



*Beyond Research, Intelligence*

---

# TOURISM'S SUPPORT FOR MAUI'S RECOVERY

Prepared for the Hawai'i Tourism Authority  
December 2023

---

Hawai'i's leading data, insights, and consulting company since 1960.

📞 808-537-3356    🌐 [smshawaii.com](https://www.smshawaii.com)    📍 1003 Bishop Street, Suite 650, Honolulu, HI 96813

# Table of Contents

<b>I. BACKGROUND .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>II. METHODOLOGY.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>III. HIGHLIGHTS OF LESSONS LEARNED FROM OTHER VISITOR DESTINATIONS EXPERIENCING NATURAL DISASTERS .....</b>	<b>3</b>
A. IMPORTANCE OF ONE CONSISTENT MESSAGE. ....	3
B. EFFORTS MUST CONTINUE TO COMMUNICATE WITH POTENTIAL AND EXISTING CUSTOMERS. ....	3
C. VISITATION TO NEARBY DESTINATIONS THAT HAVE NOT BEEN AFFECTED BY THE DISASTER SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED. ....	3
D. THE AFFECTED WORKFORCE MOVES TO NEARBY LOCATIONS WHERE HOUSING AND WORK IS AVAILABLE. ....	3
<b>IV. MAUI AND STATE ECONOMIC AND VISITOR INDUSTRY TRENDS.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>V. CHALLENGES.....</b>	<b>9</b>
A. LAHAINA RESIDENTS NEED LONGER-TERM HOUSING, PREFERABLY IN WEST MAUI .....	9
B. MAUI HAS A HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT RATE PRIMARILY IN THE VISITOR INDUSTRY.....	9
C. OVERALL VISITOR COUNT TO THE STATE IS DOWN, AND THE OUTLOOK IS LOWER. ....	10
D. MAUI HOTELS NEEDS FOR VISITORS ARE NOT THE SAME AROUND THE ISLAND. ....	10
E. OVERALL, AIRLINE SEATS AND INTENT TO TRAVEL TO MAUI ARE DOWN.....	10
F. GROUP BOOKINGS FOR SOUTH AND WEST MAUI ARE LOOKING WEAKER.....	10
G. SMALL BUSINESSES IN MAUI ARE EXPERIENCING LOWER SALES BECAUSE OF FEWER VISITORS TO THE ISLAND AND, FOR SOME, A LOSS OF STORES.....	11
H. THE MĀLAMA MAUI MESSAGE IS NOT BEING CONSISTENTLY REINFORCED AT ALL VISITOR TOUCHPOINTS. ....	11
I. “ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE” (ESL) COMMUNITIES IMPACTED BY THE WILDFIRE      NEED MORE COMMUNICATIONS AND SUPPORT IN THEIR LANGUAGES. ....	11
J. RESIDENTS, BUSINESSES, AND POTENTIAL VISITORS ARE CONFUSED WITH INCONSISTENT, SOMETIMES CONFLICTING MESSAGES. .	11
K. MANY COMMUNITY MEMBERS ARE STILL NOT CLEAR ABOUT WHAT HTA IS RESPONSIBLE FOR, WHAT THEY CAN PROVIDE AND ITS ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE WITH ITS CONTRACTORS. ....	11
<b>VI. OPPORTUNITIES .....</b>	<b>12</b>
A. CONSISTENT MESSAGING TO RESIDENTS, STAKEHOLDERS, AND POTENTIAL VISITORS. ....	12
B. THE MĀLAMA MAUI MESSAGING APPEARS TO BE CONNECTING WITH POTENTIAL VISITORS WHO SEE IT ON SOCIAL MEDIA BUT NEEDS TO REACH A LARGER AUDIENCE.....	12
C. REINTRODUCE ALL AREAS ON MAUI TO VISITORS. ....	12
D. INCREASE MARKETING FOR POTENTIAL VISITORS TO THE STATE.....	13
E. OUTREACH TO OUT-OF-STATE VACATION RENTAL OWNERS ENCOURAGING THEM TO RENT LONGER TERM TO LAHAINA RESIDENTS. 13	13
F. HAVE MORE COMMUNITY GATHERINGS FOR ESL MEMBERS OF THE FILIPINO AND PACIFIC ISLANDER COMMUNITIES. ....	13
G. OFFER AND PROMOTE ACTIVITIES IN KAA NAPALI AND KAPALUA .....	13
<b>VII. OUTCOMES AND RELATED MEASURES.....</b>	<b>14</b>
A. INCREASE INTENT TO TRAVEL STATEWIDE AND MAUI (SHORT TO MID-TERM) .....	14
B. GROWTH IN THE TOURISM ECONOMY THROUGHOUT THE STATE.....	14
C. MAUI RESIDENTS CONTINUE TO BE INCLUDED IN THE TOURISM RECOVERY DISCUSSION. ....	14
D. INCREASE THE NUMBER VISITOR INDUSTRY JOBS AVAILABLE TO HELP REDUCE MAUI ISLAND’S UNEMPLOYMENT RATE (SHORT TO LONG-TERM) .....	14

<b>VIII. STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS .....</b>	<b>15</b>
A. INCREASE THE VISIBILITY AND CALL TO ACTION FOR TRAVEL TO HAWAII' I TARGETING HIGH-POTENTIAL MARKETS. ....	15
B. SUPPORT BUSINESSES TO CONTINUE TO PROVIDE A CONSISTENT MESSAGE TO CUSTOMERS AND POTENTIAL VISITORS THAT MAUI IS OPEN FOR VISITORS. ....	15
C. SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE CONSISTENT MESSAGING AND OUTREACH TO ALL MAUI RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES. ....	16
D. SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE CONSISTENT MĀLAMA MAUI MESSAGES TO VISITORS. ....	17
E. SUPPORT MAUI SMALL BUSINESSES THAT ARE EXPERIENCING SIGNIFICANT REDUCTIONS IN SALES. ....	17
F. EXPAND TOURISM PRODUCTS ON MAUI TO PROVIDE NEW ACTIVITIES FOR VISITORS AND SUPPORT MAUI BUSINESSES. ....	18
G. SUPPORT PROVIDING LONGER-TERM HOUSING FOR WILDFIRE IMPACTED HOUSEHOLDS LIVING IN VISITOR-TYPE ACCOMMODATIONS. ....	18
<b>IX. LONG-TERM ACTIONS FOR RECOVERY .....</b>	<b>19</b>
A. CONTINUE TO WORK WITH SMALL BUSINESSES TO BUILD CAPACITY THAT CAN PROVIDE ADDITIONAL TOURISM PRODUCTS AND BENEFIT LOCAL COMMUNITIES. IN ADDITION TO TRAINING, THIS WILL REQUIRE DEVELOPING A PROCESS FOR CONNECTING BUSINESSES WITH THE VISITOR INDUSTRY. ....	19
B. PROVIDE CAPACITY BUILDING FOR FILIPINO AND PACIFIC ISLANDER NON-PROFITS SO THEY CAN BETTER SUPPORT THEIR COMMUNITIES, MANY OF WHOM ARE PART OF THE VISITOR INDUSTRY. DURING THIS RECOVERY PERIOD THEIR ALL-VOLUNTEER GROUPS HAVE CHALLENGES REACHING OUT TO THEIR COMMUNITY MEMBERS. ....	19
C. WORK WITH THE VISITOR INDUSTRY TO ENSURE THAT RESPECTFUL TOURISM IS BEING CONSISTENTLY REINFORCED AT ALL VISITOR TOUCHPOINTS. ....	19
D. UPGRADE INFRASTRUCTURE IN SMALLER COMMUNITIES TO ENABLE THEM TO SAFELY WELCOME VISITORS. ....	19
E. USE TECHNOLOGY TO EDUCATE THE VISITOR BY HAVING UNIQUE QR CODES AT KEY LOCATIONS AROUND THE ISLANDS. ....	19
<b>X. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PLANNING .....</b>	<b>20</b>
A. HTA MUST ENGAGE MORE DIRECTLY AND MORE OFTEN WITH THE COMMUNITY, CLEARLY EXPLAINING WHAT IT DOES AND HOW IT IS ORGANIZED. ....	20
B. WHEN PLANNING FOR THE 2024 HTA STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS AND THE DESTINATION MANAGEMENT ACTION PLANS UPDATE, CONSIDER HOW THE TWO PROCESSES SHOULD BE CONNECTED. ....	20
<b>XI. APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>21</b>
A. WHITE PAPER: LESSONS LEARNED FROM OTHER VISITOR DESTINATIONS THAT EXPERIENCED A NATURAL DISASTER .....	21
B. COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM THE COMMUNITY ABOUT THE DRAFT TOURISM SUPPORT FOR MAUI'S RECOVERY PRESENTATION AND PLAN. ....	32
C. WHITE PAPER: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE HTA EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN AND THE HAWAII' I EMERGENCY AGENCY VISITOR COORDINATION ANNEX .....	74

## List of Figures

FIGURE 1: AIR TRAVEL DATA, 2023.....	4
FIGURE 2: AIR BOOKING TRENDS TO MAUI, 2022-2024 .....	5
FIGURE 3: MAUI COUNTY JOB TRENDS BY SECTOR, OCTOBER 2023 .....	5
FIGURE 4: MAUI COUNTY JOBS AND UNEMPLOYMENT, OCTOBER 2023.....	6
FIGURE 5: GREATEST NEEDS OF HOUSEHOLDS IMPACTED BY THE WILDFIRES .....	6
FIGURE 6: DBEDT FORECAST ON VISITOR ARRIVALS, NUMBER OF DAYS AND SPENDING FOR THE STATE .....	7
FIGURE 7: STATEWIDE HOTEL BOOKINGS 2023 COMPARED WITH 2022.....	7
FIGURE 8: STATE OF HAWAI’I INTENT TO TRAVEL, US MARKETING.....	8

## I. Background

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) is a state agency established under Chapter 201B, Hawai'i Revised Statutes to manage tourism for the State. HTA is administratively attached to the Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism (DBEDT). HTA's mission is to "strategically manage Hawai'i tourism in a sustainable manner consistent with economic goals, cultural values, preservation of natural resources, community desires, and visitor industry needs. Working with state and federal management officials in the ongoing recovery phase of the Maui Brushfires disaster, HTA will coordinate the next 12 months of tourist activity and tourism-related economic redevelopment in the region and enhance messaging on the appropriateness of traveling to non-impacted areas in Maui. In addition, per objective 21c, Joint Incident Action Plan, FEMA-DR-4724-HI "continue tourism and economic redevelopment coordination with the HTA with an emphasis on strategic public messaging."

In response to the devastating Maui Brushfires, an emergency HTA Board meeting was held on August 15, 2023, pursuant to Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS) 92-8(a). At this meeting, the board approved to request a Tourism Emergency Declaration from the Governor, pursuant to HRS 201B-9. A Disaster Response Permitted Interaction Group (DRPIG) was also formed to address Maui's communities and visitor industry impacts. Governor Josh Green on August 19, 2023, authorized the HTA, in coordination with the Department of Budget and Finance, to use monies in the Tourism Emergency Special Fund to respond to the emergency and provide relief under section 2018-10, HRS.

HTA continues to implement its foundational plans: the 2020 to 2025 Strategic Plan, the 2019 to 2023 Maui Destination Management Plan (DMAP), and the HTA Brand Management Plan 2023. This *Tourism Support for Maui's Recovery Plan* has been developed under the direction of the DRPIG. The intent of this plan is to allocate additional resources and attention at levels that no one anticipated needing at the start of 2023. Many plans are underway at the State level and on Maui to address recovery efforts, and HTA is taking the lead in tourism.

## II. Methodology

Three types of research were used to build the foundation for this plan: secondary, quantitative, and qualitative research. The secondary research explored other tourism destinations that experienced natural disasters, how they recovered, and lessons learned. The quantitative extent and impact of the wildfires have been documented and tracked in reports from the Department of Business Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT), and the University of Hawai'i Economic Research Office (UHERO). The data has been updated on a regular basis on the DBEDT website. Both the secondary and quantitative input provide high-level insights into the challenges ahead. The qualitative interviews with Maui and State residents, visitor industry, business, and government officials provide insights at the grassroots level about the efforts that are underway and where assistance is needed. In addition, community member feedback on the plan in presentation format was encouraged after the December 4<sup>th</sup> community meeting.

A total of 55 individuals were interviewed representing about 29 organizations. Approximately 120 people attended the community meeting in person and another 90+ attended via Zoom. Written comments were received from 123 people. These comments are included in the Appendix.

### III. Highlights of Lessons Learned from Other Visitor Destinations Experiencing Natural Disasters

Research on other visitor destinations that suffered and recovered from natural disasters provides shared experiences and lessons learned that can be applied to the wildfires on Maui. The following are three recommendations that were frequently cited in recovery efforts. The complete white paper is included in the appendix.

#### A. Importance of one consistent message.

After a disaster, there is a rush to respond and act. Multiple entities and the media are anxious to get their recommendations/directions to the people who are impacted. This rush results in mixed messages that may conflict because they are not coordinated. Overreaction can also misrepresent the reality of the situation. Messages that are coordinated and consistent give people more confidence that the entities in charge know what they are doing.

#### B. Efforts must continue to communicate with potential and existing customers.

Controlling the reputation of a destination is critical after a disaster. Businesses must continue to communicate with their customers and guests on business operations and manage expectations.

#### C. Visitation to nearby destinations that have not been affected by the disaster should be encouraged.

Potential visitors often do not understand the geography of the disaster and believe it to be larger than it is. A lesson learned from the Hawai'i Island volcano eruptions to Sonoma wildfires, is that people not from the area, do not understand the extent of a disaster area. This has a negative economic impact on a larger area. The sooner potential guests are encouraged to travel to nearby areas, the faster an area's economic recovery.

#### D. The affected workforce moves to nearby locations where housing and work is available.

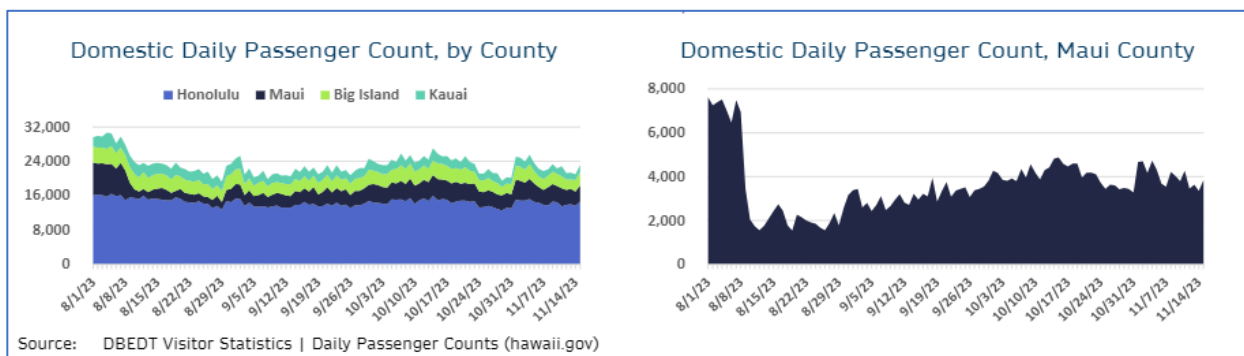
Housing after a disaster is always a significant need for community members. On the continent, residents will move to a nearby town and many move back to their hometown when able to rebuild and find work. Maui is similar in that housing is a significant challenge for wildfire impacted households. Unfortunately, a nearby town with housing and jobs is not readily available. It will be a challenge to provide adequate housing until new housing can be developed.

## IV. Maui and State Economic and Visitor Industry Trends

The catastrophic Maui wildfires in August 2023 led to the destruction of over 3,000 structures in Lahaina and Upcountry Maui.<sup>1</sup> In Lahaina alone, UHERO estimates that 2,200 structures were lost and of these 86% were homes. This has resulted in about 7,000 displaced people living with friends and family, or hotels, timeshares and TVRs. Recovery workers are also being housed, and eventually construction workers will require housing.<sup>2</sup> The challenge is significant to community members, businesses, and the economy of Maui.

DBEDT has collected and shared data on key indicators describing the challenges facing Maui and the State. Since August 11<sup>th</sup> Maui has experienced a significant decline in domestic passenger count that has impacted total passenger count for the State and the counties have not been able to offset that loss. In addition, the passengers that have gone to Maui include FEMA, HUD, and other government agency employees directly helping in the recovery, which means that visitor count is even lower.

Figure 1: Air Travel Data, 2023



Air booking trends are an indication of future visitor arrivals. As shown in Figure 2, November and December 2023 bookings are lower than in 2022. Likewise, the bookings for the first four months of 2024 are below 2023. UHERO forecast reports that at the end of 2023 Maui Visitor arrivals will reach “more than 50% of their 2022 level, rising to 80% by the end of 2024.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2023 Maui County Wildfires Recovery Needs Assessment, UHERO

<sup>2</sup> Wildfires Deliver Heavy Blow to Maui Economy, UHERO, September 22, 2023

<sup>3</sup> Wildfires Deliver Heavy Blow to Maui Economy, UHERO, September 22, 2023



Figure 2: Air Booking Trends to Maui, 2022-2024<sup>4</sup>



The effects of the wildfires have extended beyond the Lahaina and Upcountry communities. The lower visitor arrivals have resulted in a net loss of 1,000 non-agricultural jobs in October 2023 compared to October 2022 as shown in the Job Trends by Sector table below. Three thousand of the job losses have been in visitor-related industries including Accommodations, Food Service & Drinking Places, and Retail Trade.

Figure 3: Maui County Job Trends by Sector, October 2023<sup>5</sup>

	Jobs	CHG*	%CHG*
Total non-agriculture W&S jobs	72,700	-2,400	-3.2%
Nat'l resources, mining & construction	4,700	-100	-2.1%
Manufacturing	1,300	0	0.0%
Wholesale trade	1,400	0	0.0%
Retail trade	8,500	-500	-5.6%
Transportation, warehousing & utilities	4,000	-200	-4.8%
Information	700	0	0.0%
Financial activities	2,900	0	0.0%
Professional & business service	6,800	-100	-1.4%
Educational service	1,400	100	7.7%
Healthcare & social assistance	8,300	400	5.1%
Arts, entertainment & recreation	2,200	100	4.8%
Accommodation	10,500	-1,000	-8.7%
Food service & drinking places	8,100	-1,300	-13.8%
Other service	3,100	-100	-3.1%
Federal government	900	0	0.0%
State government	5,200	200	4.0%
Local government	2,700	100	3.8%

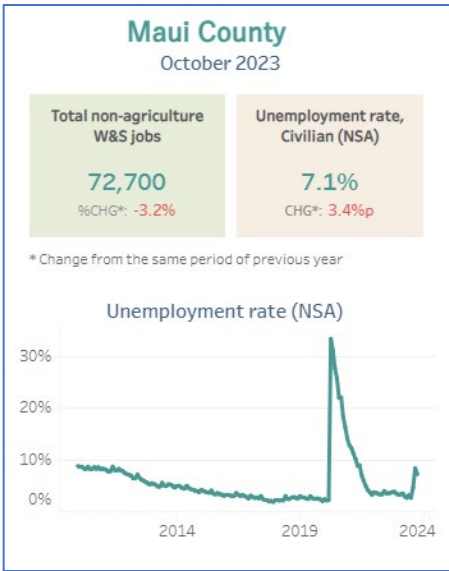
\*Change from the same period of previous year

Source: Department of Labor & Industrial Relations, State of Hawai'i

<sup>4</sup> DBEDT Visitor Statistics/ Air Bookings to Maui, November 21, 2023

<sup>5</sup> State of Hawai'i Department of Labor & Industrial Relations, October 2023.

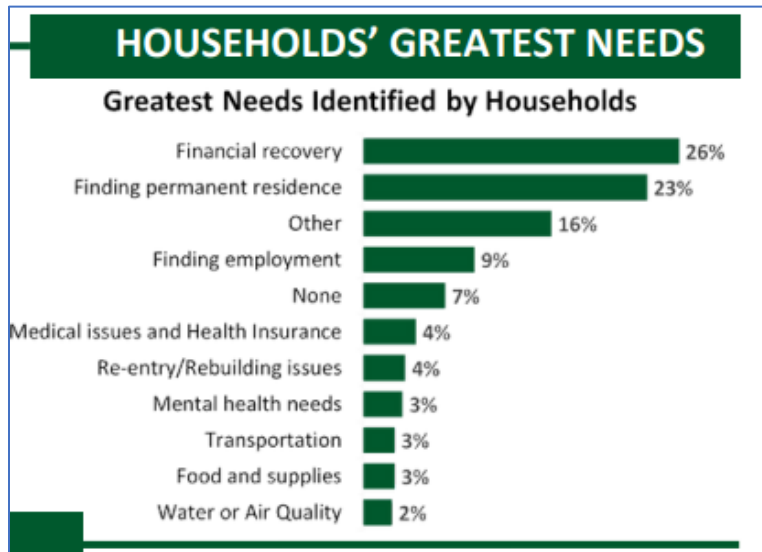
Figure 4: Maui County Jobs and Unemployment, October 2023



In October 2023 the unemployment rate for Maui County was 7.1%, an increase of 3.4% from October 2022. If the primary earner in a household is unemployed after a year, more than 50% of Maui’s households are likely to have to move from their current housing unit. If this occurs approximately 17% of these households say they will move to the Continent. Once households move, it will be very difficult to encourage them to move back to Maui.<sup>6</sup>

The State Department of Health (DOH) conducted a survey among households impacted by the wildfires. As shown in Figure 5, the greatest need for households was Financial Recovery. This is consistent with the need to regain the lost jobs in the visitor industry and reduce the unemployment rate on Maui

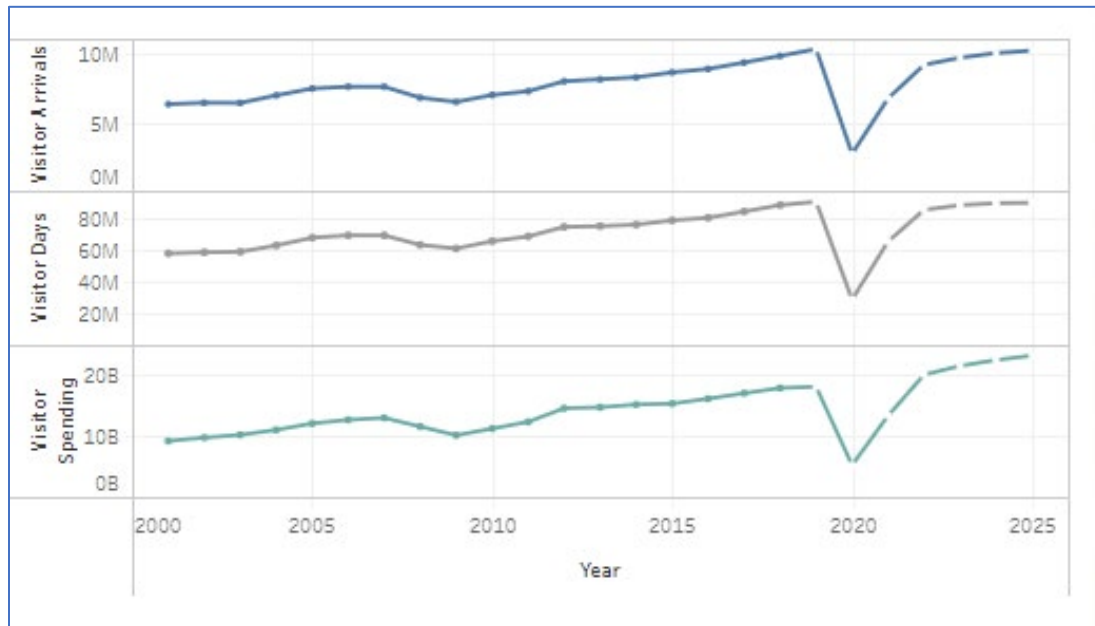
Figure 5: Greatest Needs of Households Impacted by the Wildfires<sup>7</sup>



<sup>6</sup> Hawai'i Housing Planning Study 2023, Question: if you lost your households' main income, the primary earner's paycheck or public assistance check, how long would you be able to live at your current address?"

<sup>7</sup> State of Hawai'i Department of Health, Maui Wildfires Public Health Rapid Needs Assessment Preliminary Report, October 2023

Figure 6: DBEDT Forecast on Visitor Arrivals, Number of Days and Spending for the State<sup>8</sup>



The DBEDT forecast shows an extended recovery in visitor arrivals and spending from pandemic levels to between 2020 and 2025. Depending on the results at the end of 2023 and first quarter 2024 the forecast may need to be adjusted.

Figure 7: Statewide Hotel Bookings 2023 compared with 2022<sup>9</sup>



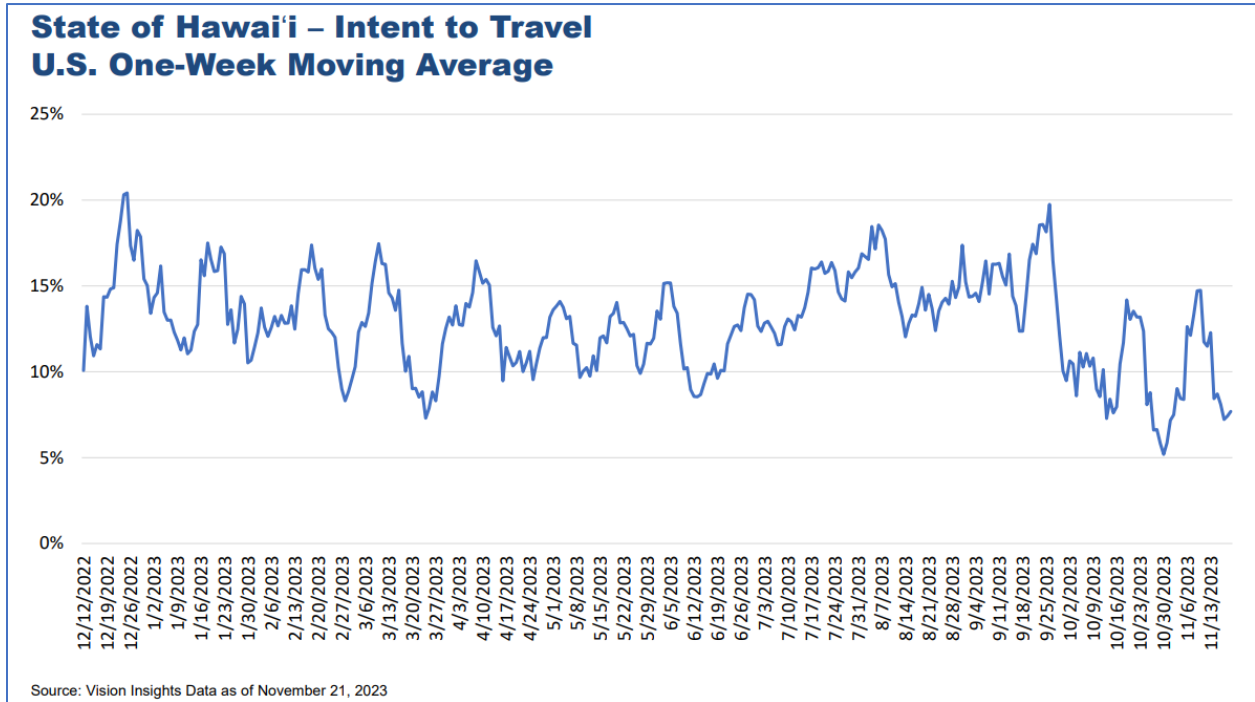
Figure 7 shows that beginning in December 2023 hotel reservations that are booked are below 2022. This is another indicator that travel to Hawai'i is softening.

<sup>8</sup> DBEDT Quarterly Tourism Forecast for the State.

<sup>9</sup> Hawai'i Visitors and Convention Bureau, Travel Click, October 15, 2023

Overall Intent to Travel from the US is also trending downward, which is consistent with the hotel room reservation bookings.

Figure 8: State of Hawai'i Intent to Travel, US Marketing



## V. Challenges

Identifying challenges helps to better understand the barriers slowing and/or stopping Maui’s economic recovery. The following challenges were identified by interviews with Maui and State community members and stakeholders, and drawn from the trends identified in Section V.

- A. [Lahaina residents need longer-term housing, preferably in West Maui](#) . UHERO estimates that over 2,000 housing units were destroyed in the wildfires.<sup>10</sup> Prior to the fires Maui already had an affordable housing shortage, and the need is now significantly greater.

Approximately “3,000 rooms in hotels and vacation rentals are being used to accommodate those in need [Lahaina residents] and emergency personnel.”<sup>11</sup> Lahaina residents are living in accommodations that are designed for visitors, others are living with friends or family, many are no longer living in West Maui. Families that once shared a house now are living in multiple locations. Childcare has become a major challenge as family members that used to provide child care are no longer living in the same household, and childcare providers including preschools and churches were also destroyed in the fire.

Some former Lahaina residents are living in Central Maui and many have additional challenges related to commuting to work in West Maui, as well as childcare. Lahaina Strong has been protesting the lack of housing by setting up a fishing camp on Kā’anapali Beach to discourage visitors from coming to the westside of Maui.

- B. [Maui has a high unemployment rate primarily in the visitor industry](#). Hotels and other accommodations have lower number of visitors due to mixed messages about being welcome to Maui soon after the fires, that have now changed, but there is still confusion. Hotels that have high occupancy rates are housing residents and recovery workers, but these guests do not frequent are not full service (activities, bars, restaurants) resulting in lower employment in these areas.

A related challenge is the need for employees varies by area and by type of business. Food and Beverage businesses are having trouble finding workers willing to work shorter hours. Activity companies are keeping a small staff on call on an as needed basis.

Another challenge is that the community is divided into two camps: a group that wants to return to work and a group that wants more time to recover from the impact of the fires and stable, livable housing. The voices for returning to work have less media coverage than the other group.

---

<sup>10</sup> Wildfires Deliver Heavy Blow to Maui Economy, UHERO, September 22, 2023

<sup>11</sup> Wildfires Deliver Heavy Blow to Maui Economy, UHERO, September 22, 2023

C. [Overall visitor count to the State is down, and the outlook is lower.](#)

Funding for communications to potential US visitors to Hawai'i has not returned to pre-COVID levels. Four years of lower funding is having a negative impact on travel to Hawai'i as other destinations have increased funding. As shown in the data, statewide hotel reservation bookings compared to 2022 are down. The lower visitor count means lower overall revenue at the State level, which means fewer funds available to support Maui's recovery.

D. [Maui hotels needs for visitors are not the same around the island.](#)

Hotels in Kapalua have very low occupancy rates and do not see improvements for next year. Hotels in Kaanapali have higher occupancy due to residents and recovery-related workforce. These hotels and condominiums do have some rooms available and want to be ready when recovery workers leave. South Maui has lower than desired occupancy,

E. [Overall, airline seats and intent to travel to Maui are down.](#)

As noted earlier, the airline seat bookings are below prior years for travel to Maui. UHERO forecasts that it may be after 2025 that Maui visitor arrivals return to their pre-COVID levels. The difficulty will be balancing staffing with demand and for workers to have full-time jobs with benefits. If workers leave the island during this early period to find housing, staff shortages could become the norm.

Media coverage is still focused on the wildfire impact and the slow recovery rather than promoting the rest of Maui's sites. Visitors who have canceled bookings say they are choosing not to book Maui out of "respect for visitors" and "the high cost of change fees."

There are also residents who do not want visitors to return to Maui. They liked the reduced traffic, having beaches that were not crowded, and the slower community feel during the COVID years. It is unclear what alternative economic engine they believe can replace the visitor industry.

Social media has shared some negative and/or untrue postings about Maui that have negatively impacted residents and some potential visitors.

F. [Group bookings for South and West Maui are looking weaker.](#)

Since the wildfire, several groups that were scheduled for 2023 canceled their booking to Hawai'i; others moved from West Maui to South Maui or another island. Group bookings on Malui are looking down for 2024. Cancellations in group bookings could have a longer-term impact because one location is often booked for multiple years at a time.

Wedding bookings are also looking weak for 2024 on Maui.

G. Small businesses in Maui are experiencing lower sales because of fewer visitors to the island and, for some, a loss of stores.

Front Street in Lahaina was known for its array of small businesses and restaurants that catered to visitors and residents. Likewise, small businesses around the island relied heavily on visitors to purchase their activities, crafts, art, treats, and meals. These businesses are experiencing substantially lower sales and are laying off staff contributing to the high unemployment rate.

H. The Mālama Maui message is not being consistently reinforced at all visitor touchpoints.

Media, promotions, and some social media are sharing the Mālama Maui message, about respectful, responsible tourism. Unfortunately, this message is not being reinforced throughout their visit to the islands, most notably on airlines, at airports, rental cars, and activities.

I. “English as a second language” (ESL) communities impacted by the wildfire need more communications and support in their languages.

The Filipino and Pacific Islander impacted communities need more communications in their languages both in terms of messages from recovery teams and support. The turnout for the Filipino special event was an indication of this need. These residents feel more comfortable with people they know and speak the same language and are shyer with others.

J. Residents, businesses, and potential visitors are confused with inconsistent, sometimes conflicting messages.

Residents see too many websites and press releases and are not sure where to go for accurate information and which site to believe. Some messages are not reaching the English as a Second Language communities. Ideally messages can be translated to Ilocano, Tagalog, and Pacific Island languages to ensure that all impacted communities are informed. Some visitors still believe that the area affected by the wildfires is much larger than it really is. Many do not understand the geography of Maui or the islands of Hawai‘i.

K. Many community members are still not clear about what HTA is responsible for, what they can provide and its organizational structure with its contractors.

While visitor industry and government leaders understand the purpose and goal of HTA, many others do not, particularly after the contracting challenges during 2022 and 2023. This lack of understanding leads to misperceptions of what HTA can and cannot accomplish.

## VI. Opportunities

Identifying opportunities helps to better understand where the community believes positive changes can be made to help the economy. The following opportunities were identified by interviews with Maui and State community members and stakeholders.

### A. Consistent messaging to residents, stakeholders, and potential visitors.

As the Maui County Office of Recovery develops its communications center, it should be designed to provide residents and businesses with the information they need with easy access. In addition, the site can provide links to other sites that complement the information they provide. Having one site that residents can rely on and trust to have the latest information they need will reassure residents and provide businesses with the information they are seeking. In addition, translations into Ilocano, Tagalog and Pacific Island languages should be made available.

Maui businesses would like to have an overall timetable for the next year or two so they know what to expect and how best to manage what is coming. Clearly state what is known for sure and what is still being developed. For example, if we know about when the number of FEMA and/or Red Cross workers will start going down.

Now is the time to correct prior misinformation about Maui being closed to visitors, with a consistent message that most of Maui is open and many activities are available. Public relations, media releases, and social media posts directed toward travel media, travel agents, and potential visitors should all consistently and frequently share the same message that Maui is open, encouraging them to explore what's available and to shop local.

Visitor industry businesses can continue to educate their guests about polite protocol when talking with staff.

### B. The Mālama Maui messaging appears to be connecting with potential visitors who see it on social media but needs to reach a larger audience.

Increasing the frequency and reach of promotional messages to come to Maui and the state will increase intent to visit and overcome lack of knowledge about the areas impacted by the wildfires. The messaging should address the misperception of lack of activities and whether businesses are open or closed. Hotels and others within the visitor industry should consider offering special promotions to overcome the other concerns about the high cost of a visit.

### C. Reintroduce all areas on Maui to visitors.

Potential visitors to Maui need to “see” that Maui has the beauty, activities and experiences that it has always offered.

For West Maui, the Sentry Golf tournament in Kapalua in January 2024 will be the kickoff showing the warmth and beauty of the area while sharing the recovery efforts underway in Lahaina. Ideally this type of exposure can continue throughout the year.



D. [Increase marketing for potential visitors to the State.](#)

Higher spending and visitor count throughout the state will contribute to higher TAT and revenues to help support the Maui recovery.

When Maui small business promotions are held on other islands, they need more promotion to residents and visitors about what is available and why it is important. All the effort to transport goods and people is for naught without enough buyers.

Once on O'ahu, concierge can promote Maui Strong Daytrips led by Maui residents, that take visitors to Haleakala, Iao Valley, small business communities such as Paia, Makawao, etc. The advantage of these day trips is that visitors can experience sites without the worry about getting a reservation. These daytrip tours already exist and, over time, can build up more capacity as needed. Done well, the social media exposure will be an added benefit.

E. [Outreach to out-of-state vacation rental owners encouraging them to rent longer term to Lahaina residents.](#)

Several agencies and non-profit organizations are working on efforts to find housing for Lahaina and Upcountry displaced residents. The most viable option appears to be encouraging owners of Transient Vacation Rentals (TVRs) to rent longer term to residents. Hawai'i Housing and Finance Development Corporation (HHFDC) has reached out to owners and developed a website that lists available units, rent levels, and locations for displaced residents to choose from. HHFDC is not offering financial assistance but other agencies are providing some financial options. Unfortunately, there are still not enough suitable housing units available.

One consideration is reaching out again to TVR owners requesting their assistance and sharing with them the benefits of renting longer term to Maui residents.

F. [Have more community gatherings for ESL members of the Filipino and Pacific Islander communities.](#)

These meetings with translators and leaders who speak their language will be able to connect residents with service providers, remind them to sign up for benefits and provide camaraderie to reconnect with friends. This can also be an opportunity to share jobs that are available and answer any questions they may have.

G. [Offer and promote activities in Kaanapali and Kapalua](#)

The County's Lahaina Open Market is planned to be open to the community in January 2024. Food trucks, stores, crafters and entertainment will draw residents to the site and increase business. This will be another attraction for West Maui.

## VII. Outcomes and Related Measures

Outcomes and specific measures are important because they identify the results that the plan will try to achieve. The measures recognize the intent of the plan and the role that HTA is expected to play. These outcome measures were developed based on input from interviews. Note that outcome measures should be tracked, and plans adjusted if they are not creating the desired outcomes. Also important to remember is that there is often a lag between a plan being implemented and the measure reflecting that change.

### A. Increase intent to travel statewide and Maui (Short to Mid-term)

Intent to travel to a destination is an indicator of future travel. The latest weekly trends report shows a downward slope. The desired outcome for this plan is to reverse this trend.

### B. Growth in the tourism economy throughout the state.

More visitors to all islands in 2024 to boost the state economy and increase the resources available to help Maui recover.

### C. Maui residents continue to be included in the tourism recovery discussion.

A measure for this plan is the percent of Maui residents that gave a Top and Mid-range rating for Maui County Resident Satisfaction question of “I feel like more effort is being made to balance economic benefits of tourism and quality of life for residents.” In Spring 2022 33% of Maui County residents gave it a rating between six to ten, on a ten-point scale. A measure for this outcome will be to maintain and increase this rating.

### D. Increase the number visitor industry jobs available to help reduce Maui Island’s unemployment rate (Short to Long-term)<sup>12</sup>

From October 2022 to October 2023 Maui visitor industry related businesses lost about 3,000 jobs. The unemployment rate was 7.1% in September 2023<sup>13</sup>. In collaboration with other agencies and departments, this plan aims to decrease the decline in the number of jobs in visitor industry related businesses and reduce the unemployment rate.

---

<sup>12</sup> Short term defined as six months, medium term defined as one year, and long term defined as more than one year.

<sup>13</sup> Note that unemployment rate could also change by residents leaving the island.

## VIII. Strategies and Actions

The following are strategies and actions that are proposed to achieve the stated outcomes, and to address many of the challenges put forth by Maui stakeholders. This plan should complement, not replace, the HTA Strategic Plan or the Island Destination Management Plans. Given the emergency nature of the funding for these actions, these plans are anticipated to begin January 1, 2024 and be completed by June 30, 2024. The impact of these actions will likely continue beyond June 2024.

Several of the actions have been started by others in the community, but they need the financial and operational experience that can be provided by HTA.

### A. Increase the visibility and call to action for travel to Hawai'i targeting high-potential markets.

#### 1. Actions

- a. Increase media and promotions to high-potential markets.
  1. Use the Mālama Maui messaging that is being used for social media because it appears to be working. Messages show Maui residents doing activities around the island.
- b. Hold Saturation Events in markets showing signs of weakness.
- c. Messages should include a call to action to visit the state including Maui.
- d. Develop and extend outreach targeting MCI group marketing managers and wedding planners on the benefits of gatherings on Maui and the State.
- e. Uplift the social media voices of the people of Maui and the State to bring balance to online conversations.

#### 2. Rationale

- a. Advertising and promotional dollars have been much lower, resulting in a decline in airline seat bookings statewide, especially for Maui. There is still a misunderstanding about whether Hawai'i is ready and able to welcome visitors. Increasing media and promotions will expand its reach and level of understanding within the market.
- b. January is the most important month for promotion because that is when travel planning for the year takes place.

### B. Support businesses to continue to provide a consistent message to customers and potential visitors that Maui is open for visitors.

#### 1. Actions

- a. Provide consistent messaging to reinforce GoHawaii.com as the primary site for accurate information for visitors and travel agents.
  1. Provide additional promotions for businesses on GoHawaii.com.
- b. Provide consistent messaging that the State and Maui welcome visitors.
- c. HTA can provide free booth space or reduced participation fees for Maui small businesses at certain domestic roadshows or travel trade events.

- d. Provide marketing technical support by HTA’s global marketing team – what to communicate to the various major market areas (i.e., updated info on business operations, how to utilize social media, and work with the travel trade and media.)
- e. Support Maui visitor industry businesses through additional funding for marketing co-ops in exchange for special rates and promotions.

2. Rationale

- a. All messages need to be focused on overcoming early messages that discouraged visitors from coming to Maui.
- b. Maui small businesses need assistance to share their products with a larger audience.
- c. Higher Hawai’i prices have been cited as a reason to travel elsewhere.

C. Support and encourage consistent messaging and outreach to all Maui residents and businesses.

1. Actions

- a. Develop and air local messages that share that many Maui residents want to return to work full-time, and it is a path to economic recovery. (Mākaukau campaign).
- b. Coordinate and sponsor a meeting of Public Information Officers (PIOs) with FEMA providing best practices on communications with residents. This may help guide a process to smooth out overlapping communications.
- c. Support Maui Office of Recovery as they develop “transparent and comprehensive public recovery communications.
- d. Messages are translated so they can be better understood by ESL community members.
- e. Sponsor community outreach events to residents affected by the wildfires to share information, provide access to services including mental health services, job postings, etc., and offer residents opportunities to gather and enjoy camaraderie with friends they may not have seen in a while. Events should take place in Kā’anapali and Central Maui. Events should be targeted to the general community as well as the Filipino and Pacific Island communities with translators available and people they know welcome them.

2. Rationale

- a. All messages need to be focused on overcoming early messages that discouraged visitors from coming to Maui.
- b. Maui small businesses need assistance to share their products with a larger audience.
- c. Higher Hawai’i prices have been cited as a reason to travel elsewhere.

D. Support and encourage consistent Mālama Maui messages to visitors.

1. Actions

- a. Increase pre and post-arrival visitor communication and education.
- b. Develop messaging that is more Maui site-specific and addresses some of the changes post-disaster (Changes in traffic patterns, where there is limited access or places to avoid, etc.)
- c. Reinforce the Mālama Maui message.
- d. Encourage all outdated brochures to be taken off the racks ASAP.

2. Rationale

- a. The Mālama Message needs to be reinforced at visitor touchpoints post-arrival reminding visitors to be respectful of the environment and of the people.
- b. Repeat visitors may need more guidance on where they can and cannot travel.

E. Support Maui small businesses that are experiencing significant reductions in sales.

1. Actions

- a. Promote Maui small business events taking place on other islands “Made on Maui” markets were held on all islands. Events could have been better promoted. Additional events could be held throughout the year.
- b. Provide businesses with media releases and placement on the GoHawaii calendar and assist with finding appropriate venues.
- c. Promote websites that are offering “Maui Made” products during West Coast saturation visits.
- d. Work with Maui County’s Office of Economic Development and Maui Chamber of Commerce to have a list of products that are available online.

2. Rationale

- a. Maui small businesses are significantly impacted by the reduction in the number of visitors resulting in lower sales and laying off of employees.

F. Expand tourism products on Maui to provide new activities for visitors and support Maui businesses.

1. Actions

- a. Through the Mālama Maui campaign, further promote other visitor destinations, such as Upcountry, East Maui, Paia, Makawao, and Kīhei, and the activities, restaurants, and small businesses that are open for business. Provide more current visuals to instill confidence in potential visitors that areas in Maui are open. This can include events and festivals to garner participation.
  1. Potential to cross-sell restaurants or activities that are open in West Maui.
- b. Encourage and support capacity building for small businesses, including small farmers or agricultural/fishing entities interested in agritourism.
- c. Remind hotels and shopping areas that many cultural practitioners are available to provide education and activities for residents and visitors.
- d. On other islands, promote the availability of Maui activities that now may be limited to certain parts of the island. Day trips.

2. Rationale

- a. Visitors need to be shown that there is much more to Maui than they may have previously thought.
- b. The current Mālama Maui campaign has been well received and needs additional funding for production to add more areas.
- c. Many locally owned small businesses are interested in expanding by reaching out to visitors but do not know what steps to take.

G. Support providing longer-term housing for wildfire impacted households living in visitor-type accommodations.

1. Actions

- a. Support County and State efforts to reach out-of-state owners of residential properties and encourage them to rent for at least a year to Lahaina residents who lost their homes.
- b. HTA can assist by providing resources to guide the communications effort.

2. Rationale

- a. The longer it takes to provide housing for residents, the longer it will take for some individuals to return to work, for hotel rooms to be available for visitors and for full economic recovery.

## IX. Long-term actions for Recovery

During the interview process many suggestions were identified that will take longer to implement than the timetable for the Support for Recovery plan.

A. Continue to work with small businesses to build capacity that can provide additional tourism products and benefit local communities. In addition to training, this will require developing a process for connecting businesses with the visitor industry.

1. For example, provide workshops on how food trucks can expand to be a restaurant, or a craftsperson can have their products sold in a hotel.
2. Work with farmers to build capacity for agri-tourism. This may involve encouraging working with multiple farmers to provide a similar product.

B. Provide capacity building for Filipino and Pacific Islander non-profits so they can better support their communities, many of whom are part of the visitor industry. During this recovery period their all-volunteer groups have challenges reaching out to their community members.

C. Work with the visitor industry to ensure that respectful tourism is being consistently reinforced at all visitor touchpoints.

1. Touch points include airlines, post-arrival at airports, rental cars, accommodations, and activities.
2. Review the environments that welcome visitors at airports. Are we sending an appropriate message of welcome and respect? If not, consider how that can be changed.

D. Upgrade infrastructure in smaller communities to enable them to safely welcome visitors.

1. For example, tour buses have limitations in some areas due to insufficient space to safely load/unload passengers.
2. Insufficient parking for buses and cars.

E. Use technology to educate the visitor by having unique QR codes at key locations around the islands.

1. Accessible via an app, visitors can learn the history of the location, its importance, and why the site should be treated with respect. This is similar to how museums share the background of art pieces.

## X. Recommendations for Future Planning

In discussions with community members, it became clear that the non-visitor industry community does not understand how HTA is organized (especially in relationship to HVCB and CNHA), what is its role, how does it go about developing plans, and what it can and cannot control. This results in a high level of misunderstanding and expectations of HTA that are unrealistic. The following are recommendations for addressing this challenge.

### A. HTA must engage more directly and more often with the community, clearly explaining what it does and how it is organized.

1. HTA does a good job of sending out media releases. A challenge is that HTA releases are shared with the community by the Star-Advertiser and sometimes local television news. Overall, traditional media is reaching fewer readers/viewers. Social media, small group community meetings and paid advertising may be effective alternatives that will expand the understanding of HTA. An example of the benefits is in the latest resident survey the more respondents knew about the Destination Management Plan process, the higher the response to “I feel like more effort is being made to balance economic benefits of tourism and the quality of life for residents.”
2. Few community members are aware of what HTA contributes to natural resources and Hawaiian culture through grants and other community efforts.

### B. When planning for the 2024 HTA Strategic Planning process and the Destination Management Action Plans update, consider how the two processes should be connected.

1. DMAP participants feel strongly engaged with their efforts and feel they should be directly connected with the Strategic Plan.



## XI. Appendices

### A. White Paper: Lessons Learned from Other Visitor Destinations that Experienced a Natural Disaster



**Beyond Research, Intelligence**

## White Paper: Tourism Recovery Post-Disaster

### Introduction

The tourism industry is a significant economic driver for many countries around the world. In the United States, tourism accounts for 2 percent of GDP and supports 7.4 million jobs through \$1.7 trillion of economic activity.<sup>14</sup> However, due to its reliance on the natural environment and conditions, the visitor industry is also vulnerable to natural disasters. They can cause significant harm by directly damaging properties and infrastructure, and indirectly by causing social and economic disruptions. When disaster occurs, jobs are at risk and the drop in the number of visitors can be devastating especially for micro, small, and medium sized enterprises that rely on the industry.

According to the National Centers for Environmental, the United States experienced 20 billion-dollar natural disasters in 2021, making it one of the costliest years in recent history.<sup>15</sup> Major events included Hurricane Ida, where it initially made landfall in Louisiana, and the destructive wildfires across the West, affecting California and several other western states. Many in these affected areas are tourist destinations.

Each community affected by a disaster has a unique path to recovery and no two plans are the same. Nonetheless, there are several practices and lessons on tourism recovery post-disaster that other communities can glean from. This white paper draws on the recovery responses of destinations that have been affected by natural disasters over the last 15 years. It highlights the challenges faced and some common recovery strategies. The appendix provides examples of events and their recovery timelines.

<sup>14</sup> International Trade Administration U.S. Department of Commerce, "Fast Facts: United States Travel and Tourism Industry", September 2023. <https://www.trade.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/US-Travel-and-Tourism-Fast-Facts.pdf>.

<sup>15</sup> A.B. Smith, "2021 U.S. billion-dollar weather and climate disasters in historical context," *National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration*, January 2022. <https://www.climate.gov/news-features/blogs/beyond-data/2021-us-billion-dollar-weather-and-climate-disasters-historical>.

## Common Challenges

**Imagery did more damage than the actual disaster.** The impacts of disasters on the tourism market are often out of proportion with their actual disruptive effects due to reports in the media. The damage to businesses caused by the disaster escalates with negative media coverage and ruined destination image. As a result, the recovery of a destination usually takes longer than the time needed to restore services to normality. Media reports have the capacity to affect the marketability of a destination and may even result in a collateral marketing crisis in neighboring destinations.

**Example:**

*The wildfires in Sonoma and Napa in 2017 spared majority of the vineyards and wineries, but because of the images reported, many tourists stayed away. The destinations saw a 62 percent drop in tasting room sales.*

**Small businesses are affected the most.** The 2021 Small Business Credit Survey revealed that 1 in 10 small employer firms suffered losses from a natural disaster during the prior 12 months<sup>16</sup>, and according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), 40 percent never reopen after a disaster and another 25 percent, that do reopen, fail within a year.<sup>17</sup>

**Example:**

*Small businesses affected by the flooding in Kaua'i struggled to attract visitors with sales down by about 74 percent.*

**Employment and Workforce.** Natural disasters usually deter guests from visiting the affected area in the immediate aftermath. This may lead to layoffs and closures, which in turn would decrease employment in the tourism sector.

**Example:**

*In New Orleans, restaurants and bars were forced to close because there was no electricity as Hurricane Ida affected the powerlines. As a result, bartenders evacuated to other cities.*

---

<sup>16</sup> B. Funderburk, and L. Misera, "The Impact of Natural Disasters on Small Businesses: Findings from the 2021 Small Business Credit Survey", *Fed Small Business*, November 2022. <https://www.fedsmallbusiness.org/analysis/2022/the-impact-of-natural-disasters-on-small-businesses>.

<sup>17</sup> J. McKay, "Small businesses are a vital part of community resiliency but often overlook vulnerabilities," *Government Technology*, July 27, 2018. Accessed from <https://www.govtech.com/em/preparedness/small-businesses-are-a-vital-part-of-community-resiliency-but-often-overlook-vulnerabilities.html>.

## Common Recovery Strategies

**One voice, consistent message.** The effectiveness of a crisis communication strategy has a major bearing on how quickly the destination is restored to normal and businesses recover. Trusted government organizations and tourism stakeholders, such as destination marketing organizations, tour operators, travel agencies, hotel associations and individual hotels must have a targeted shared communications plan and strategies to address media reports and be able to directly address the concerns of the tourists as well as the residents.

**Example:**

*In the intermediate phase of the Christchurch, New Zealand recovery, the Ministry of Economic Development collaborated with tourism stakeholders to discuss the response and crisis information updates. In Napa Valley, local officials and local tourism organizations launched together a marketing campaign called “Come Back to Sonoma County”.*

**Unaffected areas marketed as alternative destinations and open for business.** Factual, up-to-date information about safety and the status of infrastructure, attractions, accommodation, restaurants and other facilities ensure tourists are aware of areas which are not affected so they have alternative destinations if they need to evaluate their travel plans. Providing access to objective and reliable information also helps to combat media sensationalism and ensures visitors can make an informed choice.

**Example:**

*In Florida, unaffected parts of the state actively promoted themselves as alternative destinations to counteract losses elsewhere. The state also launched a website to provide information outlining what businesses are open.*

**Use of social media.** Utilizing social media to support tourism rehabilitation contributes to rebuilding the attractiveness of an affected tourist destination. It also contributes to consumer confidence rebooting. Tourism stakeholders can use their web presence to update the public as to the plans and timeline to rebuild, relocate, and reopen. It provides an opportunity for businesses to inform visitors, customers, and suppliers of their standing.

**Example.**

*To encourage visitors back, tourism stakeholders in Sonoma and Napa shared updates on social media and shared messages such as “The Love in the Air is Thicker than the Smoke.”*

Appendix: Examples of Tourist Destinations and Their Post-Disaster Recovery Plan

Event	Challenges	Recovery Plan	Timeline	Outcomes
Sonoma and Napa - Wildfires, 2017 <sup>18</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>99.8% vineyards acres (138,937 of 139,204) and 93% wineries (950 of 1,025) in Northern California came away unscathed and most hotels remained intact, yet, tourists stayed away.<sup>19</sup> Those that sustained damages closed for repairs and rebuilding</li> <li>71% of winery and vineyard stakeholders reported an immediate drop in tasting room traffic; 62% drop in tasting room sales</li> <li>Occupancy fell as low as 30% in heavily damaged areas</li> <li>The Napa Valley Wine Train reported a 75% decrease in passenger volume</li> <li>Sonoma County tourism spending dropped an estimated 40% in late 2017 compared to 2016</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To encourage visitors back, tourism stakeholders shared updates on social media and shared message likes such “The Love in the Air is Thicker than the Smoke”; reopening of restaurants and bars in historic downtown plaza</li> <li>Efforts by local tourism organizations – local officials rode the Napa Valley Wine Train to show that wine country was open for business; launched marketing campaigns like “Come Back to Sonoma County</li> <li>Visit California launched a \$2M #CaliforniaWineCountryNow campaign that kicked off with a fundraising dinner hosted by a celebrity chef</li> <li>Community events like wine auctions raised funds to help hospitality workers and businesses rebuild. Non-profits provided grants and loans to small tourism outfits.</li> <li>Test of the new Napa emergency text alert</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 – 14 days after</li> <li>20 days after</li> <li>6 weeks after</li> <li>Clearing the debris took months</li> <li>Many damaged wineries, hotels, and attractions rebuilt and reopened within several months after the fires.</li> <li>12 months after</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The tourism industry worked to develop disaster preparedness plans to be more resilient, while marketing shifted to emphasize the area’s renewal.</li> <li>Learning the importance of using fireproof materials and what kind of insurance to obtain</li> <li>By 2018, hotel occupancy and tourism spending rebounded close to previous levels, though specific areas hit hard were still recovering</li> </ul>
Kaua’i – Flooding, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recorded over 50 inches of rain in Hanalei, a historic small town</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short-term<sup>21</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ban ran for 2 months</li> </ul>	

<sup>18</sup> M. Wiley, “American Resilience: How Napa and Sonoma brought back tourists after some of the most destructive fires in California’s history swept through wine country in 2017”, *Business Insider*, July 1, 2020. Accessed from <https://www.businessinsider.com/napa-sonoma-california-wine-country-travel-tourism-recovery-2017-wildfires-2020-6>.

<sup>19</sup> “North Coast Wildfire Impact Study Signals Strong Recovery in Early Findings”, *Sonoma University School of Business & Economics*, January 26, 2018. Accessed from <https://sbe.sonoma.edu/Press%20Releases/north-coast-wildfire-impact-study-signals-strong-recovery-early-findings>.

<sup>21</sup> “Kaua’i Relief and Recovery Fund Update”, *Hawai’i Community Foundation*, November 2018. Accessed from <https://issuu.com/hcfhawaii/docs/hcfkauaiimpactreport112018?e=1137810/66316445>.

Event	Challenges	Recovery Plan	Timeline	Outcomes
	<p>and a commercial center popular among tourists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Travelers cancelled their reservations after getting the wrong impression that the flooding damaged the entire Kaua'i island</li> <li>Businesses struggle to attract visitors with sales down by about 75%<sup>20</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kaua'i county decided to place a ban on the operation of Transient Vacation Rental properties in the Wainiha-Hā'ena. This was to help affected families bridge the temporary housing gap</li> </ul>		
Morocco – Earthquake, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A powerful 6.8 magnitude earthquake struck the Atlas Mountains, a popular hiking destination, killing thousands</li> <li>Nearby hotels were damaged or destroyed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Moroccan government didn't issue any statements discouraging travelers to visit<sup>22</sup></li> <li>In the immediate, most Morocco tours were canceled as operators made critical safety assessments, making sure that all their clients and staff were accounted for and that tourists were not hindering rescue efforts</li> <li>When the damage has been assessed and following government guidance, most tours are up and running with some amended itineraries</li> <li>International travelers were advised to check with travel companies and tour operators before departing, though the industry's overall message is one of still encouraging people to travel.</li> </ul>		
Greece – Wildfires, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More than 20,000 people, mostly tourists, were evacuated from the islands of Corfu and Rhodes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourism Minister emphasized that the majority of the country including most</li> </ul>		

<sup>20</sup> "Hawai'i Tourism Authority urging travelers to visit flood-hit Kaua'i", *Travel Mole*, April 25, 2018. Accessed from <https://www.travelmole.com/news/hawaii-tourism-authority-urging-travelers-to-visit-flood-hit-kauai/>.

<sup>22</sup> C. Yeginsu, "After the earthquake in Morocco, tourists grapple with the ethics of travel," *New York Times*, September 12, 2023. Accessed from <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/09/12/travel/tourism-morocco-maui.html>.

Event	Challenges	Recovery Plan	Timeline	Outcomes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In Rhodes, 10% of hotel capacity had been shut down due to risks to both locals and holiday goers</li> <li>30% of bookings on Rhodes island had been cancelled</li> <li>Concern that the severity of heatwaves is reducing southern Europe’s attractiveness as a tourist destination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>parts of the affected islands, remains safe for tourists<sup>23</sup></li> <li>Some airlines offered alternative bookings to other destinations</li> <li>Tourists were advised to call their hotels, as most of them were open for business</li> </ul>		
New Orleans – Hurricane Ida, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lost of revenue that was expected to be accrued from the Labor Day weekend<sup>24</sup></li> <li>Bartenders evacuated to other cities</li> <li>Travelers cancelled their reservations</li> <li>Establishments such as restaurants and bars were forced to closed because there was no power</li> <li>Small tourism businesses already struggling due to COVID-19 were affected the most</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staycation program in which Louisianans are encouraged to vacation at places in the state to support local communities in the state<sup>25</sup></li> <li>Secured funding to help venues get grants to hire local musicians so they can get back to work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 days after – curfew was imposed citing cases of theft and other minor crimes. Withdrew the order the next day</li> <li>10 days after – power was restored to 90% of the city<sup>26</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2022, the city introduced a number of new emergency plans, including for post-storm evacuations, electrified post-storm resource centers for blackouts and special measures for the most vulnerable residents<sup>27</sup></li> </ul>
Yellowstone – Flooding, 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Several sections of Mammoth Hot Springs (Wyoming), Gardiner, Lamar Valley, and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evacuated all visitors to developed areas and conducted initial damage assessments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Within 36 hours</li> <li>Within 48 hours</li> </ul>	

<sup>23</sup> D. Harper, “Is it safe to travel to Greece? Tourism minister makes plea to visitors as wildfires rage”, *Euronews*, July 27, 2023. Accessed from <https://www.euronews.com/travel/2023/07/27/is-it-safe-to-travel-to-greece-tourism-minister-makes-plea-to-visitors-as-wildfires-rage>.

<sup>24</sup> H. Murphy, “New Orleans Tourism Takes Yet Another Hit from Hurricane Ida,” *The New York Times*, September 5, 2021. Accessed from <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/02/travel/new-orleans-ida-tourism.html>.

<sup>25</sup> L. Beveridge, “Hurricane Ida will be ‘devastating’ to tourism industry, Louisiana lieutenant governor says”, *USA Today*, September 13, 2021. Accessed from <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2021/09/06/louisiana-tourism-hospitality-industries-hit-hard-hurricane-ida/5742829001/>.

<sup>26</sup> “New Orleans slowly returns to life amid Hurricane Ida devastation”, *Aljazeera*, September 10, 2021. Accessed from <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/9/10/post-ida-recovery-in-new-orleans-beer-and-beignets-are-back>.

<sup>27</sup> M.I. Stein, “How Hurricane Ida changed the way New Orleans plans for storms,” *Verite News*, June 14, 2023. Accessed from <https://veritenews.org/2023/06/14/hurricane-plans/>.

Event	Challenges	Recovery Plan	Timeline	Outcomes
	<p>Cooke City(Montana) were destroyed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Power was restored, severed wastewater lines diverted, and planned for recovery and resumption of operations</li> <li>• Started planning and design for long-term reconstruction strategy; hosted senior officials from congressional committees, NPS and FHWA visit to develop strategies around short- and long-term recovery efforts</li> <li>• Started work on road repairs and awarded contracts to construction entities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 – 16 days after</li> <li>• 2 – 60 days after</li> </ul>	
<p>Florida – Hurricanes/ Floods</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hurricane Irma caused billions in damage across Florida in 2017, with heavy impacts on attractions and hotels. Orlando lost \$400M in tourism venue</li> <li>• Flooding in 2018 and 2019 caused cancellations in Miami and Jacksonville</li> <li>• Beaches and natural areas that draw many visitors faced extensive repairs and cleanup efforts after wind/water damage and erosion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing campaigns and discounts helped counteract losses and bring visitors back relatively quickly to unaffected areas.</li> <li>• Parts of the state less damaged by storms often saw increases in visitors, redistributing rather than losing overall tourism</li> <li>• Marketing efforts like Visit Florida’s “\$0 ad campaign” promoted tourism deals and pricing incentives to bring visitors back quickly</li> <li>• Unaffected parts of the state actively promoted themselves as alternative destinations to counteract losses elsewhere</li> <li>• Many major theme parks and attractions were sufficiently insured and able to repair damage and reopen relatively quickly. Disney reopened two weeks after Hurricane Irma</li> <li>• Tax incentives encouraged tourism operators to speed up renovations and improvements during rebuilding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism bounced back stronger within 6-12 months</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By 2018, overall tourism metrics surpassed pre-storm levels, though specific damaged locations continued struggling</li> <li>• Overall, strategic marketing, investment in rebuilding, redirection to unaffected areas, and community support helped both regions recover within about a year after the disasters</li> </ul>

Event	Challenges	Recovery Plan	Timeline	Outcomes
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Industry made resilience a priority in rebuilding, such as improved infrastructure to withstand flooding</li> </ul>		
Jersey Shore – Hurricane Sandy, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Iconic boardwalks, beaches, hotels, and attractions sustained major damage, especially in Seaside Heights and Point Pleasant Beach. Tourism activity initially halted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An aggressive recovery marketing campaign focused on being “Stronger than the Storm” Tourism ads showcased reopened beaches and businesses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most destinations were substantially rebuilt and reopened by the following summer season, though full recovery took several years in heavily impacted areas</li> </ul>	
Florida Panhandle – Hurricane Michael, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustained wind and water damage to coastal resorts, beaches, and attractions. Tourism businesses in Panama City and Mexico Beach decline sharply</li> <li>Most major tourism sites quickly repaired damage. But the area saw a multi-year reduction in visitors, especially international tourists</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marketing emphasized unaffected parts of the region and that most destinations were “open for business.” Some offered incentives for visitors<sup>28</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launched a website to provide information outlining what is open</li> <li>Shared local tourism agency information on social media</li> <li>Targeted videos to domestic and international markets, including TV ads</li> <li>Had international tour operators work to manage “misperceptions of damage</li> <li>Visit Florida undertook a survey on tourists’ perception on Florida</li> </ul> </li> <li>Targeted marketing, strategic building, and leveraging intact infrastructure helped drive tourism comebacks, though recovery timelines varied by impact severity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 weeks after<sup>30</sup></li> </ul>	

<sup>28</sup> L. Ruane, “Florida tourism industry sees resiliency tested in Hurricane Michael, water quality crises,” *News-Press*, October 14, 2018. Accessed from <https://www.news-press.com/story/weather/hurricane/2018/10/14/hurricane-michael-florida-tourism-industry-resiliency-tested-storm-water-quality-crises/1615328002/>.

<sup>30</sup> J. Turner, “Tourism marketing backed after Hurricane Michael, red tide,” *Panama City News Herald*, October 31, 2018. Accessed from <https://www.newsherald.com/story/news/state/2018/10/31/tourism-marketing-backed-after-hurricane-michael-red-tide/9409216007/>.



Event	Challenges	Recovery Plan	Timeline	Outcomes
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual counties have pushed their own marketing, chipping in bed tax dollars for more marketing, for clean up, and repairs for public areas</li> <li>• Launched 2 Visit Florida Hurricane Michael assistance programs to aid local tourism businesses in the counties that were included in the FEMA major disaster declaration. The programs provides assistance for advertising, direct mail, brochure production, website development, etc.<sup>29</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 months after</li> </ul>	
Christchurch, New Zealand, Earthquake, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A considerable number of architectural and historical buildings collapsed</li> <li>• Closure of many local tourism attractions and the cancellation of several scheduled events such as the Rugby World Cup 2011</li> <li>• Caused an immediate and considerable decrease in the number of incoming tourists</li> <li>• International guest nights sank by 44%</li> <li>• Estimated sustained direct losses of \$135M in visitor spending over the 18 months after the calamity</li> <li>• International and domestic visitor expenditure decreased until 2012</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency Phase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Search and rescue operations</li> <li>➢ City center was cordoned off as “red zone”</li> <li>➢ Minister of Civil Defense declared a state of national emergency</li> <li>➢ An engineering evaluation was conducted</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Intermediate Phase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Ministry of Economic Development in collaboration with tourism organizations invited a guest speaker from New Orleans to present a seminar on tourism response to a disaster</li> <li>➢ Workshops and roadshows with regional operators were arranged for discussion and planning the tourism recovery</li> <li>➢ Removing or altering links to online ads, communication with the travel</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency Phase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Within 12 hours the whole city center was cordoned off (although this decreased in size over time, it remained in place for 2 years)</li> <li>➢ Within 24 hours, a state of national emergency was declared and the area was only occupied by personnel of the emergency services</li> <li>➢ A National Controller was appointed</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Domestic tourism expenditure was less affected by the earthquake than international spending. Whereas domestic tourist spending had already recovering to over pre-earthquake level by 2015, international visitor spending was still lagging behind and was significantly lower than pre-earthquake figure.</li> <li>• Emergency plans and business continuity plans by tourism companies rose to 37% and 34%, respectively</li> <li>• Creation of “EQ Recovery Learning”</li> </ul>

<sup>29</sup> “Gov. Scott announces the launch of tourism assistance programs following Hurricane Michael,” *Florida Commerce*, December 10, 2018. Accessed from <https://www.floridajobs.org/news-center/DEO-Press/2018/12/10/gov-scott-announces-the-launch-of-tourism-assistance-programs-following-hurricane-michael>.

Event	Challenges	Recovery Plan	Timeline	Outcomes
		<p>trade, and providing crisis information updates on websites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ ‘De-marketing’ which implied the absence of marketing efforts for 6 months after the earthquake – i) removing Christchurch images from all international marketing material; ii) withdrawing existing ads from news websites and purchased Christchurch earthquake-related keyword searches to distract internet browsers from negative images and promote the search for positive content about NZ; iii) developed alternative travel itineraries that excluded Christchurch<sup>31</sup></li> <li>• Long-term Phase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ After the de-marketing period, the main focus was to inform foreign networks about the rapidly improving situation in Christchurch (i.e., Invited travel journalists to visit to slowly improve the city’s image; Tourism office analyzed arrivals data and measured changes in perception of awareness and satisfaction of Christchurch; Lobbied the aviation industry to increase the number of flights to Christchurch; International travel agencies were requested to include the city back into promotional materials and brochures)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ First days were focused on search and rescue</li> <li>• Intermediate Phase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 1 month after (i.e., invited a speaker from New Orleans; workshops, and roadshows)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Long-term Phase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ De-marketing for 6 months after the earthquake</li> <li>➤ 7 months after – marketing campaign to use Christchurch as a transport hub destination only</li> <li>➤ 8 months after – opening of the Re:START mall</li> <li>➤ 18 months after – conducted the ‘Christchurch Re-imagined’ marketing campaign</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>website that houses 300 public documents including insights and experiences from the earthquakes shared by organizations across the region</p>

<sup>31</sup> <https://openrepository.aut.ac.nz/server/api/core/bitstreams/a192b68e-00e9-4965-bc95-8b1fd1d4f572/content>

Event	Challenges	Recovery Plan	Timeline	Outcomes
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Started a marketing campaign, 'South Island Road Trips', to promote South Island among Australians. Within this campaign, Christchurch only acted as a transport hub destination since the city itself cannot host visitors</li> <li>➤ Launched the 'Christchurch Re-imagined' campaign focused on the promoting the city using social media, separate from the South Island</li> <li>➤ Opening of the Re:START mall to help the retail sector recover. This has since expanded and has become an part of tourism</li> <li>➤ Hosted a festival</li> <li>➤ Tourism stakeholders provided trips around and in the cordoned and different temporary tourist attractions were built to bring in visitors</li> </ul>		

B. Comments Received from the Community about the DRAFT Tourism Support for Maui’s Recovery Presentation and Plan.

Public Feedback on Tourism Support for Maui’s Recovery

The following are comments submitted in response to the Tourism Support for Maui’s Recovery DRAFT Plan. The comments are shared as submitted with only names and phone numbers redacted. We are showing the zip code and related area of the individual submitting the comment. These comments are representative of the feedback received during interviews.

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
1	96779	Paia	What is needed is police presence in the streets of Pa'ia and other small towns where tourists visit. To keep the homeless and mentally ill and people that rob and steal from being what tourist see when they are visiting.
2	96779	Paia	Provide the tourist outside sitting arrears and garbage cans... to rest in between shopping and eating and to keep the environment clean
3	34109	Mainland	Aloha, 1. Keeping more homes for residents: Put a cap on how many houses/ condos can be turned into vacation rentals. Maybe rezoning areas to only be allowed to full time residents. Add a tax on the existing vacation homes either by taxing owner or vacationer or both. This to be put into a fund for locals. 2. Allow local businesses to have pop up sites at resorts to sell their goods. People on vacation want to shop and spend for real local items but don't always leave their resort. 3. Need to stop the negativity from locals towards vacationers. 4. Full time residents are the back bone of any place and need not to be pushed to the side. Housing prices made affordable to them with proof of residency. This doesn't mean a low housing area but rather homes everywhere are priced differently for locals. I understand the terrible history of the U.S. taking over the islands but the generalization put onto mainlanders will and is causing a lot of people to stop going to Maui. I also live in a tourist destination SW Florida. Northerners come here every winter . SAME scenarios are happening . Big money / developers booming pushing out the low /middle class Don't let this happen on Maui. Mahalo
4	96761	West Maui	I am a charter boat captain working for UFO light tackle fishing. We are a fortunate company that did not lose any boats in the fire and still have our base yard/shop intact too. We launch out of Mala ramp and load off Kaanapali beach. As of now we can only utilize the ramp on weekdays. Weekends and holidays are closed to us. We do need more access to the only ramp on the west side. Our boating community has been decimated on the west side. We need to support the boats and crews that are still able to work. The law suite and turmoil with the Mala ramp permits and access needs to be addressed. As a community we need to come together and

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
			work together for access jobs and private boating needs. I am sure as the rebuilding starts we can keep revisiting this issue and keep moving forward. The ocean is one of our greatest resources for locals and tourist alike. Please allow access for both. Regards [REDACTED]
5	96761	West Maui	Maui County residents need immediate access to long-term housing. Maui County residents need updated and modernized infrastructure to support the resident population and visitor population. The only path to economic recovery is affordable housing for resident workers and sufficient water, sewage, road/transportation, emergency services, and electric grid infrastructure. We don't need 'regenerative' tourism PR campaigns and we don't need to pay for the tourism industry's marketing and advertising.
6	96761	West Maui	HTA does not have an office on Maui, the State info desk at Kahukui airport has not been staffed for over 5 years. MVB left all phone inquiries on hold during covid when they closed. West Maui (,look it up on a map) is not safe from fires yet. Fire victims are not housed yet. Fire victims have not all had their appointments to visit their home sites that burnt down. But the HTA and MVB current official visitors free guide promotes visiting 19: activities, historic sites and luaus that burnt down. I got my free official guide of Maui County at the Kahului airport. No wonder the tourists are asking stupid , insensitive , questions. Kaanapali developers knew Kaanapali would not be enough of a destination. So 60 years ago kaanapali Resort Development started Lahaina Restoration Foundation and rebuilt Lahaina's historic ruins and built employee housing for hotel employees. Can they do it again? Since the lahaina fire kaanapali area has had 5 more fires and 2 evacuations. There is only one firetruck with a ladder for multi story building fires. The electric company refuses to do fire break maintenance. West Maui is not safe for tourism there is only one road to evacuate tourists and the thousands of residents, hotel workers and the thousands of homeless living in developers, abandoned, almost tax free, over grown fields. Lahaina produced over 60 years of tourism revenue but sewers and water systems never got back up power. Fire halls did not get equipped . No evacuation routes built and a bypass that was never completed. It takes 3 years to get a building permit but speculators got almost 40 Percent of our residential or agriculturally zoned housing got zoning exemptions and turned them into vacation rentals that we didn't . The hotels were only 60% full. Tourism turn Maui into an unsafe 3rd world destination and at a 1st class price. -Make Maui safe with fire breaks and seize unmaintained land. -Clean the Maui Airport and upgrade the back up power system that failed. I stall emergency lighting and emergency announcement system. -Find accommodations for fire victims . -upgrade all infrastructure with back up power. -train emergency administrators. -Complete the bypass road. -Then welcome tourist back to west Maui. -Then rebuild Lahaina safer.

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
7	96761	West Maui	We should have NEVER opened up West Maui to tourists yet. There is much healing and reconstructing to do. Tourists are just in the way of all of that. We have, so far, been lucky that the attitude of us locals have not become hostile....but time will tell. And where will be the tourists if that happens? The government should have had the locals back before mainland owners of short term rentals, hotels, vacation condos, etc. We were able to survive 7 months of closure for covid....and this is much worse with lost of lives and homes. Healing needs to be the priority before tourists.
8	96761	West Maui	Aloha HTA, Regarding your recommended actions nos 1 - 5, as both a Lahaina residence and tourism industry professional I strongly believe unless issue #5 (housing) is put before numbers 1 - 4 (profit) no objectives will be reached.
9	96708	Wailua-Haiku-Pauwela	Housing & Infrastructure. Community first!!!
10	96761	West Maui	The HTA's Maui Recovery Plan is misguided. While the plan has meaningful messaging to 'Tourist', it's not enough and barely viewed by the tourist. (show on all flights coming into Maui!) And the plan is misguided because it is NOT JOBS that the community or residents need - it's housing FIRST. HTA is putting the cart before the horse. (And so is the State!) Unless what everyone thinks is really true....TOURISM NEEDS THE PEOPLE FIRST, in order to operate, and it could care less where they live.
11	96708	Wailua-Haiku-Pauwela	Hello, I attended the meeting tonight, but since the comments were solely focused on Lahaina, I felt it wasn't the right time to share my opinion. I own a small business in Paia, and we have seen a significant drop in visitors/spending. Since I spend 5-6 days per week in the store I talk with many, many visitors. One thing that I (still) keep hearing over and over is that they didn't know if they 'should ' come to Maui. Whether or not they would be welcomed, or if people would be unkind. People are still getting grief from family and friends at home, for even thinking of coming here. Clearly, the people from West Maui have a ton to work out, and their sole focus is housing. So perhaps it would be best to direct visitors to stay on other parts of the island, and support the small, local businesses there who are ready, and need it. Visitors need to know that other parts of the island will welcome them, and that they should still come with a certain sensitivity to what has happened to our community. As a side note, my guess as to why the number of visitors in Oct of 2023 was so much lower, but the 'spending' was almost the same- The room rates at the hotels have skyrocketed since covid, so I would guess most of that money has gone to the hotel industry, not local businesses. The cost of rooms has also negatively affected other industries, because they have less money to spend on activities, dining or shopping. Thank you, [REDACTED]

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
12	96779	Paia	<p>I was at the meeting tonight. And while I'm heart broken for Lahaina locals, I had hoped this meeting would give small business outside of Lahaina a voice at the meeting. Small towns that really need help in getting tourism back immediately. Paia needs your help. We don't have the funds ourselves for advertising because of the fires. We have tried reaching out to you more than once and didn't get even form email back. No one was sent to our community and we are the closest historic town to the airport on the ocean. If you change your mind, I am a business association member. I would love to speak to a representative and give all the rich history of our town, and have you meet other business owners and full understanding that you are at work for us and our employees.</p>
13	96793	Wailuku	<p>Mauis economic recovery is critical. Maui residents need to see a future here, and careers that can support that. Find ways to help Maui residents become economically sustainable and resilient through personal budgeting tools and education. Job training. Vocational training within tourism. Entrepreneurial training. Grants to help these sorts of Maui-owned businesses thrive. Tourism, like it or not, is the main driver for money coming into our economy. Use this for its strengths. Offer resources for Maui-born residents to enter into this economy. Champion the local businesses that provide these jobs. Try to limit foreign or mainland-owned businesses. Be realistic with regenerative tourism marketing. The beautiful pictures of an authentic lo'i farm experience unfortunately will not generate enough money to carry our economy. Need to find ways that can accommodate a certain amount of visitors find the 'right number' of visitors needed to sustain our island and allow it to thrive. Don't be afraid to call out the unfair comments when people place undue blame on the visitors- remind us that during Covid (no visitors) that our fish population suffered greatly due to resident over fishing. Our shorelines were trashed by residents camping and littering. 290 turtles got strangled in fishing line the year following Covid (vs the pre average of less than 20). Our public school kids suffered during that time mostly due to bad politics. That had nothing to do with effects of tourism. Explore other industries to diversify away from tourism, if it exists. Or, explore new types of high-paying visitors, such as an installing a world-class mayo clinic healthcare destination. Try to find a way to help Maui people own their own properties. It's almost impossible to compete with mainland money. Do whatever it takes to speed up the process of Lahaina's recovery. Build the temporary houses, buy a hotel, whatever it takes to get people the ability to get back into their lahaina property asap. Get the EPA to expedite everything. Don't let the housing permits bottleneck the recovery. Maybe some need to relocate temporarily to neighbor island or mainland- help create programs like this with the assurance of the end goal- lahaina people back into their homes. Create a program for those who want to sell lahaina property to give lahaina residents first shot at it. Find ways to create favorable loans to make this happen.</p>

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
14	96768	Makawao-Pukalani	Tourism needs to be capped at at 1 to 3 ratio, as stated by the Maui Island Plan. The only way to do that is by limiting accommodations. There should be zero tolerance for Short Term Vacation Rentals, especially in neighborhoods or in building and neighborhoods that were built for long term use. Money made from tourism should be put into the community to help infrastructure costs, like another fire department on the West Side of Maui, solve water shortage issues, maintain natural resources. Salaries in tourism need to be increased so that workers can afford to live here.
15	96708	Wailua-Haiku-Pauwela	Tourism and hospitality are taking too much! Too much- wear and tear on our infrastructure Too much- misuse of our environment Too much- of our finite supply of water AND ABSOLUTELY TOO MUCH OF OUR RESIDENTIAL HOUSING. Housing is a human right. Maui should not be allowing any average size residential home to be a STVR. We cannot increase the workforce without providing housing. Good people will continue to leave. The county has been 'cutting off its nose, despite its face' for 30 years, and here we are with a severe housing shortage and, much of what's available for our tourist industry workforce is often sub par; not to code, no kitchens, outside shower, mold etc.
16	96753	Kihei-Wailea-Makena	I think the disaster has highlighted our over tourism problem and the business perspective of tourists above residents - our resources can NOT handle it. Our mental and physical well being is suffering. Residents are put on water restrictions while hotels and such use most of our water. Partially treated sewage injected into wells makings its way into the ocean. Roads deteriorating no sidewalks, schools falling apart. Tourists trampling all over private property because a 'guide book' tells them it's ok. The HTA has marketed us as all Aloha and tourists feel the entire island is their personal Disney land and we all work for them. Cheap flights and so so many like thousands of condos and vacation rentals to house them they are rude and entitled. Tourists should stay at resorts and take sanctioned guided properly vetted tours. Instead everyone comes here to exploit the island and our resources. There should be a very exclusive mindset to vacationing here a bespoke type of experience that leaves a nominal footprint or even makes it better. Fix our infrastructure first. Diversify our economy. House our people. Stop looking to more more more stop the greed and exploitation. Instead look to sustainability and happy residents. No Hawaiians No Hawai'i.
17	96761	West Maui	In recent years the number of tourists reached a level that was not sustainable, especially on the west side of Maui. The level of overtourism led us to the horrible disaster that occurred on August 8th. Maui county enabled this overtourism and allowed far too many properties to become transient accommodation and to infiltrate every neighborhood. Lahaina residents should not be made to move away from the west side or off Maui. Maui needs to ensure the people, the infrastructure, and land is cared for as top priority, that would allow for tourism to flourish, but should never be at the pre-fire levels, but at the levels determined in the Maui County plan. If residents are taken care of and listened to then visitors would be welcomed and won't be



No.	Zip	Area	Comments
			receiving mixed messages. Ignoring the residents' needs is not the answer. Personally, my family will likely leave Maui in the next few years as quality of life has gotten so bad.
18	96761	West Maui	Update you our online marketing to exclude Lahaina. Throw out Experienc Maui summer/fall issue. It is sending tourists to enter the Lahaina burn zone. Lahaina's tourists revenue was not reinvested in Lahaina's safety , roads or infrastructure. Kaanapali has had five 5 fires and 2 evacuations since the Lahaina fire. It is not safe yet for tourists. Lahaina only has one fire truck with a ladder for multi story fires. Limited fire breaks and faulty emergency systems and alerts The kahului airport has faulty back up power and dirty ceilings. Maui is a 3rd world destination at a first class price. 😞
19	96761	West Maui	The answer is not more tourism or a return to pre 2019 numbers. We need to make sure our community is taken care of. The base and foundation of tourism here on Maui starts with the people who live here, contribute here, grow up here, and take care of this island. Why is there such a focus on bringing folks here who have no connection other than investing in homes that should belong to the community? Greed is killing this island and this incredible place. This is not Disneyland or some cruise ship. This is an oasis and a blessing that us being exploited beyond recognition. Make the community whole and then tourism can return...at an appropriate level
20	96761	West Maui	Tourism needs ZERO support! The people of Lahaina need the support that we have not received from out failed leaders! Clear the debris! House our people!
21	96761	West Maui	Shut down the tourism! The people of Lahaina don't even have a place to love and neither do I because of Hawaiian electrics negligence that has caused so many fires and still not being held accountable. SHUT IT DOWN!
22	96708	Wailua-Haiku-Pauwela	- rules -regulations - protocols - education Look to mirror Cuba's reentry educational volunteer trips
23	96708	Wailua-Haiku-Pauwela	The majority of people crying about a tourism downturn are not local, have recently moved here, and make a living in the tourism industry. Locals want less tourism, not more. Hawaii needs to embrace other industries: technology, agriculture, healthcare, etc... and we need to become less dependent on tourism. We don't need an HTA...we need an agency that works towards preserving our ecology, sustainability, affordable housing, and culture. It irks me that taxpayers are forced to pay for the HTA that makes our lives miserable and destroys the aina.

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
24	96790	Kula	Tourism is negatively affecting residents' recovery. How can you expect residents to service visitors when they are houseless and grieving. Children have PTSD. Please don't disregard these comments. I used to enjoy seeing families have fun on Maui but not now. You cannot expect a vacation in the middle of a wake. Now is the time to stop our dependency on tourism. Find other ways to employ residents such as building homes.
25	96753	Kihei-Wailea-Makena	The impacts of tourism on residents, infrastructure, and natural resources need to be mitigated. This includes the carbon footprint. Our economy needs to be diversified and less dependent on tourism. Reduce the numbers of flights, tourists, Short term vacation rentals, and rental cars. Focus on high end visitors who stay in hotel zoned areas, and spend more \$/capita than currently. Invest TAT in diversifying economy. Invest in developing biofuels for jets to diversify our economy and reduce carbon footprint. Support passage of a visitor fee with funds going to protection and management of natural resources.
26	96779	Paia	Make the visitor experience more enjoyable. It's embarrassing sometimes when I talk to people for whom Maui is their dream vacation. Sometimes they say they saved up for this. They are very respectful about it but I hate hearing that they don't always feel welcome, that the prices are so high they're shocking.
27	96753	Kihei-Wailea-Makena	I think HTA should continue to strategize how Maui small businesses can get in front of the Hawaii tourist. If the tourists are going to other islands, is there a way hotels/retail shopping villages can continually feature Maui pop-ups (for free) so small businesses can get in front of the tourists again. Perhaps setup free shipping between islands for small businesses so they can ship products to stores and hotels on neighbor islands. HTA could pay the rent of a brick and mortar kiosk at the International Market Place and let a different Maui small business host a pop-up every week of the year. This would allow 52 small businesses to get in front of a larger tourist audience.
28	96761	West Maui	Keep them in resort areas NOT residential neighborhoods
29	96779	Paia	Charge each tourist \$50 towards Lahaina restoration Limit tourists Limit rental cars so as locals can get to schools work etc without excessive rental cars on the road Limit hotel showers to 5 mins to conserve our water Make short term vacation rentals illegal Costco needs to help by restricting returns on all beach items & food. Maybe Hawaii has its own membership so there's enough supplies for locals as only one location on the island cannot handle supplies for in their air b&b & short term rentals Tourists need to be lessened in acting as guests Hotels need to support more & take pets
30	96761	West Maui	A phased Reclose of west maui to tourism Meaning cancel all upcoming stays at short term vacation homes and air bnbs...all except hotels... Use your 5 million to make a community housing project for Lahaina one of the biggest revenues before the fires they took care of you now take care of the people House them Do all things necessary

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
31	96761	West Maui	Use your branding to help Lahaina...make people aware of the housing situation and to be respectful Educate them on respect to the Aina on Maui west side and all over
32	96793	Wailuku	<p>My husband and I own a small local business. We deal primarily with our local residents and some vacation rental owners. Right now we work with between 3 and 8 fire victim families a day, every day. We lost friends and customers in the fire, and many, many, many of our customers who did survive lost everything. I sit and listen to their stories all day and I cry right along with them all day long. The vacation rental owners come in with a very entitled, insensitive and unkind attitude. They have gotten used to 'using' Maui for their own economic benefit with no recognition or care towards the people who actually live here, many for generations. The tourist authority has done NOTHING to mitigate this. I just flew back from Kauai and the Hawaiian Airlines pilot actually said upon landing, 'We are making our approach into Maui now, and for those of you on the left side of the aircraft, if you look out and see a large black spot, that USED to be Lahaina.' I burst into tears and so did a lady sitting across the aisle from me. Meanwhile all the tourists were craning their necks with their cameras to take photos of the new tourist attraction that the pilot just pointed out. No word about how to treat the local population, no word on how each and every one of us is suffering, and all of us know someone who have lost everything. Statistics show that the vacation rental visitors contribute much less to the economy of Maui than the hotel visitors. There are thousands of vacation rentals on this island that sit empty while families are living 15 in a one-bedroom apartment (that is a fact, because my friend, her disabled husband, their adult children and grandchildren are all staying in one apartment). In what humane world is this OK? The week after the governor opened up the west side to tourism in October, one of our local immersion schools was on a field trip at Kapalua Bay. These are Lahaina children who lost everything and who have suffered a horrible trauma. They were at the beach on a field trip learning about the ocean. My friend (who lost everything as well in the fire) was at the beach with her sister and so happy to see these little kids laughing and enjoying their time at the beach. After about a half hour a couple of tourists came up to the children and severely scolded and yelled at them for 'ruining' their day at the beach with all their laughing, and since they 'paid to be there', the children and their teacher should leave. Really?? This is just one example of many of how these entitled people treat the locals. I'm sick of these people 'preying' on Maui instead of 'praying' for Maui. Everyone wants to use her, but none of these people have respect for her or her people. Maui is fed up with these people. The tourism authority needs to realize that the local people here are fed up with over-tourism. It has destroyed our reefs, puts severe strain on our ecosystem and use up our valuable, limited resources. Why should the people who live upcountry have to go on water rationing while the vacation rentals and hotels in Wailea and Kihei get to use as much water as they want? Our landfills are full of the trash they generate. I'm fed up with being treated like a second class citizen by these people and I know almost everyone here feels that way. You want</p>

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
			the locals to stop hating the tourists so much? Then stop the over-tourism, stop the disrespect, the entitlement, and most of all, stop seeing Maui as your cash cow. People here are very angry and are suffering. How about putting their needs above the tourists for a change?
33	96753	Kihei-Wailea-Makena	<p>For someone who works directly in reservation sales for Ali'I Resorts in Kihei I get a Ton of questions and concerns from visitors returnees and new saying that on 'social media' they hear and see a lot of disgruntled residents and fear their presence on Maui would not be good and therefore they feel they shouldn't visit. The solution as we know is a big layer of actions that need to include profit for owners and businesses as well as safety and enjoyment for the visitors as well as the residents who are and have been struggling on low pay and high cost of living. As we know the county and government would need to find solutions for resident needs as we can not just allow for condos and hotels to open for long term housing of residents but with low pay and high cost of living residents will leave and no incoming workers will want to be here and work in a hotel or reservations post. We now fall into the dilemma of vacant work posts with preexisting employees frazzled and at wits end with not enough help to support the flow of visitors and all the work that goes into before during and after their visit. This creates a bad relationship between agent and visitor when tempers are high and stress is up. So we hire more people, but who? This may seem like the hotel and condo businesses situation to deal with but everything matters in the big picture of visitors to the island and how we can increase revenue and keep it sustainable. Which brings us to sustainability and not just for profit but for the islands ecosystem itself. There is only so much infrastructure that can be built and in specified areas or else we fall into some major land issues and possible destruction as we saw with Lahaina wildfires, with too many peoples homes and business buildings crammed together creating the perfect situation for a fire to go out of control. These again are not directly related to what your association deals with but these are all matters that need to be considered when compiling your research for how you as an organization can create a basis of communication to those visiting and working in the tourism industry. So where do we go from here? We need Unity, together with the heads of government, the researches of the ecological environment of the islands and find a way to bring back the Aloha for those who live here, grew up here, and those who visit. Not everyone wants to plan a vacation somewhere to learn about culture or assist in native planting most just want the landscapes beauty and warm air to relax on a sandy beach and have drinks at sunset. There are those who would be intrigued to visit and immerse themselves in an educational tour but not that many. We all know that it's mostly about a tropical paradise with lots of alcohol and sightseeing. The only way to create change is to start with change in ourselves. Opening up to new ideas and ways of doing things. The solution is not separation from other entities in this industry but coming together with all within and outside of tourism to create lasting change that benefits</p>

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
			the whole world Ohana and not just the few. When we can do this, amazing solutions will occur, people will be excited again to visit, it'll be the go to again for destination and the residents who have proper needs met will be happy to be here and share once again the aloha with visitors.They will not shun them but embrace them. Only then will things come together, when we come together.
34	96793	Wailuku	My family has been greatly affected by the wildfires in Lāhainā. My sister and her family lost everything. My brother in law barely escaped the fire with his life and still suffers with the fear of that day. We are grateful that they are still here with us. We as a community are still coming to grips with what happened and grieving. We grieve for all we have lost. While still in that grief, many of us are forced to put on smiling faces while we work our jobs in the tourism industry. There are some who come here and forget that they trample upon our homes. They often forget that their vacation is our home. Hawaii is not a playground, and Lāhainā right now, is most especially not. I have heard visitors grumble about not being able to enjoy their vacation because they cannot enjoying Lāhainā. Honestly what did they expect? We are still in the grips of recovery. For those who expect us to recover quicker, I have this to say: please take a look at how long New Orleans has taken to recover from Katrina and look at how long it took to recover after the world trade Center went down. Now it's not the time for discontent, it is time for compassion and love.
35	96761	West Maui	I run a zipline in Kapalua. Our business has been terribly slow. We would welcome any kind of marketing that promotes activities in West Maui. We have employees who need to pay their rent and mortgages. And yes, we have 7 employees who lost their homes, and they too want and need to make a living. Many thanks!
36	96761	West Maui	Aloha, I am the manager of a small business here in Lahaina. We were able to reopen Thanksgiving week and my crew are ALL so happy to get their jobs back. They wanted normalcy in their lives and going back to their jobs provide that. Plus, being on unemployment is always mentally upsetting, they told me it felt like they were in limbo. I know some people would prefer to have ZERO tourists back on Maui. But I disagree. There is always a healthy balance to welcome tourism into a community. I have been to 182 different countries (as I am trying to visit them all) and I am always surprised to find tourism in even the MOST remote spots on the planet. The difficulties we have here on Maui are not special or unique. The majority of people I know do work tourism job and WANT a job again. Let's all move forward. We are currently at four months since the devastation. We should absolutely move forward and most people I know want to get back to their lives and work and live again. Thank you, - [REDACTED]
37	96821	Honolulu	Too early to be even talking about.

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
38	98166	Mainland	There have been remarks about the length of time to obtain a building permit. If there is any way to shorten the time, it should be done.
39	96793	Wailuku	I would prefer we NOT expand tourism. 2019 numbers were too high. How about a little less and we be happy with that? Why do we need more? I live in Wailuku and have avoided South and West Maui because of over-tourism. For housing for fire victims, condos are the best option because they have kitchens, unlike hotel rooms. They are more home-like and do not require new infrastructure. Vacation rental owners need to understand that if they don't help out voluntarily (i.e., responding to tax incentives and FEMA direct lease options), a moratorium might be the only option. Ideally, housing should be available in West Maui so victims can hopefully maintain a sense of community there. Thank you for letting me share my thoughts. Good luck with your very difficult job.
40	81601	Mainland	Aloha HTA, We recently listened in on Dec 4, 2023 and heard all the heartfelt stories and the associated opinions. We understand the need for housing and feel for the calls to prioritize locals over tourists. The two are not mutually exclusive, you the HTA can be the force to bring harmony to this rift that goes deep in the Hawaiian culture. Instead, we are allowing a minority to redirect what Maui needs to revitalize the tourist economy. We have been visiting Maui annually (many years several times) since 1991. Our first visit made us fall in love with the island, its' people and the genuine Aloha. As time has passed, we have seen a minority group grow (still a minority) and express increasing discontent with tourism. Covid accelerated the anti-tourism sentiment. It was fueled by money from the government, empty highways, closed businesses and significant government overreach. Tourists were told not to come, and they stayed away. Come the catastrophic fire tourists were evacuated in a matter of days and tourists were told not to come for many reasons. Local factions on Maui are on the beaches, in the city council chambers, in planning sessions, on TV with a message that is heard by all tourists STAY AWAY YOU ARE NOT WELCOME ON MAUI, ALL OF OUR PROBLEMS ARE BECAUSE OF TOURISTS AND WE COULDN' CARE LESS ABOUT TOURISTS or second home owners. This is not Aloha! Furthermore, many tourist no longer feel safe in coming to Maui. There should be a concerted effort to make tourists feel welcome again. Over the last several years I have spoken to well over 100 tourists on this very subject and many are not sure if they should come back or vacation elsewhere. This year in the first two months of my stay I have missed a couple dozen of my tourist friends. I have reached out to a dozen or so and asked if they are coming. They are asking if they should come? Is it safe to come? Will we be welcome? Should we wait a few years? This as a branding and marketing disaster.

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
41	96768	Makawao-Pukalani	1) Running of PSA's during flights have them watch just like a safety movie 2) Put the eco /volun tourism participants as a condition to staying on the West Side 3) Partner w/ non profits located on the West Side 4) Have a satellite HTA office on Maui and hire fire survivors who have the skill sets required to run the office 5) Come but don't Come ie., A virtual shopping experience with 360 degree videos of the stores locally owned 6) Provide support for locally owned merchants to target the local \$\$'s so not so heavily dependent on the tourism \$\$'s 7) Promotion of the first Fridays eliminate the West Side have Art night in Wailea 8) Grant \$\$'s to tour company's who want to diversify into the voluntarism space 9) Start up Grants for Maui County Residents who want to create a business in the eco/ voluntarism space 10) One day guided shopping tours w/ target communities ie , Kihei/Wailea, Wailuku/ Kahului Makawao/Paia, Kaanapali/ Kapalua 11) On the 'Come but don't Come' Virtual shopping platform HTA covers the shipping 12) On the shopping platform have Hawaiian Culture education and entertainment offered in a 360 degree format 13) Hire web designers from the community that your featuring ie, Oahu based designers for Oahu/ Maui based designers for Maui/ Big Island based designers for Hawaii Island, etc. 14) (a) INFRASTRUCTURE! If you're going to be funneling tourists thru Makawao and Paia there needs to be affordable to free parking or a shuttle from a designated parking area 14) (b) PUBLIC RESTROOMS! 14) (c) Trash/ Recycling cans available to pedestrian traffic 14) (d) ADA access 14) (e) Green spaces for resting. These are not user friendly 14) (f) Address the Un housed
42	96761	West Maui	1) HTA to highly suggest to the powers at be to clean up Maui of its trash on the highways and abandoned cars, especially if it wants to target lucrative markets. 2) HTA to work with the government to enforce rules and condense fire distribution centers to one location (preferably in a building) and not be located on the beaches. Pohaku Park, Honokowai Park and Napili Park are distribution centers within 1.5 miles of each other. The Pohaku and Honokowai centers are unsightly, create a parking issue to their neighbors and make it impossible for tourists to enjoy the area. Thank you.
43	96761	West Maui	While Maui overall is struggling from the recent fires, especially in Lahaina, it becomes increasingly important to beautify the areas that are frequented by tourists. Areas along the Honoapiilani Highway are littered with abandoned vehicles (even before the fires). There are still many businesses in West Maui that rely on tourists for survival. Communication needs to be clear that Maui, including most of West Maui is open for business.

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
44	98253	Mainland	You're penalizing a select group of individuals. Just because we have an investment property on Maui doesn't mean we're flush with cash. We have large mortgages, sky high real estate taxes, and HOA dues just to name a few expenses. In addition, renting long term comes with additional liabilities for landlords and most of us don't want the additional liabilities. If you're going to penalize property owners, you should include hotels and every property on the island. You knew you didn't have housing for the displaced people from Lahaina since August 7 but have chosen to do absolutely nothing in 4 months. Why haven't you brought in portable construction camps which are more like a a three story motel? These are used in remote construction sites, have cooking facilities, can be expanded for families and can be built FAST. What are you waiting for? What have you done with the additional taxes we've had to pay Maui county the last two years? The extra three percent? Where's that money?
45	96779	Paia	I support the proposed actions. For those of us that have the ability to contribute to the economy by hosting safe, respectful and mindful visitors, it is imperative that we do. Your support through these proposed actions is exactly what we need to do our part in Maui's recovery. Mahalo.
46	96708	Wailua-Haiku-Pauwela	1. Sponsor and/or be part of major events on an international stage to promote Hawai'i as a destination: A) Enter a float for the next available Rose Parade (New Year's 2025) that highlights the state and Maui in particular. Build an entire media and marketing campaign leading up to the parade about the float, get locals to donate towards some of the cost, send local high school kids to help decorate it, etc. (I helped run the City of Pasadena for many years and know many people within Tournament House, and this can be done) B) Get a high school marching band to be in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade for 2024 2. Ask Taylor Swift to help promote Hawai'i. 3. Use social media, especially videos, a lot more frequently .. Use Nene as a mascot theme to fly thru the islands 4. Revamp the Hawai'i International Film Festival and get some real star power and glam --have it be located on Maui next time. 5. Get the NFL to bring back the Pro Bowl for 2025 as a tribute to its roots here and showcase Maui 6. Get Wheel of Fortune back here for special TV taping and showcase 7. Has anyone reached out to Disney to get its help? 8. Do something with that terrible, mostly vacant mall on Maui to give cruise ship passengers and other visitors more to do. What an underutilized eyesore that mall is 9. Sponsor 100 young people as Maui Ambassadors and send them to key cities around the world to promote Maui and rest of the state 10. Get Major League Baseball (MLB) involved ... The Seattle Mariners every year does Hawaiian Shirt Giveaway to fans --get all of the teams, with clothing manufacturer Reyn Spooner, to do special Maui Strong shirt giveaways one night for all all teams.. Get all or as many teams as possible, to do the giveaway all on the same night.



No.	Zip	Area	Comments
47	98233	Mainland	I'm not a resident of Maui but recently visited and saw the devastation the fires caused. I would propose a \$5 or \$10 dollar per person tax on VISITORS dedicated solely to individual rebuilding assistance for those affected. No non Maui residents allowed. This would not be enough to affect tourism and those of us who visit your beautiful island would feel like we were contributing to our future visits.
48	95661	Mainland	I would add that Group business can be a revenue driver. What are the Resorts on the South side doing to attract new business? Offering great rates, new activity offerings and experiences, reduced golf rates and even Group air would go far. I think Groups may still be hesitant about booking Kaanapali due to its proximity to Lahaina and impression that they are still housing residents. More needs to be done to communicate to the large Group bookers...ConferenceDirect, Helmsbriscoe, etc.
49	96732	Kahului	I am very disappointed in the plan. I fundamentally disagree with the premise that we need more tourists to come to our islands. What we actually need to focus on is increasing the spending per tourist not increasing the number of tourists! You should be concentrating on how to bring tourists who will spend more through targeted marketing. I am also not happy with the token attempt at addressing the housing issue. Let's face it, we had a problem before the Lahaina fires and now it's worse. Encouraging short term renters to rent for a year is 1) have hearted and 2) only kicks the can down the road one year. A year from now we will have the same problem , maybe you could take a look at and support measures to convert some short term vacation rentals to long term housing permanently and focus on marketing people towards hotels . After all, hotels support the local economy even more that short term rentals and employ lots of people
50	96753	Kihei- Wailea- Makena	Aloha ... we are south Maui residents. ALL that matters now is getting housing for the survivors. If all this tourism we've had for decades hasn't brought in enough money to take care of the people on whose backs it was made, then it isn't the right industry. It's beyond us that 'we don't have the money for that' is ever uttered when it comes to our own people when we're practically burning cash to fight yet another war. And what priority in our state could be more important now? If we can't get even 10% of the 25k non occupied owner dwelling owners to help, why do we allow them here at all? Please stop talking about tourism. ALL OF YOU. Start building water, sewer and electrical infrastructure on vacant land and ordering tiny houses, mobile homes, etc. immediately. It's really beyond us the approach you're taking. It's seriously shameful. [REDACTED]
51			Please update your tourism articles and brochures to remove Lahaina historic sites. Lahaina harbor , shops and restaurants all within the burn zone of Lahaina. Tourists are still heading into the burn zone and are surprised that there has been a fire. Thank you.

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
52			In Paia, as much as we would love to be the place that visitors can peruse now that they can no longer enjoy Lahaina, we are limited by parking. I lost my gallery on Front Street, but I have galleries in Paia and Makawao. Visitors walk into my Makawao gallery daily saying they couldn't park in Paia. I spoke with David Spee, who owns the lot below the Paia Post Office, and he said he is not allowed to open that huge lot to parking any more. That would really help if he could. Sincerely, [REDACTED]
53	96740	Big Island	The statements being called 'actions' are not actions at all, but strategies. For example: 'Support businesses to continue providing a consistent message that Maui is open for mindful and respectful visitors.' That's a strategy; actions would be specific things that need to be done by HTA. For example, Pay for additional television and newspaper advertising that highlights businesses that are open. Give businesses X hours of web designer support. Sponsor street fairs and reimburse businesses for giving 10% discounts to shoppers. HTA needs to get its 'tourism support vendor' to move from broad strategies to specific, helpful actions which HTA will fund/support.
54	96790	Kula	I was very encouraged to attend the meeting after so many months of tragedy and uncertainty. After attending the meeting I was taken back by how it went. I have lived on Maui for 35 years, my children were born and raised here. I have employed hundreds of people over the last 35 years most of them being locals. I have never seen such a turn in the economy here on Maui and after the meeting it seems morale is down as well. It seems to me that the State and county officials need to come up with the solutions for the people of Lahaina and until that is done tourism will not be excepted. It is the first time in 35 years after many obstacles from the Fedsl and County regulating and impacting our business we are thinking of leaving the island and the state due to the current circumstances. It breaks my heart because we have many people born and raised on maui as employees that have worked with us for upwards of 25 years. I will also mention that our business is down close to 65 percent over the last four months, we were not even hit as hard from COVID. We have as a business pivoted through a lot over the years and I just don't feel confident about the future of tourism in Maui.
55	96761	West Maui	Housing on the island is currently priority one. As soon as those displaced by the fire, have semi permanent accommodations, a strong emphasis and message should be sent through all media channels to return to Maui, with an emphasis on returning to the west side.
56	96790	Kula	Maybe it's time to create Hawaiian locals authority, so us local people are able stand up strong against the tourists authority. Obviously the government doesn't care about us. While some tourism might be ok, remember its us that have to service them in every way. How can we do that when people are still displaced from their homes and lives. I hear government representatives going all over the world spending millions to lure tourists here. Or ridiculous amounts of money to foreign countries! Maui first!!!! Local

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
57	96761	West Maui	As a someone who lost everything in the fire , I pray for housing over profit, it's very hard to provide aloha when living like a refugee. Aloha has so many meaning, Profit isn't one of them.
58	96732	Kahului	The HTA is not listening to the people of Maui. I am distressed to see how low a priority the short term rental problem is in your action plan. This is the biggest problem we face and the main area where the HTA can help . Our economy can flourish with our visitors staying in hotels instead of vacation rentals , shifting this focus from short term vac rentals to hotels is something the hta can do in its marketing . I also feel strongly that encouraging visitors to travel to off the beaten path locations like makawao is a terrible idea, this will turn the entire island into Disneyland and there will be no place you can live or go to that isn't overrun by tourists. This is a disastrous idea!! Also why are we trying to bring more visitors to Hawaii? Shouldn't we be looking at ways to bring the right kind of tourists to Hawaii? Those who respect the environment and importantly who spend when they are here (as opposed to stay in a short term rental and stock up at Costco). Please work on a marketing plan that targets respectful high spenders . I am so distressed and disappointed in this report and frankly my confidence that the HTA will actually listen to this input rather than sweep it under the rug is low
59	96753	Kihei-Wailea-Makena	What do you want the tourist do? not have a good time, not snorkel, not shop and be miserable. Let's prioritize locals first - how? help the displaced first with housing by not kicking them out of hotels, short term rentals and airbnb then what should we tell Dad and Mom who got laid off from hotel due not enough tourist are booked because rooms are occupied by displaced locals. We cannot just rely on tourism for our livelihood but explore other avenues. Stop this thinking. Accept the fact that tourism is our livelihood. People will always come and pay good money to come to the islands. Be part of the solution and not the problem.
60	96793	Wailuku	I am a Transient vacation rental owner and I want to say how nearly impossible it would be for me to rent to a family displaced by the fire. I am legally and morally required to honor future reservations which extend into the future 6 months. I have put my life savings into my condo and short term rentals preserve the furnishings (condo is cleaned once a week and tourists are careful of all the furnishings, which wouldn't be provided in long-term housing). And finally, my costs are so high - \$5,500 a month, I would lose money renting long term and be forced to sell. The mayor's approach is a good one - finding short term rental owners who voluntarily convert to long term with the tax-free provisions.
61	96793	Wailuku	I have deep empathy for those who have lost their homes in Lahaina and I don't know anyone who would not like to see every person stay on the island. No question, but what will allow us all to stay for the short and long term? If we don't have tourism, not only will fire impacted people need to leave, but many others will too. If we don't actively pursue getting tourists and make it a priority, our economy will tank, thousands of jobs will be lost and that means lots of people leaving the island, not just those impacted by this tragedy. It isn't an either/or and shouldn't be set up as such. This is a symbiotic relationship, like it or not, that powers our

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
			economy and gives the opportunity for everyone to stay. The housing issue needs to be managed through collaborative efforts in order to be effective. The current authoritarian approach is divisive. We are in a connected system where everything impacts the other. De-prioritizing tourism means many more people would have to leave the island either immediately or in the future.
62	96708	Wailua-Haiku-Pauwela	Tourism should be limited. Come, visit, and go back home where they come From. No Buying, Investing, Building, Opening up Businesses Etc. Instead of the WORD TOURISM, PUT THE HONEST WORDS OUT TO PEOPLE! MONEY, POWER, CON TROL, AND GREED. THAT,S WHAT TOURISM IS ALL ABOUT. .
63	8830	Mainland	The best way to help 'Locals' is to promote Maui's economic recovery. The moto should be 'Treat tourists with respect and aloha.'
64	98144	Mainland	I own a second home on Maui and two rentable condos. The number one industry on Maui is tourism. You shouldn't kill the goose that laid the golden egg. I do understand the pain but your response needs to be measured. Hawaiians need jobs. Tourism is way down and next year's bookings are down. If you take away short term housing, that reduces tourism and the jobs that these unemployed people need.
65	97302	Mainland	Local housing is definitely a priority but don't vilanize vacation rentals. Everyone seems to forget that the vacation rentals give locals monthly income thru multiple services as in Hospitality services, construction remodeling, landscaping, plumbing, electrical and on and on. Not to mention the occupants of all of these are spending money on local arts crafts, food, entertainment sight seeing services. Tax the darn Hotels, your biting off your nose to people who contribute already.
66	96761	West Maui	Why is the Mayor penalizing the licensed short term rental properties that pay the highest property, GET/TAT taxes, attract visitors that spend money and generally have unaffordable room rates? Why aren't the Airbnb/VRBO rentals suspended and used for permanent housing? These properties pay a low subsidized property tax rate and generally rent closer to what can be afforded by those needing homes so deferring property taxes won't be such a hit to Maui's tax base.
67	96733	Kahului	Aloha Faith & Team, Mahalo for holding the various town halls on Maui & Molokai. Lots to unpack. Suggestion - Maui needs to take a page out of Oahu in terms of limiting short term rentals. Mayor Blangiardi's plan is having the desired effects. Multiple prepandemic Maui County Councils said 'they did enough' and 'it isn't an issue' but we are seeing this is not the case post fire. Suggestion #2 - Maui DMAP Action H 'Advocate for increased enforcement of current laws.' When residents see commercial activities and thus visitors act disrespectfully it leaves a lasting impression. Some examples: Unauthorized commercial activity on beaches ('free photo shoots on beaches', hotels claiming beaches with their commercial activity - lounge/beach chairs preset, etc.) Suggestion #3 - Restrict access to hot spots and overloved areas. This works as seen by Haleakala Downhill bike tours, Molokini boat usage regulation & Waianapanapa State Park Suggestion #4 - Transparency.

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
			Maui County Council needs to highlight where the 3% MCTAT fees are being used to benefit the residents and assist with tourism impacts. Suggestion #5 - Malama Hawaii campaign did not work on Maui. Oahu & Kauai had great success. Maui visitors (leisure and groups) do not have the volume locations to conduct voluntourism activities. Voluntary beach clean ups were a joke. Maui Visitor's Bureau is out of touch with the industry, our visitors and residents.
68	96815	Honolulu	Our family owns a condo property on Oahu and occasionally we visit Maui. So technically you could consider us tourists to Maui. But we pay property taxes in Hawaii so really we are locals too. I don't like the 'Anti-Tourism' sentiment that is being pushed by many citizens on Maui. We live in the USA and freedom to travel anywhere in our country is our right. Stop the negative sentiment towards visitors to Maui or any other Hawaiian island!
69	96753	Kihei-Wailea-Makena	I appreciate you asking for public comments. As a Maui business owner and resident of almost 20 years here are my suggestions: 1. More support for tourism service based businesses. We have a photography and wedding planning business that primarily serves visitors to the island. we typically get 20 to 40 new wedding bookings (for future wedding dates) per month over the past three months. We are averaging about 8 bookings per month. This has a major trickle down effect to all of the vendors we work with, including Officiants, make up artists, florists, wedding venues, videographers, etc. 2024 will be a very tough year for people in the wedding industry. we don't have a product we can sell at a craft fair, etc. so free advertising and promotions through the HTA websites would be helpful as well as social media blitzes featuring wedding industry and service based businesses. The thing about weddings is the couple that books typically brings between five and 50 guests with them so encouraging wedding business help bring more overall visitors. 2. I believe HTA needs to work closely with state and county, regarding turning short-term vacation rentals into long-term rentals. Although this is one of the many ways to secure, long-term housing, it is also an important option for tourism to still have vacation rentals available for rent. A fine balance needs to be made. Visitors who stay in short term vacation rentals spend more money in the community at local businesses than those that stay at resorts. I believe the state and county should be focusing on converting short term rentals on the west side and keeping short term rentals on the south side, open for business to help keep tourism and our economy going.
70	95648	Mainland	Please take care of the displaced Ohana before you take care of the tourists such as us. We love Maui and missed visiting in September, but the people who work and live there are much more important to us to be safe, housed, fed and working. We know you also need the tourism to survive. It's a very difficult time for all. It must be balanced somehow. When we come back to visit, we look forward to the Aloha spirit that means so much to us when we visit. Maui is No Ka 'Oi.. Bless you all, [REDACTED]

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
71	96753	Kihei-Wailea-Makena	We were prepared to speak at the HTA meeting on Monday, 12/4. However we were somewhat intimidated, as were others, by the justified anger and emotion of the residents of Lahaina who attended the meeting. We feel that tourism has to be encouraged, in a manner that is respectful to the people affected by the fire. Hawaii is dependent on tourism for its economic survival. It is our only industry. Perhaps we should restrict tourism to Lahaina and the areas affected by the fire, and encourage it on the rest of the island. People need jobs and if tourism does not rebound, local businesses, restaurants and tourist services will be negatively impacted. Perhaps too, a fee could be imposed on arriving tourists, to defray some of the lost revenue. Please consider respectful tourism in your plans going forward.
72	96753	Kihei-Wailea-Makena	Housing should NOT be at the bottom - #5 of your list!. Teach Kokua - Have tourist building classes to learn & participate in rebuilding Maui housing. Run it thru the UH Maui College (recruit contractors to lead). Charge a fee but give a Certificate of accomplishment. Have a committee start by asking for donations of \$, land, tools, & building materials! All work overseen by professionals. Have construction classes for anyone willing to learn building skills in order to building ADU's and other needed housing! Also, start local farming projects to provide food & also education for visitors who want to participate. Great family project to show kids 'VALUES of life' At the same time, learn to fish - learn some of the old Hawaiian traditions - making lei, palm leaf-weaving, music, dancing, drumming, etc. Charge visitors to join Kokua classes while learning Hawaiian culture that they can take home & enjoy!!! - Profits go to rebuilding the heart of Lahaina, while supporting fire survivors and the damaged economy as well. Have lei making at the airport, and sell leis to incoming & outgoing visitors - inexpensive so they ALL buy lei plus - to stimulate the Hawaiian culture of Aloha! Have the wood-working class make pins of wood with first names etched on them in Hawaiian... I can think of more.... It should be Hawaiian culture-based!
73	96753	Kihei-Wailea-Makena	Aloha, I strongly encourage the Tourism Authority to spearhead a motion for a moratorium on new hotel construction and expansions of existing hotels until the housing crises for those affected by the Lahaina and Upcountry fires, and those who have been priced out of affordable housing has been fully resolved. Mahalo, [REDACTED]
74	96753	Kihei-Wailea-Makena	What will be different a year from now if short term rentals are used for Lahaina people? I'm betting nothing will have changed and that the can is just kicked down the road. When the politicians originally told tourists to stay away from Maui last August, they created a secondary crisis for residents who depend on tourism for their livelihoods. How soon they forget this!! It is happening again with these new proposals!!!

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
75	96753	Kihei-Wailea-Makena	<p>I was at the meeting at the MACC last week where HTA presented 'data' and talked about it's proposed action items related to Maui's recovery, and was really disappointed that HTA is recycling the same propaganda that has been used for years, and re-packaging it as 'recovery.' I'd first like you to define 'recovery.' Does recovery mean a return to 2019 numbers where Maui was well OVER it's tourism-to-resident ratio as defined in the Maui Island Plan, and absolutely bursting at the seams? At that time, Maui's housing crisis was already tragic, and Maui's unemployment rate was at 3% which, nationally, basically means no unemployment. Existing businesses were having trouble finding workers because the workers they need could not compete in the housing market and it was already becoming a problem to fill positions in businesses. Tourism, as it has been, and as it is being marketed post-fires, is NOT the supportive, mutually beneficial economic driver that it is being made out to be. It is a manufactured toxic relationship. Based on the kind of power imbalance that is not healthy in any relationship, personal or economic. 'You need me.' 'You're nothing without me.' This is the attitude that visitors are coming to Maui with. And no matter which words you package that sentiment up with, that is a fundamentally toxic relationship, that has played itself out on Maui, and incredibly clearly in West Maui, for decades before and ever since the fire. Please, immediately stop the 'Come to Maui. We need you.' messaging. The interests of the visitor industry are in direct competition with the interests of generational families of this place. Water. Space. Housing. Environment. In every way, interests of the visitor industry are in direct competition with the interests of generational families of this place. In your proposed plan, it states: 'Forecast for visitor arrivals to Maui is down through 2024' —&gt; is this compared to the over-capacity numbers? Is 2019 your benchmark? And if so, how can you think that's a good idea? How much is ENOUGH? 'Small businesses are seeing lower sales because of fewer visitors, loss of stores.' ---&gt; how many of those small businesses are owned by folks who moved here TO PROFIT off the industry, and who have to hire people who come here to work because the labor pool locally was already tapped out? Just because someone moved here to profit off tourism, does not mean this community is obliged to maintain a tourism economy to support them. It's time for folks who moved here to profit off the extractive over-tourism industry to find another way to support themselves. Your spending data is full of misleading assumptions. Tourist spending data: Please skew your spending data to also take into account how their spending drives up the cost of living for residents? Tourist spending drives up the cost of rent, as locals compete with the tourism industry for homes. Also, most of the hotels and activity companies that tourists spend money on are not locally owned, and a majority of the profit goes off-shore, while residents are left to pay the bill for supporting infrastructure and residual environmental impacts. Unemployment numbers: How much of your unemployment numbers are ACTUALLY from tourism? So many businesses closed that have nothing to do with tourism, and your presentation conveniently ignores that fact, misleading folks to think that all of those lost jobs are based in tourism. Economic revitalization: for</p>

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
			<p>WHO???? Unless you can specify what portion of the tourism economy actually stays on Maui, with truly Maui-grown resident-owned businesses, you can not talk about economic revitalization. I was also present at the 10 hour Maui County Council meeting at the Westin Ka'anapali post-fires. The room was full of real Lahaina residents, the 'workforce' of Lahaina. The wealthy STR and investors were noticeably absent and when I mentioned that to my friend: 'Where are the owners of the STRs?' he replied 'Gone. They went home. They HAVE another home to go to. We don't.' NOT ONE PERSON asked for tourism to 'play a role in Lahaina's recovery' Not one. The resounding message in that room, for 10 hours is: ENOUGH. We are done being servants. Tourism does not serve us. If you really want to listen and do better, listen to that.</p>



No.	Zip	Area	Comments
76	96708	Wailua-Haiku-Pauwela	<p>Aloha HTA, I believe housing Hawaii's residents should be #1 on your list. Those on Maui who lost their homes and livelihoods to the fire, should be your first priority, not #5. TVRs, VRBO and Airbnb's should be legally shut down by the state. They should be made immediately available to these residents and then other long-term residents in the state of Hawaii. We can look to other cities, states and countries who have banned these for guidance if needed to make this happen. They should never have become a reality here from day one. They are the main cause of inflated housing prices for purchase and rentals and the state houseless crisis. Please make this your number one priority. There are enough hotel rooms for all of these visitors. You had also mentioned sending visitors to Paia, Makawao... These places are already overburdened and there is not enough parking spaces as is, for the shops and also the north shore beaches. I have noticed many more visitors in this area recently and it seems to get worse every time I go out. Please keep local long-term residents and #1 native Hawaiians your first priority.</p>
77	96793	Wailuku	<p>The most important thing that you can do for Maui is to get its economy up and running smoothly again. The loudest voices you hear do not represent those who suffer in silence when jobs are lost and hours are cut back. You are listening to those who are not working hard for Hawaii. Hawaii is not just about Hawaiians. It is about all of our cultures working together harmoniously for the common good. With each person treated equally as Americans. Hawaiians should be respected but they in turn should respect all of the cultures of Hawaii. We are not a Kingdom and we do not belong to the King. Those who advocate for a restoration of the Kingdom have never lived as a subject of a Kingdom. Subject to his whims and wishes. They put up signs along our highway saying 'respect the locals' but they in turn do not show any aloha for visitors who help them earn a living. Respect works both ways. You get it when you earn it with Aloha. You cannot rebuild Lahaina when you are without a job. Nothing can be rebuilt and no one will be able to afford a 7% mortgage without a functioning economy. We are all not on welfare. The Hawaiian community activists are ruining the visitor industry with their entitlement demands.</p>
78	96793	Wailuku	<p>The Hawaiians never asked for all the tourists to come to Hawaii- that was ALL the mainland money people, just trying to make money off of the Hawaiians- complete disregard to what they've been saying since WE took their Kingdom away... Please, PLEASE- keep Maui 'Maui'. Please stop building more stupid condos that charge people an arm and a leg to stay at, as it directly affects rent for ALL of us that live here. We don't have industries like Oahu, that's just like on the mainland. Other countries are reducing the amount of tourists- there is absolutely no reason the people in charge of Hawaii can do the same. Maui is a very special place- please help keep Maui. I've been here for 34 years, and like a lot of people leaving, I'm thinking to do the same as it's just too expensive. We don't live in paradise, we only work in paradise, and that truly sucks...</p>

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
79	98375	Mainland	Tourism does support Maui's Economy However Locals Housing are also a Priority which they come first Land must not be for sale for vacation homes Must be sells to Local Residents There must be a Law of how Rich people buying houses in the Hawaiian Islands and Restricted. Majority of the Hawaiian Islands own by Japanese Who Bomb the Hawaiian Islands. Imports goods to the Mainland like the old Sugar Cane Fields Use them as a farm & sells goods to the Mainland Support Locals Ideas
80	96761	West Maui	There is a lot to both sides of this argument. We do need housing, temp or permanent. It has always been our number one issue even pre fire. We have been trying to help with adding in options for hundreds of temp housing and getting no where with approvals from the county from Week one of the fire. It should have been obvious that would be a critical Need asap. Here we are month 4 and still no temp housing. Taking the str away from both the fee simple owners as a solution for Maui's lack of planning over the last 4 months doesn't seem right for those owners. It also will not help Maui's economy get back on its feet. As much as we may hear that we don't need tourism from people, we do. Our whole economic engine is based around tourism. From the restaurants, staff, activities, boat captains and crews, small business owners, and hotel jobs. So yes we do need to keep and promote tourism. If we don't there are many other places in the world that will welcome them if Maui doesn't.. People do have choices of where they want to go, where they want to spend their money. I grew up in the islands and raised my kids here. Maui is a special place and it needs to find compromise for both sides to thrive.
81	96753	Kihei-Wailea-Makena	We must prioritize our tourism other wise all The people in will saffer Some people are ready working less hours If we are not prioritized tourism people make Smaller paycheck they end up lost their home No tourist no Maui !
82	96761	West Maui	The need for housing is unquestioned, but that should not come at the expense of the backbone of Maui's economy, tourism. For people of Maui to have long term, affordable housing and food and clothing, they need jobs- 80% of which are tied to tourism on Maui. The suffering of those affected by the fires is tragic, but that suffering will be made worse by failing to restore a robust tourism industry. There are many other avenues to pursue to restore housing and those should be the focus. Not a focus on diminishing the economic engine of Maui. Tourists are not the enemy.
83	96761	West Maui	Zoning continues to be the root of our housing problem not tourism. In my opinion hotels have a long and prosperous connection to our island. Many hotels make it their kuleana to be good stewards of the land. They provide good jobs, health insurance and sustainability to our work force. Short-term rentals plague Maui County. Realtors and property managers of short term rentals allow residential neighborhoods and condominiums to be overrun with greedy owners and visitors. Short term rental owners are not hoteliers. Visitors should stay in hotel zones not residential zones.

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
84	96753	Kihei-Wailea-Makena	There is an easy way to provide housing for Maui's people: Re-zone all vacation rental units to long-term rental and limit short-term rental to hotels and resorts. For all the talk about how Maui needs tourism, our fragile ecology cannot sustain pre-pandemic numbers of tourists. This became clear during 2020 when our reefs and fish populations recovered significantly in the absence of tourism. Maui needs local productive industry and it needs agriculture for local consumption to reduce the need for imported food. Relying on tourism is a devil's bargain, as we saw during the pandemic and again now in the wake of the fire. Maui needs fewer tourists and more self-sufficiency.
85	96768	Makawao-Pukalani	Aloha, my name is [REDACTED] I have lived on Maui 25 years. I am a PUC Ground Transportation Small Business Owner/Operator. I generate my income by transporting visitors from the Kahului Airport to the Resorts & on Island Tours. I would like to remind the Hawaii Tourism Authority that the State of Hawaii is part of the United States. US Citizens are free to come & go as they please. I also would like to raise awareness about the 'Greedy Real Estate Landlords' who charge too much for Rent, & others who Horde Land . Many of these 'Locals Only' complaints/Demands appear to be coming from Lobbyists hired by the Greedy Real Estate owners. These 'Locals' DO NOT OWN THE ROAD. Yet many times on the Hana HWY I experience Rude Reckless Drivers engaging in Road Rage acting as if they own the road. This is unacceptable. I suggest the HTA work with the Federal Government to turn the Road to Hana into a National Park. The HTA & Federal Government can offer to purchase Hana Residential Homes from those who do not like the Visitors enjoying the Beautiful North Shore of Maui. Again, these people do not own the Roads, so if they are disgruntled, this would offer them an opportunity to move somewhere else. Furthermore Visitors should be educated on the 'Cost of Living' in Hawaii & on Maui. Too many times visitors from China, Australia, Canada & the States do not bring enough money to pay the Fair Market Rate for Island Tours based on Hawaii's 'Cost of Living'. Finally, priority should be given to long term residents like myself who have lived on Maui over 25 years. These greedy Real Estate owners & their lobbyists should be content with their Lots & stop acting like entitled Spoiled Babies! I've got bills to pay! I need visitors. But if the HTA wants to provide me a Grant for \$2.5 Million USD so I can buy a home & shutter my small business to satisfy these alleged 'Local Residents' demands, I am open to negotiations. [REDACTED]
86	96790	Kula	I think the tourist is vital to the economy of Maui and the smart application of monies and good will they bring here needs to support our people in all the communities here. I am not an isolationist as I know without the support of these mostly friendly people that come here, many would not be able to have even a semblance of what they have. The balancing act of having tourist support needs to have component of education attached to their visit. Just my two cents. But tourism is needed to support us.

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
87	96761	West Maui	<p>Please throw out all the outdated official guides to Maui that print activities and sites of Lahaina. Tourists do not know that Lahaina town burnt down and are going around barriers and guards to 'Just take a look around'. False advertising and outdated articles promoting Lahaina should be taken down. Lahaina was Maui,'s number one tourist attractions is gone. The events, fairs, celebrations, street parties, music and cultural events are gone and the Lahaina civic center has been closed from events and concerts for years. Quit promoting Lahaina as open ,it is attracting insensitive oaf tourists . There have been 18 suicides of displaced fire victims staying in the hotels. The car accidents and road rage is elevating. Lahaina has paid her dues. Kaanapali resort Development rebuilt Lahaina 60 years ago to create a tourist destination . They built hotels with employee housing. It worked. And kaanapali thrived. Since the Lahaina fire the Kaanapali area has had 5 fires and 2 evacuations. Would you visit today? We have one fire truck that has a ladder for multi story fires. We do not have a Chinook helicopter to douse fires. Our fire risk still exists and you are sending tourists into it. The occupancy rate on Maui was down to 60% but the housing crisis was at 100%. Nobody reinvested In Lahaina's infrastructure or safety. It created the biggest fire disaster in US History . . . Please stop promoting Lahaina as open , it is cruel and false advertising. Just Stop! [REDACTED]</p>
88	96753	Kihei-Wailea-Makena	<p>Unfortunately, the seriousness of the dilemma is even more complex than dealing with those who are displaced and insisting on 'dignified' housing at the expense of others. The town of Lahaina, if ever rebuilt with affordable housing, will take many years to create. So any commitment being made to struggling people to curtail tourism and to be provided long term financial support without an honest timeline, will exacerbate this dilemma. Leadership needs to quantify the resources/donations, etc. in hand, and try to create a lump sum stipend to help people create a realistic plan for themselves and their families. If not, valuable resources will be squandered in 2024, and we'll be dealing with the same problems and unhappiness next December. All of your intentions are good, but honesty is so desperately needed to this time.</p>
89	96779	Paia	<p>You know who is short staffed? Every public service that Maui residents and really tourists rely on. Schools, hospitals, police, fire, dispatchers, waste management, government workers. Let's fill those positions before we stress about all the 20 year old transplants that get loaded every weekend and then drive home. I do not want local businesses to suffer but you folks have been taking too simplistic approach to tourism management. We don't need advertising for Maui- we need progressive management that protects residents and Hawaiians first.</p>
90	96732	Kahului	<p>It's time to put local needs ahead of tourism. Maui has been over-touristed to the point of destroying our ecosystem and way of life. During the pandemic we locals learned that there are enough people living here to sustain our own community without tourists. The island itself began to thrive and recover when the tourists weren't here. Once Covid was over they came back with a vengeance and were ruder, more entitled, and hateful than ever before, and that's really saying something. They have the mistaken notion that everyone</p>

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
			<p>here is poor and desperate for their dollars. Well guess what? We aren't. The tourists who rent condos contribute very little to our local economy. They go to Safeway or Costco and do very little to support local businesses. We have enough agricultural land to become Hawaii's bread basket. We don't need more entitled, rude, disrespectful tourists invading our island any more. They are killing our reefs, treating the local residents like dirt, damaging our local flora and fauna and filling up our landfills with all their trash. Their level of entitlement is just unbelievable. I work with the public and the difference in the way our residents behave and the tourists behave is profound. If the tourist authority truly wants to help Hawaii instead of just using our state to make a buck, then put your money where your mouth is and start educating the visitors and vacation rental owners on how to behave when they are here. How to respect the environment, the culture, and the people who live here. The more tourists who come here, and the more disrespectful and unpleasant they are, is making confrontations between tourists and locals increasingly more common and more violent. Again, how about looking after the locals with as much energy as you put forth destroying our home with the tourists you are so anxious to bring here. Maui is fed up with tourists, and that's how we ALL feel.</p>
91	96761	West Maui	<p>How can Maui Tour businesses get involved? Virtual Tours? Lots going on the ground especially West Maui. I'm working with Red Cross SRT /NCS team.</p>
92	96753	Kihei-Wailea-Makena	<p>Regarding Mayor Bissen and Governor Green's proposals to alleviate the housing shortage caused by the Lahaina fire. It seems to me that offering tax incentives to people who rent their vacation rentals to those affected by the fire is a fine idea. Punishing those who do not opt for this is not a good idea. Property taxes on our condo have nearly tripled in the last three years already. Why punish small property owners, rather than big hotels or timeshares? This one vacation rental is our retirement, and we have lived in Hawaii for over 30 years. We have owned our condo for 23 years. We currently have 28 reservations for next year. In order to convert to long term rental, we would have to refund thousands of dollars in deposits and destroy our standing with our guests. How could we afford that? We would not make it financially without the vacation rental income and might end up losing our condo and home. And we are both in our 80's, so this feels like elder abuse as well. House someone who lost their home by making someone else lose theirs? How is this in any way how a democracy is run? I know there is a lot of antipathy toward tourism in Maui, but many of our guests have contributed both financially and of their vacation time to help out the fire victims. It is so tiresome to be constantly vilified by so many people and our governments when we add so much to the economy. Not only do we pay a massive amount of taxes, but our guests contribute greatly to the local economy. Tax loss to the county and state would be immense, and those funds could be used to provide other forms of housing. We currently pay the following in annual taxes on one 2-bedroom condo unit in Kihei: Property tax: \$13730; GETA taxes: \$15050; State Income tax: \$6324; Total: \$35,104 Multiply this by 2000 units and you have \$70 million</p>

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
			<p>you would be losing annually. And we really have to wonder where all that money is going to as it is! Why have our property taxes nearly tripled in 3 years? We see no added benefit to our state or county. Where are the parks? Where are even the needed stop signs? Why hasn't the homeless problem been addressed with all this money? What has been done to mitigate the wildfires that we are now being punished for. Please explain before you take away our livelihood. Our net income from this property is only about the same as what we pay in taxes. And now you want to take even more taxes? Does that seem fair to you? Please give this further consideration. We absolutely support finding ways to house those who lost their homes in the fire, but please don't punish us for it. Sincerely, [REDACTED]</p>
93	96761	West Maui	<p>Aloha, Great article and yes we want to help! The article stated that financial concerns and 'employment' were huge concerns for the displaced residents. The Kaanapali Golf Courses have had 6 job openings for groundskeepers and Roy's Restaurant has had at least that many openings for several months now. We are short staffed as are many other business on the West Side. These are well paid jobs with great benefits. We attended a recent job fair at Whalers Village and did not get a single applicant. Where are those people you are referring to who want/need to work? We have jobs for them and we want to help! Mahalo</p>

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
94	96708	Wailua-Haiku-Pauwela	<p>I already submitted a comment but came across this comment on a Hawaii News Now post today and though it would be important to share. I think many visitors are feeling this way. * the following is copied from FB, not my own words* As a 35~time visitor over 24 years, the messaging on social media by mostly transplanted from anywhere other than Hawaii residents has been changing over the last several years and is extremely negative, telling tourists they are not welcome and bordering threatening at times. Couple that with homelessness and crime increasing and that makes it a place that many people feel won't make a good vacation place anymore. I've always said I don't want to go to a place where I don't feel like I'll be welcome—thus, the reason I've never visited Molokai. That message has been made loud and clear that they do not want tourists. Maui is my favorite Hawaiian island and although ive been many, many times, I'm absolutely taking a pause for a while, perhaps as long as five years or so for a couple of reasons. It will never be the same as it was pre-fire. Locals in Lahaina need their time to grieve and can't be expected to share Aloha while they are doing that, another message being put out there on social media. The other reason is hotel prices pre-fire but post-covid have reached the level where most common-folk can't afford it—\$800 a night for a simple small hotel room is out of the question for most people coupled with nearly \$2000 a week car rentals and \$9.00 for ONE egg ala carte at a restaurant (yes, we paid that!). It has reached such a level of in-affordability for the average person that unless the messaging AND the pricing decreases, it will be very difficult to bring visitors back anytime soon. And, perhaps that's what it will take—a few years of reduced visitors and revenue to change the messaging that tourists are welcome and not just for their money. No one wants to be told that their money is needed somewhere. They want to be told that THEY are welcome. The messaging over the last few years has been 'come to Maui, spend your money and lots of it, but go home and don't stay.' That doesn't make people feel welcomed; it makes them feel used and not wanted for anything other than their money and that's not a place that most people will continue to go or return to, no matter how beautiful. My comments are probably off-putting to some but they are my honest thoughts as I've had the experience over the years of coming. To Hawaii, to all of the islands (again, except Molokai) and have seen the messaging change quite negatively over the past few years. Fix the negative social media, lower the prices in hotel, car and restaurant industries (as well as increased activity pricing too!) and you'll begin to reverse the tourism problem but ultimately, until rebuilding of Lahaina has begun or is nearly complete, Maui will probably continue to suffer from decreased tourism. As for me, I won't be returning for a few years until I feel comfortable coming back. I'll be traveling internationally and more locally until that time. Aloha.</p>

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
95	98075	Mainland	<p>I own a condo in Kaanapali at the Honua Kai. To help with the recovery of Maui, residents need a source of income and the City needs to receive transient taxes from guests. While the Red Cross and FEMA look to house the displaced, we as residents need to ramp up availability for tourists. Tourists create need for restaurants, servers, activities, grocery stores etc. When the need is low, people are laid off. In their time of need people need a purpose to return to work and Maui workforce is over 85% focused on tourism. To ensure that people do not need the island they need to create a paycheck for their families. Visitors enjoy the amenities of Maui as, it is a relaxing holiday. Most people that visit Maui have visited before and continually return to enjoy good, food, nice weather, golf and general resort living. People chose to explore cities like Rome but, always return to Maui for a relaxed resort holiday. Many of the people who visit Maui prefer one spot - Wailea, Kihei or Kaanapali and will drive to the other spots. Once a client finds their 'spot', they want to continue to frequent their spot. Hawaii Tourism needs to ensure all of Maui is open as, people who like Kaanaapli, want to return to Kaanapali, not Wailea. The beaches, restaurants and amenities are outside their hotel door, they do not have to drive to beaches with their kids. We need to promote the hotels again in Kaanapali. The big hotels are putting out ads welcoming visitors and there are a group of people who unfortunately continually discourage visitors. People on the mainland think all of Maui is closed, part of Maui is closed and the residents do not want visits. The people that are voicing no visitors are a small percentage compared to the percentage of people who want to get back to work. If people need to continue grieve, they should be allowed but, they should not stop people who need to work and stop visitors from coming to Maui, Kaanapali/Kapalua/Wailea/Kihei. Too many events have been cancelled or sent to other islands which is a huge financial loss to Maui. When one's parent deceased there is always tragedy but, you have to pick yourself up to move forward. A distraction of work is sometimes healthy to help people move forward. no one is going to forget or minimize the tragedy but, we have to ensure there is work available for families so that they can feed them. We also have to think of the owners who are also suffering, unable to pay their maintenance fees, mortgage and other financial obligations. Full ads on television, on social media and other avenues will help push and reinforce that the island is open.</p>
96	96761	West Maui	<p>Item #4 Introduce areas that may have not been seen before. Add areas north of Lahaina: Kaanapali, Kapalua, etc.</p>
97	96761	West Maui	<p>Aloha All, and thank you for the presentation. I lost my house in Puamana, and am currently living up north in a borrowed condo. I have 2 things to bring up: It is critical to get the campers off Kaanapali Beach. The homeless drug addicts ruin the experience for everybody. The 'fishing for houses' people have just trashed the place too. I saw one drunken 'fisherman' (beer and cigarette in hand) come out of the tents and start bothering a young girl getting a temp tattoo at the nearby kiosk. It's not good. The rebuilding of Lahaina has to be fast tracked. The usual obstructionists will work hard to make sure nothing happens, but if we do not move quickly</p>



No.	Zip	Area	Comments
			the people will leave. Moneyed interests will buy it and build a Disneyland type place. We need to move quickly. [REDACTED]
98	96753	Kihei-Wailea-Makena	I see that people are hurting and scared but how can we help anyone if we can't take care of ourselves? Less tourists equals more local businesses getting shut down. More Unemployment, no GET, no money to build houses and infrastructure. Also, what are these displaced people doing to help themselves ? I know it's not all, but I see many people I know personally who have lost their home and work just waiting around for someone to take care of them. They go surfing all day and aren't looking for new work or a place to live. I know it's hard but they can't ask the island to stop. We can work towards new ideas but life can't stop and wait. We need money to solve the problems we face and right now that's tourism.
99	96793	Wailuku	I urge HTA to not call this plan a 'recovery plan.' This is a great disservice to the people of Lāhainā town that have lost their homes and/or lively hoods. Your plan insinuates that tourism is the only business worth salvaging. You are also encouraging the attitude of 'you need me.' Or 'you can't survive without us' mentality. Please STOP encouraging people to come to Lāhainā. The recovery plan must start with the original po'e of this island. Start with Moku'ula. Keep the water coming and flowing Mauka to makai. Stop the rape of the land and it's people. Just stop.
100	96720	Big Island	As a lava evacuee who lost their land and hime in the 2018 eruption, I feel keenly the loss of Lahaina. It is 5 years and the Lava Zone County buyout program has not yet finalized more 150 properties - mine is not yet done. If you truly want to support familes and ensure their housing security then you MUST be prepared to to support their housing needs for AT LEAST 5 years or more - since HUD payouts are unlikely to happen sooner than that. Please do better than what we lava evacuees went through.
101	96763	Lanai	There will be no tourism with no work force. It's not rocket science. Maui county needs affordable housing. The entire state of Hawaii needs affordable housing.
102	96753	Kihei-Wailea-Makena	'Tourism Support for Maui's Recovery' Is this some kind of joke? What is needed is long term housing, not more tourists. We all see on social media the mindset of the tourists coming here. They actually believe we need them, and your plan is adding to that narrative. We certainly don't NEED the number of tourists we were getting prior to the fires. Relying on tourism as our economic engine is a mistake. It is an extractive economy and does not abide by the Hawaiian concept of malama the aina. Our reefs are being loved to death. Check out the Ahihi Kinau reserve. There used to be hundreds of fish to greet you upon entering. They were there in 2020 as Maui

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
			was able to breathe for lack of people trampling all over her. In 2021, hundreds went down to dozens as tourists returned. Go now and you'll see NONE. We need to diversify our economy, not rely on tourism. Now is the time to do it.
103	96753	Kihei-Wailea-Makena	Enough about tourism helping our economy! It's helping HTA with profits! Where does the money go? NOT schools, roads, infrastructure on the Maui! STOP telling people we want them to come! WE DON'T!!!
104	96761	West Maui	Thank you for coming to Maui to gather public feedback. I wish the community meeting had not been 'hijacked' by the Lahaina folks. There wasn't much time for all Maui concerns. That being said, here's my feedback: 1. Consistent messaging is and will continue to be very important. Consistent messaging to our visitors and to our residents. Provide face-to-face Welcome Ambassadors who will share pamphlets at the airport to all arrivals. Provide those pamphlets at all car rental companies and other visitor places. 2. Provide the same consistent messaging to all residents. 3. Utilize the 'dust skirts' for consistent messaging / signage. Folks will be looking, let's determine what they see and read while looking. 4. Provide a 'Gold Card' for Hawaii residents to receive '50%' off typical visitor activities; to encourage our residents to try the wonderful activities they may not otherwise try. This would require working with local companies to provide the discounts. 5. Work with the airlines to provide the consistent messaging while in-flight. Westside Air LLC is a small business in Lahaina. We provide cylinder service and maintenance for the west side. Our local scuba instructors welcome the visitors. We have opened our doors to visitors as well as residents. If they want to scuba dive, we can gear them up. [REDACTED]

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
105	96761	West Maui	<p>First Thank you for coming to Maui and allowing community feedback on HTA efforts toward Maui's recovery. Also, tourism must come back to Maui and to the westside. HTA can assist in three areas, messaging incoming tourists, messaging locals, and working with Maui council on managing Maui tourist numbers. Tourism must come back to Maui. We have moved past the point that tourism can be halted. Too many businesses owners and employees rely on tourists for their livelihood. To stop tourism on Maui and especially in Lahaina would be a huge mistake. The call for tourism to stop because of local sensitivities due to the disastrous fires is shortsighted. Businesses are trying to help residents with housing and financial support. But without tourism the economic impact will be much greater and a truly devastating disaster. And if prohibiting tourist from Lahaina was implemented, what events would have to occur for tourism to resume? And until that time what are businesses to do? HTA can assist by providing messaging to incoming tourists of the level of devastation Lahaina suffered and how each tourist can help the situation. One way is by being respectful of Lahaina residences by not asking questions about the fire and how it impacted them. Also, by visiting only those places that cater to the tourist and not venturing into areas that are off limits. By maintaining the speed limit as you drive through areas devastated by the fire and not slowing down and impeding traffic HTA can also highlight the plight of residents. That many are struggling with inadequate housing and that many tourists will encounter locals who will be in the same hotels while permanent housing can be found. The key to this messaging is to show examples of respect to the residence and resources of Maui. Respect starts with respect. HTA can also help message locals; respect is a two-way street. Locals must show the same respect to tourists such as addressing tourists in conversation with a friendly tone. If the local resident is unwilling to answer a visitor's question about the fires, the local resident should respectfully decline. Also, HTA can address the housing issue and help educate locals in that the visitors are not the reason that causes local resident to periodically move to other accommodations. HTA can address the housing issue by publicly discussing why locals must move and that it is not due to the visitor. If it is due to the visitor and hotels moving to providing more rooms for tourists, then HTA should investigate and publish those reasons. HTA can also help by investigating incentives that would incentivize tourist visits to help local residents. One way would be to have hotels donate a monetary amount to a recovery fund for every visitor who stays in a hotel that was housing displaced locals. Or maintain several rooms for only displace locals which would be funded by the hotel, and which would be based on the number of visitors staying in the hotel. Also, HTA works with hotels to ensure the hotel treats displaced residence the same way the hotel treats visitors. Displaced residents should receive the same access to hotel services as do the visitors.</p>

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
106	96761	West Maui	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment. It would be great if something could change. I would like to say that the great overlooked value of tourism in Maui is the local people. When I first came to Hawaii 15 years ago - I didn't see any native people and I was so dismayed by this, I never came back for more than a decade. I know that this feeling of 'what happened to the Hawaiians' is not unique to me - I know other people feel this and that is the customer you will not attract in the future if you do not change the way local people are treated. If you look at any demographic, you can see that the new generations don't want to go to places that mistreat or suppress native voices - they want to go to those places to learn, to contribute, and to amplify those voices. They don't want to go shopping at Louis Vuitton, they want to buy goods that support the local economy and a local craftsman. I know if you look around Maui, you will think that the rich (mostly white) tourists are satisfied with the status quo and just want their mai tai and a nice beach - never mind who is hurt or what price they pay. But if you want tourists who are indeed respectful of the environment, you have to take a look at the overall picture of how people are treated. Because no amount of money and p.r. efforts can combat a bad reputation. Right now there is an opportunity to show the world that things are not going to be the same as the past, where local people get shunned - while their culture is on display and being sold for the benefit of large corporations. Here are 3 solutions. You could do this but INVESTING in local people's entrepreneurial skills. I try to recommend locally-owned, and Hawaiian-owned businesses whenever possible to my guests who visit. I can only recommend 2 businesses that I know are Hawaiian-owned. If Hawaiians were given a chance to own businesses - that means giving them first place in line for new licenses and low-interest loans or grants, business coaching and PR - I'm sure they would succeed. Number 2 - please put in place some rent stablizing or rental laws to protect renters. I've never lived or visited a place that cared so little for it's tenant population. I have been a tenant as well as a landlord and right now, i could do whatever I wanted (as a landlord) to my tenant and the law is on my side. You will decrease the anger toward tourists - who do threaten the local population of tenants by driving up the rent - if you showed value and care of your population. Number 3 - Get rid of STR and turn it into a more fair system. the software used by Airbnb and VRBO is not unique - Hawaii could build it's system. But instead of allowing only those rich enough to have more than one home to get richer - make it more democratic - while still allowing different experiences for guests. Everyone who owns a home and who lives here and therefore contributes to the economy - those with N-11 status could be eligible to rent their home for exactly 2 months out the year - if they choose to do so. This would allow all kinds of people to rent their homes - if they choose and to make money once a year to help them survive in Maui. It's not fair that I can not rent my home legally but my neighbor - who lives in california and is already very wealthy - can rent hers for \$1500 a night - because she has the money to hire lawyer and consultants and create a fake farm - so she can make even more money. This is something that creates resentment among neighbors, among locals because they know</p>

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
			<p>that STR is eating away at available rentals. This might spur STR owners to rent to local people because they would be limited to only two months. Because this would be a statewide or island-wide initiative - it would take the money, fees, and taxes directly from the website and stop feeding the tech bros who are getting richer by the minute. OR JUST OUTLAW STR altogether. Even NYC - which has a population of 8 million and plenty of land around it - has outlawed STR to protect their population. WHY WOULD AN ISLAND be so uncaring toward its population? Number 3 - please support businesses that actually do good and support local people. For instance, why don't you support us? We are a brand new farm tour that just opened this year and closed again because of the fire. We are committed to regenerative farming practices - some of which come from Native Hawaiian knowledge. We are also committed to hiring native Hawaiians to demonstrate native crafts - but instead of just taking their knowledge and giving them a pittance or just plain stealing - we are going to invite them to partner with us so that they can get 50% of the profit. This allows them to be amply compensated for their time and knowledge and not exploited. In the future, I would love to see all these companies that have made trillions on Hawaii and Hawaiian culture pay reparations to Hawaiian families - many of whom have been displaced because of overtourism. It may seem like an un</p>

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
107	96761	West Maui	I am a victim of the fire as the house I rented in Lahaina burned down on Aug 8, 2023. I have been provided with housing assistance, meal assistance and all kinds of other generous financial assistance from government and private donations. If we don't go full speed ahead on promoting tourism, then everything on Maui is lost, especially for those families who are displaced and relied on tourism for income. Promoting tourism IS putting residents first. The caterwauling from a very small group of activists to dissuade tourism are near-sighted, destructive, self-defeating and, in some cases, promoting a hidden, ulterior agenda. The tourism authority, the county and the state need to show true leadership and bolster the economy so that all of us can survive rather than kowtowing to the illegitimate grievances of the very few.
108	96779	Paia	We desperately need more parking spaces for tourist and for employees. We also need police presence in the streets. A walk about police men. rather than someone in their car hiding in a corner of a parking lot. Please! I own a business in Paia and find these issues to be extreme in Paia. Please help.
109	96708	Wailua-Haiku-Pauwela	The only recovery plan that Hawai'i needs is to diversify away from rampant tourism that is destroying our ecology and way of life. Tech jobs can be done anywhere....where's the push to educate locals and bring tech jobs here? The visitor industry has run rampant for decades and needs to be reigned in to more tolerable levels. The HTA needs to lose all their funding....we do not need more tourists under any circumstances and calling this a recovery effort is further proof that the HTA is dishonest and harmful to these fragile islands.
110	96768	Makawao-Pukalani	HTA, We are grateful to be able to add our thoughts upon the plans for tourism. I will say I am a settler living in Maui for the last 12 years and do not live in Lahaina, so my opinion is not as relevant as the community of local residents. I will say that the way that tourism has been established and maintained is upon the illegal occupation and false statehood of Hawai'i. Tourism has always maintained an colonial narrative giving full access to visitors and corporations, exploitation and cultural appropriation. Here in Hawaii the cost of living is so high and the access to professional training is limited. When we live in a place that pays more to work at hotels and restaurants than support for teachers, lactation consultants, health care professionals, actual community jobs for the actual community. The state continues to work along side the tourism industry using the local community resources and bodies to maintain a system that is not sustainable and is not culturally congruent. WE have seen that the tourism is the economy but that is based on structural control, institutional racism, and capitalistic domination that needs to shift. The visitor industry could shift to actually care for this place and be required to take care of this place. Yes that may deter people from coming but Hawaii does not need selfish and occupation kind of visitors. We must see the state and HTA work to making more accountable the narrative that it presents. Cultural exploitation should no longer be your business using aloha as a tool for more money but actually a call to participation in this incredible place and the well being of it and it's people. Our health care, Indigenous Brilliance and protection, Education, Domestic violence issues, unsheltered

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
			<p>residents, economic well being, and Maternal and Infant health, all suffer in a tourist bombardment using resources and taxing infrastructure that doesn't leave space for the actual well being of the local residence that live here and are the gems of why Hawaii is so special. So I would say what ever plan you have leave exploration of people and resources out of you plans. LISTEN to the Lahaina residence, not settler residence, as they know how to care and plan for the wellbeing of Hawaii where every one can nourish this precious place. This is not Disneyland and HTA needs to stop promoting it as such. There will be no business as usual and people and 'āina before profits needs to be the focus. Thank You for your time. [REDACTED]</p>
111	96779	Paia	<p>In line with 'expanding tourism product on Maui' and 'providing longer-term housing for wildfire-impacted households,' keep TVRs as TVRs and use the tax revenue from TVRs to build housing stock. Keep small businesses open and make productive use of the large revenue they create for the county to build a long-term investment in housing.</p>
112	96761	West Maui	<p>Aloha! While the messaging was made clear to mainland businesses that West Maui was open, those business were not made aware of the fact that the area of West Maui would see significant changes in the amount of business that would be coming. As a result, I lost my job when sales at the retail store I worked at were not comparable to last year.</p>

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
113	96708	Wailua-Haiku-Pauwela	<p>I have not listed my real name out of fear of reprisal for telling the truth as I see it. That does not mean that my comments are any less valid or truthful. I started and run a tourism related business in upcountry Maui that over the previous 5 years has paid more than \$750,000 in state excise taxes. I have also consistently employed more than 20 persons on Maui for the previous 10+ years. During this time, I have been harassed by Maui County Government incessantly. Maui County has prevented me from expanding my business, has caused me to spend more than \$500,000 on attorney fees to defend my private property rights against unwarranted harassment by county personnel and done absolutely nothing to encourage or allow for the growth of my legally operating business. They have also been consistently arbitrary and capricious and unjust in their attempts to make up rules that do not apply to anyone else in an attempt to get in my way and make my life more difficult. They have also steadfastly refused to help or even allow me to obtain needed building permits. It has been my experience that Maui County employees actively go out of their way in their attempts to hinder economic development, especially tourist related economic development. The problem with encouraging more tourism on Maui starts and ends with Maui's County Government. Everyone that I know who has been able to accomplish anything business related on Maui, has managed to do so in spite of Maui County Government, not with the assistance of Maui County Government. The challenge with encouraging more tourism and better tourism experiences on Maui, starts and ends with the County Government. If there is any impact that the HTA hopes to make in a positive way towards improving tourism on Maui, it first and foremost should be about getting the Maui County Government, especially the Planning Department, to commit in writing to actually supporting tourism on Maui, full stop. And then to not only pay lip service to supporting tourism, but to actually and actively take new steps and new measures to do so. Like actually reading and agreeing to follow the laws of the State of Hawaii including HRS 46-4, which doesn't allow for the phasing out of legally operating businesses in the residential or agricultural district - ever. Full stop. The County of Maui should not be in the business of attempting to shut down and phase out tourist related business in any district in the county, but even more so in those districts in the county where Hawaii State law expressly forbids any such phase out activity - ever. Please help tourist related business, by respectfully asking the County to finally train their staff and personnel to help as opposed to hinder both new and existing tourism related business in Maui County. Nothing else is more important than this, in my informed opinion. Because without the support of county government everything becomes 10 times harder than it otherwise would be. And for no good reason either, other than county government personnel have not yet been trained on how much tourism matters to Maui's economy and how to help instead of hinder the hard working citizens of Maui County, especially those employed in Maui's tourism industry, myself included. I think you should add a section to your report about getting Maui's County Government to commit to supporting Maui's tourism business, instead of hindering them. I also applaud item</p>



No.	Zip	Area	Comments
			<p>#4 about creating new tourist focused experiences. That is all well and good to put on paper, but the rubber meets the road where it comes to actually allowing people to create new tourist business. The County has basically almost never simply outright allowed new tourism business, but that is the only way it is going to happen on any kind of reasonable time frame. Get the government to allow new business, not suffocate and snuff out new business with a bunch of pointless and arbitrary rules and regulations that accomplish nothing other than to decrease the numbers of people in the tourism industry. The County needs to change its focus from disallowing to expressly allowing tourism business, especially new businesses and in every zoning district, not just the commercial or resort districts. I could go on for pages about how hard Maui County is on new tourist related businesses, but I will stop here. I still believe that Maui County ultimately wants tourism to expand and grow on Maui, they just need to take steps to actually train their people on how to do so. My \$0.02</p>

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
114	96761	West Maui	To start with a few random idea: --Stop saying 'Hawai'i needs tourism'; -- The purpose of a strong economy is to serve the residents of place - focus on plans that help residents thrive; -- HTA should NOT aim to increase the number of tourists, but should focus on managing tourism in a sustainable way. In response to the proposed actions: Action 1a: focus on an invitation to respectfully visit SOUTH Maui (Kihei and Wailea) and other island. Avoid travel to West Maui. Action 1b: LISTEN to residents so the message coming from businesses/ HTA is supported by residents. Action 2: LISTEN to Maui residents and businesses to give them the support they need. Action 3: Support Maui small businesses by strengthening their product offerings to appeal to residents so downturns in tourism do not have such a negative impact. Action 4: Focus on using this opportunity to diversify the economy and more effectively managing tourism. Action 5: Housing for residents should be the top priority. A phase out of legal but not permitted vacation rentals should be pursued. The overall goal is to redirect tourism to better serve the island residents and local culture. Mahalo for your time
115	96822	Honolulu	Please stop having news outlets and reporters record the burn zones and report from in front of the destruction. When they report about anything on Maui, it should be in front of a small local business or non profit that accepts voluntourism in other areas on the island. The visuals people outside of Hawai'i are leading to the misunderstanding of the geography. The HTA and its PR teams need to utilize their media relationships to persuade media to stop showing the destruction in their reporting to help support the recovery long term.
116	96793	Wailuku	I appreciate the chance to comment on the draft report, 'Tourism Support for Maui's Recovery: Key Findings and Proposed Actions'. My thoughts on the recommended actions follow: a. Proposed Action 5, Support providing longer-term housing for wildfire-impacted households living in visitor-type accommodations by assisting with communications efforts to TVR owners, should be your highest priority, not #5. As noted at your recent public hearing at the MACC, this is the highest priority of Maui residents, and they want to know that they are not a lower priority than tourists. I hope you agree. b. Proposed Action 1b, Support businesses to continue providing a consistent message that Maui is open for visitors is a reasonable proposed action, although ignorance among the public of the geography of the State and Maui is nothing new. c. Most of the other recommended actions focus on tourism marketing and support for Maui's tourism sector. It is not clear why the former is needed because Hawai'i largely sells itself as a premier tourist destination. But given the declaration of Governor Green that released monies in the Tourism Emergency Special Fund in September 2023, a much better focus of the HTA should be to encourage Maui businesses to stress sustainable tourism activities and products as a central part of your proposal to expand tourism products on Maui (Proposed Action 4). This will strengthen the Maui tourism sector in the long run and better support tourism related employment.

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
117	96790	Kula	<p>a. Proposed Action 5, Support providing longer-term housing for wildfire-impacted households living in visitor-type accommodations by assisting with communications efforts to TVR owners, should be your highest priority, not #5. As noted at your recent public hearing at the MACC, this is the highest priority of Maui residents, and they want to know that they are not a lower priority than tourists. I hope you agree.</p> <p>b. Proposed Action 1b, Support businesses to continue providing a consistent message that Maui is open for visitors is a reasonable proposed action, although ignorance among the public of the geography of the State and Maui is nothing new.</p> <p>c. Most of the other recommended actions focus on tourism marketing and support for Maui's tourism sector. It is not clear why the former is needed because Hawai'i largely sells itself as a premier tourist destination. But given the declaration of Governor Green that released monies in the Tourism Emergency Special Fund in September 2023, a much better focus of the HTA should be to encourage Maui businesses to stress sustainable tourism activities and products as a central part of your proposal to expand tourism products on Maui (Proposed Action 4). This will strengthen the Maui tourism sector in the long run and better support tourism related employment.</p>
118	96753	Kihei-Wailea-Makena	<p>I am writing because I am concerned about the push to bring back the amount of tourists we hosted a few years back. Quality of life and the health of our environment a.k.a the shit we all depend on to live, should take priority before profits. I am asking you to create a plan that is more focused on quality, not quantity. Also, please understand that the majority of people working in the tourism industry aren't necessarily from here. I worked as a spa receptionist at the Fairmont Kea Lani and there were 6 locals out of 44 employees that were actually from Maui. So when you say you are helping the local people you are actually helping the people who decided to transplant to Maui and work in tourism.</p> <p>Ideas for quality tourism industry:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A healthy ratio between tourist and locals (quality life for our residents and 'āina)</li> <li>2. Support getting rid of STVR (as majority are owned by out of state investors)</li> <li>3. Educate guests with DO's/DONT's video on all airlines (no longer the state of aloha, but the state of kuleana)</li> <li>4. Encourage a cultural advisor for every hotel and demand that the advisor not take on dual positions! (I've seen many hotels have a cultural advisor who also doubles as security manager or concierge manager)</li> <li>5. Support/fund hotels to host culture classes for employees</li> <li>6. Encourage guest to get involved with making Maui a better place. Require each hotel to have a volunteer section in their concierge book with volunteer opportunities</li> </ol>
119	96761	West Maui	<p>Donate some of the tourist dollars you have raised to families looking for long term Housing. Educate visitors about the sensitivity of Lahaina at this time &amp; how to be supportive and respectful from afar.</p>

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
120	96768	Makawao-Pukalani	HTA has been supporting the tourist industry over resident needs for decades now, promoting tourism over all other financial drivers. Tourism is the reason that Hawai'i. in particular Maui, has become too expensive for the regular person to live. Short Term Rentals taking up housing that should be for the working class resident, hotel revenues profiting mainland corporations instead of profits staying local, salaries in tourism being among the lowest in the nation, work in tourism not paying at all when tourism is down. In other words, the tourism industry has created a life here with the highest cost of living and highly insufficient and unstable salaries. Adding insult to injury, it is our taxpayer taxes that is funding HTA. The Maui Island Plan calls for the tourist to resident ratio to be 1 to 3, which HTA completely ignores, pushing the tourist to ratio to 41% in 2019 and again more recently. HTA literally does not care what residents want or about our quality of life. The quality of life here is ruined by over-tourism. HTA needs to be abolished and tourism needs to be part of our economic landscape, but not so much of it. Those who are here on Maui just for the tourism industry don't need to stay here. We just can;t support the industry they want to see.
121	96727	Big Island	HTA has been supporting the tourist industry over resident needs for decades now, promoting tourism over all other financial drivers. Tourism is the reason that Hawai'i, has become too expensive for the regular person to live. Short Term Rentals taking up housing that should be for the working class resident, hotel revenues profiting mainland corporations instead of profits staying local, salaries in tourism being among the lowest in the nation, work in tourism not paying at all when tourism is down. In other words, the tourism industry has created a life here with the highest cost of living and highly insufficient and unstable salaries. Adding insult to injury, it is our taxpayer taxes that is funding HTA. The Maui Island Plan calls for the tourist to resident ratio to be 1 to 3, which HTA completely ignores, as it does for all islands, pushing the tourist to ratio to 41% in 2019 and again more recently. HTA literally does not care what residents want or about our quality of life. The quality of life here is ruined by over-tourism. HTA needs to be abolished and tourism needs to be part of our economic landscape, but not so much of it. Those who are here on the islands, just for the tourism industry don't need to stay here. We just can;t support the industry they want to see. Hawai'i people are the ones that suffer and have to give up more and more, e.g. water, homes, etc.
122	96761	West Maui	We are so heartbroken to hear the condos will be taken out of the short term rentals. I, along with many long time visitors will never come to Maui again if this goes through. That's unsettling. The Bahamas and Caribbean are becoming the new destinations and will continue to grow if Maui blocks short term rentals.

No.	Zip	Area	Comments
123	96761	West Maui	Maui's Recovery should prioritize residents before any visitors. Without the community who will serve our guests. Long term housing is essential before any recovery can occur. We must not rely solely on tourism but should look to other industries to diversify. Tourism should not only extract from our home and environment but must also prioritize giving back to this place and it's people. All concerns should be addressed with the community in mind and then move forward. The people should always come before profits. We need responsible tourism and tourism that values a sense of place. Ecotourism and experiences should also be included.

## C. White Paper: Recommendations for The HTA Emergency Operations Plan and the Hawai'i Emergency Agency Visitor Coordination Annex

The HTA *Emergency Operations Plan* and the *Hawai'i Emergency Agency Visitor Coordination Annex* are well-thought-out documents that were followed and will now have to be reviewed and updated based on the lessons learned from the Maui Wildfires.

Based on feedback from stakeholders the HTA Emergency Operations Plan was implemented as written.

- As required, an Operations Center was established and manned at the Convention Center.
  - Resources were available to assist visitors arriving from Maui with services available to help with planning their next step after arriving from Maui. This may have been related to booking accommodations or making air travel reservations. Note that 200 visitors sought assistance here.
- HTA staff were part of different emergency response teams as required.
- HTA issued Media Releases consistent with the situation.
- HTA updated and assisted with the distribution of Visitor Situation Reports on Maui.
- HTA coordinated with their designated contacts.

In the Tourism Support for Maui's Recovery Plan, Action C.1.b stated: coordinate and sponsor a meeting of Public Information Officers (PIOs) with FEMA providing best practices on communications with residents. This may help guide a process to smooth out overlapping communications and develop new approaches. At this meeting the following recommendations should be discussed and implementation steps agreed to.

The following are recommendations based on stakeholder feedback and best practices.

1. Establish and be prepared to implement a protocol for one-consistent message distribution for residents and visitors within the state.

In coordination with HIEMA and PIOs designate one communications center to issue media releases, provide on-air interviews, and social media messages for a given time during and after the emergency. Updates that need to be relayed to the public should be forwarded to this center to be released. This will ensure that messages are consistent and that the public knows which communications to believe.

This communications center will have to be established and manned quickly and efficiently. This may be challenging to create and for different departments to follow, but it is critical that in an emergency people receive one message. Ideally the center can send phone messages, texts, radio, and social media messages.

If one communications center can be designated as the sole source of communications in an emergency, then residents can be made aware of who to listen to ahead of time. Also, consideration should be given to communications in different languages.

Rationale:

Following the Wildfire emergency media releases were being sent out and on-air interviews were being conducted by multiple individuals and departments, all with the best of intentions to share what they knew and provide hope for the future. However, this resulted in conflicting messages and confusion that took time to correct. No one knew who to believe.

The majority of people in Hawai'i speak English. The top non-English speaking households are more comfortable with Ilocano, Tagalog and Japanese. Depending on the island and community impacted the languages may change, but it is important these households are not forgotten. This was an issue raised in interviews.

2. Establish a one-voice protocol for media inquiries.

In coordination with HIEMA develop a section on protocol for responding to media inquiries pertaining to visitors currently within the state or planning on visiting. The protocol should include directing all media inquiries to HTA during an emergency. This protocol should be included in the HTA Emergency Operations Plan and the HIEMA Visitor Coordination Annex.

Rationale:

- i) During an emergency, it is important to have one consistent message. During the Maui Wildfires, outbound messages were consistent, but responses to inbound media inquiries varied depending on who was contacted by the media. Mixed messages resulted in confusion and made it difficult for visitors to identify a reliable information resource.
- ii) The HTA Emergency Operations Plan includes directions for gathering and dispersing information regarding visitors. HTA Public Information Officer (PIO), Public Relations agency and HVCB are located at the Operations Center and prepared with the latest information and background to provide accurate information as it becomes available.
- iii) During an emergency, the priority is visitors in the state; however, visitors planning on traveling to the state soon thereafter are an important second priority. All media releases (HTA and others) should consistently refer to one website as the primary source of reliable information.

3. Media Releases Content Recommendations

- a) *If air travel to the state or a county is being restricted, media releases should include a specific time frame when an update will be available.*

For example, "air travel to Maui will be limited to emergency support personnel until further notice, an update will be provided on a daily basis accessible at (indicate a website for ongoing updates.)"

Rationale:

- i) Knowing where to access the latest updates, future visitors will be better able to adjust their vacation plans as necessary. Based on research after the Wildfire emergency, visitors were not sure if flights were able to land on Maui.
- ii) In research after the Wildfire emergency some potential visitors still believed that visitors were not able to visit Maui, long after that ban had been lifted.

*b) Media releases should include a map identifying the area(s) impacted by the emergency within the county or state as soon as possible.*

Rationale:

Some potential visitors to Hawai'i still do not understand that Hawai'i is a multi-island state and even fewer now areas within the state. This misperception was evident during the eruptions on Hawai'i Island, and the wildfires on Maui, with potential visitors to all islands being concerned about whether to change their vacation plans because of the emergency.

*c) Social media can be better used to provide updates to current visitors, potential visitors, and residents.*

Rationale:

Social media such as TikTok, Facebook, and X were reported to be a highly accessed form of communication after the Wildfires, especially for younger adults. Ideally one trustworthy source of reliable information, in this case HTA for visitors, will help get quality updates out that are consistent with the information being shared with other media.

- 4. The list of contacts within the HTA Emergency Operations Plan is extensive and should be reviewed and updated every three to six months. Training with key staff should take place at least once a year.

Rationale:

This will minimize potential time delays as the plan is being implemented. It will also save time if key staff knows where to report without needing to access the plan.