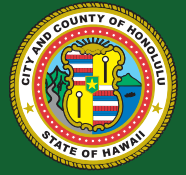


MAYOR'S Highlights



DECEMBER 2023

Rick Blangiardi



Happy Holidays



The tree lighting ceremony at Honolulu City Lights on December 2, 2023.

The holidays are finally here! Thousands of people made their way to Honolulu Hale on December 2 for the opening night of the Honolulu City Lights, our annual celebration to ring in the holiday season. The festivities started at 4 p.m. with a block party across the Frank F. Fasi Civic Grounds and continued a few hours later with the tree lighting ceremony and the start of the annual Public Workers' Electric Light Parade, which ran from 'A'ala Park to Honolulu Hale.

This year's theme for the month-long celebration is "We are Hawai'i," and it is reflected in all of our wonderful displays across the grounds — especially in the world famous Shaka Santa sculpture, which sits alongside Tūtū Mele atop the fountain outside Honolulu Hale!

If you missed the opening night celebration, don't worry! Our holiday displays will be free and open to the public all month, with the spectacular City Department Tree Exhibit inside the Honolulu Hale courtyard open from 7:45 a.m. until 10 p.m. every night until New Year's Eve!

Setting up the Honolulu City Lights every year takes months of planning and countless hours of hard work, and we are extremely grateful for all of the dedicated City employees and volunteers who bring our holiday wonderland to life. This year, we're especially appreciative of HCL coordinators Teresa Fonseca and Coranne Park-Chun, who did an incredible job leading the charge!

Finally, the City would be unable to bring so much cheer to so many people without the Friends of Honolulu City Lights, the non-profit organization dedicated to supporting the month-long December celebration. Mahalo for all that you do!

As you celebrate the season in your own communities, our team will be participating in several of the holiday parades that take place every year. We hope to see you there!

Mele Kalikimaka, and Happy Holidays to all!



Mayor Blangiardi and his wife Karen attend the Honolulu City Lights with Gov. Josh Green and his family.



Mayor Blangiardi with Coranne Park-Chun (left) and Teresa Fonseca, our HCL coordinators.



Mayor Blangiardi and DFM Deputy Director Warren Mamizuka.



Mayor Blangiardi and City volunteers walk in the Kāne'ohe Christmas Parade.



What does it take to set up Shaka Santa, Tūtū Mele, and the dozens of other displays for Honolulu City Lights? Listen to the latest episode of the **One O'ahu Podcast** and find out!



It's Showtime, Once Again!

The Neal S. Blaisdell Center Arena reopened last month following approximately \$9 million in exciting upgrades, including new energy efficient lighting, improved technical infrastructure for performances, reconstructed public restrooms and 567 refurbished loge seats.

The Department of Design and Construction and the Department of Enterprise Services oversaw the renovations, which started in May, as part of a \$43.6 million renovation project for the entire Neal S. Blaisdell Center campus. The work has been staggered so that at least one of the Blaisdell facilities will remain open for operation during the rest of the project.

A blessing was held on November 21 featuring the Kamehameha Schools Concert Glee Club. The school was the first to perform in the newly renovated arena, with its annual Christmas Concert, and is the longest running annual tenant of the arena, dating back to its opening 59 years ago.

The Blaisdell Center, formerly called the Hawai'i International Center (HIC), was built in 1964 and was dedicated as a war memorial to honor Hawai'i's fallen heroes.



Mayor Blangiardi congratulates Kathleen Elliott-Pahinui (left) and Dorreann Kaehuaea (right) during a ceremony at the Blaisdell.

Honolulu's Report Card on Equality

Mayor Blangiardi announced last month that the City and County of Honolulu has achieved its highest-ever score on the Human Rights Campaign's Municipal Equality Index, earning 89 out of a possible 100 points. The City's previous high was recorded back in 2014, with a score of 72.

The Municipal Equality Index uses 49 different criteria to rate more than 500 cities across the country on how inclusive the laws, policies, and services are of LGBTQ+ people who live and work in that municipality. Cities are rated based on things like non-discrimination laws, anti-bullying policies and whether elected leaders are publicly supportive of LGBTQ+ equality — which Mayor Blangiardi received full marks for!

In November, Mayor Blangiardi also designated Krishna Jayaram, the administration's deputy managing director, to serve as the City's first-ever LGBTQ+ Liaison, where he will play a critical role when it comes to the continued improvement of our Municipal Equality Index score.



Taking Action on the Ala Wai

After more than a dozen community meetings dating back to November 2021, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has released its Ala Wai Flood Risk Management draft report and supplemental environmental impact study — and we're looking for public feedback! Scan the QR code to read the draft report, submit your comments and find out why the Honolulu Star-Advertiser says "the city must act" to prevent catastrophic flooding across Waikiki and the entire Ala Wai watershed.



Rendering release by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the draft Ala Wai Flood Risk Management report.

The Best of the Best!

A heartfelt congratulations to Dorreann Kaehuaea (Dept. of Environmental Services), the City's Employee of the Year, and Kathleen Elliott-Pahinui (Honolulu Board of Water Supply), the City's Manager of the Year!

For the full list of award winners, including the Employees of the Year for each department, scan here:





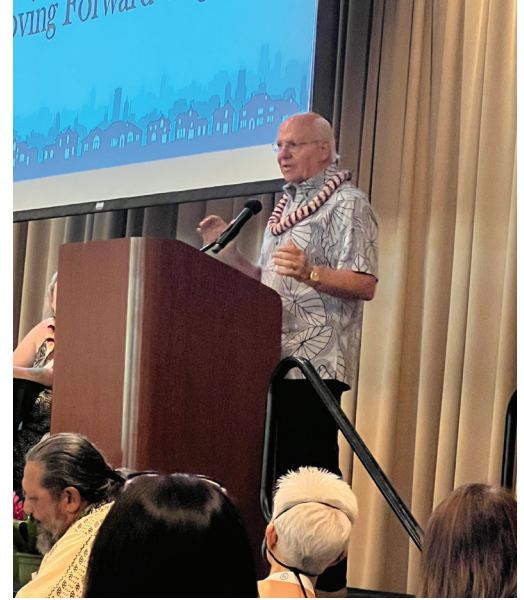
Nānāikapono Refuse Remix (Nānākuli) October 30, 2023

The City partnered with Honolulu Theatre for Youth to create a captivating and informative 55-minute musical with talented artists who engaged 300 students at Nānāikapono Elementary School in Wai'anae and taught them valuable lessons about recycling.



Homeless and Housing Conference (Kāne'ohe) November 3, 2023

Mayor Blangiardi joined partners from across the state for critical conversations on our housing crisis during this year's statewide Homeless and Housing Conference on November 3 and 4 at the Ko'olau Ballrooms.



Ernest Street Blessing (Honolulu) November 7, 2023

Mayor Blangiardi joined Gov. Josh Green and builders Paul Lam, Greg Thielen and Evan Amakata for a ribbon cutting at a new Bill 7 affordable housing development on Ernest Street in Urban Honolulu.



Arbor Day Celebration (Kahuku) November 8, 2023

Students from Kahuku Elementary joined Mayor Blangiardi at Kahuku District Park to plant nine new trees to celebrate Arbor Day — the direct result of community concerns raised during a town hall meeting at Lā'ie Elementary in April!

Veterans Day Ceremony (Pūowaina) November 11, 2023

On Veterans Day, Mayor Blangiardi demonstrated his unwavering support for service members during a ceremony at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific.



Transgender Day of Remembrance (Downtown Honolulu) November 20, 2023

Krishna Jayaram, the City's deputy managing director and LGBTQ+ Liaison, spoke at the Transgender Day of Remembrance ceremony at the Hawai'i State Art Museum. The somber ceremony, which was organized by the Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center, brings attention to continued violence against transgender people.

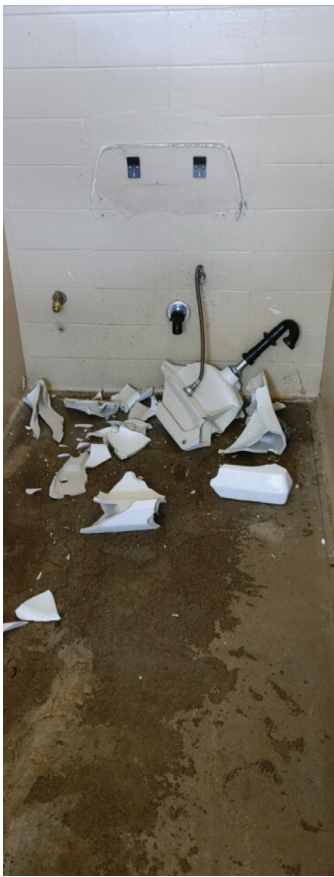


Now You See It, Now You Don't

In October, we were excited to share the news that the Mō'ili'ili Neighborhood Park would be closing for most of the month for some much-needed maintenance, including the renovation of the park's comfort stations. And last month, we were even more excited to re-open the park and show off all of the upgrades.

But just days later, our parks crews were alerted that the renovations had been wrecked by vandals — wiping out weeks of hard work for the Mō'ili'ili community.

Criminals who destroy City property in public places do so at the expense of entire communities, and countless families and park users who rely on comfort stations at the park suffer as a result. Please help us keep our facilities open to the public by calling 911 to report illegal or suspicious behavior.



More Eyes On Our Oceans

Last month, Mayor Rick Blangiardi approved \$1.3 million in additional funding to hire more Honolulu Ocean Safety lifeguards — an especially important announcement amid the start of the winter surf season, when big crowds flock to west and north-facing shores to watch huge waves roll in. The funds will support 18 additional full-time positions to support extended lifeguard services.

Earlier this summer, Ocean Safety extended its operational hours, from 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., at its 42 towers around O'ahu. The change has helped dramatically improve public safety capabilities at beach parks, particularly in the busy hour from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

"I am grateful for Mayor Blangiardi's leadership and commitment to collaboration," said Honolulu City Councilmember Matt Weyer. "This is a win for our community, and I know that public safety and our first responders will continue to be top of mind at the City."

Diving Into Kahuku Pool Planning!

Seven months after North Shore residents pushed for a full-sized public swimming pool during a town hall meeting in Lā'ie, Mayor Blangiardi has released \$1.5 million for the planning and development of a new pool and recreation building at Kahuku District Park.

The City is partnering on the project with renewable energy company AES Hawai'i, who has committed \$4 million in funding. The first planning meeting for the new pool was held in November.

"We heard this community loud and clear about the need for a swimming pool on the North Shore," said Mayor Rick Blangiardi. "The Kahuku public swimming pool has been a longstanding aspiration for the community, and we are grateful for the anticipated financial support of AES Hawai'i in making this vision a reality."

The closest public swimming pools for Ko'olauloa communities are either at Kāne'ohe District Park or Waialua District Park, which are approximately 25 and 17 miles from Kahuku District Park, respectively.



Representatives from the City and AES Hawai'i attend the first planning meeting for a new swimming pool in Kahuku.

Report An Issue

Have an issue in your community? Report anything, from potholes to graffiti, using the City's 311 program — available now via mobile app or <http://www.honoluluhi.citysourced.com>



Sign Up For City Updates

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