

Kalihi Valley Active Living Project

Evaluation of Active Living by Design | Honolulu, Hawai'i | 2003-2008

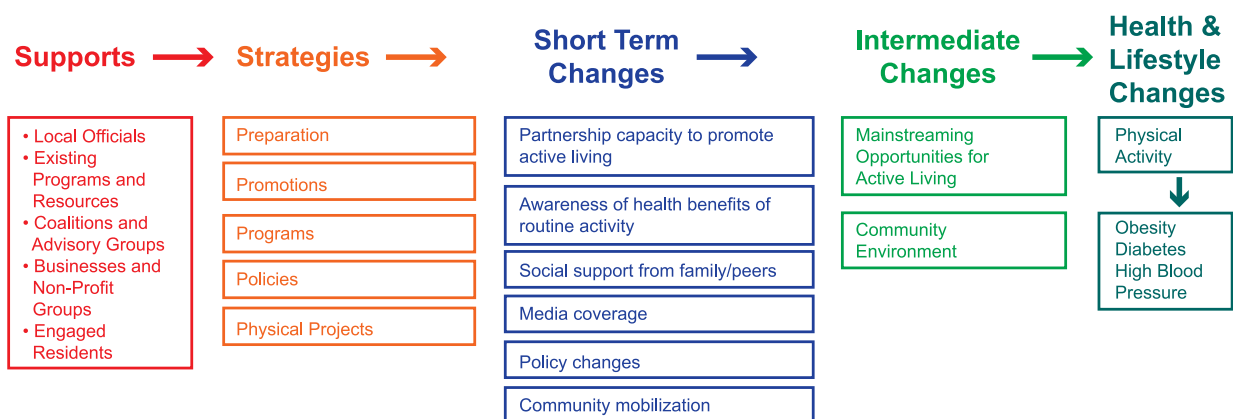
One Saturday a group of older Asian men volunteered for a clean-up day at Ho'oulu 'Aina, a nature park in Kalihi Valley, a neighborhood in Honolulu, Hawai'i. Because of a miscommunication, a group of young Samoan men from a nearby public housing development were also scheduled to volunteer that same day. The park staff were nervous about having the two groups of men work together, as age and cultural differences often led to conflict. By the end of the day, the two groups of men developed a friendly relationship, breaking down communication and cultural barriers. Such community-building experiences became a driving force behind one local health center's mission to increase active living.

"We've had groups of all different stripes [at the Nature Park]. Everyone finds some piece of it to engage in a way that's really meaningful to them personally but that also allows them to interact with other members of the community. So the [Active Living by Design] project has really become, for us, much more about building community as opposed to strictly just physical activity and health. I think we're finding out [building community is] the key ingredient to health." -Staff

"Active living" is a way of life that integrates physical activity into daily routines in order to accumulate at least 30 minutes of activity each day. In November 2003, Kokua Kalihi Valley Comprehensive Family Services received a five-year, \$200,000 grant as part of the Active Living by Design national program (www.activelivingbydesign.org) funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF). By advocating for changes in community design, specifically land use, transportation, parks, trails, and greenways, the Active Living by Design initiative intended to make it easier for people to be active in their daily routines.¹

The Active Living by Design Community Action Model provided five active living strategies to influence community change: Preparation, Promotions, Programs, Policies, and Physical Projects. The 5Ps represent a comprehensive approach to increasing physical activity through short-term, intermediate, and long-term community changes. This inclusive model provided an opportunity for Kokua Kalihi Valley Comprehensive Family Services and its partners to better integrate interests in providing resources for disadvantaged members of the community and engaging the community through culturally appropriate efforts to improve health.

Active Living by Design Community Action Model



¹ The Active Living by Design (ALbD) initiative was established by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) in 2001, and its National Program Office (NPO) is part of the University of North Carolina Gillings School of Global Public Health in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Twenty-five interdisciplinary community partnerships were selected across the country to demonstrate how changing community design can impact physical activity. Transtria was funded by RWJF to work with the NPO to conduct ALbD evaluation and dissemination activities. This case report draws from Transtria's evaluation efforts.

Through the leadership of Kokua Kalihi Valley Comprehensive Family (KKV), the Active Living Partnership reclaimed unused land for active living, distributed hundreds of bicycles to community members, and engaged the community in creating a healthier environment. In addition, the grant served as a catalyst to allow a unique public-private partnership to form between KKV and the Hawaii State Parks division.

“I came [to the Nature Park] more often, and at first I think I fell in love with the place because it is something beautiful. As I came up more often, I fell in love with the people who are here, and as I came even more often, I fell in love with what we were trying to do here.” -Staff

Kalihi Valley, Hawai'i

Kalihi Valley is a densely populated, residential neighborhood of nearly 30,000 people, adjacent to the urban and industrial core of Honolulu on the island of O'ahu. While agriculture was historically a major industry in the area, much of the land once used for farming lies fallow and is subject to intense debates regarding re-zoning. Kalihi Valley is home to two of Hawai'i's largest public housing developments, with over 4,000 residents half of whom are under the age of 20. According to the 2000 Census, the per capita income in Kalihi Valley is \$13,717. The population in Kalihi Valley experiences high rates of diabetes mellitus, poor birth outcomes, youth delinquency, gang violence, hypertension, coronary heart disease, obesity, substance abuse, and high cholesterol.

Kalihi Valley has traditionally been the first home to a majority of the new immigrants moving to Hawai'i. Seventy-eight percent of Kalihi Valley residents are Asian or Pacific Islanders and 35% are foreign-born. Kalihi Valley residents speak a number of languages and dialects, including English (including pidgin), Filipino (Ilocano, Tagalog, Visayan, Cebuano), Chinese (Cantonese, Mandarin, Taiwanese, Tieu-chau), Burmese, Thai, Vietnamese, Japanese, Samoan, Tongan, Laotian, Micronesian (Chuukese, Panapei), and Hindi. Many immigrants changed their entire lifestyle when they came to Hawai'i, abandoning their cultural connections to agriculture and the land. Medical staff at KKV noted that many of the immigrants never develop a connection to their new home, believing that their relocation is temporary.

“The saddest thing for me was the sense that some of the patients I'm taking care of who have been here for a couple of generations now still don't have the sense that they're moved here. They're still thinking it's a temporary deal... Without that sense of connection, it's very hard to be healthy.” -Staff

As the population continued to grow, the limitations of the physical infrastructure became more apparent. Although there were eight public schools within or near the neighborhood, walking or biking to school was unsafe because of dangerous intersections and inadequate sidewalks. Despite both the city and the state having master bike plans, Kalihi Valley had seen little infrastructure improvements. Not all of the streets were wide enough for bike lanes, which necessitated a reduction in traffic lanes, something government agencies resisted. To further complicate matters, the streets in the community were under a number of different jurisdictions (city, county, and state).

“[Kalihi Valley is] an old neighborhood, built a long, long time ago, one of the original neighborhoods. So, as far as infrastructure goes, a lot of the streets in Kalihi don't have sidewalks. Though, we also cannot put sidewalks on because the houses are directly on top of the streets, it's walled. So that's a continuing problem that we face as far as safety goes. A lot of automobiles park on the side of the road, so you have that high risk of people walking between cars to cross the street.” -Staff

Likewise, the community had limited space for organized and recreational play. School yards tended to be fenced in, to keep kids and community residents from accessing the space after school hours.

Kokua Kalihi Valley Comprehensive Family Services (KKV), a non-profit community health center, formed in 1972 to serve as an agent for healing and reconciliation in the Kalihi Valley community and has been a Federally Qualified Health Center since 1991. In addition to providing primary medical care and dental services, the agency has a long history of addressing the social determinants of health, including language barriers, unemployment, and lack of housing. As lead agency for the Active Living by Design (ALbD) grant, KKV sought to increase access to and availability of active living opportunities throughout Kalihi Valley to encourage a thriving and healthy community for people of all ages.



The initiative centered on two main efforts: the redevelopment of an unused 100-acre state park, Ho’oulu ‘Aina (Nature Park), and the creation of a bicycle repair and recycling program, Kahili Valley Instructional Bike Exchange Program (K-VIBE). These efforts energized community partners, mobilized volunteers, attracted media coverage, and fostered a number of related physical projects, policies, programs, and promotions. KKV sought to engage community members in both short-term, tangible activities to increase physical activity levels and long-term efforts to create policies and environments supportive of active living.

Preparation

Partnership

In the original grant, KKV named Eki Cyclery (a local business) and the City and County of Honolulu as primary partners for the ALbD grant. These partners were selected based on personal connections, previous efforts, and level of involvement in and support of the community. After the grant was awarded, KKV engaged a number of other organizations to form the Active Living Partnership, including representatives of resident associations, local businesses, health care organizations, and educational and research institutions. Potential partners were identified through both formal and informal processes. Staff noted that the relatively small land mass of Hawai’i lent itself well to networking.

“[Hawai’i is] a small community in a lot of ways... You know just making phone calls, just talking to people, to people that know people.” -Staff

The lead agency, KKV, had a long history of community- and capacity-building experience in Kalihi Valley. The agency viewed the process as a gradual progression. It began by developing organizational capacity and then bringing in others to support growth. Legislators and representatives were approached early in the grant period, because their involvement and support was seen as valuable to the success of the initiative. The Hawai’i American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) also provided access to a large network of community residents and was essential to organizing residents.

“It’s a fine balance between really pushing to get the word out and then of course getting the right people there.” -Partner

The lead agency found that, when an attempt was made to keep everyone involved in all aspects of the project, the number of people and organizations actively engaged in the partnership dwindled. For example, a local bike shop may not have been interested in attending meetings focused on community gardening. Therefore, a more effective, dynamic structure that centered on flexible, project-oriented partnerships was adopted. Each partner contributed to individual projects rather than the initiative as a whole. The lead agency found this strategy made it easier to sustain relationships, because partners were not asked to be involved in efforts for which they had little interest. The Nature Park’s core partnership met monthly for two years to focus on planning and implementing the renovation. K-VIBE partners did not hold regular meetings. Rather, partners were engaged when specific needs arose.

“Partnership really needs to be around action... People aren’t going to come attend a partnership meeting, doesn’t work that way. They’ll come a few times, and then peter out. So it really had to be around specific things that were going on. So, there is a huge partnership, but it’s not like a group that gets together and all talks to each other at any time. It was really important for us to engage the people by using what they were interested in and not wasting their time with what they weren’t.” -Staff

Staff believed that their partnership model and the broad organizational support received were essential to the success of KKV’s efforts. However, while the flexible nature of the partnership aided the lead agency in its efforts to sustain participation in active living activities, it also made it more difficult to build long-term community support to advocate for policy change.

“It’s good for people to come in and work on a specific project. They’re not interested in sort of slugging it out for the long haul with policy changes. So, that’s good and bad.” -Staff

The table below lists the partners involved in the Honolulu Active Living partnership.

Members of the Honolulu Active Living Partnership	
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kaiser Permanente • Kokua Kalihi Valley Comprehensive Family Services* • State of Hawai’i Department of Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Healthy Hawai’i Initiative - Injury Prevention and Control Program • University of Hawai’i <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Department of Native Hawaiian Health - School of Nursing
Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hawai’i State Department of Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Damien High School - Dole Middle School - Farrington High School - Halau Lokahi Charter School - Ka`ewai Elementary School - Moanalua Middle School - Radford High School - Waialua High School • Honolulu Community College Carpentry Apprentice Program • Kamehameha Schools/Bishop Estate • Kapiolani Community College • University of Hawai’i, Hawaiian Studies Program

Members of the Honolulu Active Living Partnership (continued)

Parks & Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City and County of Honolulu <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bicycle Program - Kalihi Valley District Park Swimming Pool - Nature Park • Hawai'i Trail and Mountain Club • Honolulu Wild Pig Hunter's Association • Kalihi Late Night Sports League • National Park Service - Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program • State of Hawai'i <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Department of Land and Natural Resources - Division of Forestry and Wildlife - Division of State Parks • YMCA – Nu'uauu and Kalihi Branches
Urban Design, Planning & Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hawai'i State Department of Transportation • Honolulu Alu Like • Mayor's Committee on Bicycling
Community Leaders, Policy- & Decision-makers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Council members • Hawai'i State Legislature • Mayor's Advisory Committee on Bicycling
Other Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Army 50th Engineering Battalion • City and County of Honolulu, Kalihi Weed and Seed
Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honolulu Bicycle League • One Voice Coalition • Sierra Club O'ahu Group
Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archaeological Consultants of the Pacific • Bike Hawai'i • Eki Cyclery • Island Triathlon • Kalihi Valley Instruction and Bike Exchange (K-VIBE) • The Bike Factory • The Bike Shop
Community & Faith-based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boy Scouts of America, Aloha Council • Consuelo Alger Foundation Partners' Network • Downhill Hawai'i • Hawai'i American Association of Retired Persons • Kahili Community Liaison Committee • Kalihi Valley Homes Collaboration • Kanu Hawai'i • Kuhio Park Terrace Housing Complex • Micronesians United • Neighborhood Board Taskforce • Nanakuli Housing Corporation • Paloma Settlement • Parents and Children Together • TJ Mahoney (Reawakening for Women) • Salvation Army Women's Way Program

*Organization that served as lead agency during the ALbD grant period

Leadership and Champions

Kokua Kalihi Valley Comprehensive Family Services (KKV) was an ideal lead agency because of its nearly 40-year history in the community. KKV credited its success in providing medical, dental, and social services to its culturally competent and trusted staff, its long-standing relationships with medical centers and training institutions (e.g., University of Blaine Medical School, Luther Medical Centers of Brooklyn, New York), and its deep connections to the community it has served.

“The reputation that we have had and the relationships that we have had with other organizations has allowed us to really be able to bring in a lot of money and a lot of community support over the first few years of the project. That was an enormous support for the program.” -Staff

Because the organization was founded with the understanding that the definition of community health was very broad, concerns about mission drift were discouraged. Staff were encouraged to seek out opportunities to pursue their own passions in the context of the agency’s goals. KKV surprised many partners by taking on projects outside of the traditional medical model.

“The federal government has been so successful in defining, narrowly defining, the purview of community health centers to the medical model, to the strictly medical model, that an unbelievable amount of pent-up talent and energy that exists out there within community health centers is going to waste, towards pursuing this medical model.” -Staff

Some KKV staff members were not supportive of the active living efforts at the beginning of the grant. To increase understanding of the link between active living and community health, KKV held a staff retreat. As KKV’s active living efforts gained traction, the positive benefits for the community became apparent. KKV leadership and staff showed visible signs of commitment, such as providing additional financial support to support staff positions and demonstrating a willingness to share space. In general, as well as specifically for the ALbD grant, KKV made an effort to hire people who had grown up in the community and were bilingual. Having staff who were comfortable engaging with the community was crucial for the lead agency’s success.

One KKV staff member who served as an early Project Director devoted about 10 hours each week to the grant. She was deeply involved in the conception and vision of the grant and closely supervised the implementation in the first years. A Project Coordinator (transitioned from part-time to full-time during the second year of the grant) managed day-to-day operations and planning responsibilities, which allowed the Project Director to serve in an advisory role. The initial Project Coordinator was a former head of the city council, with strong and valuable connections to the community. He was instrumental in jumpstarting the Kalihi Valley Nature Park project by obtaining a lease for the land and gaining the support of government officials. In addition, KKV’s grant writer was responsible for identifying new sources of funding to support active living efforts, writing grants, and developing relationships with potential and current funders.

“The park wouldn’t have happened without [the initial Project Coordinator]. He had the skills and the know-how and the motivation to get the lease on the place. He had a lot of connections, and I really don’t think we would have been able to get through the hoops we had to get through to actually secure the lease on that land [without him].” -Staff

In the later years of the grant, the partnership successfully weathered multiple staff transitions, including a new Project Director, a Project Coordinator, and a K-VIBE Manager. The Project Director was new to KKV and had other responsibilities within the lead agency that limited her time with ALbD.

To build staff capacity, ALbD staff members attended numerous training and networking conferences, including the Hawai'i Conservation Conference, the Annual Hawai'i Watershed Symposium, AARP's Transit-oriented Development Conference, Safe Routes to School training, and Spitfire Communications Training.

Both the Kalihi Valley Nature Park and Kalihi Valley Instructional Bike Exchange Program (K-VIBE) were supported by dedicated and passionate staff and volunteers. The Nature Park caretakers were responsible for setting up work projects and maintaining the grounds. The Community Education coordinator was responsible for organizing volunteer efforts and developing infrastructure projects. The staff were generally knowledgeable of Hawaiian culture and served as mentors for children visiting the park.

“I can’t think of anything better to do with the rest of my life than to do something like this. And be here at this place, trying to make this place grow, trying to reach out for more and really, when it comes down to it, we are trying to change the world, if not the universe” -Volunteer

Nature Park leaders focused on allowing maximum involvement by community members, stepping in to provide guidance, filling in the gaps, facilitating efforts, and providing contact and access.

“So every motion, every input and output of energy, we try to carefully measure and if we can involve other people in any part of that process, whether it’s the research or planting or building trails, then I think that we’re doing a better job as facilitators and not so much as the doers.” -Staff

The K-VIBE manager and volunteers were very active in the local bicycle industry and had a variety of backgrounds, from car repair to jet engine manufacturing to racing. The staff often went above and beyond to ensure the success of the program, donating their own time and resources during off hours. The staff created a positive learning environment and set a good example for children and other community members. The bike shop was supported by a large number of community volunteers, some of whom worked an average of 8 to 10 hours a week. The bike shop also offered part-time jobs and internships for middle school students.

“I love working with kids and I love working on bikes... Being volunteers at K-VIBE, we provide an example to the kids of adults who are willing to help other people for no gain to ourselves... We’re providing a positive example outside of their narrow neighborhood.” -Partner

The partnership benefited greatly from the involvement of several local champions. For example, a community resident, who grew up in the valley and was a past president of the neighborhood board, was an early supporter of Kalihi Valley Nature Park. One KKV health care provider recalled that, when this individual found out about the potential park project, she researched the history of the land and was adamant about pursuing the project.

“When the project was originally hatched, she came to me, as a patient. She had a stack of papers about the history of this piece of land and plunked it down on my desk and said, ‘We’re gonna do this. It’s gonna happen now.’ She was so excited.” -Staff

Another champion of the Nature Park was the president of the Wild Pig Hunters' Association, a longtime community resident who recognized the value and opportunity added by the creation of culturally relevant greenspace. His dedication and advocacy inspired others.

Despite its strong leaders and inspirational champions, KKV and the Active Living Partnership were challenged by funding constraints. Most paid positions were officially part-time, but staff often worked full-time hours.

“Right now we’re only half-time. Imagine what we’d be able to do full-time. For us, we see the potential, imagine if we could get a couple more people on board that have specialties in these areas, imagine what more we can do.” -Staff

Staff members reported feeling stressed by both the projects' demands on their limited time and the fact that they were implementing new projects without the benefit of having models to follow. Lack of communication between some staff members and different ideas of what is culturally-appropriate also led to conflict among staff. Staff often found they needed to create agreements, guidelines, and policies for everything from overlapping job responsibility to cultural protocols to standards of cleanliness. These issues were addressed through structured, professionally facilitated staff meetings that aimed to clarify the different sources of stress and conflict.

Funding and Resources

ALbD grant funding was used primarily to support KKV staff salaries. In an effort to supplement the ALbD grant, KKV staff, including the grant writer, sought out atypical funding sources for the health center. The staff also developed relationships with the local philanthropies, which, in turn, brought funding opportunities to the attention of the partners.

“We lifted everything we could think of that related to what we were trying to do... It’s worked, and the funding sources are many. We put in for a state grant and aid that’s supporting some of the capital expenses of the park. The bike shop has a fatherhood grant now. We really tried to fit whatever funding may come available with whatever the activity was.” -Staff

Through event sponsorships, the partnership was able to build awareness and elicit donations from community groups and individuals. The partnership also made a list of Nature Park resource needs for potential donors and relied on volunteers and in-kind resource donations for K-VIBE.

“Money is really key. I think longer grant cycles are important because I think it takes time to get anything off the ground. I mean even this active living. One year in, there wasn’t that much to look at. But now, like six years in, there’s amazing stuff to look at. So that extended grant cycle is important... In five years you’re just getting to your stride. You know, you’re built up, you’ve got your people, you’ve got, you know, it takes a while.” -Staff

With the support of the grant writer, KKV reached out to a number of local, state, and national funding sources to expand the resources available to support its active living efforts. Financial and in-kind support came from the following sources:

- Anonymous private donors
- Archeological Consultants of Pacific
- Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations
- Atherton Foundation
- Central Pacific Bank
- Consuelo Alger Foundation
- Cooke Foundation
- Crosstown
- Flyright
- Friends of Hawai'i Charity
- Governor of Hawai'i
- Group 70 Foundation
- Hau'oli Mau Loa Foundation
- Hawai'i Bicycle League
- Hawai'i Community College Carpentry Apprentice Program
- Hawai'i Community Foundation
- Hawai'i Department of Forestry and Wildlife
- Hawai'i Department of Human Services
- Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources
- Hawai'i Department of Transportation Safe Routes to School program
- Hawai'i Department of Health
- Hawai'i forest Stewardship Program
- Hawai'i State Grant-in-Aid
- Hawai'i State Legislature
- Hawai'i State Capital Improvement Projects
- Hau'oli Mau Loa Foundation
- Kaiser Permanente
- Kalakaua Lion's Club
- Kaulunani Urban Forestry Program
- KSSK Radio Station
- Men's Club of Hawai'i
- Nanakuli Housing Corporation
- National Institutes of Health
- National Trust for Historic Preservation
- Office of Hawaiian Affairs
- Seto Foundation
- State Commission on Fatherhood
- The Bicycle League
- The Trust for Public Land, Western Region
- Tree trimming companies
- Weinberg Foundation

Community Supports and Challenges

The Nature Park and K-VIBE were both tangible and popular projects that the partnership leveraged to gain local and national resources, funding, and support. Community members showed a tremendous amount of support for KKV and the partnership's active living efforts, especially for the Nature Park and K-VIBE. Residents and activists attended partnership meetings to provide input and show their support. After the completion of the Nature Park, volunteer groups, especially youth, regularly visited the park to learn about the cultural, historical, and environmental significance of the land and how to take care of it. Adults were impressed by how being at the park motivated the children.

“The adult advisors were looking around at how into [the Nature Park] the kids seemed to be. We just said, this is something we gotta get into more than just this one time because it’s kind of the same stage of their lives that the park is at. They’re developing who they’re gonna be and a lot of their attributes that are gonna stay with them, volunteering and taking care of the land and being able to sustain things. It’s just a powerful message to these kids that otherwise, they’d just go out on the weekend, maybe get into some trouble.” -Community member

The partnership’s efforts had a powerful impact on policy and decision-makers. The kids from K-VIBE built the Mayor a bicycle, which he rode around his neighborhood. The success of K-VIBE helped increase the Mayor’s awareness of the community’s support for improved walkability, which increased his support for active living initiatives. In addition, Hawai’i’s Lieutenant Governor and a State Senator with roots in Kalihi Valley were impressed with KKV’s efforts. The state Department of Health initiated a Built Environment Working Group. Efforts related to the Nature Park also garnered respect, appreciation, and admiration from the Land Board, a function of the Hawai’i Department of Land and Natural Resources.

“The chair of the [Land Board]... at a public meeting stood up and said, ‘This is incredible. This is a model for how [land preservation] should happen.’” -Staff

“[The Nature Park] is a place that we have been able to bring policy-makers to and they have been very impressed and have been able to increasingly refer to it as a model for something that other communities can do.” -Staff

“We went to do a capital campaign for a [health clinic] building and we attached the park project to it, to get some capital for the park, too. The [legislators] didn’t want to talk about our building for new medical services at all. They wanted to talk the entire time about this park.” -Staff

Community Assessment

In order to better understand the barriers to and facilitators of physical activity in the community and built environment, KKV and its partnership conducted a number of assessment activities, including interviews, environmental audits, and mapping activities.

From its inception, KKV recognized the importance of speaking with residents to understand their needs. In the past, KKV hired four immigrant women to go door-to-door to get to know the residents, share stories, and hear their concerns. From these interviews, KKV was able to shape the services it provided. During the ALbD grant, KKV staff continued to listen to residents in order to augment their planning process. For example, the partnership distributed “Let’s Live Active” interest surveys in the first year of the grant at health fairs and community meetings as part of kick-off activities.

The local AARP conducted a walking audit and used that data to prepare a report that bolstered its argument for simple street improvements, such as crosswalk markings and countdown timers. In the fourth year of the grant, the partnership hosted a walkable communities workshop on pedestrian issues. Their goal was to educate the over 50 attendees to become potential advocates for walking improvements. The workshop included a walking audit of the neighborhood that demonstrated the need for crosswalk improvements.

“The beauty of AARP was that they were totally prepared, in terms of ‘we’ve done our assessment, here are the recommendations, this is what we want’. And they were actually able to find out that some of the, I mean just from the list of things there, the countdown timers, well oh, those are only 200 bucks, well can we get them in the next year’s budget for transportation services.” -Partner

The partnership also invited local schoolchildren to lead assessment activities related to Safe Routes to School efforts, including an informal survey of how peers traveled to school and a mapping exercise to identify barriers to walking to school.

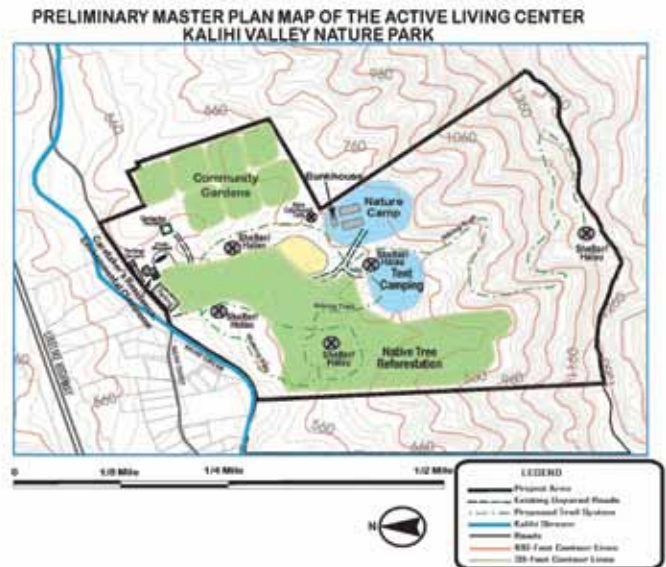
The Trust for Public Land created the Kalihi Valley Park Equity Map to demonstrate the lack of adequate park space in the community. The partnership believed the map would be a valuable tool for advocating for increased green space in the community.

Policies and Physical Projects

Initially, KKV envisioned that policy goals would be identified through discussions with partners and residents. However, the community’s overwhelming support for the Nature Park and K-VIBE and the lead agency’s limited staff and funding led the partnership to narrow its primary focus to these programs. Despite this, KKV and other partners supported other policy efforts in Honolulu. Policies and physical projects, related partner, staff, and community implementation activities, and associated outcomes included the following:

► Ho’oulu ‘Aina (Kalihi Valley Nature Park)

- In the first year of the grant, the lead agency applied for a 20-year lease for 100 acres of unused state-owned land that had become a dumping ground for cars and home to late-night drug dealing. The directors of the State Parks Division and the State Department of Land and Natural Resources supported this effort. This was the first of its kind awarded to a non-profit agency in Hawai’i.
- One of the central efforts of the ALbD grant in Honolulu was the creation of Ho’oulu ‘Aina, the Kalihi Valley Nature Park, an active living center that provided space for physical activity and an opportunity to nurture cultural connections to the land.
- Amenities at the Nature Park included a trail system, a campground and bunk house, recreational areas, a community education pavilion, educational programming, community gardens, native vegetation, and archeological sites.
- Community volunteers and organizations (e.g., public housing residents, KKV clinic patients, sports leagues, teen programs, schools, cultural groups) contributed time, resources, and money to support the park’s development and maintenance.
- While the Nature Park was managed by a number of staff, volunteer efforts were essential to its maintenance (e.g., gardening, trail-making, clean-up). For example, the Hawai’i Community College Carpentry Apprentice Program provided free services to build the Active Living Center at the Nature Park.



“We’re feeling a sense of pride. I think [the Nature Park is] also an example that you can change things, that things don’t always have to stay bad, that you could take something or somebody that’s been neglected, and if you spend energy on it, it can become a beautiful thing. I think that’s a very powerful example for that community.” -Staff

“It’s actually the creation of the park which is the project... you know, allowing individuals and community groups and schools and an incredible constellation of partners to come in and express what it is that they, what part of the path they want be involved in, and finding out that a lot of people want to be involved in some way.” -Staff

► **Kalihi Valley Instruction and Bike Exchange (K-VIBE)**

- The Kalihi Valley Instruction and Bike Exchange (K-VIBE) provided an opportunity for community residents to rehabilitate a used bicycle, learn about bike mechanics, and earn a free bike.
- K-VIBE was housed in the KKV Warehouse located on a busy community road near schools, parks, and stores, making it very accessible to the community.
- The shop included a large inventory of donated and repaired bicycles, two bike repair stations, an office, and a covered lounge space for neighborhood youth.
- During the grant period, 1890 refurbished bicycles were distributed to community residents, and over 12,000 repairs were made.
- Over 3,300 community residents visited the bike shop, either as volunteers or recipients of bikes.
- KKV selected two community bike specialists to manage K-VIBE and to be trained in bike mechanics by a local bike business.
- KKV worked with local bike shops and bike messenger services to obtain bike and bike part donations and to recruit new volunteers.

► **One Voice for Livable Islands Coalition**

- KKV was actively involved in the development of the One Voice for Livable Islands Coalition. Other members included the Hawai'i American Association of Retired Persons, Hawai'i Public Health Association, Hawai'i Bicycle League, Department of Health's Injury Prevention Program, Sierra Club, American Planning Association, and Maui Tobacco-Free coalition.
- Through One Voice, KKV supported City Charter Amendment 8, an amendment to the city and county charter to have the Department of Transportation prioritize making Honolulu a pedestrian and bicycle-friendly city.
- KKV passed out flyers, posted signs and banners, and promoted the amendment to community residents.
- After passing Charter 8 in 2006, One Voice continued to play an active role in local and state policy efforts, including Complete Streets.



“The transportation planning process, like so many government processes, is so difficult to understand... I think that’s been sort of a big focus for One Voice, just bringing more light to that process so more people can participate in it, understand it, and make informed input based on good information.” -Partner

► **City Charter Amendment 8**

- The Department of Transportation Services was hesitant to take on bike and pedestrian projects because it was not in its mandate to do so.
- As a result of passing Charter 8, the pedestrian and bicycle-friendly Honolulu amendment, the government was more open to considering a number of infrastructure improvements.
- The Mayor made a commitment to retrofit all sidewalks to make them more pedestrian-friendly, and there was an interest in requiring all new schools to accommodate pedestrians and bicycles.

“It shall be a priority of the Department of Transportation Services (DTS) to make Honolulu a pedestrian and bicycle-friendly city.” -City Charter Amendment 8

► **Community Action Plan**

- In the third year of the grant, a community action plan was presented to and approved by the Kalihi Neighborhood Board.
- The plan included six components:
 - Develop and maintain the Nature Park, including trails, gardens, historic preservation, native reforestation, and a campground.
 - Improve Kalihi, including sidewalks and shoulder enhancements.
 - Extend the Kupehau Slope Park Promenade to create a circular path.
 - Create a public/private partnership to seek funding to install bike racks at schools.
 - Seek funding for planned bikeways.
 - Work with the city to install bike racks on public streets in selected locations.

► **Bike Racks**

- KKV worked with community partners to identify 20 locations for new bike racks and also worked with government and school officials to gain support for the bike racks and obtain funding for installation.
- The effort faced many challenges, including hesitancy on the part of the schools and government agencies and inadequate physical conditions for bike racks (e.g., surface lacked stability).
- After many delays, 20 bike racks were installed across the city and plans for bike rack installations were made for one elementary school.

► **Community Gardens**

- Initially, KKV identified unused greenspace at two public housing developments, an underused city park, and an undeveloped state park for potential community food-production sites.
- The garden construction at many of the sites was delayed for a number of reasons, including simultaneous renovation projects, difficulty finding families to commit to sustaining the gardens, and competing efforts.
- Midway through the grant, the partnership shifted toward creating community gardening spaces (individual and co-operative plots) at the Nature Park.



► **Kamehameha IV Road Bike Lanes**

- KKV worked with the City Bike Coordinator to make a request to the Department of Transportation Services to complete a traffic study (e.g., traffic counts, roadway measurements) on Kamehameha IV Road to determine the feasibility of restriping for a bike lane.
- The City agreed to reduce traffic to three lanes to add bike lanes in both directions following the completion of new water line construction in 2008.
- In the meantime, a sign alerting motorists to cyclists was installed on the road.

► **Other Policy Efforts**

- Staff worked with organizations in the community to plan and advocate for improvements to pedestrian rights of way in the Kalihi Valley.
- KKV staff, partners, and over 25 community members appeared before policymaking bodies, including the state legislature, to support active living principles.
- KKV became a member of the O'ahu Metropolitan Planning Organization Citizen Advisory Committee.
- The state legislature approved an earmark (at least 2% of eligible federal funding) that supported bikeways and bills that required the inclusion of bicycling organizations in decision-making processes and the accommodation of cyclists in any state plans for mass transit.

Challenges and Successes

Staff, partners, and community members noted a number of successes related to developing and implementing policies and physical projects:

- KKV found that policy efforts were made easier when public relations were a main focus.
- Skills and knowledge gained by working and volunteering in the Nature Park were transferable and valuable in other arenas.
- Staff believed that the involvement of the community in the creation of the Nature Park facilitated community ownership and represented an opportunity to bring the different communities together in a positive way.
- The Nature Park provided a valuable educational setting for children in the community.
- For people living in public housing, the Nature Park provided an opportunity to garden, engage in healthful behaviors, save money, and nourish a spiritual connection to the land.
- Park staff worked hard to include community members in many aspects of the park development and maintenance, including research and manual labor.
- Staff believed that careful, proactive, and collaborative planning would allow them to best serve the needs and wants of the community.
- KKV learned to garner community support and interest before drawing a connection between safety, health, and infrastructure change.

“There’s an extraordinary amount of community participation and support [for the Nature Park]. It’s thousands of hours that people have just put in as volunteers from a real wide variety of different groups. It’s been a magnet for good will in the community.” -Staff

“[The Nature Park is] living, it’s breathing, and it’s a healing place too. Being in the city can kind of distract the students. When they come back here a morning or two, they have a better outlook. They try better. They’re more rounded. That’s kind of [what is] ideal is to really take all the goodness that they experience back here apply it to their lives, their family environment, community, all those.” -Community member

“[The Nature Park] gives people an opportunity to share their own culture and feel proud of their culture, too. I think a lot of people who live in the housing, they don’t [feel proud]...they don’t have access to land in order to just be active or to plant or to work or to feed themselves... They don’t have access to that kind of land.” -Staff

Staff, partners, and community members noted a number of challenges to developing and implementing policies and physical projects:

- The main barriers to projects included a lack of commitment, funding, and support.
- There was some resistance to redesigning streets because some funders favored focusing on the development of new communities rather than revitalizing old ones.
- While planning meetings were heavily attended at first, participation gradually declined as decisions were made.
- Government staff were hesitant to engage in efforts outside of their usual job description.
- At times, the Mayor and Department of Transportation Services did not support Charter 8.
- Staff noted that, while the passing of Charter 8 was a major accomplishment, holding government agencies accountable proved challenging.
- Coordinating efforts between different levels of leadership (e.g., state, city, community) and different government departments was difficult.

- Organizing volunteer efforts to best coincide with the interests and availability of individuals and groups was challenging.
- Funding given to the Department of Natural Resources for parking at the park was not spent efficiently.
- K-VIBE's bike inventory quickly spilled over into sections of the KKV Warehouse dedicated to other programs, which caused resentment among staff.

“[Partners] had been stymied in moving anything forward with the City due to the fact that the [Department of Transportation Services staff member] kept telling them, ‘It’s not in my job description to do anything with walking and biking.’” -Staff

“We’ve got [the pedestrian and bicycle-friendly charter amendment] passed. Now, how’re we gonna make [the Department of Transportation Services] accountable and make them actually do something now that its in their job description?” -Staff

“There’s so much potential [for active living], but the coordination of the efforts, just between state departments alone – state, city, and county – it’s a huge learning curve, not only for us in state government but for community partners. I mean, if we don’t get it, then people within the [state] Department of Transportation say they don’t get all the pieces either. Then, how do you help communities mobilize these things?” -Partner

Programs and Promotions

KKV organized a number of programs and promotions related to the Nature Park and K-VIBE. Programmatic and promotional efforts, related partner, staff, and community implementation activities, and associated outcomes are described as follows.

► **Programs related to Kalihi Valley Instruction and Bike Exchange (K-VIBE)**

- The K-VIBE earn-a-bike program was recognized as an innovative prevention effort that offered hands-on skill and vocational training for at-risk youth, particularly boys aged 8 to 13, who viewed the caring and creative male staff as role models.
- A variety of other youth programs were offered through K-VIBE, including nutrition education, healthy snacks, prevention activities (gang, violence, pregnancy), placement for expelled and probationary youth, and weekly informal bike rides.
- K-VIBE also hosted a number of promotional events, such as Fathers and Sons events and a Girls Night Out.
- K-VIBE staff provided technical assistance at a number of bike race events, and children involved with the bike shop participated in bike races, including the Metric Century Ride and a 24-hour race at Kualoa Ranch.
- Children who received bikes rode in the annual Christmas Parade and carried a K-VIBE banner.
- K-VIBE staff assisted as bike valets at the Jack Johnson Kokua Festival to promote riding to the concert instead of driving.



► **Programs related to Ho’oulu ‘Aina (Kalihi Valley Nature Park)**

- The Nature Park depended on volunteers for its success and attracted nearly 1,000 individuals through a listing with Volunteer Hawai’i, websites, presentations, flyers, partner networks, and word-of-mouth.
- Each week, 60 to 70 community members participated in environmental, cultural, and health-related activities; approximately 50 residents participated in monthly community work days.
- A gardening class for Micronesian women with chronic diseases met twice a week to plant and harvest native foods, and fifty KKV health clinic patients participated in a Diabetes Gardening Program.
- Several area academic institutions (schools, colleges) utilized the park as an outdoor classroom for science and culture/history lessons.
- KKV collaborated with a local museum’s docent training program to train youth to lead community groups in activities, including gardening and reforestation.



► **Media**

- The partnership promoted its efforts through flyers, brochures, the KKV website, a K-VIBE blog run by youth, and event sponsorships.
- The Nature Park was featured in a public service announcement, “We Grow by Taking Care of the Land” that aired during primetime television and a cable television show.
- KKV staff used press releases, personal contacts with reporters, and events to attract media attention from 8 television spots (NBC and Fox affiliates, public access shows), over 20 newspaper articles (Honolulu Advertiser, Star-Bulletin, Ka Wai Ola, Midweek Magazine), and radio stations.
- One K-VIBE staff member was featured in a newspaper as an active living role model for achieving dramatic health improvements after adopting an active lifestyle.

“They came down just a couple weekends ago and they did a 30-second spot down at the [Nature Park]. We’re going to be one of the featured things. So, you know it’s just like the pebble in the pond and the ripples. We’ve seen from the get go the interest, it’s expanding more and more...” -Staff

▶ **Community Outreach**

- K-VIBE hosted a mobile bike shop and handed out flyers aimed at children during an annual family fair at the largest public housing development in the community.
- KKV conducted an outreach campaign to raise awareness of the importance of active living to environmentally friendly lifestyles and to promote K-VIBE.

▶ **Presentations**

- KKV presented on active living, K-VIBE, and the Nature Park to a number of conferences, including the United States Health and Human Services Region IX Annual Conference, State Department of Health Physical Activity and Nutrition Summit, Hawai'i Pacific University health communications students, Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations, University of Hawai'i planning and health students, and neighborhood boards.
- Presentations facilitated relationship building between key partners and critical agencies and helped communities be more proactive about making changes to promote physical activity.

▶ **Safe Routes to School**

- A Safe Routes to School non-infrastructure grant was used to provide bicycle and pedestrian safety lessons and refurbished bicycles to students at Dole Middle School.
- K-VIBE applied for grants to organize Safe Routes to School programs with components, such as a Walking School Bus, cross guards, paths around the school, a bike rack with a roof, and pedestrian safety education.

▶ **Other Programs**

- KKV attempted to start a mothers' walking group to encourage women from a public housing development to walk to a nearby grocery store. The program was dropped due to low interest, scheduling conflicts, and childcare needs.
- KKV tried to organize community walking groups in a public housing development, but the effort was discontinued due to the large commitment of time and energy required.

Challenges and Successes

Staff, partners, and community members identified a number of strengths related to implementing programs and promotions:

- Community members were impressed by the number of children and volunteers at the Nature Park and K-VIBE shop.
- Community bicycle-related businesses were eager to contribute to K-VIBE by volunteering time and contributing resources.
- K-VIBE had a sense of community where everyone learned from each other.
- The K-VIBE encouraged children to see cycling and earning a bike as cool, which resulted in increased physical activity and a sense of accomplishment and pride.
- K-VIBE provided a safe and productive place for children suspended from school to spend their time, which was an unanticipated positive result.
- The partnership quickly learned to abandon slow-moving, resource-demanding projects for those that involved community members in tangible activities with perceivable results.

“Each kid that comes with a bike into our shop has always got a grin from ear to ear and their eyes just sparkle like saucers, you know? So all I have to say is [K-VIBE] a positive program, it’s working.” -Staff

Staff, partners, and community members identified a number of challenges for implementing programs and promotions:

- Staff ultimately found that a number of planned efforts (e.g., walking groups, school bike clubs, active living video) were not feasible due to the amount of staff time, funding, and resources required.
- While K-VIBE strongly suggested that children involved with their programs wear helmets, the children were often resistant.
- Safety concerns related to pedestrian and bicycle traffic were reinforced as more children began to ride their bicycles.
- When the partnership planned events or programs, they often could not get people to show up.
- While the state made funds available to reimburse Safe Routes to School programs, the schools in Kalihi Valley did not have the capital to start programs.
- KKV recognized an opportunity to encourage immigrants to engage in physical activity, but often faced language and cultural barriers.

“We have one Micronesian group of women who had been coming [to health education meetings] for about a year and we had been encouraging them to begin a daily exercise regimen as an important part of their diabetes control. Somewhere about at the end of the year, the interpreter for that group said, ‘You know, I probably should have told you this before, but we really don’t have a word for exercise in the [our] language.’ And the program head was like, ‘Uh....So what have you been saying to them?’ The interpreter was like, ‘I really have been at a loss, and I just was so at a loss that I didn’t really want to tell you. You’re so excited about this exercise thing, but it just isn’t connecting to people at all.’” -Staff

“I think funding is an eternal [challenge], you’re always trying to do something with half the money that you really can do it with.” -Staff

“I’m scared to death of thinking about all these kids on bikes in the streets and neighborhood, just all the cars, industrial traffic and everything. So, it’s wonderful that we’re bringing up kids bikes but it’s still I’m just so nervous.” -Staff

Sustainability

The Nature Park and K-VIBE were extremely popular among Kalihi Valley residents and drew immense support, resources, and excitement from within and outside the community. KKV and its partners believed the incredible buy-in for these efforts would help sustain them for years to come.

“[The Nature Park and K-VIBE are] the ones more people rallied around, and they’re just the ones that generated more, more, you know just more energy, more money, more commitment, and I think partly maybe because they’re more tangible.” -Staff

KKV staff, partners, and local leaders sought other funding to support K-VIBE after ALbD ended. For example, KKV absorbed K-VIBE into its Youth Services programming and worked with the Department of Human Services to fund the program through state funding streams. A grant from the State Department of Health’s Healthy Hawai’i Initiative provided KKV with the opportunity to replicate the K-VIBE model at three new sites.

The Nature Park continued as a stand-alone project within KKV, with financial support from a number of sources. An open-ended commitment from the Consuelo Alger Foundation provided support for the Community Education Coordinator position. Other staff positions were supported through a ten-year Forest Stewardship grant.

Through a long-term strategic planning process, KKV and the partnership identified four main focus areas, including native reforestation, community gardens and food production, archeological restoration, and community access. Support for these efforts included a five-year National Institutes of Health-funded collaboration with the University of Hawai'i's Medical School and a ten-year reforestation project with the State of Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources. KKV also secured a three-year grant to implement a wide range of programming aimed at children.

KKV received a sustainability grant from RWJF to continue its efforts to develop and sustain the Nature Park. KKV believed that its efforts to establish the park would provide opportunities to influence future city and state policy decisions related to land use, the built environment, and public-private partnerships. Specifically, KKV sought to develop a community partnership centered on the park, by creating a sustainability plan, generating information resources, holding a two-day planning retreat and a community planning meeting, and identifying other sources of funding. KKV continued to explore income-generating projects to support the Nature Park, including wood crafts, medicinal plants, food production, and eco-tourism.

Acknowledgements

This evaluation and report were developed under the leadership of Laura Brennan, PhD, MPH, Principal Investigator, Transtria LLC, and Ross Brownson, PhD, Co-Principal Investigator, Washington University Institute for Public Health. Support for this evaluation was provided by a grant from The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (#57649). Transtria LLC led the evaluation and dissemination activities from November 2006 to December 2009. For more information about the evaluation and dissemination methods, activities or results, please contact Laura Brennan (laura@transtria.com).

Our team is grateful for the collaboration and support from the staff at Kokua Kalihi Valley Comprehensive Family Services and its Active Living Partnership in Honolulu, Hawai'i.

With special thanks to the many individuals who have contributed to these efforts from Transtria LLC (Anna Alexandrov; Joanna Bender; Shruthi Bhatt; Yolanda Campbell; Julie Claus, MPH; Kathryn Coniglio, MPH; Kate Dickman; Kate Donaldson, MPH; Melissa Hall, MPH; Courtney Jones, MPH; Shannon Keating; Allison Kemner, MPH; Benjamin Krause; Amy Krieg; Lisa Meng; Lauren Middendorff; Luke Odom; Regina Quadir, MPH; Laura Runnels, MPH; Elsa Taricone, MPH; Cindy Thomas, MPH; Sarah Weiner), Saint Louis University School of Public Health (Elizabeth Baker, PhD, MPH), Active Living By Design (Rich Bell, MCP; Phil Bors, MPH; Mark Dessauer, MA; Joanne Lee, LDN, RD, MPH; Mary Beth Powell, MPH; Sarah Strunk, MHA; Risa Wilkerson, MA), National Park Service (Helen Mahan), Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (Laura Leviton, PhD; Jamie Bussel, MPH), University of North Carolina Gillings School of Global Public Health (Kelly Evenson, PhD), University of California at Davis (Susan Handy, PhD), Wholonomy Consulting (Katherine Kraft, PhD), San Diego State University and Active Living Research (James Sallis, PhD), and Innovative Graphic Services (Joseph Karolczak).