



County of Kauai, HI

Blue Skies for Island Parks and Rec Group with New Tech

The island of Kauai, HI is known as “The Garden Island” for a good reason. The oldest of the Hawaiian Islands, Kauai is full of rain forests, stunning beaches, and unmatched beauty.

The Kauai Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for maintaining much of the island’s natural beauty by developing and maintaining quality recreational facilities. Additionally, the department is responsible for setting policies, rules, regulations, and administering to the needs of the public.

All of this is a big task, considering people come from all over the world to examine their work every single day.

Fortunately, for those lucky enough to visit the island to attend a wedding, family gathering, or any other event at one of Kauai’s beautiful pavilions or natural resources maintained by the Parks and Recreation Department, the reservations process is now quicker, easier, and more efficient for all parties involved.

Application processing times have been drastically reduced, information is better organized, and applicants can now access their data via an online portal at any time.

“What used to take 3 weeks now takes just a few days with the new online reservations system. When an online reservation is completed by the applicant, they receive a permit letter including a map and other important reservation detail documents, that’s accessible online in their customer portal at any time.”

Robyn Serquina, Parks Assistant Program Coordinator,
County of Kauai

An Aging Process

Until recently, reserving any of the Parks and Rec-maintained facilities required an in-person visit, a paper-based application with a valid ID, as well as other paper-based supporting documentation for the reservation. Typical application process time was around 3 weeks, data was not centrally located, and the process involved a lot of manual intervention. While aging, untouched land resources largely contribute to the island’s natural beauty, this particular aging and untouched process was due for an update.

Discovering the Need for Improvement

In 2018 the County recognized the need to improve not just the Parks and Rec processes, but land information management processes across the board. Through a formal bid process, the County of Kauai selected Elements XS and Connect, products created by Utah-based company Novotx LLC as their platform of choice. While the County has since implemented these products across several departments to improve multiple processes around Land Information Management, the Parks and Recreation Department has realized significant returns.

Designing the System

The Parks and Recreation Department began designing their implementation with Novotx LLC in 2020. Key processes identified by the Parks and Rec group that were targeted for improvement include:

- Parks Pavilion Reservations
- Commercial Vendor Applications
- Commercial Activity Applications
- Community Event Applications
- Sports League Reservations and Scheduling
- Special Request Applications
- Neighborhood Center Applications
- Kaula'i Memorial Convention Hall Applications
- Report Feral Cat Feeding and Abandonment
- Report Downed Seabirds
- Report Predators (other animals)

The first process to go live was the Parks Pavilion Reservations system in 2021. This online process allows online reservations at any of the County's pavilions, making application data and related documents more accessible and reducing the time required to process online applications.

Improvements with Modernization

Paper forms and a manual application process inherently led to interpretation issues and gray areas among the permit clerks. Handwriting and missing or invalid information were common issues, depending on how an applicant filled out the paper-based application on any particular day. The modernized system now provides clarity to all parties, identifying exactly what is needed from the applicant, ensuring data is properly formatted, and nearly eliminating the problem of missing information.

Enforcing fairness is another obstacle the County has overcome with the new system. Many applications are processed on a first-come-first-served basis and the paper-based processing methods often proved difficult to manage dates that papers were dropped off, dates papers were viewed, and more. The County now has a clear picture of all dates involved and can ensure reservations are fairly issued to the public.

When referencing the updated technology, Robyn Serquina, Parks Assistant Program Coordinator, says ["I love that we can assign clerks and coworkers Tasks. When someone fills out an application, we can manage assignments to internal staff and determine who will take the lead on each application."](#)

Moving the application process online has inherently eliminated several outdated processes. Additionally, the County has benefited from a few specific features of the modernized deployment including a unique "discussion" feature that allows County staff and applicants to interact in a chat-like environment. Online document delivery has also streamlined operations, allowing

constituents to attach documents and centralize permit and application data.

The County recognized early on that user experience is critical, especially when deploying a system that will be used by the general public.

"I love how user friendly it is. I can make my own applications for customers with ease and training other people [the public & staff] how to access and check applications on the backend is simple," says Robyn Serquina, Parks Assistant Program Coordinator.

System Expansion

After the pavilion reservations process, the County implemented a similar process for sports fields and parks for local sports leagues. This system provides an online system to reserve sports fields for practices, games, and more. Season schedules are organized based on the data collected using Connect and all information is stored in a centralized database with other Land Information Management data.

Next, the County implemented online applications for special events and commercial activity, allowing applicants to rent park space for events and collect associated fees.

Access to boat ramps, including a system for gate code distribution came next. Then came an online system for commercial vendors to apply for permits to provide services at events.

Recently deployed are online report forms for patrons and employees to quickly and easily notify the County when predators, such as feral cats and downed seabirds are observed

on County property. Reporting predators and endangered seabirds such as Shearwaters will help save their lives and ensure the County remains in compliance with the KSHCP (Kauai Seabird Habitat Conservation Plan).

Looking Forward

The Parks and Rec Department plans to continue the expansion of their online processes in the coming years as more returns are realized. Processes for reporting and maintaining wildlife and protected resources are currently being deployed and additional modernized processes are on the way.



About the County of Kauai

Located on the oldest of all Hawaiian islands, the County of Kauai Parks and Recreation Department develops, maintains, and improves recreational facilities while maintaining the beautification and safety of all County property. Learn more at:

<https://www.kauai.gov/Parks>



About Elements XS

Elements XS is an industry-leading asset management and civic engagement platform used by local governments and utilities around the United States and internationally. Learn more at

elementsxs.com.