maui is single family, which is increasingly unaffordable for many residents.

Source: Maui MPO



Huliau opened in spring 2021 to provide transitional housing for families experiencing homelessness.

Source: Maui County



Storms in early 2021 flooded streets in Central Maui, highlighting the need for resilient and adaptable infrastructure.

Source: Hawai'i Department of Transportation



Making it easy for people to take the bus instead of driving alone can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions on Maui.

Source: Nelson\Nygaard

Sustainable and Resilient to a Changing Climate

Maui's spring 2021 floods brought the climate crisis into sharp relief for many people on the island. Storm events are worsening, and by 2100, climate change is expected to lead to 3.2 feet of sea-level rise near Kahului. This will shift the shoreline and limit access to Kahului Beach Road.

Drinking water remains a limited resource on Maui, as on many islands. Increased temperatures associated with climate change coupled with decreased rainfall over time may reduce the amount of fresh water available for drinking and crop irrigation on Maui.

The way our community grows has significant impacts on greenhouse gas emissions, which contribute to climate change. We can reduce greenhouse gas emissions by taking the following steps through the Community Corridor:

- Building compactly, using energy-efficient "green" building techniques
- Re-using and redeveloping existing infrastructure and buildings
- Locating homes, jobs, stores, parks, and schools close to each other so that people can easily walk or roll, bike, take the bus, or drive shorter distances to their destinations

- Preserving parks and open space
- Incorporating landscape elements to infiltrate, store, evaporate, and/or detain rainwater runoff close to the source

Climate change is not just an environmental problem. It impacts every aspect of our lives, including availability of food, water, and shelter. The recommendations and strategies for the Ka'ahumanu Ave Community Corridor will be responsive to the climate crisis. We will focus on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and developing resilient and adaptive infrastructure.



Landscape strategies, like the new plantings at Maui Mall, can be used to infiltrate, store, and/or detain stormwater close to its source.

Source: Pamela Eaton, Maui County

“We should be planning to make a lighter footprint than we have in the past, using less energy, using less water, and where we can, meeting more of our daily needs close to home. Part of the solution is giving people the option to live closer to jobs and schools. Any planning for future growth on Maui needs to take into account availability of water.”

- Kaahumanu Ave Vision Survey Comment



Water is a scarce resource on Maui. Protecting our drinking and surface water is an important part of taking care of our environment.

Source: Nelson\Nygaard



Source: Shawna Pabingwit

Achieving the Vision

The vision for the Community Corridor—shaped by input from thousands of Maui residents—helps to define where we want to go. You've asked for a more comfortable and connected corridor, one that welcomes people of all ages and abilities and provides affordable housing, jobs and services, and places to play and explore. The Ka'ahumanu Ave Community Corridor will offer people more choices and more opportunities, reflecting Maui's past, present, and future and the values we all share.

Capturing the vision was the first step. But to achieve the vision, we need a plan of action. We can't do everything at once, and the Community Corridor Action Plan will help us identify and prioritize the big moves and the near-term steps we can take to start working toward this vision. The Action Plan will outline the land use and transportation strategies that will play a role in transforming the Ka'ahumanu Ave Community Corridor over the next 20 years.

Achieving the vision will require leadership, dedication, hard work, and above all, collaboration among people with different perspectives, opinions, and expertise. As we develop the Community Corridor Action Plan this fall, we will ask for your feedback on draft recommendations.

You can learn more about what we've done and what's coming next by visiting our website, following us on social media, or sending us an email.



Visit the project website at
www.kaahumanucommunitycorridor.org



Follow us on social media
[@kaahumanucommunitycorridor](https://www.instagram.com/kaahumanucommunitycorridor)



Email us directly at
info@kaahumanucommunitycorridor.org



The Action Plan will include both near-term actions, like street painting, and long-term recommendations for the Community Corridor.

Source: Maui MPO



We look forward to hearing your feedback on the draft Action Plan in fall 2021.

Source: Maui MPO

