

Fall 2021 Progress Report – O’ahu Destination Management Plan





The O’ahu Destination Management Action Plan (DMAP) was approved by the Hawai’i Tourism Authority’s (HTA) board of directors in July 2021. It was released to the public and published on HTA’s website on August 31, 2021.

This report provides an update on the progress toward fulfilling O’ahu’s DMAP from September to November 18, 2021, and specifically provides updates on the actions identified for Phase 1 (September 2021 - 2022) implementation. Only Phase 1 sub-actions are listed unless otherwise noted. There are 37 sub-actions in Phase 1, of which 26 (70%) are in progress. One sub-action in phase 2 has been started.

Mahalo to the City & County of Honolulu’s Office of Economic Revitalization and the O’ahu Visitors Bureau (OVB) for their support and partnership in moving the O’ahu DMAP actions forward. HTA also acknowledges the other state and county agencies, nonprofit organizations, and the visitor industry which have been integral to advancing the DMAP efforts.






Legend

Symbol	Definition
	Not Started – Action has not begun.
	Delayed – Action was initially targeted for the identified phase, but then deferred to a later phase.
	In Progress – Action is being worked on.
	Completed – Action is finished being implemented.





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Action A. Decrease the total number of visitors to O’ahu to a manageable level by controlling the number of visitor accommodations and exploring changes to land use, zoning and airport policies.

Progress	Sub-Action No.	Sub-Action
	A.1	<p>Lower the number of illegal short-term vacation rentals by supporting the County to improve enforcement of current regulations. Support the County in implementing new rules.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HTA had a number of meetings with the City & County of Honolulu’s director of the Department of Planning and Permitting (DPP) between August and October. DPP introduced proposed amendments to Chapter 21, relating to transient accommodations. This included the enhancement of their enforcement ability with unpermitted short-term vacation rentals throughout the City & County of Honolulu. A City & County Planning Commission hearing was held on September 1, 2021. HTA provided testimony in support of the proposed amendments. Bill 41 was introduced to the Honolulu City Council’s Committee on Zoning and Planning on October 19, 2021. It passed first reading on November 10, 2021. HTA’s President and CEO John De Fries also sent out communication on November 2, 2021, to HTA’s contact list of more than 18,000 to bring awareness to Bill 41 and rally support. A statement from HTA’s President and CEO, was also included in the City & County’s press release on November 4, 2021, announcing the Blangiardi administration’s proposed amendments to Bill 41. HTA’s President and CEO also sent out communication on November 4, 2021, to HTA’s contact list to bring further awareness to Bill 41 and encourage residents to support Bill 41 CD1. Bill 41 was introduced to the City Council’s Committee on Zoning and Planning on October 19, 2021. It passed first reading on November 10, 2021. A request for a time extension occurred for the bill.
	A.2	<p>Provide resources to engage communities and agencies to collaborate on additional rules; particularly to limit expansion of legal short-term vacation rentals outside of the resort areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HTA’s President and CEO also sent out communication on November 2, 2021, to HTA’s contact list to bring awareness to Bill 41 and rally support. HTA’s President and CEO also sent out communication on November 4, 2021, to HTA’s contact list to bring further awareness to Bill 41 and encourage residents to submit testimony in support of Bill 41 CD1. OVB also sent out communications to the industry and community to drum up support.
	A.3	<p>Commit resources to study methods of limiting supply such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Controlling new visitor accommodation development through building permits or approvals for new sites. Exploring changes to land use, zoning, airport policies, etc. that influence tourism infrastructure and ultimately determine the number of visitors that can access O’ahu sites.

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Action B. Implement a pre- and post-arrival tourism communications program to encourage respectful and supportive behavior.

Progress	Sub-Action No.	Sub-Action
	B.1	Identify the best messaging and ways to reach and communicate with visitors prior to arrival.
<p>This is currently being done through: 1) HTA and OVB's social media - how to be a respectful, mindful traveler; 2) Hawai'i Tourism USA and HTA's Mālama Hawai'i and kuleana (travel tips) efforts; 3) HTA's Global Marketing Team messaging on being a responsible traveler; and 4) HTA partnering with the Hawai'i State Department of Transportation's Airport Division to put up safe travel messaging at Daniel K. Inouye International Airport's baggage claim areas.</p>		
	B.2	Support Hawaiian cultural educational and training programs – including ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i (Hawaiian language) for the employees in the visitor industry (e.g. hotels, tour guides).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OVB is exploring the possibility of utilizing its board of directors to reach out to Human Resources departments at hotels/resorts to push for ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i training. • Native Hawaiian Hospitality Association (NaHHA)'s will continue to support the Awaiaulu Kipapa Resources going into to FY 2022. This includes a Hawaiian language project -- free educator resource programs -- both in Hawaiian and English; bilingual curriculum; Hawaiian history (awaiaulu.org/kipapa) – which has been effective since October 18, 2021. • On September 28, 2021, NaHHA introduced “Curriculum to ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i.” This is a separate one-hour class. It will occur monthly through June 2022. • NaHAA is working to develop a “Hakalama Drills” video, which is to provide pronunciation of Hawaiian words. It will be housed on NaHHA's resource webpage. • HTA's Ma'ema'e Tool Kit is also on NaHHA's resource website in addition to being providing to new HVCB members. • The Mayor's Office on Culture and the Arts has also started offering ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i training for city employees. 		
	B.3	Develop a messaging program (physical and virtual) to educate visitors and locals about significant sites or areas and pono practices related to them.
	B.4	Enhance the goHawaii app to include more real time information, road closures, events, local etiquette, resource protection, and areas that are of-limits.
	B.5	Boost the goHawaii app with geofencing capabilities to notify visitors when they are in proximity to a hotspot and redirect them to other more accessible areas through a reservation system.

OVB will be testing five (5) sites (i.e., historical site; natural resource; parks; hot spots) via the goHawaii.app beacons starting in CY 2022.

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B.6 Promote use of the goHawaii app to travelers to encourage safe travels and communicate with them to understand where to go and not go.

The HTA’s Brand team has pushed out the goHawaii app through its Global Marketing Team to English-speaking countries. OVB is also promoting the app to its members, partners and platforms.



Action C. Identify sites and implement stewardship plans for key hotspots on O’ahu.

Progress	Sub-Action No.	Sub-Action
	C.1	Work with stakeholders to identify sites associated with public impact on natural and cultural resources. Prioritize sites where: 1) communities and/or neighborhoods have issues with visitors; 2) conflicts exist within communities regarding visitors; or 3) residents’ access and traditional cultural access need protection.
	C.2	Work with communities to determine desired conditions or limits of acceptable change then identify management actions to achieve/ sustain those conditions to ensure integrity and avert degradation of hotspots.
	C.3	Develop a process to support government and community collaboration on how to manage and steward sites. Determine if there are similar issues across some of the hotspots, so they can be addressed in a group or pilot program.
	C.4	Increase opportunities for community-led initiatives that steward and manage these resources, including closure of areas and managing traffic.
	C.5	Advocate for increased funding and resources for Department of Land and Natural Resources, City and County Department of Planning and Permitting, and City and County Parks and Recreation, to better manage hotspots.

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	C.6	Investigate site user fees or hiking permits that go directly to support and manage specific hotspots and the affected communities. Review studies to determine whether site fees are warranted and how fees are to be processed and returned to that spot or community for maintenance, management and enforcement. Evaluate if the fees are working.
	C.7	Explore the process of requiring hikers to apply for and acquire a hiking permit. Fees would also go to reimburse search and rescue expenses. The process would include mandatory education on safety and protocol while hiking.

Action D. Increase enforcement and active management of sites and trails.

Progress	Sub-Action No.	Sub-Action
	D.1	Explore ways to improve enforcement of parking rules at hotspots and popular visitor attractions. Crack down on illegal tour vans and buses dropping people off at beaches and trails.
	D.2	<p>Increase biosecurity at Daniel K. Inouye International Airport and trails.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote sanitation protocols for cleaning gear. • Encourage responsible visitor practices like cleaning gear at hiking trails and not tracking in invasive species.

DLNR and the Hawai‘i State Department of Transportation’s Airports and Harbors Divisions are working to further develop a “Ports of Entry Biosecurity” project for the State of Hawai‘i.

Action E. Develop a reservation system to monitor and manage users at natural resource and cultural sites.

Progress	Sub-Action No.	Sub-Action
	E.1	Explore a reservation system and demand-based fee pricing at popular sites and hotspots.
	E.2	Evaluate the current reservation systems at Hanauma Bay and Lē‘ahi to support a sustainable capacity of visitors and advocate for expansion to other hotspots on the island.

HTA is investing in a “Channel Manager System.” This system will sit on top of other reservation and booking systems.

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E.3

Pilot a program for a statewide reservation system that can redistribute excess demand to other sites or to other participating attractions.

HTA is investing in a “Channel Manager System.” This system will sit on top of other reservation and booking systems.

Action F. Establish a “Regenerative Tourism Fee” that directly supports programs to regenerate Hawai‘i’s resources, protect natural resources, and address unfunded conservation liabilities.

Progress	Sub-Action No.	Sub-Action
	F.1	Identify how to legally collect this fee (State gives the County the authority to establish such a fee), distribute this type of fee, and develop accountability measures. The fee would support the management system, impacted communities, and workforce development in jobs related to invasive species removal, fishpond restoration, coral growing, and native ecosystem restoration.

On November 3, 2021, a meeting was held which brought together HTA, OVB, Conservation International, Harold K.L. Castle Foundation, and Kanu Hawai‘i to discuss the proposed 2022 legislation for a “green fee” – which is similar to a “regenerative tourism fee.” The proposed legislation will be introduced by the private sector. Details are still being worked out.

Action G. Develop and implement marketing programs to attract positive-impact travelers who prioritize the environment, culture and investing in our local community.

Progress	Sub-Action No.	Sub-Action
	G.1	Continue to develop and focus marketing messaging to market segments that appreciate learning about unique cultures and natural resources.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The HTA’s Global Marketing Team is developing their 2022 Brand Management & Marketing Plans with this action in mind. • OVB also continues this effort.
	G.2	Continue to develop plans to attract higher spending travelers (i.e., meetings, conventions and incentives (MCI) visitors, weddings, business travelers, medical tourism, LGBTQ, and arts and culture).
		The HTA’s Global Marketing Team is developing their 2022 Brand Management & Marketing Plans with this action in mind, and HTA will be monitoring performance.
	G.3	Continue to reassess and adjust marketing O‘ahu with context and not just surf and sand. Include island values, prioritize environment and culture to attract the right kind of visitors.

This is an ongoing effort by HTA, its Global Marketing Team, and OVB.

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G.4

Use marketing campaigns as an opportunity for visitors to connect with O’ahu on a deeper level through immersive experiences, and travel in a way that enriches their lives while giving back to the communities they are fortunate enough to visit.

This is an ongoing effort by HTA, its Global Marketing Team, and OVB.



G.5

Continue to develop campaigns to shift visitation from peak periods to slower shoulder periods.



G.6

Be intentional about what we promote to ensure that it is authentic. Enhance the current “The Hawaiian Islands” brand guidelines for the industry partners and encourage consistent use.

This is an ongoing effort by HTA, its Global Marketing Team, and OVB.



G.7

Develop metrics and collect data to measure marketing effectiveness beyond the economic impacts (e.g., Aloha+ Challenge measures, acceptance of tourism by local residents, visitors participating in voluntourism, buying local, etc.).*

New dashboard measures (water, waste, energy) are being developed for hotels for inclusion in the Aloha+ Challenge dashboard.

** This is a phase 2 sub-action in progress now.*

Action H. 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.

Progress	Sub-Action No.	Sub-Action
	H.1	Continue to encourage the visitor industry to prioritize purchase of Hawai’i based, ‘āina friendly products, services and technology solutions to include literature, crafts, fashion, music, performance art, film, fresh produce, value-added products, and software.
HTA is in discussions with DBEDT and the Department of Agriculture (DOA) to determine how much the visitor industry (hotels and restaurants) is purchasing from local farmers.		
	H.2	Work with hotels, restaurants, and visitor retail to feature or promote local products.
HTA is in discussions with DBEDT and DOA to determine how much the visitor industry (hotels and restaurants) is purchasing from local farmers.		
	H.3	Continue to leverage programs that support buying local. Coordinate with various certification programs for a cohesive promotion program.
HTA’s Global Marketing Team is addressing this action via their respective Brand Management & Marketing Plans. The GMT’s have also promoted the Made in Hawai’i Festival.		

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H.4

Promote O’ahu artisans, including local crafts, fashion, music, performing, and visual arts.

HTA’s Global Marketing Team is addressing this action via their respective Brand Management & Marketing Plans. The GMT’s have also promoted the Made in Hawai’i Festival. OVB continues to promote O’ahu’s artisans.

Action I. Manage the visitors’ use of cars as transportation on O’ahu.

Progress	Sub-Action No.	Sub-Action
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I.1

Work with the O’ahu Metropolitan Planning Organization to examine the issues stemming from visitor traffic in impacted communities. Determine how to alleviate those issues such as developing infrastructure to reduce stress on residential areas or a penalty structure to discourage visitors or industry from violating restrictions.

The City’s Office of Economic Revitalization coordinated a meeting between various City agencies including Department of Transportation Services, HTA and OVB in early October to review this action item. The next meeting is scheduled for November 19, 2021.



I.2

Support O’ahu Metropolitan Planning Organization efforts to provide safe, convenient, reliable and efficient private and public transportation to shift visitors from driving rental cars to more environmentally sustainable modes. Include the development, support of, and advocacy for bike paths and the promotion of bicycle use.

The City’s Office of Economic Revitalization coordinated a meeting between various City agencies including Department of Transportation Services, HTA and OVB in early October to review this action item. The next meeting is scheduled for November 19, 2021.

Action J. Work with community partners to develop, market, encourage, and support more collaborative, curated experiences that enrich residents and visitors alike.

Progress	Sub-Action No.	Sub-Action
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J.1

Increase the number of suitable places for visitor and resident activities by renovating popular hikes/sites away from residential areas or developing new sites. Improvements would include adding walking paths, developing parking, signage, etc.

DLNR is in the process of developing the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). HTA staff met with DLNR and PBR Hawai’i on November 15, 2021, to provide feedback to the draft SCORP.

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J.3

Develop new recreational opportunities for residents to ease the burden on sites that are heavily used by visitors and residents.

DLNR is in the process of developing the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). HTA staff met with DLNR and PBR Hawai'i on November 15, 2021, to provide feedback to the draft SCORP.



J.5

Examine creation of “Kama‘āina Days” at identified sites with priority for weekends.

HTA is looking further into this action with its Attorney General.