

May 7, 2025

Re: Mauna Kea Stewardship & Oversight Authority Strategic Framework – April 17, 2025 Draft

Aloha MKSOA,

Founded in 1968, the Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for our community through a strong, sustainable economy on Hawai'i Island. Representing 460 member businesses and organizations, our mission is to provide leadership and advocacy for a successful business environment in West Hawai'i.

The Kona-Kohala Chamber supports culture, science, education, and environmental stewardship on Maunakea. We recognize the astronomy industry on Maunakea as a significant contributor to Hawai'i Island through advancements in scientific discovery, global leadership, educational outreach, workforce pipelines, job creation, and overall economic impact. We advocate for successful management, embracing a concept of sharing Maunakea for all.

Mahalo for the opportunity to participate in the MKSOA Community Talk Story on April 17, 2025, in Waimea, Hawai'i Island, where diverse perspectives were shared through respectful dialogue. It was a privilege to listen, learn, and contribute alongside community members, cultural practitioners, scientists, educators, and local leaders. This exchange of ideas is essential to building trust and deepening understanding, ensuring that Maunakea's stewardship reflects the community's values and voices.

Participants at the meeting were introduced to a draft of the Mauna Kea Stewardship & Oversight Authority Strategic Framework. It's obvious the authors approached this work with care and intention. The input below is offered humbly, with the understanding that some ideas may or may not align with the vision for the final draft.

- The cover's image, font, and format are excellent.
- In the opening section, would it be possible to acknowledge the law first?
  - *Example:* The Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority (MKSOA) was established under Act 255, Session Laws of Hawai'i 2022. This landmark legislation marks a shift to a new governance structure that fosters a mutual stewardship paradigm, where ecology, the environment, natural resources, cultural practices, education, and science are in balance and synergy. (*Reference: Act 255, p. 2, lines 13-14 and 17-19*)
- Then add the importance in this opening section.
  - *Example:* Mauna Kea serves as an important cultural and genealogical site to the people of Hawai'i, particularly to Native Hawaiians. The summit region of Mauna Kea is a spiritual and special place of significance, home to cultural landscapes, fragile habitats, and historical and archaeological artifacts. Due to its topographical prominence, Mauna Kea is also a highly valued site for astronomical study, which produces many significant discoveries that contribute to humanity's understanding of the universe. (*Reference: Act 255, p. 1, lines 11-18 & p. 2, line 1*).

- And, possibly ending the opening section with a statement about the document:
  - *Example:* The Mauna Kea Stewardship & Oversight Authority Strategic Framework sets the course for a shared future guided by mutual respect, meaningful collaboration, and thoughtful governance.
- Would it be possible to rework and shorten the Mission statement and add a Vision statement? Note: The content of the “Mission and Purpose” statement in the draft was moved to the first paragraph of the opening section example.
  - *Shortened Mission Statement Example:* To steward, oversee, and protect Mauna Kea for future generations. (*Reference: Act 255, p. 2, lines 15-16.*)
  - *Vision Statement Example:* To ensure a mutually beneficial balance is always maintained for Mauna Kea and the people of Hawai‘i. (*Reference: Act 255, p. 3, lines 3-5.*)
- Would it be possible to create a “Values” section with this existing list?
  1. Mauna Aloha
  2. ‘Ōpu Kūpuna
  3. Holomua ‘Oī Kelakela
  4. ‘Ohana
  5. Kuleana
- Would it be appropriate to pull the Kānāwai from the draft’s “Core Values” section and make it the only content in the “Guiding Principles” section? Or, if appropriate, have the Kānāwai be its own section with that as its title.
- Would it be possible to rename the existing content in the “Guiding Principles” section to “Strategic Imperatives”?
  1. Significance of the Mountain
  2. Land Use Controls
  3. Protection of Native Hawaiian Rights
  4. Support of Astronomy
  5. Restoration of Natural Resources
  6. Commitment to Community Engagement
- It would be nice to have a brief inspirational conclusion for the document.

Mahalo for this opportunity to share input about the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority Strategic Framework draft from April 17, 2025. We are deeply grateful to MKSOA and all who have contributed their time and expertise to this effort.

Sincerely,



Wendy J. Laros, President and CEO  
Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce