



O'ahu Destination Management Action Plan Steering Committee DRAFT ACTIONS FOR PUBLIC REVIEW AND INPUT

The O'ahu Steering Committee met over the course of two months to develop actions to reset O'ahu's visitor industry and address impacts to communities and natural resources. There were several overarching issues that were generated from the discussions:

- Reduce visitor impacts by improving infrastructure, actively managing sites, and decreasing the level of visitors.
- Desire for collaborative efforts among all industry partners in support of natural resources.
- Ensure a balance between the needs/wants of residents and visitors, and well-being of O'ahu.
- If residents are not happy then visitors will sense that and will not have a good experience either.
- We must manage the visitor experience with capacity limits at hotspots, promoting or allowing only selected experiences, and offering alternatives to move visitors away from hotspots. A "hotspot" is an area/site that attracts visitors due to its popularity, and may result in overcrowding, congestion, degradation of resources, safety hazards, and a negative experience for both the resident and visitor.
- We must educate our visitors about our respect for this land and its people.
- We must pivot towards regenerative tourism. Regenerative tourism is how tourism can make destinations better for both current and future generations.

Below are **draft** actions developed by the O'ahu Destination Management Action Plan Steering Committee. These actions have been organized in four areas. Items A-Q are the high-level actions and the bullets are examples of the proposed actions.

We are seeking community input from O'ahu residents in order to help reset tourism's future. To provide feedback, please visit bit.ly/oahudmapinput or to learn more about the Destination Management Action Plan process, visit bit.ly/oahudmap. The deadline to provide feedback is May 21, 2021.

Better Manage Visitors On O'ahu

A: Establish a "Regenerative Tourism Advisory Committee" for the City & County of Honolulu to identify and manage tourism-related issues for O'ahu.

- Pull together a committee with measurable goals and a set timeline with an implementation and an end date. Committee to work and collaborate with C&C on balancing the needs of the community and the drivers of O'ahu's economy. Establish measurable parameters especially in designated regions with high population density.
- Curb, control and enforce regulation of illegal short-term vacation rentals, traffic/street parking issues, and access to environmentally sensitive areas.
- Recommend a penalty structure that can support enforcement efforts.

- Identify and request any additional funding and resources (labor and otherwise) that may be required to support enforcement, whether it be from collections from legal rentals, penalties or government resources.
- Work with Mayor and C&C legal counsel to develop a legally sound plan, have City Council collaborate, review, and pass as law. Determine if legislation is necessary. Rollout recommendations as a trial, so process can be reviewed and perfected over time.
- Identify and collaborate with state agencies and a cross-sector of stakeholders as needed.

B: Manage number of visitors on O’ahu by discouraging short-term vacation rentals.

- Limit expansion of legal short-term rentals outside of the resort areas.
- Improve enforcement of illegal short-term vacation rentals.

C: Identify, assess, and prioritize key hotspots on O’ahu that need to be better managed.

- For natural resource and cultural sites, determine desired resource and social conditions and identify management actions to achieve those conditions to ensure integrity and avoid degradation of hotspots.
- Identify key State & County hotspots in communities by meeting with communities and generating ideas on how to better manage sites. Identify and prioritize communities and/or neighborhoods that have 1) issues with visitors or 2) conflicts within their community regarding visitors.
- Examine the issues stemming from visitor traffic in impacted communities. Determine how to alleviate those issues. If infrastructure needs to be developed to reduce stress on residential areas or a penalty structure needs to be put into place if visitors or industry breaks the restrictions.
- Develop a process to support government and community collaboration over how to manage and steward frequently visited sites. Determine if there are similar issues across some of the hotspots, so they can be addressed in a group or pilot program.

D: Develop a reservation system to monitor and manage users at natural resource and cultural sites.

- Explore a reservation system and demand-based fee pricing at popular sites and hotspots.
- Start with a group of sites like Hanauma Bay and Lē’ahi, to evaluate reservation systems models (e.g., DLNR reservation system).
- Conduct a study to determine whether fees are warranted and how fees are to be processed and returned to that spot or community for maintenance, management, and enforcement.
- Pilot a program for a central reservation system that can redistribute demand to other sites and be integrated with participating attractions.

Target Positive Impact Travelers to O‘ahu and Encourage Responsible Visitor Behavior

E: Develop and implement marketing programs to attract positive impact travelers who prioritize environment, culture and investing in our local community and effectively decreasing the interest of undesired travelers.

- Target niche markets that appreciate learning about unique cultures and natural resources.
- Attract higher-spending travelers such as the meetings, conventions and incentives (MCI) visitors, weddings, business travelers, film industry workers, medical tourism, and arts and culture.
- Shift the number of visitors during peak periods to the shoulder periods.
- Focus marketing of Hawai‘i as an opportunity to connect with destinations on a deeper level through immersive experiences, and travel in a way that enriches the visitors lives as well as the communities they are fortunate enough to visit.
- Develop targeted communications to attract positive impact travelers. Be intentional about what we promote to ensure that it is authentic and develop guidelines that businesses also buy into.
- HTA to lead by marketing O‘ahu with context and not just surf and sand. Include island values, prioritize environment, and culture so we attract the right kind of visitors.
- Create campaigns with organizations and media that focus on regenerative tourism.
- Expand on programs to encourage visitors to do more to increase total visitor spending.

F: Implement a pre- and post-arrival tourism marketing communications program to encourage respectful and supportive (regenerative) behavior.

- Produce a mandatory pre-arrival education program to ensure visitors are informed on respectful and supportive practices (e.g., make available videos).
- Identify the best ways to reach visitors prior to arrival.
- Promote use of the GoHawaii app to travelers to promote safe travels and communicate with them to understand where to go and not go.
- Enhance the GoHawaii app with GEO fencing capabilities to inform visitors at hotspots.
- Develop a signage program (physical and virtual) to educate visitors and locals about significant sites or areas and pono practices related to them.

Manage Destination Experiences for Mutual Benefit of the Communities and Visitors

G: Develop, market, encourage, and support more collaborative, curated experiences that enrich residents and visitors alike.

- Incentivize or financially support venues that deliver on the Hawai'i promise (sites and attractions).
- Promote and elevate significant sites as alternatives to going off the beaten path and redirect visitors to areas that can accept higher traffic.
- Create an advisory group to determine how to elevate and preserve these places, so that the "place" can spend their resources on developing programs, educational offerings, more exhibits, etc.
- Encourage visitor industry to promote experiences that are equitable and fair for our communities.
- Explore a program to certify experiences that are pono (Quality Seal).

H: Foster seamless interaction between community and visitors through cultural experiences and knowledge.

- Develop a community-based tourism program: identify communities that are interested in sharing their experiences with visitors. Work collaboratively with those communities, appropriate government agencies and business community to develop plans to improve facilities, services, products, and access, while also implementing ways of promoting the place to redirect visitors versus "off the beaten path options". Include community involvement, encourage events that create an exciting experience while enriching the visitor and locals enjoying the place.
- Develop a Native Hawaiian tourism program. Identify Native Hawaiian communities and organizations interested in sharing their experiences with visitors. Work collaboratively with these organizations, similar to the community-based tourism program.
- Develop a "Storytellers Program" for communities to curate and share their stories to educate locals and visitors.
- Create opportunities for local community members to be compensated when sharing the mana'o of their place.
- Expand promotion of quality community projects and events (e.g., Hawai'i podcast).

I: Work with Destination Management Companies (DMCs) and Meeting Planners to integrate a respectful and supportive visitor program for Meetings, Conventions & Incentives (MCI).

- As new MCI bookings are made, encourage integration of materials and presentations to better acquaint attendees to the cultural aspects of the island and responsible behavior.
- Connect community-based experiences to MCI groups to enrich the attendees' experiences and foster an understanding of O'ahu's communities.

Ensure Tourism and Communities Enrich Each Other and the 'Āina

J: Continue to develop and implement “Buy Local” programs to promote purchase of local products and services to keep funds in our communities and minimize carbon footprint.

- Continue to encourage the visitor industry to prioritize purchase of Hawai'i-based, 'āina-friendly products & services to include literature, crafts, fashion, music, performance art, film, fresh produce, added-value products.
- Continue to leverage programs that support “Buying Local.”
- Work with hotels and restaurants to prioritize purchases from local suppliers and to feature/promote local products.

K: Expose visitors to quality local products vs. generic/mass manufactured “local” items.

- Promote O'ahu artisans – including local crafts, fashion, music, performing, and visual arts.
- Promote O'ahu-made items and businesses.
- Explore a certification of authenticity program to ensure the origin and the maker are recognized.

L: Expand on programs that strengthen partnerships and encourage mutual support between the visitor industry and community organizations.

- Encourage the visitor industry to partner with community groups to acknowledge the direct/indirect benefits of locals (sustainability, interaction with residents for an authentic experience).
- Encourage an “Adopt an 'Āina” Program: hotel chains, convention centers, tour operators become members with monthly staff volunteer day programs, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program for their employees, fundraising offerings and donation campaigns for community-centered nonprofits.
- Develop service/management (stewardship programs) agreements with community groups where they can generate income to do the mālama 'āina work in their place that the state or county currently does not or cannot do.

M: Create certification programs to ensure that visitor industry professionals are more knowledgeable and share appropriately with visitors.

- Collaborate with communities and organization(s) to train visitor industry professionals to become knowledgeable about the place (culturally, historically, socially and environmentally/geographically).
- Require a certification to conduct tours.
- Incorporate requirement for certified guides in the hiking guide and commercial permitting process at State sites.
- Promote the value of visitor industry certifications.

N: Expand programs in hospitality training across all facets of the visitor industry.

- Integrate Hawaiian language and culture programs for employee training, marketing, and branding.
- Develop and promote responsible “host” practices.
- Provide resources and training so industry can share with visitors how to behave responsibly (following HTA's Mālama Hawai'i program).

O: Implement communications program to encourage resident participation and better understanding of the how “regenerative tourism” is being implemented.

- Hold meetings with residents to discuss the role of tourism, and their ideas to make it better for O’ahu.
- Develop a process for open dialogue between communities and the visitor industry.
- Develop an awareness program in our schools.

P: Deepen investment in partnerships with industry to expand sustainable environmental practices.

- Explore means to incentivize businesses to increase participation.
- Invest in future technology to track and actively manage visitors and impacts.

Q: Establish a “Regenerative Tourism Fee” where money goes directly to support repair/restoration of hotspots, management of sites, unfunded conservation liabilities and natural resources issues.

- Determine and identify how to legally collect and distribute this type of fee, whether it is a state or county fee, and accountability measures.
- Fee would support management system, impacted communities, and workforce development in jobs related to invasive species removal, fishpond restoration, coral growing, and native ecosystem restoration.
- Fee would also be provided to community groups to manage sites and perpetuate culture.
- Educate the visitor industry on the need for the fee and how it signifies visitor industry contribution to sustainability.
- Share with the traveler/visitor how the fee would be used to enhance their visit by protecting the place.