Mauna Kea Trask

PARTNER

Mauna Kea is a partner in the firm's Līhu'e office. He practices in the areas of Environmental Law and Litigation, Land Use, Zoning, and Entitlements.

Call 808.521.9297 Fax 808.540.5015 mtrask@cades.com

Līhu e: 3083 Akahi Street, Līhu e, HI 96766

Honolulu: 1000 Bishop Street, Suite 1200, Honolulu, HI 96813

Overview

Mauna Kea is a partner in the firm's Līhu'e office. He practices in the areas of Environmental Law and Litigation, Land Use, Zoning, and Entitlements.

Born on O'ahu and raised on Kaua'i, Mauna Kea is a graduate of Kamehameha Schools and a fourth-generation attorney.

He has years of experience working with and navigating through governmental regulatory processes and has extensive civil litigation experience in both administrative and state and federal venues.

He began his legal career at the Office of the Public Defender, State of Hawai'i and later was hired by the Office of the Prosecuting Attorney, County of Kaua'i where he was appointed First Deputy Prosecutor. In 2009, Mauna Kea joined the Office of the County Attorney and was appointed the County Attorney from 2014 to 2018.

Mauna Kea obtained his Bachelor's of Science Degree in Anthropology from Oregon State University with honors. He earned his law degree from the William S. Richardson School of Law.

Practices & Industries

Environmental

Land Use, Zoning & Entitlements

- Historic Preservation & Native Hawaiian Rights
- Land Use Violations & Disputes

Litigation

- Alternative Dispute Resolution
- Commercial Disputes
- Contested Case & Administrative Proceedings

Real Estate

- Quiet Title/Partition

Noteworthy

Experience

- Represented Employer before State and Federal courts and governmental administrative review commissions including but not limited to Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), Hawai'i Civil Rights Commission (HCRC), Hawai'i Labor Relations Board (HLRB), and Hawai'i State Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR)
- Represented Employer in binding arbitration in both individual grievance proceedings and collective bargaining proceedings
- Advised Employer regarding internal investigations related to employer practices and

employee misconduct

- As both a Deputy County Attorney and later as the appointed County Attorney, Mauna Kea advised career regulators and political appointees on a variety of environmental, administrative, procurement, and other legal issues
- Land use entitlements and permitting, Important Agricultural Land designations, environmental assessments and impact statements, native Hawaiian land rights and traditional and customary practices, archaeological, historic preservation and Island Burial Council matters, water rights, and land use enforcement actions. Contested cases and other proceedings before state and county boards and commissions. Administrative appeals and litigation involving statutory and constitutional issues, vested rights, and other land use entitlements

Awards

- *Best Lawyers*® Lawyer of the Year, Litigation – Land Use and Zoning, Honolulu, 2026
- Listed in *Best Lawyers*®, since 2022
- *Hawaii Business Magazine*'s 20 for the Next 20: People to Watch 2012

Community Involvement

- Kaua'i & Ni'ihau Island Burial Council, Vice Chair (2012-2014)

Credentials

Education

- J.D. (2004), William S. Richardson School of Law University of Hawai'i
- B.S. Anthropology (2001), Oregon State University

Admissions

- Hawai'i State Bar (2005)
- United States District Court for the District of Hawai'i (2005)

Membership

- Hawaii State Bar Association
- Kaua'i Bar Association

Publications

- "2024 Hawai'i Legislative Updates," *ke kumu* (Fall/Winter 2024) (Co-Author)
- "Is Develoopment Desecration?" *ke kumu* (Spring/Summer 2021) (Co-Author)

Speaking Engagements

- "Does Development Equal Desecration? Native Hawaiian Usage & Tradition and Customary Perspectives Concerning Land Use and Development," Cades Schutte Corporate Counsel seminar (September 2026) (Speaker)
- "Legislative Update," The Real Property Financial Services Section of the Hawaii State Bar Association (July 28, 2023) (Speaker)
- "Seawalls and Shoreline Access," 2022 Hawaii Land Use Law Conference (May 25, 2022) (Panelist)
- "Hawaiian Issues with Mauna Kea Trask: Hawaiian Homes, SHPD, Pa'akai Analysis," ThinkTech Hawaii (April 20, 2022) (Interviewed)
- "Primer on Dealing with the Neighbor Island Land Use and Planning Commissions," Cades Schutte Corporate Counsel seminar (October 2021) (Speaker)
- "Legislative Update," The Real Property Financial Services Section of the Hawaii State Bar Association (July 23, 2021) (Speaker)
- "Legislative Update," Hawaii State Bar Association Annual Bar Convention (October 16, 2020) (Speaker)