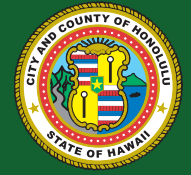


MAYOR'S Highlights



APRIL 2024

Rick Blangiardi



This Month's Highlights

- Mayor Blangiardi delivers the 2024 State of the City address to a packed Mission Memorial Auditorium crowd
- Mayor Blangiardi and members of his cabinet leadership team host the first two town hall meetings of 2024
- The City signs an agreement with the Department of Health to open a behavioral health crisis hub in Iwilei
- The Royal Hawaiian Band moves into a new home at the Waikiki Vista
- An important traffic update for residents of the Lanikai area

2024 State of the City

Mayor Rick Blangiardi took the stage in front of a crowded Mission Memorial Auditorium last month to deliver his fourth State of the City address. The speech was an opportunity to update O'ahu residents on the important work the City and County of Honolulu is doing to address the major issues in our communities. Here are some of the highlights from this year's State of the City:

Affordable Housing

During his speech, Mayor Blangiardi announced plans to transform the Iwilei area into an "iconic" affordable transit-oriented community — with as many as 1,500 new housing units — that will be built around the future Skyline rail station. The mayor also revealed plans to merge two separate City agencies to create a brand new Department of Housing and Land Management, which will help create housing units across the island more efficiently than ever before.

Public Safety

Mayor Blangiardi made two major announcements in the speech related to public safety. First, he unveiled plans to offer \$25,000 in recruitment bonuses for new Honolulu Police Department officers, to help solve their staffing shortages. And second, he announced plans to work with the Honolulu City Council to create a new Department of Ocean Safety, so that our lifeguards — like our other first responder agencies — will have their own department.

DPP

Many of our initiatives to improve the Department of Planning and Permitting were shared during the speech, including details on the long-awaited replacement for POSSE, the permitting software the department has been using for more than 20 years. Once all of the new technology is fully implemented, residential and commercial permit applications will be reviewed by DPP faster than they have in decades.

Homelessness

The mayor discussed a number of homeless-related initiatives during his speech, including an update on the Iwilei Resource Center, which you can read more about on page two of this newsletter. He also announced plans to repurpose a second facility in Iwilei into a triage center with at least 100 beds, and updated our public on new homeless facilities in areas across O'ahu.

City Services

Among the many other topics discussed during the State of the City, Mayor Blangiardi talked about new roving park maintenance crews, to better care for parks in West O'ahu and along the Wai'anae Coast; improvements to the City's hiring capabilities, which helps all departments improve their ability to provide services to the public; and how the City's budget submittal to the City Council reflects our top priorities.



Town Hall Tour Underway!

Mayor Blangiardi's town hall meetings are back! In the final two weeks of March, the mayor and his senior leadership team held town hall meetings at Kapolei High School and Kailua Intermediate School, to talk about issues and concerns in each of those communities — and the meetings are scheduled to take place in nine additional communities, running through early June.

The town hall meetings are an opportunity for the mayor and other senior leaders to listen to concerns directly from the public, answer questions about the City's top priorities and brief residents about upcoming projects in individual neighborhoods.

To find the town hall meeting closest to your area, or to view the recordings from meetings that have already taken place, scan the QR code!



Behavioral Health Crisis Center Opens in Iwilei

In last year's State of the City speech, Mayor Blangiardi promised to help address O'ahu's homeless crisis by finding new opportunities for the City to partner with the state, allowing healthcare workers with the Department of Health (DOH) to use facilities across the island that are owned by the City and County of Honolulu.

The unveiling of a groundbreaking new mental health crisis hub at the Iwilei Resource Center last month is an example of that promise being kept.

The Behavioral Health Crisis Center, as the facility is being called, provides sanctuary for individuals in mental distress — particularly those experiencing homelessness or housing instability. The center will offer crisis interventions, which help individuals suffering from mental health issues to stabilize before outreach workers assist them with the process of finding supportive housing.

The center's primary focus is to create a supportive environment conducive to healing and stability, ensuring that individuals receive the necessary support during times of need.



Innovative Solutions For Our 'Āina

Last month, the City and County of Honolulu entered into a historic agreement with the non-profit Hui O Ho'ohonua to support their efforts to restore the corridor along the Pearl Harbor Historic Trail.

The bike path falls under the jurisdiction of multiple City departments, complicating the project. But after concerns were raised at Mayor Blangiardi's 2023 town hall meeting in Waipahū, Cat Taschner, the director of the City's Department of Land Management, and members of Hui O Ho'ohonua spearheaded a solution to let the non-profit work cooperatively with multiple City departments under one agreement.

The military has also taken critical steps to support the project, and the agreement between the City and Hui O Ho'ohonua serves as a blueprint for future initiatives around the island that will help non-profit organizations better care for our lands.

"This is a shining example of how the City, our military and local non-profit partners can tackle big challenges and move ahead together," said Mayor Rick Blangiardi.



Film Studio Visit (Los Angeles, California) February 27, 2024

Mayor Blangiardi had the privilege to visit Los Angeles to meet with studio executives from Disney, Universal, and Amazon. It was an opportunity to explore cutting edge facilities and engage with industry leaders to discuss the future of projects in Hawai'i — and the potential growth of the film industry in Honolulu.



Honouliuli Blessing Ceremony (Honouliuli) March 1, 2024

Mayor Blangiardi and the Department of Environmental Services broke ground on Friday, March 1, 2024, at the Honouliuli Wastewater Treatment Plant kicking off a \$517 million construction project aimed at revitalizing and upgrading the facility.

Chinatown Update (Ke'elikōlani Middle School) March 7, 2024

Mayor Blangiardi attended the Chinatown Neighborhood Board meeting to provide board members and area residents with an update on ongoing improvements in the area, including the latest on a \$4.4 million project to fix up Kekaulike Mall, which is scheduled for completion in late April.



Janet Jackson Day (Neal S. Blaisdell Arena) March 7, 2024

Mayor Rick Blangiardi proclaimed March 7, 2024 as Janet Jackson Day in the City and County of Honolulu. The Mayor honored the pop legend with a proclamation acknowledging her incredible music career and her years of contribution to Hawai'i. The five-time Grammy winner performed three consecutive performances at the Blaisdell Arena.

28th Honolulu Festival Grand Parade (Kalākaua Avenue) March 10, 2024

Mayor Blangiardi was honored to serve as the Grand Marshal for the 28th Honolulu Festival Grand Parade. Hundreds of performers, musicians, and marchers made their way through Waikīkī to celebrate the collaboration and harmony between Hawai'i and the Pacific Rim region.



King Kamehameha III Lei Draping Ceremony (Thomas Square Park) March 18, 2024

Mayor Blangiardi, along with members of his cabinet and representatives from several City departments, joined representatives from the state and Native Hawaiian organizations at Thomas Square Park to commemorate the birthday of Kamehameha III, who was later known as King Kamehameha III, with a special lei draping ceremony.





The Royal Hawaiian Band's New Home!

After entertaining residents and visitors for generations, the Royal Hawaiian Band finally has a permanent home and rehearsal space — the first known space the band has called home since it was founded in 1836!

Earlier this year, the band moved into space in the 19-story Waikiki Vista building, which was bought in 2022 — at the time, the largest affordable housing purchase ever made by the City. One floor of the building will now be dedicated to the Royal Hawaiian Band, including a beautiful koa-embellished space where the renowned musicians can rehearse freely. Prior to Waikiki Vista, their rehearsal schedule at the Tom Moffat Waikiki Shell or the Neal S. Blaisdell Center was at the mercy of different events and activities.

Bandmaster Clarke Bright and his administrative team now also have permanent office spaces, allowing them to work and plan more efficiently. In addition, there are conference rooms for the musicians to strategize, along with storage space for priceless band artifacts and an extensive library of music.

We are thrilled that the band finally has the home and rehearsal space it deserves!

Traffic Advisory in Lanikai

Beware of lane closures! The City and County of Honolulu is asking all residents and visitors to avoid non-essential travel to Lanikai due to an upcoming rock slide mitigation construction project happening on Mokulua Drive.

Construction is expected to begin on Monday, April 1, 2024, and will last approximately one month, weather permitting. Work will be conducted on weekdays, from the hours of 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., excluding holidays.

Drivers are asked to anticipate intermittent single-lane closures during work hours. Parking in the Lanikai area will also be restricted for the entire duration of the project.

The project is necessary to enhance public safety and minimize the risk of rockslides and potential accidents, as well as to prevent property damage and disruptions to traffic flow — all while ensuring the stability of the roadside.



Take Action Against Illegal Dumping

Illegal dumping continues to plague parts of our communities, including Pa'akea Road in Mā'ili. But neighbors who are fed up with the eyesore have options: they can use the City's 311 app to report illegal dumping, call **(808) 768-3203**, or send an email to illegaldumping@honolulu.gov.

Just a reminder: there are plenty of convenience centers and transfer stations around O'ahu that are free for all residents, so no one should ever have to dump rubbish along the road. You can find them in communities all across the island, including 'Ewa Beach, Kapa'a, Kapolei, Wai'anae, Waimānalo, Wahiawa and near Ke'ehi Lagoon.



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

HNL.info is your one-stop shop for updates from the City! Sign up today to receive emergency alerts, service notifications and information about registering for City activities.



Get In Touch Today!

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Golf Course & Zoo Information
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 (808) 768-5400

Parks and Recreation
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 (808) 768-3003

Neighborhood Boards
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