

KAUHALE PROJECT PRIORITIZATION

Kauhale Initiative Overview

The Kauhale Initiative aims to support innovative, cost-effective approaches to creating affordable homes and supportive communities for people experiencing homelessness. The Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions is seeking proposals that combine construction/acquisition and up to 3 years of operation to establish affordable communities for people experiencing homelessness. Our goal is to resource the creation of 12 Kauhale statewide, with 6 on Oahu and 2 in each neighbor island County, although this is not a strict limit on the number or location of projects.

Essential Requirements

1. Site Control. Project champions must have site control in the form of a deed, lease, option to purchase or lease, or other agreement with a property owner.
2. Homeless Verification. Champions must commit to a method of verifying that all residents of the Kauhale are homeless. “Homeless” can include individuals who are fleeing domestic violence, who face imminent eviction, or who were homeless prior to institutionalization and about to be discharged from an institution back into homelessness.
3. Community Capacity Building. Projects must include a plan for how to build capacity among Kauhale residents to take care of place and each other, and to participate in management and governance of the Kauhale. Project operators should be aiming to “work themselves out of a job” by building capacity of residents to manage their own community.
4. Other State Contracting Requirements. Entity must be up to date and compliant on taxes, annual reports and other government filings. See Hawaii Compliance Express.

Proposal Criteria

1. Project Duration. Strong projects will have a plan to continue site control, operations, and the affordable community for longer durations of time, ideally in perpetuity.
2. Length of Stay. Projects that do not impose time limits on residents/participants will be prioritized over projects that offer time-limited, transitional housing or shelter.
3. Cost-Effective Construction. Construction budgets, if part of a proposal, should be created by development and construction professionals, and based on construction drawings stamped by licensed professionals. Projects with lower development costs per housing unit, including the cost of land, infrastructure, and buildings/improvements, will be prioritized over projects with higher, per-unit development costs.

4. Cost-Effective Operation. Strong projects will present cost-effective operating budgets and a plan to reduce operating costs over time, by building the capacity of residents to take responsibility for functions initially performed by housed allies or service providers.
5. Deep and Lasting Affordability. Strong projects will present an operating pro forma (financial projection) that illustrates how deeply affordable rents (in the range of \$500 per month per unit for a single adult) will be sustained for residents.
6. Building Community in the Kauhale. Strong projects will have a plan for how to foster and sustain a sense of community among Kauhale residents. This may include social events, service projects, or other activities that build trust and caring within the Kauhale.
7. Building Kuleana Among Residents. Strong projects will have a plan for how to foster kuleana among Kauhale residents. This may include things like creating roles for residents in security, cleaning, maintenance, gardening, improvement projects, supporting peers, or coordinating social events. Ideally, roles will build skills and knowledge that can be applied in jobs or entrepreneurship that will expand residents' economic opportunities.
8. Building Community Beyond the Kauhale. Strong projects will have a plan for how to build connection and understanding between housed people and residents of the Kauhale. These may include social events, service projects, or other activities that foster understanding and relationships between housed and unhoused people.
9. Incorporating Lived Expertise. Strong proposals will have a plan for how to involve unhoused individuals during planning and implementation to ensure that project is informed by the needs and strengths of those it serves. Strong proposals will also include mechanisms for ongoing input and feedback from Kauhale residents.
10. Past experience. Multiple types of experience will be considered: (a) design and construction (if applicable), (b) experience providing social services, (c) experiencing providing housing, and (d) experience building relationships and community with unhoused people. The combined experience of all partners in a project will be considered.
11. Leverage Resources. Strong projects will bring commitments of community resources to both the building and operation of a Kauhale, such as donated or discounted land or buildings, private grants or donations, or in-kind contributions of materials or volunteer labor.
12. Speed of Implementation. Projects that have a shorter timetable to bringing people home will be prioritized over projects with longer timeframes.