Hawai'i Tourism Authority



KAUA'I

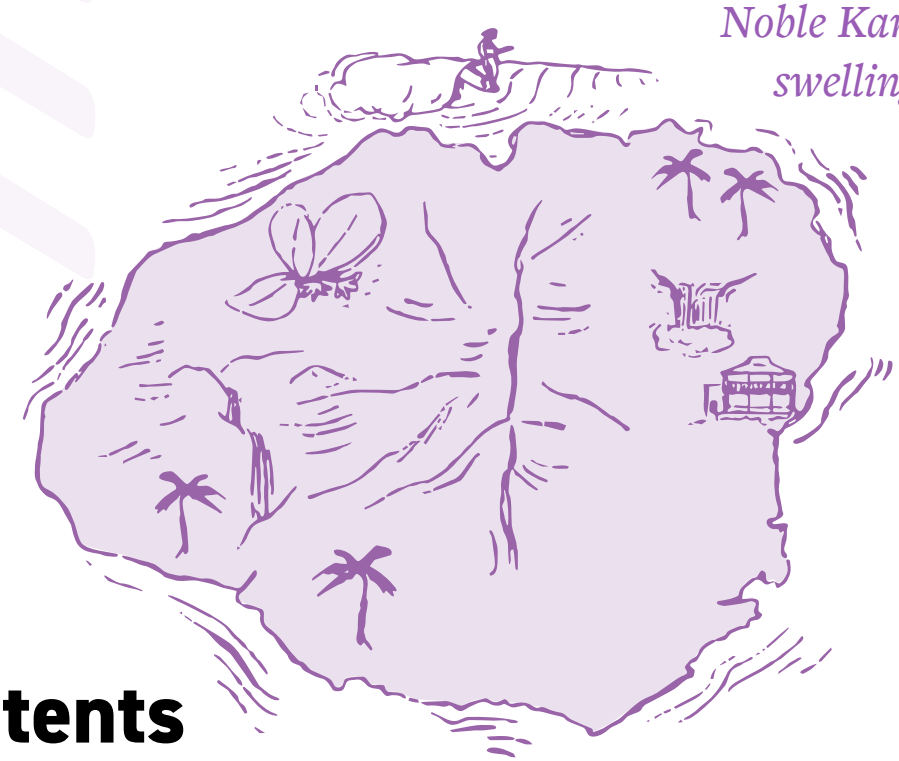
DESTINATION MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN 2026 - 2028

Kulana Kamāwaelualani i ka ale‘ale o na wai kau mai i luna

Noble Kamāwaelualani of the swelling waters high above

Healthy people come from a healthy land. Kaua‘i is a bountiful island lush and verdant, and is a great resource as well. The people of the island are good natured, generous and of modest disposition.

Leimoana Collection



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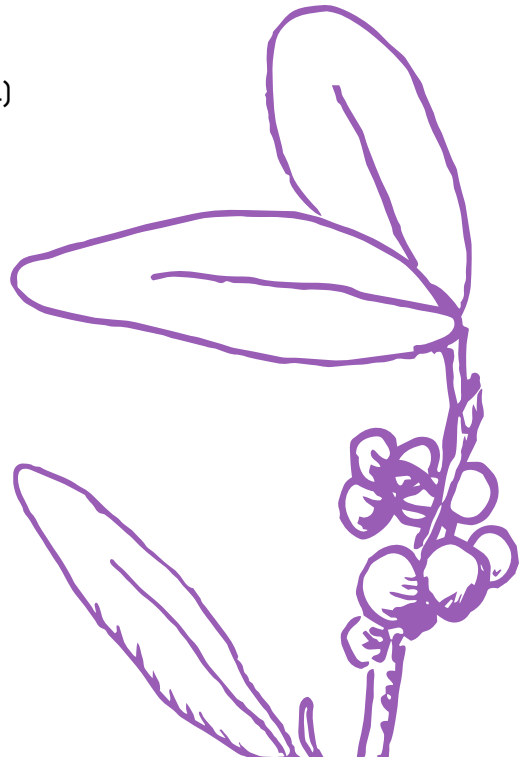
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01. PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN

Kauaʻi has long been celebrated as Hawaiʻi's *Garden Island*: a land whose lush landscapes, deep history, and close-knit communities capture the natural beauty and aloha spirit that typify Hawaiʻi for visitors. Yet the same qualities that make Kauaʻi extraordinary have also left it vulnerable to strain. In an era of social media and global connectivity, once-remote beaches, valleys, and trails are now easily discoverable. The Hawaiʻi Tourism Authority (HTA) reported in the *2024 Annual Report* that visitor arrivals to our oldest island have increased 40% since the early 2000s, while transportation systems and visitor infrastructure have struggled to keep up. Nearly 70% of Kauaʻi residents believe the island is managed primarily for the benefit of visitors rather than for local people (*2024 Resident Sentiment Survey, Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism*).

Over the course of nine months of community meetings, Advisory Group sessions, and industry roundtables, **we at the HTA heard about these pressures clearly and repeatedly**. We heard **grief** from *kamaʻāina* (locals) as familiar places like Hoʻopiʻi Falls have become so congested that residents no longer feel welcome there, and in some cases lose access entirely as places are gated off to protect from strain and illegal access. We heard **frustration** over traffic on Kaumualiʻi Highway south of Līhuʻe and along Kūhiō Highway in Kapaʻa, and about unsafe roadside parking in Kōkeʻe and Kapahi. We heard **concern** from the visitor industry who worry that the *aloha* visitors expect to encounter is increasingly difficult to sustain as workers and communities are stretched thin, and the **disappointment** of residents who feel that too many visitors expect *aloha* from them without offering respect and reciprocal care in return. And yet, we also heard **hope** that these compounding concerns can be overcome through collective, intentional action, and **pride** in the improvements that are already being accomplished in Hāʻena and advanced in areas like Coconut Marketplace.

The purpose of this plan is to address conditions driving concerns through decisive, stakeholder-informed action. Building on what was heard throughout this process, the Kauaʻi Destination Management Action Plan (DMAP) identifies practical actions to improve daily life for residents, strengthen how visitors learn about and move through the island, and protect resources that sustain both community and economy. These actions reflect priorities voiced by people from across the island: clearer rules and communication, on-site presence and safety measures, proactive stewardship, and interagency coordination.

This is the work of **destination management**. This work is essential not just to address experiences of strain, but precisely because the industry is central to Kauaʻi's economy: supporting jobs, small businesses, and the island's broader stability with nearly $3 billion in visitor spending in 2024 according to the *2024 Annual Visitor Research Report* by DBEDT. When the *destination* of Kauaʻi is inadequately managed, the strain often falls on those who call the island *home*. But when managed deliberately, tourism supports livelihoods while honoring the lives of those who live here. In doing so, destination management seeks to create greater harmony among visitors, residents, industry, and natural resources by caring for Kauaʻi's people, and protecting the places and experiences that matter most to residents and visitors alike.

ALIGNMENT WITH HAWAIʻI'S STATEWIDE DESTINATION MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The work of **destination management** on Kauaʻi is part of a broad statewide mandate established under Chapter 201b-3(a)(14), Hawaiʻi Revised Statutes, which directs Hawaiʻi Tourism Authority (HTA) to carry out and coordinate "destination management" in Hawaiʻi, defined in the statute as:

A collaborative and coordinated process with public, private, and community stakeholders *to manage the various elements of a visitor destination in order to:*

1. *Create, implement, and monitor strategies that attract targeted visitor markets and improve visitor experiences;*
2. *Improve natural and cultural resources valued by Hawaiʻi residents and visitors;*
3. *Develop and maintain tourism-related infrastructure to prevent overcrowding and overtaxing sites and resources; and*
4. *Ensure that the provision of services enhances the visitor experience.*

The same engagement that informed this plan shaped a collective **vision** for destination management and the **guiding principles** underlying every island's DMAP. Conversations across the *pae ʻāina* (archipelago), including those held on Kauaʻi, helped define this shared vision for destination management:

"Destination management in Hawaiʻi is rooted in deliberate, ongoing stewardship that honors ʻāina, culture, and community as the foundations of both our beloved home and our world-renowned visitor destination. Acting collaboratively as government, industry, residents, and visitors, we embrace the kuleana (responsibility) to guide tourism into greater harmony with Hawaiʻi's people and places, reducing strain while regenerating reciprocity, connection, and abundance for generations to come."

1. Aloha aʻe au i kuʻu ʻāina
I ke kū kilakila ʻo Waiʻaleʻale

Nani Kauaʻi

The statewide vision is expressed through four guiding principles:

PRINCIPLE	MEANING	PRACTICE
MĀLAMA **Stewardship** *of ʻĀina (Land) and Culture*	Caring for what sustains and distinguishes Hawaiʻi (its lands, waters, and living heritage) through protection and restoration.	Intentional, strategic action that advances protection, restoration, and resource management to heal ecosystems, safeguard cultural sites and practices, and care for Hawaiʻi's storied places.
LAULIMA **Collaboration** *and Accountability*	Acting together in shared *kuleana* (responsibility) across community, industry, and government agencies.	Interagency coordination, community governance, transparent data, and adaptive management that ensure alignment, accountability, and sustained communication with stakeholders.
LŌKAHI **Harmony** *and Reciprocity*	Cultivating relationships among residents, visitors, and ʻāina through respect, care, connection, and attentive response to strain.	Visitor engagement, place-based interpretation, stewardship opportunities, and responsive visitor management that deepen connection to place, reinforce care for communities and ʻāina, and address tourism-related strain as it emerges.
HOʻŌLA **Regeneration** *and Growth of What is Good*	Nurturing the conditions for abundance so tourism replenishes rather than depletes.	Reinvestment of revenues, strengthened infrastructure and labor force, and regenerative tourism practices that respect ʻāina, support local businesses, operationalize traditional knowledge, and advance community well-being.

Rather than dictating the structure of this plan, these statewide principles ground its overall approach to **destination management.** They inform the strategies, objectives, and actions that follow, guiding how statewide priorities are translated into place-based solutions for Kauaʻi.

"NANI KAUAʻI"
A MELE PANA COMPOSED BY LIZZIE ALOHIKEA
NOHILI IN THE 2ND VERSE IS KNOWN TODAY
AS BARKING SANDS. THE OLD HAWAIIANS CALLED IT
"KE ONE KANI AʻO NOHILI" OR THE SOUNDING SANDS OF NOHILI.

NOTE: While the DMAP presents a structured, time-bound action plan for addressing priority management needs, HTA regularly advances destination management through multiple efforts, programs, initiatives, and functions that support the same statutory objectives and guiding statewide principles. These include visitor education and post-arrival marketing (VEPAM), pre-arrival messaging, resident engagement, product development, and stewardship and community capacity-building initiatives such as ʻUmeke grants and the Community Tourism Collaborative (CTC) programs. Although these efforts are only occasionally included as actions within this DMAP, they remain integral to how destination management is carried out in practice and how community well-being, visitor satisfaction, and stewardship outcomes are shaped over time.

HOW THIS PLAN BUILDS ON AND DIFFERS FROM THE FIRST DMAP CYCLE

Kauaʻi enters this next phase of destination management building on strong momentum from its first DMAP (2021–2023), which strengthened collaboration across government agencies, industry, and communities, and demonstrated that coordinated, place-based management can succeed. Several initiatives that were implemented in response to the last DMAP, such as funding a feasibility study and plan for the East Kauaʻi Mobility Hub at Coconut Marketplace (EKMH), laid important groundwork that this plan advances.

A 2024 State Auditor report and another independent evaluation highlighted areas where the DMAPs could evolve: clearer agency roles, better measurement, and more realistic, sequential action planning. These reports were also considered in the formation of this plan.

To reflect those lessons and respond to current conditions, the 2026–2028 Kauaʻi DMAP introduces several key refinements:

- **A hotspot-centered, place-based approach to destination management.**
  The previous DMAP identified a set of hotspots through a review of community input, agency feedback, and partner consultation; however, the criteria and process used to identify and prioritize those sites were not explicitly stated, and hotspots were one of several planning considerations rather than the primary organizing focus. **This DMAP places hotspots and sites under strain at the center of its approach**, introducing a stakeholder-informed, factor-based framework for identifying **sites under strain** across the island and designating within them a smaller subset of critical, **priority hotspots** where tourism-related pressure is most acute. The plan moves beyond identification by centering **targeted, site-specific management actions** for priority sites, reflecting a more place-based focus on managing tourism impacts where they are greatest.

- **Stronger measurability and clearer articulation of progress.**
  Each hotspot and site under strain action in this plan is structured with defined steps laid out by fiscal year, anticipated deliverables, and intended outcomes, enabling more consistent tracking and communication of progress and success over time. These measures place greater emphasis on outcome-based indicators than the previous plan to better assess whether actions are producing meaningful change on the ground, while still including select process measures where appropriate. Action steps and deliverables are intended to guide implementation and may be refined over time in response to evolving conditions, operational considerations, and on-the-ground realities.

  A comprehensive implementation timeline for all actions included in this plan is provided in Appendix B.

- **Clearer roles and accountability in interagency collaborations.**
  Each hotspot and site under strain action also identifies specific management partners and roles, including relevant divisions within agencies (e.g., the Division of Forestry and Wildlife within the Department of Land and Natural Resources) and named community and industry partners, rather than broad designations alone. During the drafting process, HTA engaged these partners directly and secured provisional commitments to collaborate, helping ensure actions are grounded in organizational capacity and shared *kuleana*. Where implementation authority sits with other agencies (e.g., for enforcement, land management, transportation, or infrastructure), HTA is often included as a coordinating/convening partner to support alignment, communication, and visitor-facing strategies.

- **Identified opportunities for aligned destination management beyond named actions.**
  While this plan identifies a defined set of priority hotspots and site-specific actions for this cycle, it also articulates destination-wide management strategies, lists stakeholder-identified priorities for priority sites, and includes a section of policy and advocacy positions intended to help align and support complementary efforts led by communities, agencies, and partners beyond the DMAP itself. These elements recognize destination management as a collaborative, ongoing endeavor, in which community-led, agency-led, or independently funded efforts that advance identified priorities may be considered aligned with DMAP outcomes, regardless of whether they are named as actions in this cycle. Communities, agencies, and partners are encouraged to utilize this DMAP as a reference framework when advancing actions aligned with the strategies, priorities, outcomes, and sites articulated in this plan.

- **A different stakeholder engagement process.**
  Unlike the previous DMAP cycle, where the island's Steering Committee drafted actions that were subsequently taken to the broader public for input, during this DMAP cycle, island-wide community meetings, industry sessions (to inform both the DMAP and the HTA Strategic Plan), and Advisory Group discussions were conducted concurrently. This ensured that stakeholder inputs directly and iteratively guided the structure and content of the plans. For more details about the engagement and creation process, see Section 2: Development Process for the Plan.



02. DEVELOPMENT PROCESS FOR THE PLAN

The Kauaʻi Destination Management Action Plan (DMAP) was developed through an iterative planning process spanning **July 2025 through early 2026**. Rather than following a linear "consult once and decide" approach, the plan evolved through repeated cycles of engagement, analysis, drafting, and refinement.

Throughout the planning period, many inputs informed development. Community and industry perspectives, advisory guidance, agency and partner dialogue, HTA staff insights, and ongoing research were considered together to identify emerging priorities, refine strategies, and develop feasible actions.

Input gathered through this process shaped the plan at several levels:

- **Strategies** (**Section 4**) synthesize recurring themes raised through engagement and organize how the DMAP responds to those concerns.
- **Hotspots and sites under strain** (**Section 5**) align with locations repeatedly identified by stakeholders as experiencing concentrated tourism-related impacts.
- **Actions** (**Sections 5 and 6**) were developed to address these themes while remaining feasible within the DMAP timeframe and partnership context.

As additional input was gathered, draft materials were revisited with various stakeholders and refined. This approach helped ensure that the DMAP's structure, priorities, and actions emerged from shared patterns across engagement rather than isolated comments or individual meetings.

This section describes how engagement, analysis, and drafting informed each other during the planning process. **A schedule of meetings and engagement activities is provided in Appendix A.**

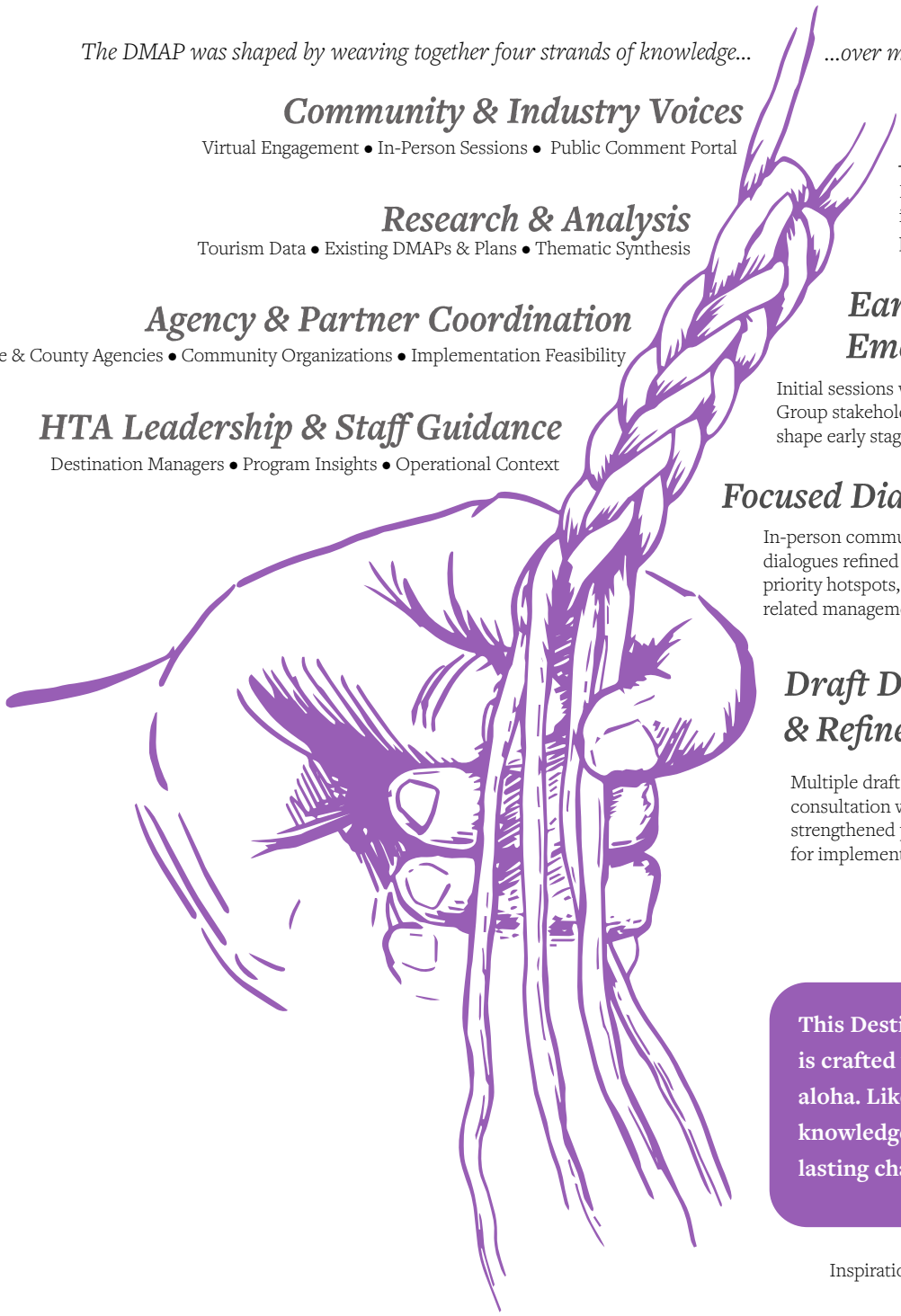
The DMAP was shaped by weaving together four strands of knowledge...

Community & Industry Voices
Virtual Engagement • In-Person Sessions • Public Comment Portal

Research & Analysis
Tourism Data • Existing DMAPs & Plans • Thematic Synthesis

Agency & Partner Coordination
State & County Agencies • Community Organizations • Implementation Feasibility

HTA Leadership & Staff Guidance
Destination Managers • Program Insights • Operational Context



...over multiple phases of engagement, insight, and action.

Initial Insights & Priorities
Legislative direction, research, and HTA priorities informed early understandings and identified a preliminary focus on hotspots.

Early Engagement & Emerging Themes
Initial sessions with industry, community members, and Advisory Group stakeholders surfaced broad island priorities and helped shape early stage management themes.

Focused Dialogue & Action Development
In-person community sessions and ongoing Advisory Group dialogues refined themes into island-specific strategies, solidified priority hotspots, and offered more specific insights that informed related management actions.

Draft Development & Refinement
Multiple draft iterations, continued stakeholder input, and consultation with potential action partners refined actions, strengthened plan framing, and clarified feasible pathways for implementation.

This Destination Management Action Plan is crafted with intention, iteration, and aloha. Like a kaula (rope), it seeks to weave knowledge from many sources to create lasting change for our communities.

Inspiration for this illustration comes from *"Aha Weave featuring John Kaimikaua"* on YouTube.

HOW THE DMAP WAS WOVEN TOGETHER

The planning process was iterative and collaborative, with **engagement, analysis, and drafting occurring in ongoing cycles** rather than discrete phases. Input gathered at each stage helped to identify recurring themes, locations experiencing tourism-related strain, and possible directions for action. As new insights emerged, draft ideas were revisited with stakeholders and refined.

This approach allowed the plan to evolve over time and helped ensure that strategies, hotspot priorities, and actions reflect patterns consistently raised across engagement rather than isolated feedback.

1. **Establishing the Initial Frame**
   Planning for the DMAP began with a review of existing conditions, policy direction, the 2021-2023 DMAP and other island-specific management plans, and available visitor and other tourism-related data. This work informed the situational analysis and SWOT (Section 3), providing an initial picture of the possibilities, pressures, and management context facing the destination.

   Key contextual drivers for the plan included legislative direction to focus management efforts on hotspots and sites under strain, as well as findings from the State Auditor and internal HTA review related to destination management accountability and implementation described in Section 1.

   While this research provided an early baseline for the plan, additional plans, studies, and policy context continued to be incorporated as they were identified through engagement with partners.

2. **Advisory Guidance and Iterative Direction**
   An island Advisory Group provided ongoing guidance throughout the planning process. Convened by HTA, the group included representatives from the visitor industry, ʻāina stewardship groups, State and County agencies, visitor bureaus and destination organizations, business and community leadership, and other partners with relevant experience in tourism and resource management. A list of these individuals is provided at the end of this plan.

   The Advisory Group met several times and provided their *manaʻo* (input) as the plan evolved, reviewing emerging themes, discussing locations raised as experiencing tourism-related strain, and helping shape the direction and scope of proposed actions. This input helped refine early concepts, identify priority locations for management attention, and ensure that draft strategies and actions reflected a broad range of perspectives.

   Additional information on Advisory Group meeting dates is provided in Appendix A.

3. **Listening to Recurring Concerns and Emerging Themes**
   Early engagement with community members and industry stakeholders focused on understanding how tourism is experienced in daily life across the island and where its impacts are most visible.

   Rather than simply listing comments, the project team looked for patterns in what people raised repeatedly, how they described those concerns, which locations were consistently cited as places of concern, and what types of actions stakeholders suggested in response.

   Through this process, several recurring themes began to emerge across conversations, including concerns related to traffic, infrastructure, and access; enforcement and safety; natural and cultural resources; visitor education; local economic benefit; and resident engagement, among others.

   These themes helped shape later in-person community sessions, where participants explored these topics in greater depth and discussed potential approaches for addressing them.

As the process progressed, **these recurring themes were refined several times until they were synthesized into the management strategies presented in Section 4.** While the strategies do not correspond directly to individual comments raised during engagement, they reflect the broader patterns and priorities that emerged and helped organize how the DMAP responds to those concerns.

Additional information on the timing, format, and locations of community and industry engagement is provided in Appendix A.

4. **Partner Coordination**
Throughout the planning process, HTA Destination Managers and other HTA staff engaged directly with State and County agencies, ʻāina-based stewardship organizations, and other potential implementation partners. Several of these entities are listed at the end of this plan.

These conversations focused on:

- understanding roles, internal processes, staffing capacities, and operational limitations,
- alignment with existing programs, policies, and capital investments,
- clarification of jurisdictional responsibilities,
- identification of feasible pathways for implementation and partnership,
- and securing provisional commitments to included actions.

This coordination helped ensure that proposed actions reflect both stakeholder priorities and practical implementation realities.

5. **Draft Development, Review, and Refinement**
Insights from stakeholder engagement, advisory dialogue, analytical work, and partner coordination were brought together to develop draft strategies and actions. These materials were refined through multiple rounds of drafting and review as the plan evolved.

Draft concepts were shared with Advisory Group members, HTA staff, and relevant partners to confirm that they accurately reflected stakeholder concerns and appeared feasible within the DMAP planning period. A draft version of the DMAP was presented publicly in February 2026 through a virtual session and an online commentary portal, providing an opportunity for additional feedback from community members and stakeholders. Input received during this stage informed late stage revisions before finalization of the plan in March 2026.

HOW ACTIONS WERE DEVELOPED

Actions included in this plan were informed by stakeholders' *mana'o* (insight). Ideas for action suggested by stakeholders were evaluated for feasibility and the ability to advance the statewide vision for **destination management** (Section 1). Actions proposed in this plan are those that:

- Align with one or more of the three Kaua'i management strategies (Section 4),
- Directly address identified sites under strain (Section 5) through targeted, site-specific action at priority hotspots, or support those efforts through complementary management approaches, and
- Can reasonably demonstrate measurable outcomes within the FY 2027–2029 planning period.

Site-specific actions at priority hotspots form the core of this DMAP. These actions were honed for sites on the island where tourism-related strain is most acute and where the feasibility of near-term management intervention is strongest. They reflect the plan's primary emphasis on addressing tourism-related pressure, safety concerns, and cultural and environmental impacts at specific strained locations.

In addition to these site-specific actions, the plan includes a smaller number of other management actions that support hotspot management by addressing broader destination conditions and opportunities (Section 6). While hotspots identify places where visitor pressure is currently concentrated, visitor behavior is shaped by factors that extend beyond any single site, including how visitors receive information and what alternatives they perceive to be available. Research from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa finds that when access is limited at one heavily visited location, visitor demand can shift to nearby sites rather than dissipating (Moromizato 2025). These other actions therefore focus on visitor education, coordination, engagement, and targeted place-based initiatives that shape how visitors move through and interact with the island. While these actions may be applied at specific locations, they are not primarily driven by site strain and are intended to reinforce, complement, and strengthen the effectiveness of hotspot-focused management.

In developing proposed actions, HTA conducted a review of existing plans and studies – including those led by the Department of Land & Natural Resources (DLNR), Hawai'i Department of Transportation (HDOT), County agencies, and local organizations – to ensure that actions build on existing work where appropriate and avoid duplicating ongoing efforts.

Draft actions were reviewed by the island Advisory Group and named action partners. Several partners confirmed their roles and offered provisional commitments to actions that included them, while Advisory Groups considered how effectively draft actions address identified sites under strain and desired outcomes. HTA utilized this feedback in further refining actions, then shared proposed actions with community stakeholders during public meeting sessions and through an online commentary portal in February 2026.

While actions in this plan are presented with defined timelines, proposed steps, and anticipated deliverables to support clarity and measurability, DMAP implementation will follow an **adaptive management approach**. Specific implementation details may evolve over time in response to changing conditions on the ground, emergent priorities, shifts in visitor behavior, resource conditions, and community needs, among other reasons. In some cases, actions may be sequenced differently, postponed, rescoped, or refined to reflect new information, while maintaining alignment with the plan's core intent and intended outcomes.

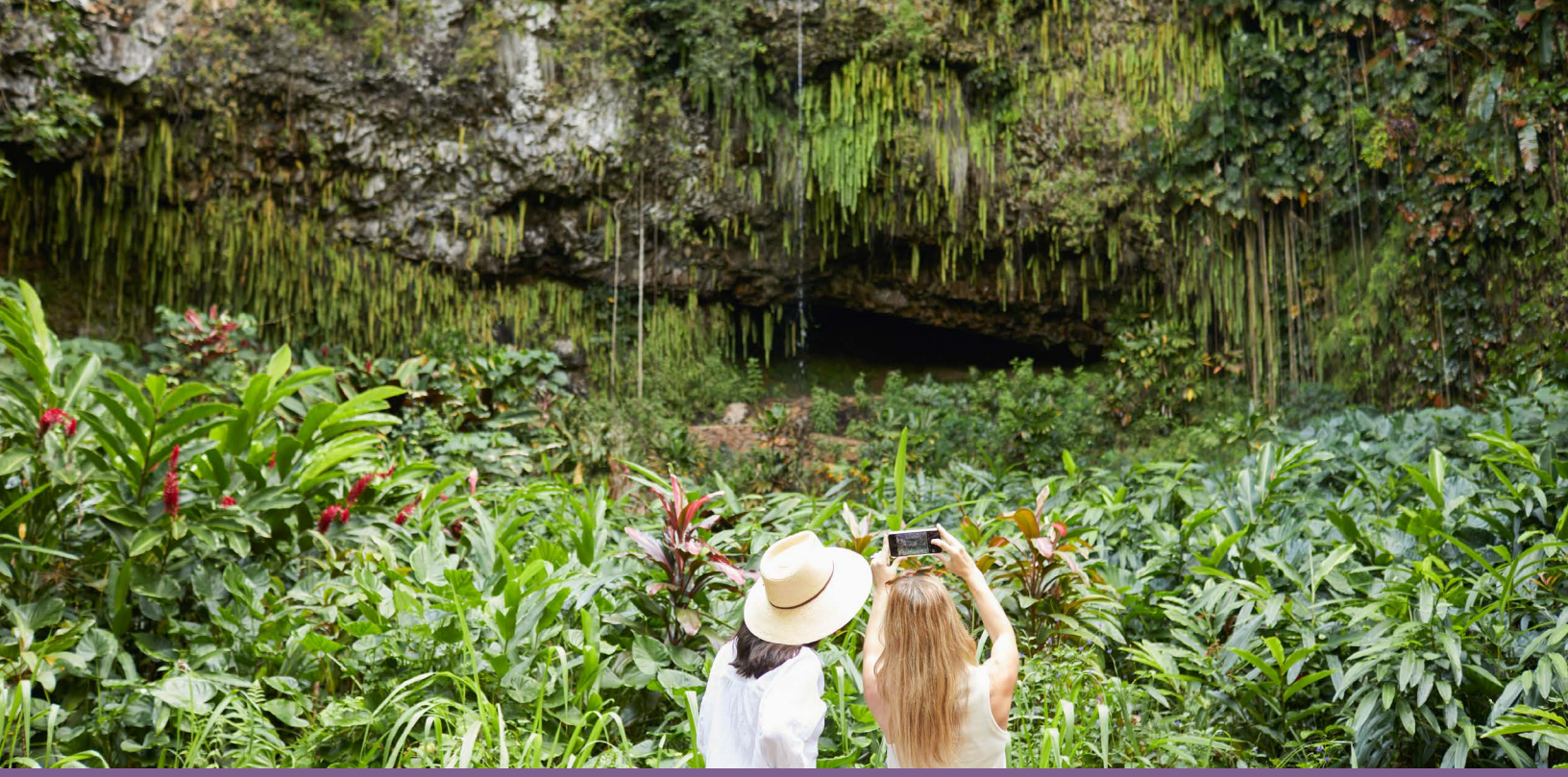
As destination management is a "collaborative and coordinated process with public, private, and community stakeholders," as defined by Chapter 201B-3(a)(14), Hawai'i Revised Statutes, implementation is shaped by factors beyond any single entity's direct authority. These include funding availability, procurement outcomes, partner capacity, regulatory processes, and interagency coordination, among others. While leads and action partners were identified during plan development and commitment provisionally secured, implementation of several actions is contingent on partner participation and readiness, available funding, and legislative appropriations. Any material changes to action steps, timelines, or deliverables will be documented and communicated through ongoing reporting and engagement to ensure transparency.

Although actions included in this plan represent priority initiatives identified for advancement within the DMAP planning period, they do not represent the full spectrum of destination management activity occurring or needed on Kaua'i. Consistent with the statutory definition of *destination management*, community-based stewardship, hosting, education, safety guidance, and place-based management efforts are understood to be **core components of destination management**, whether implemented through DMAP actions or other public, private, or philanthropic pathways. Initiatives that advance the intent of the Kaua'i management strategies (Section 4) and the statewide destination management framework (Section 1) may be considered aligned with destination management goals regardless of funding source or implementing entity. Communities, agencies, the visitor industry, and other partners are encouraged to reference and draw from this DMAP when advancing actions aligned with these strategies, priorities, and outcomes.

Finally, some suggestions raised throughout the DMAP process did *not* advance as **actions** and were instead organized into two additional categories:

- **Additional Opportunities Identified Through Stakeholder Engagement:** ideas raised by stakeholders that could advance destination management but fall outside the specific actions included in this DMAP. These may include recommendations for action by other agencies, potential pathways for future HTA consideration, or broader policy requests that could influence destination management outcomes. Select recommendations are included in **Appendix C** of this plan, while a full listing of opportunities is available on the HTA website.
- **Infeasible or Out-of-Scope:** ideas that proved impractical, outside legal authority, or otherwise unworkable within this DMAP cycle. These are not included in the plan.

Collectively, the actions and positions outlined in this document seek to advance **destination management** on Kaua'i in ways that support harmony, stewardship, regeneration, and collaboration.



03. TOURISM & DESTINATION MANAGEMENT ON KAUAʻI

Before turning to the strategies and actions of this plan, it is important to understand the conditions related to tourism that shape daily life on Kauaʻi today. Over the course of the DMAP development process, residents, industry partners, and agency staff shared observations about the island's current pressures and capacities: insights echoed in and expanded by State and County data. Taken together, they offer a grounded picture of the **situation** in which destination management will operate during this DMAP cycle.

That picture reveals an island whose success as a visitor destination has brought both opportunity and strain. Tourism remains the backbone of the island's economy, supporting roughly 40% of jobs and visitor spending contributing $2.79 billion in 2024 (*2024 Annual Visitor Research Report, Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism – DBEDT*). At the same time, growth of the tourism sector has increased pressure on infrastructure, public services, and daily life. Visitor arrivals have grown nearly 40% since the early 2000s, leading to an average of one visitor for every three residents as of 2024 (*2024 Annual Visitor Research Report, DBEDT*). More than 70% of residents report feeling that the island is managed primarily for the benefit of visitors rather than locals, reflecting a disconnect between economic dependence and community well-being (*Spring 2024 Resident Sentiment Survey, DBEDT*).

The following sections capture some of the island-wide conditions affecting destination management on Kauaʻi today. They draw on quantitative indicators, stakeholder input, and analytical tools used during planning to understand where demand concentrates and when strain peaks. What emerges is a snapshot of Kauaʻi's present moment: the patterns of movement, economic realities, management challenges, and community sentiment that inform the work, strategies, and actions ahead.

KEY ISLAND-WIDE CONDITIONS

CONGESTION AND VISITOR VOLUME

- On an average day, nearly 30,000 visitors are on-island, which is equivalent to about one visitor for every three residents. No other island in the state has a higher visitor to resident ratio (*2024 Annual Visitor Research Report, DBEDT*).
- **During DMAP engagement meetings:**
  - Industry leaders reported that **social media** continues to amplify demand for "must-see" spots, often drawing visitors to fragile or unsafe areas and, at times, encouraging inappropriate, unsafe, and disrespectful behaviors.
  - Residents and visitor industry participants described **traffic** as an everyday reminder of the island's limited infrastructure. Traffic congestion can be equally discouraging for visitors, who come seeking tranquility only to encounter long lines and crowded sites.
  - Some residents described not just physical crowding of sites and roadways, but a growing sense of **displacement and grief** at the loss of their home and beloved places.
  - Residents noted that unmanaged roadside stopping creates cascading congestion and safety risks, as one stopped car often triggers many others to pull over in unsafe areas.

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

- The island's strong appeal translates into **high levels of visitor spending**, however much of this is concentrated in accommodations and lodging. In 2024, average hotel rates were over $400 per night, well above the statewide average. The average hotel lodging rate on Kaua'i is nearly 50% higher than it was in 2019 at $282 per night (*2024 and 2019 Annual Visitor Research Reports, DBEDT*).
- During DMAP engagements, industry representatives noted that despite strong travel demand, **workforce shortages and housing costs** continue to strain local businesses and service quality, affecting both resident well-being and visitor experience.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- According to the Pacific Business News *Book of Lists*, Kaua'i has relatively **few commercial attractions** able to accommodate large visitor volumes. Most travelers explore independently by rental car, visiting beaches, parks, and scenic lookouts that were not designed for high volumes.
- **During DMAP engagement meetings:**
  - Stakeholders described parking shortages at high-use areas such as Hā'ena Beach Park, and Wailua Falls, where lots can overflow and roadside parking creates safety hazards.
  - Residents and industry partners noted that many trails, lookouts, and park facilities were designed and constructed for significantly smaller visitor numbers, leading to a mismatch between the current use and available infrastructure. In some cases, a lack of infrastructure investment was seen as a deliberate strategic decision, with concerns that "if we build it, they will come."

MANAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES & ISSUES

- **Fragmented land ownership** and overlapping jurisdiction among agencies at high-demand sites can complicate management. These divisions make it difficult to sustain consistent maintenance, parking enforcement, or cultural resource protection.
- **Kaua'i is a leader in community-led, place-based site management**. The recent success of the Hā'ena State Park community-led management initiative (cited by residents across the state in the DMAP stakeholder engagement process) shows that agency-community collaboration, managed access, and local stewardship can protect resources while improving safety and visitor behavior when communities are properly organized, resourced, and agency supported.
- In DMAP engagements, stakeholders described a need for **better coordination** among State, County, and industry partners to pool capacity, funding, and information. They further noted that inconsistent enforcement of rules undermines even well-designed regulations, issuing calls for more visible, coordinated presence by agencies on the ground.

RESIDENT SENTIMENT REGARDING TOURISM

- DBEDT's *Spring 2024 Resident Sentiment Survey* shows that over 70% of Kaua'i residents believe that the island is run for the benefit of tourists rather than locals (statewide average: 67%). However, Kaua'i residents are also more likely to hold the view that tourism has been "mostly positive" for them and their family than the statewide average (Kaua'i: 46%; State: 40%).
- Resident perspectives on tourism surfaced in DMAP engagements were mixed: a blend of **pride** in sharing Kaua'i's beauty, people and culture with visitors and **fatigue** from years of inadequate management. Many acknowledged tourism's economic value but described living with daily life impacts as exhausting, marked by traffic, crowding, and limited enforcement of poor behavior.
- Residents who participated in DMAP stakeholder engagements spoke of ***"living around tourism,"*** avoiding visitor corridors or once-quiet beaches and trails that have grown crowded and unsafe.
- A recurring concern expressed during DMAP engagement was that many **visitors arrive without understanding** local norms or their own *kuleana* (responsibility) as guests. Education was seen as key to fostering mutual respect between residents, visitors, and *'āina* (land).
- Despite fatigue, **most residents who expressed their views during public engagement for the DMAP did not express outright rejection of tourism**. Instead, they want it better managed with care, consistency, and presence – in greater harmony with community well-being and Kaua'i's pace of life. The DMAP process offers actions and tools for the pursuit of this: a willingness to partner, matched with a clear expectation that tourism can operate with and for the community it touches.

KAUAʻI SWOT ANALYSIS

The SWOT analysis below summarizes the strengths and weaknesses of Kauaʻi as a destination, alongside opportunities to strengthen management and threats to effective stewardship. It was used as a planning tool to inform priorities and actions, rather than as a comprehensive assessment of all conditions impacting destination management.

STRENGTHS

- Hawaiian culture, natural beauty, and mild year-round climate
- Strong community identity, aloha spirit
- Consistently high visitor satisfaction
- Well-established reputation as "Hawaiʻi's Garden Island"
- Proven success in community-led site management (e.g., Hāʻena)
- Rich artistic, cultural, and environmental assets that define distinctive, place-based visitor experiences
- High environmental and cultural consciousness among residents

OPPORTUNITIES

- Shuttle and mobility hubs
- Reservations and managed-access systems for parks and attractions
- Certification and permitting standards for tour operators
- Visitor education and marketing that emphasize respect and higher-value travel
- Strengthen visitor spending with local vendors, artisans, and cultural enterprises
- Proactive social media engagement to address unsafe or disrespectful behavior
- Interagency collaboration and resourcing
- State and County park systems offer opportunities for expanded co-management through public–private partnerships
- Additional funding for environmental projects generated through the new "Green Fee"

WEAKNESSES

- Infrastructure strain; roads, parking, and facilities unable to meet visitor demand
- Persistent traffic congestion undermines both visitor and resident experience
- Inconsistent enforcement and limited agency presence weaken management effectiveness
- Few sites or experiences equipped to accommodate high visitor volume
- Workforce shortages and high housing costs affect service quality and availability, as well as community well-being
- Low resident trust due to years of limited transparency, ineffective management, and weak coordination
- Large State Park areas are maintained and managed by limited staff

THREATS

- Economic downturns reducing visitor arrivals
- Rescues and safety incidents involving visitors
- Lack of visible progress may sustain negative resident sentiment
- Reduced funding for arts, cultural, and community programs
- Climate change, natural disasters, and other global disruptions
- Outmigration of residents diminishing cultural vitality and workforce capacity
- Social-media exposure may create new hotspots faster than management responses can adapt
- Increasing percentage of visitor expenditures spent on accommodations, reducing economic benefit to local small businesses



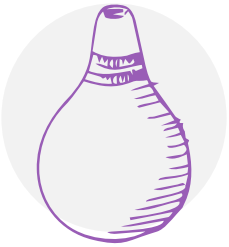
04. MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR KAUAʻI 2026 - 2028

Rooted in extensive stakeholder engagement on Kauaʻi, this plan advances three interrelated strategies for **destination management** on the island over the next three years:

1. Prepare Visitors Through Values-Based Education
2. Improve Visitor Movement by Car and by Foot
3. Strengthen Partnership and Shared Stewardship

Community, agency, and industry stakeholders who engaged in the DMAP process, as well as Advisory Group members, were prompted to identify **problems, issues,** or **needs** related to tourism-related strain in their communities as a component of DMAP outreach. In some cases, they proposed **specific ideas for action** that informed or complemented those observations and concerns.

Evaluating these stakeholder contributions for common themes led directly to the destination management strategies that follow, which in turn anchor the actions throughout this plan.



STRATEGY 1:
PREPARE VISITORS THROUGH VALUES-BASED EDUCATION

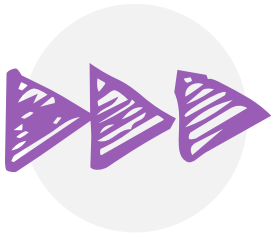
Helping visitors understand Kaua‘i’s safety practices and cultural values through consistent, place-rooted guidance.

Objective: Increase visitor understanding of local values, safety practices, and place-based knowledge through more consistent, layered education that fosters respectful behavior and care for place.

Community, industry, and agency representatives across Kaua‘i identified education as one of the most important ways to strengthen destination management. Many residents believe most visitors want to be respectful but may not know *how*. Education helps connect behavior to local values: showing how safety, cultural awareness, care for others, and care for nature are all part of a reciprocal aloha. When done well, education prevents issues before they occur; when necessary, enforcement reinforces this through material consequences. Stakeholders called for regular, multimedia education grounded in local *‘ike* (knowledge), informed by community, cultural practitioners, and others with deep *pilina* (relationships) to places, people, and communities that visitors encounter. By reaching visitors at multiple touchpoints, this approach guides more respectful behavior through repetition and example, enhancing the visitor experience by connecting travelers more intentionally to place.

Select Associated Actions:

- **Island-wide:** Values-Based Visitor Orientation in Short-Term Rentals (*Action IW-3*)
- **Kapa‘a & Wailua:** Coconut Marketplace-Based Kaua‘i Visitor Information Booth (*KWC-1*)
- **Kōke‘e & Waimea Canyon:** Trail Stewardship & Safety Signage Pilot (*KKW-2*)



STRATEGY 2:
IMPROVE VISITOR MOVEMENT BY CAR AND BY FOOT

Improving how visitors move through Kaua‘i by strengthening access, wayfinding, and safety systems that reduce strain on roads, parking, and trails.

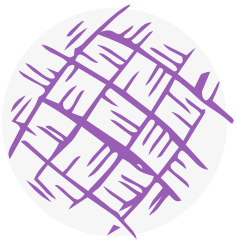
Objective: Improve how visitors move through Kaua‘i by enhancing access, safety, and wayfinding systems to encourage responsible behavior and reduce strain on roadways, parking, neighborhoods, and trails.

Stakeholders emphasized that caring for the island means managing how people move through and access it. Concerns about traffic, limited parking, and unsafe behavior on roads and trails pointed to the need for more coordinated planning and communication to alleviate overcrowding and overtaxing of sites and transportation infrastructure, improving resident quality of life alongside visitor experience and safety. With nearly all travel

funneled through a single circular highway network, these challenges affect everyone who lives on or visits Kauaʻi. This plan advances collaborative efforts among Department of Transportation (DOT), Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), the County, and industry partners to improve access, reduce congestion, and create a safer, more respectful experience of movement across the island.

Select Associated Actions:

- **Kōkeʻe & Waimea Canyon**: Visitor Access & Shuttle Feasibility Study (*KKW-3*)
- **Hoʻopiʻi Falls**: Site-Based Data Collection to Inform Long-Term Management (*HP-3*)
- **Island-wide**: Visitor Road Safety & Courtesy Campaign (*IW-2*)



STRATEGY 3:
STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIP AND SHARED STEWARDSHIP

Aligning partners through clearer communication, coordination, and shared kuleana in managing the visitor experience.

Objective: Strengthen collaboration and communication among community, industry, and government partners to align decisions, increase transparency, and advance destination stewardship of Kauaʻi.

Participants emphasized that meaningful progress in tourism management depends on stronger, more accountable partnerships: collaboration that unites community, government, and industry around shared stewardship of the island's visitor experience. Stakeholders described how progress can stall when roles, authority, and follow-through are unclear or fragmented across agencies, and stressed the importance of regular communication, role clarity, and consistency in how management responsibilities are carried out.

This strategy advances that vision through "a collaborative and coordinated process," consistent with Chapter 201B-3(a)(14), Hawaiʻi Revised Statutes, among the Hawaiʻi Tourism Authority (HTA), County of Kauaʻi, Department of Land & Natural Resources (DLNR), Hawaiʻi Department of Transportation (HDOT), an on-island destination marketing organization (DMO), and other government and private partners. It emphasizes aligning education, safety, and site management efforts while reinforcing clear *kuleana* (responsibility) and accountability for core management functions, so that shared stewardship initiatives support, rather than replace, agency responsibilities. Further, it prioritizes substantive collaboration with cultural practitioners, lineal descendants, community members, and ʻāina-based organizations with longstanding stewardship relationships to place. The strategy also strengthens pathways for residents to remain informed and engaged in how decisions are made and implemented.

Select Associated Actions:

- **Hoʻopiʻi Falls:** Long-Term Access, Circulation & Stewardship Decisions (*HP-1*)
- **Island-wide:** Resident Engagement in Ongoing Management & DMAP Dialogue (*IW-5*)
- **Kōkeʻe & Waimea Canyon:** Highway Safety & Access Management Framework (*KKW-4*)



05. SITES UNDER STRAIN: DESTINATION MANAGEMENT IN FOCUS

Tourism-related strain on Kauaʻi is experienced most tangibly in specific places: along roadways, in bays, at beaches, and in other areas where visitors, residents, and natural resources interact every day. These are the settings where Kauaʻi's destination management strategies can have the greatest and most immediate impact when translated into **concrete action**.

With that in mind, this DMAP is intentionally centered on the locations where tourism-related pressures are most evident. These **sites under strain** – the roads, beaches, valleys, trails, and corridors repeatedly cited as places of concern during stakeholder engagement – are places where tourism-related activity intersects with natural, cultural, or community resources, creating or intensifying impacts that diminish resident quality of life, the visitor experience, and the overall health of our natural resources. *Strain*, as defined in this plan, may arise from the scale or behavior of visitation, or from visitation occurring in places that are unsafe, culturally inappropriate, environmentally sensitive, or otherwise restricted from public access.

Within this broader set of sites, the plan identifies a smaller number of **hotspots**. Hotspots represent **the most acute subset of sites under strain**: locations where tourism-related pressure is concentrated, multifaceted, and persistent; and where the need for coordinated, site-specific management is most apparent. By distinguishing hotspots from other sites under strain, the plan identifies where targeted actions are prioritized, versus where ongoing coordination, monitoring, or broader initiatives are more appropriate.

This approach builds on the 2021–2023 DMAPs, which identified named hotspots through a review of community input, agency feedback, partner consultation, and implementation-phase evaluation, but did not include the comprehensive process used to select those sites in the final plan. This plan strengthens that foundation by outlining a clear, collaborative framework for **identifying, prioritizing, and advancing action** at sites where tourism-related pressures are concentrated, placing site-specific management at the forefront of the DMAP and strengthening coordination among public, private, and community partners to sustain resident well-being, the visitor experience, and the health of Hawaiʻi's natural, cultural, and infrastructural resources.

HOW SITES UNDER STRAIN WERE IDENTIFIED AND EVALUATED

Input on potential sites came from multiple types of stakeholder engagement. **Community participants** shared input on a wide range of locations where they observed tourism-related strain throughout different quadrants of the island (North, South, East, West). Responses reflected where the impacts of tourism are experienced locally and provided the foundation for identifying areas of concern.

As part of their charge, **Advisory Group members** were explicitly asked to identify hotspots using a shared definition: *places where impacts from visitors or the visitor industry significantly contribute to pressure on natural, cultural, or community resources*. Potential sites were also informed by HTA recommendations.

From this combined input, the planning team compiled a list of potential hotspots and evaluated each using **thirteen** (**13**) shared criteria, grouped into three (3) categories:

1. Where tourism-related strain is occurring,
2. How serious or consequential that strain is, and
3. How feasible it is for HTA and its partners to act within the scope of the DMAP.

Each location was assessed using a combination of quantitative and qualitative inputs, including Advisory Group review, the frequency and intensity of stakeholder comments, and other available data and analysis. Feasibility was assessed separately through HTA and agency input, considering jurisdiction, resources, and alignment with the DMAP's scope.

A color scale was then applied to show both **strain** and **feasibility** ratings for each site. These scales move in opposite directions: **high strain** (**red**) indicates greater pressure and concern, while **high feasibility** (**green**) indicates a stronger ability to act through collaborative, coordinated management.

COLOR SCALE

COLOR	IDENTIFICATION/COMPOUNDING FACTOR	FEASIBILITY
	Very high: Severe conditions, risks, or vulnerabilities clearly present and widely evident	**Very low:** Limited ability for HTA or partners to act within current scope or resources
	High: Notable and recurring conditions requiring coordinated management attention	**Low**: Some capacity for action, but significant barriers remain
	Moderate: Emerging or situational conditions manageable with targeted effort	**Moderate**: Feasible with coordination or additional resources
	Low: Minimal pressures or sensitivities at present	**High**: Clarity of solution; authority, partners, and resources available for action
	Not applicable or insufficient information	Not applicable or insufficient information

HOW PRIORITY HOTSPOTS AND SITES FOR THIS DMAP WERE DETERMINED

Following the evaluation to identify sites under strain, those sites that showed significant levels of **Tier 1 and Tier 2 criteria rated red** (**very high strain**) **or orange** (**high strain**) were classified as **hotspots**. Sites exhibiting some strain but which did not reach those thresholds remained "sites under strain" for purposes of this document. These areas reflect real and ongoing pressures or community concerns but were not elevated to hotspot status for this DMAP cycle based on relative severity and implementation feasibility.

The Kauaʻi Advisory Group, in consultation with HTA, selected **priority hotspots and sites of strain** for focused DMAP action during the 2026–2028 DMAP cycle. A limited number of priority sites were chosen to ensure that limited available resources (e.g., staffing, funding, and partnerships) could be applied effectively and efficiently; and that included actions could be sequenced based on feasibility and readiness, allowing each action to achieve measurable results within the DMAP implementation period. The identification of priority sites and development of associated actions reflects this sequencing approach and is not intended to limit other agencies, organizations, or communities from advancing management actions aligned with DMAP outcomes at other sites under strain, nor to foreclose consideration of site-specific actions for other locations in future DMAP cycles.

While several sites under strain are not addressed through site-specific actions in this DMAP due to resource and sequencing considerations, they were considered in constructing **broader destination-wide management actions** presented later in this document. These actions are designed to shape visitor movement, knowledge, expectations, and coordination across the island, thereby improving conditions at all sites under strain through changes in visitor behavior, distribution, and management practices broadly.

Communities, agencies, industry, and other partners are encouraged to continue organizing, coordinating, and advancing place-based efforts aligned with included DMAP strategies, priorities, and outcomes, regardless of whether a site is named for focused action in this cycle. All DMAP-identified sites under strain are indexed at the end of this section and will continue to be monitored by HTA in collaboration with partners for changes in conditions, feasibility, and partnership readiness that may adjust their designation as hotspots or sites under strain. Hotspot identification and site-specific DMAP action are part of a repeatable, island-wide destination management approach that will evolve over time, with additional sites considered in future DMAP cycles as readiness and capacity align.

CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFYING AND PRIORITIZING HOTSPOTS

CATEGORY 1 - Identification

"Is this site under strain related to tourism?"

CRITERION	DEFINITION / FOCUS
Access Infrastructure & Arrival Pressure	Strain created by how people **reach** the site. Reflects whether approach routes and arrival infrastructure (e.g., road capacity, parking, trailheads, marine landings, neighborhood adjacencies) are overwhelmed, unmanaged, unsafe, or reliant on informal / illegal access points.
On-Site Capacity & Crowd Pressure	Strain created by what happens once people are **at** the site. Reflects whether conditions within the area (e.g., trails, lookouts, beaches, pools, facilities) are overcrowded or exceed what on-site infrastructure and management can safely or sustainably support.
Community Strain & Resident Impact	Degree to which visitation disrupts surrounding communities through noise, trespass, blocked driveways, neighborhood congestion, or interference with local use.
Site Degradation & Maintenance Stress	Observable environmental, cultural, or infrastructural wear and tear (or escalating maintenance burden) linked to visitation (e.g., erosion, litter, vandalism, or declining water quality).

CATEGORY 2 - Context & Compounding Factors

"How serious or consequential is that strain?"

CRITERION	DEFINITION / FOCUS
Cultural Sensitivity	Presence of sacred, historic, or community-valued cultural sites or practices vulnerable to visitation impact.
Environmental Sensitivity	Ecological fragility or biodiversity importance that heightens the consequence of overuse.
Safety & Risk	Degree of danger to visitors, responders, or nearby residents based on incident history or inherent hazards such as cliffs, flash floods, surf, or traffic conflicts.
Visibility & Promotion	Level of amplification through social media, influencers, or commercial marketing that fuels visitation.
Local Economic Benefit & Reciprocity	Extent to which visitation can generate tangible community benefit (e.g., jobs, local commerce, stewardship funding). High strain with low benefit indicates higher priority for intervention.

CATEGORY 3 - Feasibility & Viability

"Can HTA and its partners realistically act within the mandate of the DMAP?"

CRITERION	DEFINITION / FOCUS
Jurisdictional Clarity & Legality of Access	How clear and actionable the site's ownership, access rights, and management responsibilities are for HTA and its immediate DMAP partners. Ambiguity or contested access reduces feasibility.
Cost & Resource Demand	Financial and staffing requirements relative to what HTA and its partners can plausibly support or co-fund within the plan period.
Implementation Timeline & Complexity	Realistic timeframe and administrative lift for DMAP-aligned action, considering permitting, coordination, and policy processes within the DMAP window of FY 2027 – FY 2029.
DMAP Alignment & Partnership Leverage	Extent to which effective action falls within HTA's mandate or can be catalyzed through formal collaboration mechanisms. Sites requiring action entirely outside HTA's role score lower.

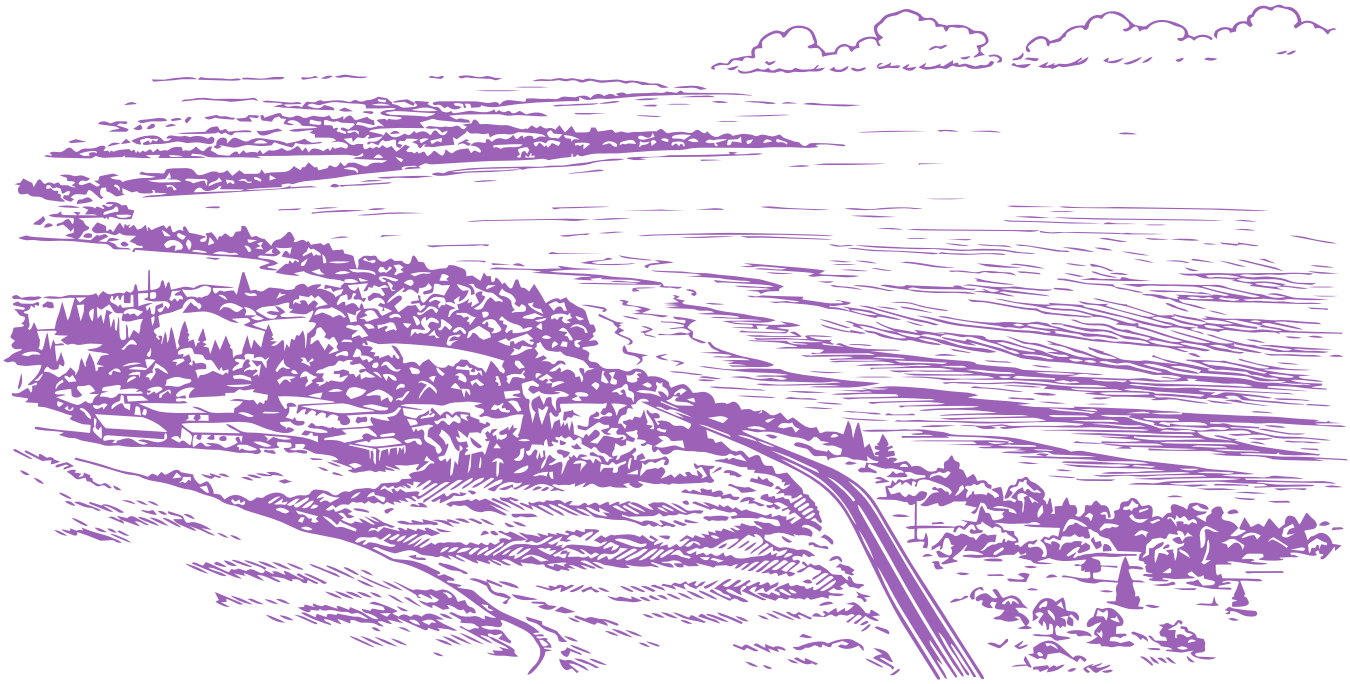
HOTSPOT:

KAPAʻA-WAILUA CORRIDOR

LOCATION: KAPAʻA, PUNA, KAUAʻI

The **Kapaʻa–Wailua** corridor is East Kauaʻi's most heavily trafficked stretch of roadway, a coastal route that carries residents, workers, and visitors alike along Kūhiō Highway and the Ke Ala Hele Mākālae path. The same scenic coastline that attracts travelers also funnels nearly all local movement through a narrow corridor where congestion, limited parking, and unclear wayfinding routinely test patience and safety. As one community member observed, "Everyone uses that road; there's no other way." These shared experiences speak to a broad sense of strain, where mobility challenges have become a daily indication of how closely tourism and community life are intertwined.

Several mobility investments are already underway. In addition to the widening of the southbound lane of Kūhiō Highway from Wailua River to Hanamāʻulu, the upgrade of Wailua River Bridge, and plans for intersection improvements to connect the southern end of the Kapaʻa Bypass and Papaloa Rd, the County-supported **East Kauaʻi Mobility Hub** (**EKMH**) **at Coconut Marketplace** Project now led by Makaiwa Initiative aims to get rental cars off the road and reimagine how visitors move through East Kauaʻi, creating a safer, more connected, and less car-dependent corridor that better serves both residents and visitors with a shuttle system and on-site car rental. HTA contributed funding toward the initial feasibility study for the EKMH where solutions aligned with the 2021-2023 Kauaʻi DMAP, advancing actions to expand visitor mobility options and explore shuttle systems linking major destinations.



The EKMH Project is part of a broader effort supported by the County of Kauaʻi to develop an island-wide mobility system, consisting of several phases, two of which have already been established:

- **Phase I:** The Hanalei Initiative established shuttle service between Hanalei and Hāʻena to address acute congestion and parking pressure at Hāʻena State Park with support from the State of Hawaiʻi and the County of Kauaʻi,
- **Phase II:** The Hanalei Initiative expanded shuttle connections between Hanalei and Princeville,
- **Phase III** centers on the East Kauaʻi Mobility Hub at Coconut Marketplace (EKMH) as a key East Kauaʻi node,
- **Phase IV** will connect EKMH through Kapaʻa,
- **Phase V** will connect eastern mobility upgrades to the northern mobility upgrades.
- *Additional phases will focus on the southern and western parts of the island.*

Through coordinated work between public, private, and nonprofit entities, the following actions seek to advance destination management priorities in the Kapaʻa–Wailua corridor that were raised by stakeholders during DMAP engagement:

1. **Reduction of traffic congestion and vehicle pressure**, particularly along Kūhiō Highway where residents, workers, and visitors share a single constrained corridor
2. **Clear, intuitive wayfinding for parking and movement**, helping individuals understand where to park, how to access shared-use paths, and how to move safely through the area
3. **Improved safety and predictability of movement**, including safer pedestrian crossings, and clearer transitions between driving, walking, biking, and shuttle use
4. **Protection of cultural resources, *wahi pana* (storied places), and community spaces**, especially along the shoreline, roadway, and shared-use path(s)
5. **Advancement of an islandwide mobility solution**, supporting phased implementation of an island-wide shuttle and mobility-hub network that reduces reliance on cars rather than shifting trips from one area to another
6. **Stronger visitor preparation and informed decision-making**, ensuring visitors encounter consistent, values-based orientation and messaging about transportation options, expectations, and pace of life before traveling through East Kauaʻi

Other community-led, agency-led, or otherwise funded efforts that advance these priorities may be considered aligned with destination management outcomes for the Kapaʻa–Wailua corridor.

HOTSPOT INDICATORS

OVERALL PRIORITY

IDENTIFICATION

- Access Infrastructure & Arrival Pressure
- On-Site Capacity & Crowd Pressure

CONTEXT & COMPOUNDING FACTORS

- Community Strain & Resident Impact
- Site Degradation & Maintenance Stress
- Cultural Sensitivity
- Environmental Sensitivity

FEASIBILITY & VIABILITY

- Safety & Risk
- Visibility & Promotion
- Local Economic Benefit & Reciprocity
- Jurisdictional Clarity & Legality of Access
- Cost & Resource Demand
- Implementation Timeline & Complexity
- DMAP Alignment & Partnership Leverage

SITE SWOT

STRENGTHS

- Iconic coastal setting and scenic ocean views
- Established Ke Ala Hele Mākālae multi-use path as an alternative method for moving through the corridor
- Resident pride and stewardship commitment
- Active businesses and visitor industry network support community well-being
- Existing momentum and collaboration for the East Kaua'i Mobility Hub (EKMH)

OPPORTUNITIES

- Align community input with CMMH implementation
- Establish mobility hub and information center as model for visitor education and managed movement
- Strengthen tour and shuttle coordination practices to reduce road congestion from rental cars
- Expand wayfinding signage for pedestrians
- Resident and visitor frustration with congestion creates momentum for change in the area
- Complete the Ke Ala Hale Mākālae extension to Līhu'e
- Intersection improvements to busy corridor areas

WEAKNESSES

- Chronic congestion along Kūhiō Highway
- Limited safe pedestrian connectivity/crossings
- Inconsistent visitor wayfinding and parking
- Significant strain on community quality of life
- Limited frequency and coverage of mass transit
- High concentration of resident population and STVR (short-term vacation rental) units in the area
- Limited resident recreation spaces

THREATS

- Continued growth in visitor vehicle volume
- Visitor disregard for or confusion about parking or road safety guidelines
- Erosion, flooding, and coastal infrastructure risks
- Potential expansion of hotel network contributing to increased congestion

VERY HIGH/VERY LOW | HIGH/LOW | MODERATE | LOW/HIGH | N/A

***PLEASE SEE COLOR SCALE ON PAGE 23 FOR HOTSPOT ANALYSIS**

MANAGEMENT ACTIONS, KAPAʻA & WAILUA CORRIDOR (KWC)

KWC-1: LAUNCH A COCONUT MARKETPLACE-BASED KAUAʻI VISITOR INFORMATION BOOTH

KWC-1

Management Strategy: Prepare Visitors Through Values-Based Education, Strengthen Partnership and Shared Stewardship

Goal: Establish and operate a staffed **Visitor Information Booth at Coconut Marketplace** that welcomes visitors and provides them with values-based orientation, safety and cultural guidance, and multi-modal travel information in a neutral, visitor-serving manner aligned with community priorities.

Justification: Feedback during the DMAP process underscored a need for visitor education and orientation that reflects community values, promotes safety and courtesy, and supports informed decision-making. The EKMH Plan also identifies the Marketplace as a site for an information center, being a high-traffic location where visitors will naturally pause throughout their trip.

Locating a staffed Visitor Information Booth within the Marketplace provides an opportunity to reach visitors early in their stay, offer guidance on multi-modal transportation options, and promote respectful interaction with Kauaʻi's places and communities. This action supports the development and initial operation of a public-serving information booth that functions as an orientation and stewardship resource distinct from a commercial concierge desk and can evolve toward long-term sustainability beyond the DMAP period.

Proposed lead: Makaiwa Initiative (non-profit leading EKMH project): *establishment, operations*

Projected partners:

- Hawaiʻi Tourism Authority (HTA): *procurement funding, coordination, oversight*
- Hanalei Initiative: *organizational oversight*
- Coconut Marketplace ownership and property manager: *space coordination, site logistics*
- County of Kauaʻi – Office of Economic Development (OED): *alignment with corridor initiatives*
- Hawaiʻi Department of Transportation (HDOT): *input on transportation and mobility information*
- Royal Coconut Coast Association (RCCA): *area business and multimodal transport coordination*
- On-island destination marketing organization (DMO): *collaboration, material coordination*
- Area cultural practitioners and ʻāina-based groups: *place-based, cultural, and interpretative information consultation and guidance*

Other project stakeholders:

- Community organizations and cultural practitioners: *input on values-based messaging and stewardship content*
- Visitor industry representatives (e.g., hotels, ground transportation, tours): *dissemination of materials, promotion of offerings*

Implementation framework:

PHASE	PROPOSED ACTION STEPS
FY 2027	**Makaiwa Initiative + partners and stakeholders:** • Conduct a focused inventory and gap assessment of existing Kaua'i visitor materials (print, digital) with attention to safety, stewardship, and multi-modal travel • Hire staff for direct operation or procure and contract a qualified organization to operate the Visitor Information Booth • Coordinate with EKMH partners and Marketplace ownership to confirm location, footprint, and launch timing • Develop a **Visitor Information Booth plan** that defines: ○ Core visitor services (orientation, safety guidance, transportation information) ○ Stewardship and values-based messaging approach, including the use of traditional knowledge, place names, and ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi ○ Neutral information standards ○ Prepare and install booth elements (e.g., displays, printed materials, digital assets) • Recruit and train staff to deliver consistent, values-aligned visitor guidance **HTA:** • Fund start-up and operating costs for the booth through DMAP, which may include: ○ Staffing and training ○ Rent or use fees ○ Utilities (e.g., Wi-Fi) ○ Design, fabrication, and installation of displays and education materials **Contracted operator + Makaiwa Initiative:** • Launch the Visitor Information Booth around Q3 FY 2027 (January-March) • Conduct an initial operational review to confirm readiness and effectiveness
FY 2028	**Makaiwa Initiative or contracted operator:** • Operate the Visitor Information Booth on a regular basis • Refine materials, messaging, and staffing practices based on observed visitor needs and partner input **Makaiwa Initiative + HTA:** • Continue funding operations through the DMAP while working with partners to explore long-term sustainability options, which may include: ○ Integration with broader EKMH operations ○ Cost-sharing or sponsorship models consistent with public-good principles ○ Transition of costs to non-DMAP funding sources

KWC-1

Makaiwa Initiative or contracted operator:

- Operate the Visitor Information Booth on a regular basis
- Refine materials, messaging, and staffing practices based on observed visitor needs and partner input

FY 2029

Makaiwa Initiative + HTA:

- Assess operational performance, visitor use, and funding pathways
- Identify options for continuing, modifying, or transitioning the Visitor Information Booth beyond the DMAP period while maintaining a public-serving, non-commercial role

Anticipated deliverables:

- Inventory and gap assessment of existing visitor information materials
- Procured contract for operation of the Visitor Information Booth
- Booth design and outfitting completed
- Staffing and training implemented, with regular staffing of the booth throughout DMAP period
- Visitor Information Booth launched around Q3 FY 2027
- Sustainability and transition considerations identified for post-DMAP operations

Intended outcomes:

- Visitors receive clear, values-based orientation and safety guidance at a high-traffic arrival point
- Improved visitor understanding of multi-modal transportation options and respectful behavior
- Visitor advice delivered from a neutral source promoting and informing about the entire destination
- Enhanced visitor experience with informed, welcoming, and stewardship-oriented engagement
- A durable foundation for a public-serving visitor information function beyond the DMAP period

KWC-2: DESIGN & INSTALL CORRIDOR STEWARDSHIP AND WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

KWC-2

Management Strategy: Prepare Visitors Through Values-Based Education, Improve Visitor Movement by Car and by Foot

Goal: Improve visitor navigation, parking behavior, and on-site conduct throughout the Kapa'a–Wailua corridor by implementing a coordinated system of wayfinding and stewardship signage that supports safe movement, cultural respect, and access to the shared-use path network.

Justification: EKMH Project planning identified a need for clear, consistent wayfinding to help visitors and residents understand how walking, biking, shuttle routes, and parking areas connect within the corridor. Community feedback during the DMAP process reinforced this need, citing regular visitor confusion, unsafe pedestrian behavior, and roadside stopping along the highway and at key access points.

At the same time, the corridor already contains a mix of directional, regulatory, cultural, and educational signs installed by different entities, resulting in inconsistent visuals and messaging. A coordinated approach that integrates **directional guidance, parking cues, and stewardship messaging**, including cultural and place-based context, can improve visitor and resident safety, reduce vehicle conflict, and support respectful visitor behavior and interactions with cultural sites without capital construction. This action supports initial implementation that can inform broader corridor alignment over time.

Proposed lead: Makaiwa Initiative (non-profit leading EKMH project): *coordination, implementation*

Projected partners:

- Hawaiʻi Tourism Authority (HTA): *funding and recruiting funding partners for design, fabrication, and installation of wayfinding and stewardship signage; visitor-use input*
- County of Kauaʻi – Office of Economic Development (OED): *project support, corridor integration*
- County of Kauaʻi – Public Works (DPW): *roadway context, safety coordination*
- Hawaiʻi Department of Transportation (HDOT), Highways: *state roadway interface, coordination*
- Royal Coconut Coast Association (RCCA): *area business and multimodal transport coordination*
- On-island destination marketing organization (DMO): *visitor-use perspective*
- Property owners and community stakeholders: *site-specific input, access coordination*
- Area cultural practitioners and *ʻāina*-based groups: *cultural and interpretative content review*

Implementation framework:

PHASE	PROPOSED ACTION STEPS
FY 2027	**Makaiwa Initiative + all partners:** • Review and inventory existing signage throughout the corridor (directional, regulatory, cultural/educational) to understand gaps, overlaps, and opportunities for alignment • Develop a **coordinated wayfinding and stewardship signage framework** that integrates: ◦ Directional wayfinding (paths, key destinations, distances or travel time) ◦ Parking guidance (directing visitors to appropriate off-highway or designated parking areas or lots) ◦ Stewardship and place-based messaging (appropriate behavior, cultural context, and respect for place) • Conduct targeted community and stakeholder input sessions to confirm place naming, cultural considerations, accessibility, priority locations, and information to be highlighted • Consult area cultural practitioners and *ʻāina*-based organizations to ensure any interpretive signage elements accurately reflect and safeguard the corridor's cultural landscape and place-based knowledge

FY 2027 *(CONT.)*	**HTA:** • Provide convening and coordination support, as needed, to assist with engagement of public and private landowners regarding signage placement and permissions • Fund wayfinding and stewardship signage design, fabrication, and installation through the DMAP; recruit funding partners as needed **Makaiwa Initiative + HTA:** • Work with landowners to secure permissions for initial signage installation • Identify priority locations for initial signage installation, such as: ○ Key highway access points to the shared-use path ○ Parking areas and transition points ○ Kukui heiau and other culturally significant sites where stewardship messaging for visitors is appropriate ○ Ke Ala Hele Makalae interface ○ Connections between Coconut Marketplace, Wailua, Waipouli, and Kapaʻa town • Coordinate fabrication and installation of an initial set of a**t least 25 integrated wayfinding, interpretation, and stewardship signs** across the corridor
FY 2028	**Makaiwa Initiative + all partners:** • Gather feedback from residents, businesses, and corridor users regarding clarity, safety, and effectiveness. Feedback will inform future signage installations. • Prepare a **corridor wayfinding and stewardship framework summary**, documenting: ○ Design principles and visual language ○ Iconography, typography, and messaging approach ○ Placement logic and lessons learned ○ Considerations for aligning or replacing existing signage over time • Expand signage installation to other priority locations as funding and coordination allow
FY 2029	**Makaiwa Initiative + all partners:** • Use the documented framework to support longer-term alignment of wayfinding and stewardship signage across the corridor • Advocate for future replacement or alignment of existing signage, as opportunities arise, to move toward a more consistent system.

Anticipated deliverables:

- Corridor-wide signage review completed
- Coordinated wayfinding and stewardship signage framework developed
- Public and private landowner permissions secured for initial installations
- HTA-funded design, fabrication, and installation of **at least 25 initial signs**
- Parking guidance and shared-use path access points clearly marked
- **Wayfinding, interpretation, and stewardship framework summary** documenting design process, standards, and placement strategy
- Adjustments made based on community and user feedback

Intended outcomes:

- Safer, more predictable movement along the Kapa'a–Wailua corridor
- Reduced roadside stopping, unsafe crossings, and navigation confusion
- Clearer direction to appropriate parking, paths, and access points
- Stronger integration of practitioner-vetted cultural and stewardship messaging into navigation
- Improved resident quality of life through reduced congestion and erratic visitor behavior

KWC-3: PROMOTE AND INTEGRATE THE EAST KAUA'I MOBILITY HUB AND ASSOCIATED MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

Management Strategy: Improve Visitor Movement by Car and by Foot, Strengthen Partnership and Shared Stewardship

Goal: Increase awareness and use of the East Kaua'i Mobility Hub at Coconut Marketplace and associated multi-modal transportation options by promoting them through visitor-facing channels and supporting integration with area accommodations, transportation providers, and on-site services.

Justification: EKMH is envisioned as a pilot node in a broader island-wide mobility system that includes airport and area shuttles, car share and satellite car rental, biking, walking, and other options. Over time, this approach is intended to support a network of connected hubs that reduce reliance on single-occupancy vehicles while improving visitor access and resident quality of life.

For the hub to launch and function most effectively, visitors will need **clear, consistent, and repeated exposure** to information about available mobility options across multiple points in their journey. This is best achieved through **active promotion alongside operational integration**. Destination-level marketing, on-site visibility, and visitor-facing materials help establish awareness and understanding, while coordination with accommodations, transportation providers, and experience operators enables practical use like shared pickup and transfer at the hub. Together, these efforts increase uptake, reduce dispersed vehicle trips, and support the hub's role in Kaua'i's evolving visitor mobility system.

Proposed lead: Makaiwa Initiative (non-profit leading EKMH project): *promotion and materials*

Projected partners:

- Hawaiʻi Tourism Authority (HTA): *industry engagement and dissemination*
- On-island destination marketing organization (DMO): *visitor-facing messaging; industry outreach*
- County of Kauaʻi – Office of Economic Development (OED): *alignment with corridor initiatives*
- Royal Coconut Coast Association (RCCA): *area business and multimodal transport coordination*
- Coconut Marketplace ownership and property management: *on-site coordination and visibility*
- Hawaiʻi Department of Transportation (HDOT) – Airports: *airport arrival promotion, coordination*
- Area accommodations and lodging providers: *operational integration, guest communications*
- Transportation, tour, and experience providers: *pickup, transfer, and shuttle-stop integration*

Implementation framework:

PHASE	PROPOSED ACTION STEPS
FY 2027	**Makaiwa Initiative + all partners:** • Develop a coordinated promotion and integration approach for the EKMH as a primary access and transfer point for multi-modal transportation options • Convene accommodations, transportation providers, and experience operators to: ◦ Discuss the hub and its services (airport and area shuttles, car share or satellite car rental, bikes, micromobility) ◦ Explore practical operational integration, such as shared pickup, transfer, or guest routing through the hub ◦ Explore marketing and pre-arrival integration for Kauaʻi visitors • Develop shared messaging, scripts, and basic promotional materials for use across visitor touchpoints (e.g., confirmation emails, arrival instructions, concierge guidance, on-site materials) • Create corresponding visitor-facing materials for the hub, including how the hub works, what services are available, and how visitors can use it during their stay • Fund and implement a focused, direct-to-consumer promotional campaign highlighting the EKMH and associated multi-modal options • Track simple indicators to understand reach and uptake, such as: ◦ Number of accommodations and providers integrating or promoting hub use ◦ Visitor awareness or usage indicators where available ◦ Shuttle ridership trends • Use findings to refine promotional approaches and integration strategies over time

FY 2028-FY 2029
(Ongoing)

Makaiwa Initiative + HTA:

- Continue coordination with industry partners as services evolve to reinforce consistent promotion and operational alignment
- **+ DMO:**
  - Further integrate EKMH messaging into visitor channels and industry communications
  - Support airport, accommodations, and other partners in maintaining consistent visitor guidance related to hub use
- Track simple indicators to understand reach and uptake, such as:
  - Number of accommodations and providers integrating or promoting hub use
  - Visitor awareness or usage indicators where available
  - Shuttle ridership trends
- Use findings to refine promotional approaches and integration strategies over time

Anticipated deliverables:

- Coordinated promotion, integration, and operational approach for the East Kaua'i Mobility Hub
- Outreach and coordination sessions with visitor industry partners
- Shared messaging toolkit and scripts for partner use
- Visitor-facing materials explaining hub services and use
- Direct-to-consumer promotional campaign implemented by mid FY 2027
- Simple evaluation summary documenting reach, uptake, and partner participation

Intended outcomes:

- Increased visitor awareness and use of the East Kaua'i Mobility Hub and associated mobility options
- Integration with airport and corridor accommodations promotion and operational messaging
- Greater consistency in how multi-modal transportation is presented across visitor touchpoints
- Reduced dispersed pickups and single-occupancy vehicle use in the Kapa'a–Wailua area
- Stronger alignment between visitor industry practices and community mobility goals
- A replicable approach for promoting and integrating future mobility hubs across Kaua'i

HOTSPOT:

HOʻOPIʻI FALLS

LOCATION: KAPAʻA, PUNA, KAUAʻI

Hoʻopiʻi Falls consists of two small waterfalls along Kapaʻa Stream. The roughly two-mile unmaintained "trail" to the falls begins down the road from the County's Kapahi Park and crosses portions of private and leased State property before descending toward the stream. Although access is not sanctioned or legal, the site is widely promoted on social media, drawing many visitors who park along narrow residential roads or at the nearby park and hike in seeking the upper and lower falls, often for photos or cliff-jumping. This increased attention has grown rapidly. In the 2021-2023 Kauaʻi DMAP, Hoʻopiʻi Falls was listed merely as an "area identified to be managed more intentionally," but was top of mind for residents, the Advisory Group, Kauaʻi legislators, and HTA staff for the current DMAP.

Unmanaged visitation has led to **safety incidents and mounting strain** on the surrounding community. Residents report traffic, litter, and trespassing, as well as a loss of place, visiting the site only at limited times to avoid crowds in an area once accessed primarily by local families. Some have placed *pōhaku* (stones) and tree stumps along the roadside to deter parking by their homes and protect their neighborhood. The combination of illegal access, safety risks, unclear jurisdiction, and resident taxation underscores the need for management intervention to address community concerns and restore balance at the site.



The actions that follow are designed as a deliberate, **community-first approach** to manage a site that social media has transformed from a "hidden gem" to an unsanctioned "attraction." Rather than presuming a single solution, this plan prioritizes actions that inform the shape and path of long-term access, circulation, and stewardship decisions. All actions seek to advance the following priorities for destination management at Hoʻopiʻi Falls:

1. **Safe and appropriate neighborhood access**, including parking behavior, traffic circulation, and reduction of trespass on private and leased lands
2. **Protection of the falls and surrounding natural areas**, with attention to erosion, unsafe use, and degradation linked to unmanaged visitation
3. **Visitor safety and informed access decisions**, particularly related to trail conditions, swimming hazards, and emergency limitations
4. **Stronger engagement with the primary drivers of visitation**, especially online, social media, and peer-to-peer recommendations that shape visitor behavior
5. **Clear, community-informed direction for long-term site management**, grounded in shared data, feasibility, and neighborhood priorities
6. **Improved coordination among agencies, landholders, and residents**, to clarify roles, responsibilities, and realistic management pathways

Other community-led, agency-led, or otherwise funded efforts that advance these priorities may be considered aligned with destination management outcomes for Hoʻopiʻi Falls and the surrounding area.

HOTSPOT INDICATORS

OVERALL PRIORITY

IDENTIFICATION

- Access Infrastructure & Arrival Pressure
- On-Site Capacity & Crowd Pressure

CONTEXT & COMPOUNDING FACTORS

- Community Strain & Resident Impact
- Site Degradation & Maintenance Stress
- Cultural Sensitivity
- Environmental Sensitivity

FEASIBILITY & VIABILITY

- Safety & Risk
- Visibility & Promotion
- Local Economic Benefit & Reciprocity
- Jurisdictional Clarity & Legality of Access
- Cost & Resource Demand
- Implementation Timeline & Complexity
- DMAP Alignment & Partnership Leverage

SITE SWOT

STRENGTHS

- Limited points of access allows for increased opportunities to control entry
- Strong community awareness and advocacy

OPPORTUNITIES

- Resident-only parking or access restrictions
- Community stewardship or monitoring program
- Targeted education and redirection to safer sites
- Assess closure or partially limited access to the site
- Revenue-generating management model for local community

WEAKNESSES

- Located within a residential neighborhood
- No designated parking or restrooms
- Unofficial access crosses private land illegally
- Narrow roads and chronic congestion
- No signage, enforcement, or lifeguard presence
- Occasional rescues and unsafe trail conditions
- Fragmented jurisdiction

THREATS

- Continued social media exposure driving visitation
- Growing resident–visitor tension
- Erosion and environmental degradation
- Liability and safety risks for landowners

VERY HIGH/VERY LOW | HIGH/LOW | MODERATE | LOW/HIGH | N/A

***PLEASE SEE COLOR SCALE ON PAGE 23 FOR HOTSPOT ANALYSIS**

MANAGEMENT ACTIONS, HOʻOPIʻI FALLS

HF-1: ADVANCE LONG-TERM ACCESS, CIRCULATION & STEWARDSHIP DECISIONS

HF-1



Management Strategy: Improve Visitor Movement by Car and by Foot, Strengthen Partnership and Shared Stewardship

Goal: Reach timely, community-informed determinations on long-term access, circulation, and stewardship pathways for Hoʻopiʻi Falls and the surrounding neighborhood, while clarifying roles, responsibilities, and next steps to advance management of the site.

Justification: Concerns about unsafe conditions, unmanaged visitation, and uncertainty around access at Hoʻopiʻi Falls arose frequently during engagement for this plan. These concerns are closely tied to how visitors move through the area: where they park, how they travel along neighborhood roads, and how Kapahi Park functions as both a community space and an informal access point. Residents emphasized that access decisions cannot be separated from traffic safety, parking behavior, and neighborhood livability.

At the same time, the site is shaped by fragmented land ownership, mixed public and private jurisdiction, informal access routes, and constrained roadway conditions. These factors mean that no single agency can address conditions at Hoʻopiʻi Falls in isolation, and that long-term management must consider **access, parking, circulation, and stewardship together as an integrated system**. This action establishes a focused, site-specific process to bring the relevant agencies, landholders, and community perspectives together to review available data, determine how the site should function over time, and decide what management approach(es) is feasible, lawful, and responsive to neighborhood realities.

Lead: Hawaiʻi Tourism Authority (HTA): *convener, facilitation, coordination*

Projected partners:

- County of Kauaʻi – Public Works (DPW), Roads Division: *roadway, traffic*
- County of Kauaʻi – Office of Economic Development (OED): *shuttle integration, resident benefit*
- County of Kauaʻi – Parks & Recreation (DOPR): *Kapahi Park jurisdiction*
- Landholders and lessees: *access permissions, constraints, coordination*
- Neighboring residents and lineal descendants: *perspectives and lived experience*

Implementation framework

PHASE	PROPOSED ACTION STEPS
FY 2027	**HTA:** • Convene partners to initiate focused, site-specific discussions regarding long-term access and stewardship at Hoʻopiʻi Falls • Support facilitation and coordination to ensure discussions are time-bound, decision-oriented, and grounded in legal, operational, and community realities **HTA + partners:** • Review existing conditions, including visitor access routes and informal entry points, parking behavior and roadway safety concerns, use of Kapahi Park, enforcement capacity, operational constraints, land ownership, and jurisdictional boundaries • Examine a defined set of long-term management approaches, such as limited entry or guided access models, managed or relocated parking, community-based stewardship, and partial or full closure scenarios • Identify preferred direction(s) and document feasibility, needs, constraints, and liability/insurance considerations if any form of access is sanctioned • Determine which entities would be responsible for advancing elements of the selected approach(es) and what approvals or processes are required for implementation • Conduct at least three (3) community engagement sessions focused on optional approaches
FY 2028–FY 2029 *(Ongoing)*	**County, State, and private partners** (**as applicable**)**:** Advance approved access, circulation, parking, or stewardship actions through internal processes and authorities **HTA:** • Align visitor-facing information and guidance to reflect agreed-upon access and circulation conditions • Coordinate messaging with related visitor education and promotion efforts to reinforce safe, respectful behavior

Anticipated deliverables:

- At least three community engagement sessions in FY 2027 to discuss management options
- Documented summary by end of 2027 with long-term access, circulation, and stewardship direction(s) and determinations outlined, including:
  - Viable management pathways considered and identified approaches
  - Identified roles, responsibilities, constraints, and decision points
  - How traffic, parking, and Kapahi Park are addressed within each option
  - Feasibility, liability, constraints, and authority considerations
- Clear articulation of next steps required to advance implementation through appropriate agencies

Intended outcomes:

- Clear, community-informed direction for how access, parking, and circulation should function
- Reduced neighborhood safety risks and uncertainty by addressing visitor movement as a system
- Stronger alignment among County, State, landholders, and HTA around management roles
- A durable foundation for stewardship approaches that protect resident well-being while addressing visitor behavior

HF-2: DESIGN & RUN A MEDIA MESSAGING CAMPAIGN ON SITE SAFETY & CAUTION



Management Strategy: Prepare Visitors Through Values-Based Education

Goal: Reduce unsafe or inappropriate promotion of Hoʻopiʻi Falls and align visitor-facing messaging across digital, print, and industry channels with community safety, access realities, and neighborhood respect.

Justification: Community and Advisory Group discussions identified social media and online travel content as key drivers in the shift of Hoʻopiʻi Falls from a quiet neighborhood site to a high-traffic visitor destination. Framing of the location as a "hidden waterfall" and incomplete or misleading information have contributed to trespassing, parking conflicts, unsafe navigation, and increased risk for visitors and residents alike.

These issues can be addressed with coordinated, proactive messaging to reach visitors where information is most commonly encountered: across social media platforms, mapping tools, print materials, and industry touchpoints. Aligning cautionary language, visuals, and guidance across these channels can help correct misinformation, discourage unsafe behavior, and redirect visitors toward more appropriate alternatives.

Lead: Hawaiʻi Tourism Authority (HTA): *convener, campaign development, implementation oversight*

Projected partners:

- On-island destination marketing organization (DMO): *content input, visitor channel distribution*
- Landholders and lessees: *access permissions, constraints, coordination*
- Visitor industry representatives (e.g., hotels, ground transportation, tours): *distribution, reinforcement at visitor touchpoints*
- Neighboring residents: *design and messaging input*

Implementation framework:

PHASE	PROPOSED ACTION STEPS
FY 2027	**HTA:** • Conduct a baseline review to document how the site is presented across major social media, mapping platforms, and print materials • Identify priority platforms and channels for outreach • Convene at least one collaborative session with community representatives, DMO, and visitor-industry partners to develop shared guidance on appropriate messaging, including what information about the site should and should not be promoted • Develop standardized caution language, visuals, and alternative-site guidance for use across digital, print, and industry channels **HTA + DMO + industry partners:** • Launch unified caution messaging through visitor-industry channels and distribute across **at least five** major digital, social, or travel platforms • Provide hotels and tour operators with briefing materials and alternative-site guidance to reinforce consistent visitor messaging with concierges and guides • **Integrate caution messaging into at least three printed outlets** (e.g., hotel maps, brochures, visitor magazines)
FY 2028–FY 2029 *(Ongoing)*	**HTA:** • Continue ongoing monitoring of broad digital, social-media, mapping, and travel platforms for references to Hoʻopiʻi Falls • Refresh or re-issue caution messaging and guidance as needed to address emerging trends, misinformation, or shifts in management and access conditions **DMO:** • Continue distribution of caution messaging through Kauaʻi-specific visitor channels • Conduct targeted outreach with local visitor-industry partners to reinforce consistent messaging • Support alignment of print and on-island visitor materials as conditions, access, or management approaches evolve

Anticipated deliverables:

- Baseline scan documenting major platforms and existing visibility and framing of Hoʻopiʻi Falls
- **At least one** collaborative session convened to establish shared messaging guidance
- Unified caution messaging package, including visuals, language, and alternative-site guidance
- Campaign launched across HTA channels and **at least five** social, mapping, or travel platforms
- Messaging integrated into **at least three** printed visitor outlets or reference materials
- Briefing materials created for visitor-industry partners

Intended outcomes:

- Reduced promotion of unsafe or misleading content that encourages inappropriate visitation
- Increased consistency in visitor-facing messaging across digital, print, and industry touchpoints
- Improved visitor understanding of safety risks, access limitations, and neighborhood sensitivities
- Safer visitor behavior and fewer incidents related to navigation, trespassing, and trail hazards
- Stronger coordination between community, HTA, and the industry on responsible communication

HF-3: CONDUCT SITE-BASED DATA COLLECTION TO INFORM LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT

Management Strategy: Improve Visitor Movement by Car and by Foot

Goal: Establish a time-limited, site-based data collection pilot to better document and understand visitation patterns, access conditions, and use dynamics at Hoʻopiʻi Falls in order to inform long-term access and stewardship decisions.

Justification: Conditions at Hoʻopiʻi Falls considered in developing this plan were informed by general community observations, agency experience, and aggregated mobility data, all of which offer important but incomplete insight into how the site is visited. While these sources help illustrate broader visitation patterns and concerns, they do not fully capture on-the-ground conditions like total visitation levels, timing of use, parking behavior, access routes, or how visitors learn about the location, all of which can inform the direction of future management and mitigation strategy.

This action supports an initial, site-based data collection effort to complement existing knowledge and data sources. By adding direct, on-site information to what is already understood, this pilot will help clarify access pressures, support more grounded conversations about managed access options advanced through this DMAP, and provide a stronger evidence base for future stewardship and visitor messaging decisions.

Lead: Hawaiʻi Tourism Authority (HTA): *procurement, convening, oversight, data coordination*

Projected partners:

- Contracted community organization: *site-based data collection, limited visitor engagement*
- County of Kauaʻi – Office of Economic Development (OED), Parks & Recreation (DOPR), Public Works (DPW): *relevant agency insights*
- Landholders and lessees: *access permissions, constraints, coordination*

Implementation framework:

PHASE	PROPOSED ACTION STEPS
FY 2028	**HTA:** • Determine scope and shape of observation-based data collection pilot based on long-term management determinations made in Action HF-1 • Procure a qualified organization to conduct a **time-limited, site-based data collection pilot** at Hoʻopiʻi Falls • Coordinate with County and DLNR partners to align pilot logistics with site conditions, jurisdictional requirements, and access constraints • Establish data parameters and reporting expectations to ensure findings can be shared and used across related destination management efforts **Contracted organization:** • Maintain a regular on-site presence focused on collecting foundational data, such as: ◦ Estimated total number of visitors ◦ Visitation patterns ◦ Access routes and parking locations ◦ Visitor-reported information sources (e.g., how visitors learned about the site) • Where appropriate, provide limited, situational engagement related to safety or awareness, without serving as a formal orientation or enforcement presence if not determined as a viable model via Action HF-1
FY 2029	**HTA:** • Review pilot findings with relevant partners • Consider whether and how site-based efforts should continue, adapt, or transition based on emerging access and stewardship directions derived from Action HF-1

Anticipated deliverables:

- Time-limited on-site data collection pilot implemented
- Dataset documenting volume, timing, access routes, parking behavior, and information sources
- Evaluation memo outlining options for continuation or adaptation

Intended outcomes:

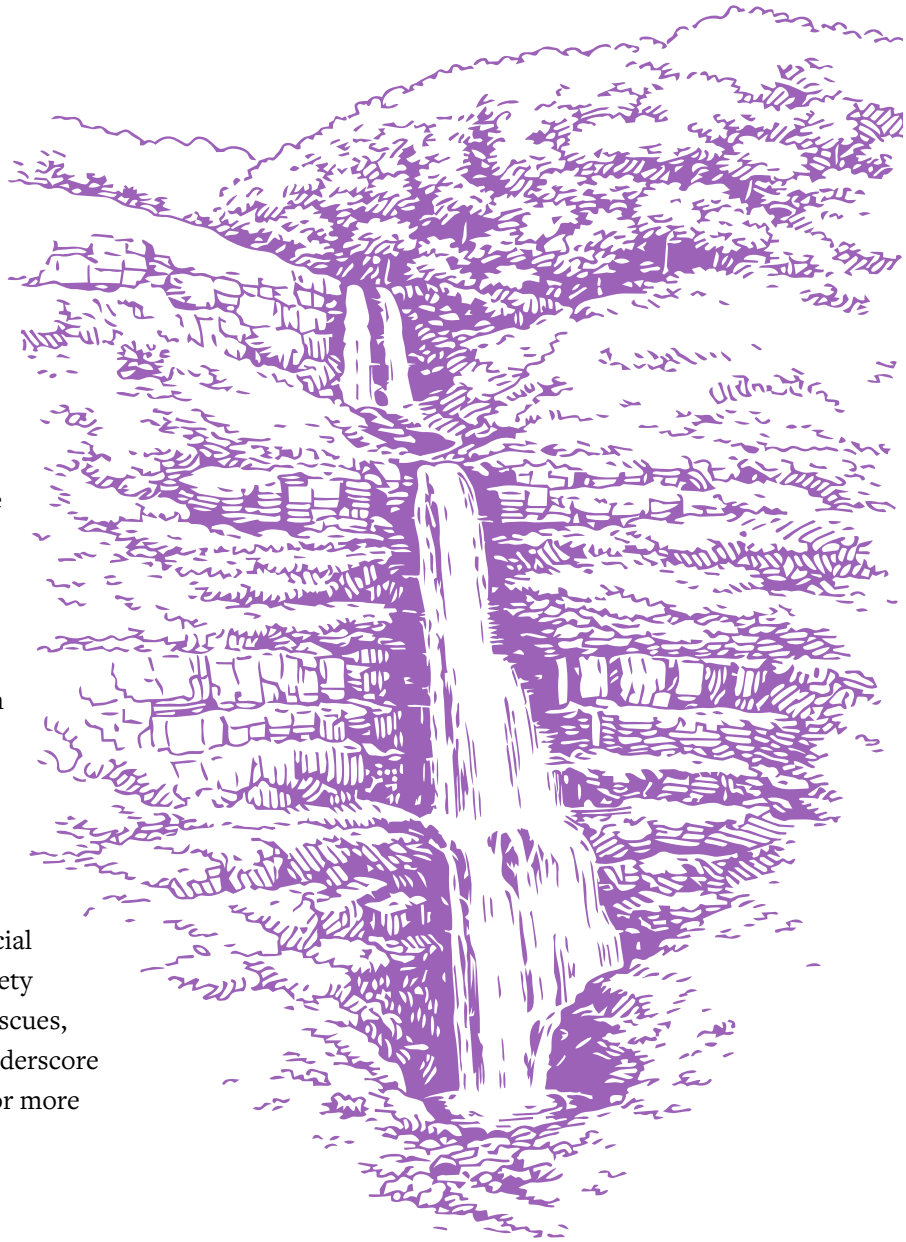
- Improved understanding of visitation patterns and access dynamics at Hoʻopiʻi Falls
- Stronger evidence base to support long-term access management, stewardship, enforcement, and messaging decisions determined through Action HF-1
- Clear linkage between site-based data, long-term management, and site promotion responses

HOTSPOT:

KŌKEʻE & WAIMEA CANYON

LOCATION: WAIMEA, KONA, KAUAʻI

Stretching across nearly 4,500 acres of upland forest and canyon rim, **Kōkeʻe and Waimea Canyon** form one of Kauaʻi's most striking landscapes – a place where deep valleys, red cliffs, and mountain trails offer unmatched views into the island's interior. Long cherished by local families for hiking, camping, and gathering, the area is also a major draw for visitors seeking scenic vistas and access to Kauaʻi's uplands. That shared appeal has increasingly translated into strain: narrow roads, limited parking, crowded lookouts, and informal stopping behavior now make access more difficult and less predictable for everyone.



The *2014 Kōkeʻe–Waimea Canyon Master Plan* laid important groundwork for park management, but it predated current visitation levels, social-media-driven travel behavior, and corridor-wide safety concerns. Since then, non-resident parking fees were introduced to help manage demand within park boundaries. However, many visitors bypass these systems by stopping along highway shoulders or unofficial viewpoints, contributing to congestion and safety risks along Waimea Canyon Drive. Frequent rescues, trail wear, and unmanaged roadside activity underscore the limits of existing tools and point to need for more coordinated, data-driven visitor management.

In 2024 and 2025, coordinated roadway repaving by DLNR State Parks and the Hawaiʻi Department of Transportation (HDOT) improved driving conditions and safety along portions of the corridor, benefiting both residents and visitors alike. These investments highlight the value of interagency coordination as visitation pressures persist. The following actions are intended to advance the priorities for destination management in the Kōkeʻe–Waimea Canyon corridor that were consistently raised by stakeholders during the DMAP engagement process through that very sort of interagency engagement:

1. **Reduction of unsafe roadside stopping and illegal parking**, particularly at unofficial viewpoints and along Waimea Canyon Drive, to improve safety and traffic flow
2. **Improved visitor safety and preparedness on trails**, including clearer communication of trail conditions, hazards, and expectations to reduce rescues and emergency response strain
3. **Data-informed, long-term planning for park access and operations**, supporting sustainable management, fiscal resilience, and informed decision-making over time
4. **Protection of local access and customary use**, recognizing Kōkeʻe and Waimea Canyon as cherished places for West Kauaʻi *ʻohana* (families) and community life
5. **Stronger linkage between park visitation and local economic benefit**, particularly for Waimea and surrounding communities, in ways that are appropriate to scale and place
6. **A more legible and respectful visitor experience**, grounded in education, orientation, and understanding of the landscape, culture, and responsibilities of being in the uplands
7. **Protection of natural and cultural resources**, including trails, native ecosystems, scenic landscapes, and culturally significant sites
8. **Clear coordination between DLNR State Parks and HDOT**, particularly regarding Waimea Canyon Drive, to align park management, highway safety, and visitor access strategies

Other community-led, agency-led, or otherwise funded efforts that advance these priorities may be considered aligned with destination management outcomes for the Kōkeʻe–Waimea Canyon corridor.

HOTSPOT INDICATORS

OVERALL PRIORITY

IDENTIFICATION

CONTEXT & COMPOUNDING FACTORS

FEASIBILITY & VIABILITY

- Access Infrastructure & Arrival Pressure
- On-Site Capacity & Crowd Pressure
- Community Strain & Resident Impact
- Site Degradation & Maintenance Stress
- Cultural Sensitivity
- Environmental Sensitivity
- Safety & Risk
- Visibility & Promotion
- Local Economic Benefit & Reciprocity
- Jurisdictional Clarity & Legality of Access
- Cost & Resource Demand
- Implementation Timeline & Complexity
- DMAP Alignment & Partnership Leverage

SITE SWOT

STRENGTHS

- Established state park management structure
- Existing non-resident parking fee system
- Strong resident and cultural connection
- High visitor interest in visiting and hiking
- Proven partnerships with State & County

OPPORTUNITIES

- Managed entry or shuttle access system
- Expanded trail stewardship and interpretation
- Operator safety compact for tour coordination
- Visitor-use monitoring to inform corridor planning
- Alignment of State, County, and industry partners on corridor safety and enforcement

WEAKNESSES

- Narrow, unsafe roadway with limited pull-outs leading to the parks
- Trails and facilities outdated for current use levels
- Parking fees often avoided at the roadside, leading to road congestion and safety risks
- Minimal on-site staff and enforcement
- Limited data on visitor numbers

THREATS

- Continued roadside parking and congestion risks
- Rescues and accidents due to unprepared visitors
- Road and trail degradation from overuse
- Limited resources and overlapping jurisdictions
- Potential reputational harm from unsafe visitor behavior

VERY HIGH/VERY LOW | HIGH/LOW | MODERATE | LOW/HIGH | N/A

*PLEASE SEE COLOR SCALE ON PAGE 23 FOR HOTSPOT ANALYSIS

MANAGEMENT ACTIONS, KŌKEʻE & WAIMEA CANYON (KKW)

KKW-1: INSTALL AUTOMATED COUNTERS FOR VISITOR USE DATA COLLECTION

KKW-1

Management Strategy: Improve Visitor Movement by Car and by Foot

Goal: Establish a consistent baseline and ongoing visitor-use monitoring system to inform safety, congestion, and visitor management decisions across the Waimea Canyon–Kōkeʻe corridor.

Justification: Limited data on visitation, parking behavior, and trail use along the Waimea Canyon–Kōkeʻe corridor makes it difficult to fully assess access conditions, evaluate safety concerns, or plan responsive management actions. While agency experience and observational knowledge provide vital context, they do not offer a shared, quantitative baseline for understanding where visitors stop, how use shifts over time, or when peak pressures occur.

Installing automated visitor- and vehicle-use counters at key locations like formal trailheads, lookouts, and informal but widely used roadside pull-outs will establish a reliable foundation for ongoing monitoring. This data will support near-term safety and operations decisions while also informing future managed-access, shuttle feasibility, stewardship, and infrastructure actions advanced through this DMAP and beyond.

Proposed lead: Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) – State Parks: *implementation, installation, monitoring of automated data collected*

Projected partners:

- DLNR – Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW), Outdoor Recreation: *trail use and resource context*
- DLNR – Conservation and Resource Enforcement (DOCARE): *enforcement and safety context*
- Hawaiʻi Tourism Authority (HTA): *funding and coordination support for automated counters*
- Place-based organizations and stewardship partners: *site presence and observational context, where applicable*

PHASE	PROPOSED ACTION STEPS
FY 2027	**State Parks (with partner input):** • Identify **at least five (5)** initial monitoring locations along the Waimea Canyon–Kōkeʻe corridor, such as major trailheads and trails, lookouts, and informal roadside pull-outs • Confirm appropriate counter types and placement based on environmental conditions and use patterns • Procure and install automated counters at selected sites • Initiate data collection immediately upon installation **HTA:** Provide DMAP funding and coordination support for procurement of automated visitor and vehicle counters
FY 2028–FY 2029 *(Ongoing)*	**State Parks:** • Continue ongoing data collection related to items such as total visitation volume, parking and stopping behavior, trail access, and time-of-day peaks • Review data to assess safety, congestion, and operational considerations • Adjust counter placement or expand monitoring coverage if needed to improve accuracy or representativeness **HTA + State Parks:** • Coordinate use of data to inform implementation and refinement of Actions **KKW-2 through KKW-4** • Share relevant findings with partner agencies to support data-informed coordination and decision-making

Anticipated deliverables:

- Automated visitor- and vehicle-use counters installed in **at least five** locations along the Waimea Canyon–Kōkeʻe corridor
- Ongoing visitor-use dataset documenting volume, timing, and spatial patterns
- Periodic internal summaries synthesizing trends and implications for management
- Data inputs actively applied to support decision-making for **KKW-2 through KKW-4**

Intended outcomes:

- Publicly shared, data-driven understanding of use patterns across the corridor
- Stronger evidence base for safety, congestion, and operational decisions by DLNR and in DMAP
- Improved alignment between monitoring data and implementation of subsequent DMAP actions
- Foundational monitoring system that supports data-informed destination management over time

KKW-2: EXECUTE A TRAIL STEWARDSHIP & SAFETY SIGNAGE PILOT

KKW-2



Management Strategy: Prepare Visitors Through Values-Based Education, Improve Visitor Movement by Car and by Foot

Goal: Improve visitor safety and understanding of Kōkeʻe's landscapes through coordinated trailhead signage and targeted on-site stewardship, informed by observed use patterns and agency experience.

Justification: Stakeholder engagement in West Kauaʻi indicated that trail safety concerns, limited visitor orientation, and inconsistent or unclear signage remain persistent issues across the Kōkeʻe area. Visitors may underestimate trail difficulty, overlook hazards, or be unaware of cultural protocols and environmental sensitivity, contributing to rescues, resource damage, and strained response capacity.

DLNR agencies have existing standards and authority for trail signage and management, while other partners bring additional on-the-ground experience, cultural context, and safety insight. Building on baseline visitor-use data collected through Action **KKW-1**, this pilot supports a coordinated approach to updating trailhead information and testing limited on-site stewardship presence to strengthen safety, stewardship, and visitor preparedness hiking Kauaʻi's well-renowned trail system.

Proposed lead: Department of Land & Natural Resources (DLNR) – State Parks: *execution, oversight*

Projected partners:

- DLNR – Forestry & Wildlife (DOFAW), Outdoor Recreation, Nā Manu ʻElele: *interpretive guidance*
- Hawaiʻi Tourism Authority (HTA): *convening and coordination*
- Kauaʻi Fire Department (KFD): *safety insight, rescue trends*
- Place-based organizations and stewardship partners: *on-site presence, interpretive input*

Implementation framework:

PHASE	PROPOSED ACTION STEPS
FY 2028	**State Parks:** • Use visitor-use patterns and hotspot data from **KKW-1**, along with agency experience, to **identify around five** (5) high-use trailheads for participation in the pilot • Develop updated trailhead signage templates consistent with DLNR standards that integrate: ○ Safety messaging and hazard awareness ○ Trail condition indicators (e.g., difficulty, elevation change, estimated time) ○ Interpretive content addressing local ecology, history, and cultural context • Identify appropriate procurement and installation pathways for signage

FY 2028 *(CONT.)*	**State Parks + HTA support:** • Fabricate and install updated signage at an initial set of trailheads, with expansion to additional locations as appropriate based on conditions, feasibility, and observations • Develop and attach QR code scanned survey to signage for visitor feedback of trail conditions and stewardship/safety messaging • Coordinate partner input to ensure messaging is clear, grounded, and responsive to observed visitor behavior
FY 2029	**State Parks:** • Explore feasibility of a **limited, pop-up trail steward and interpretation station** near Kanaloahuluhulu Meadow or other location, staffed during peak periods, to: ◦ Provide trail and safety information ◦ Reinforce cultural and environmental stewardship messages with input from area cultural practitioners and ʻāina-based organizations ◦ Record common visitor questions and observed issues • Provide stewardship and safety information to site-based partners for visitor distribution • Expand updated signage to remaining pilot trailheads as appropriate based on FY 2028 observations, feasibility, and resource availability • Review visitor feedback, safety indicators, and use patterns to assess effectiveness of signage and any on-site stewardship presence • + **partners:** ◦ Refine signage content, placement, or stewardship approaches as needed ◦ Document lessons learned, cost considerations, and suitability for longer-term placement or replication at other sites

Anticipated deliverables:

- Around five high-use trailheads participating in the pilot over FY 2028–FY 2029
- Updated safety and interpretive signage installed at priority trailheads
- Feasibility assessment for a pop-up trail steward & interpretation station, with potential implementation in FY 2029
- Survey response summary
- Pilot summary documenting safety trends, visitor feedback, and stewardship insights
- Recommendations for refinement, expansion, or replication in other highly visited corridors/sites

KKW-2

Intended outcomes:

- Improved visitor preparedness at pilot trailheads during FY 2028 through clearer, more consistent safety and interpretive information
- Reduced confusion and safety incidents at participating trailheads as visitors better understand trail conditions, hazards, and expectations
- Increased DLNR awareness of ever-evolving trail conditions, use, and visitor perceptions
- Better alignment between observed visitor behavior and trail management responses, informed by KKW-1 visitor-use data and on-site observations
- Clear decision-making foundation for whether and how enhanced trailhead signage or limited on-site stewardship should be continued, expanded, or adapted at Kōke'e and other visitor areas

KKW-3: CONDUCT A KŌKE'E–WAIMEA CANYON VISITOR ACCESS & SHUTTLE FEASIBILITY STUDY

KKW-3

Management Strategy: Improve Visitor Movement by Car and by Foot, Strengthen Partnership and Shared Stewardship

Goal: Evaluate practical, data- and community-informed options for managed visitor access in the Park, including shuttle and reservation-based approaches, to improve safety, mobility, and visitor experience.

Justification: Unsafe roadside parking, congestion at popular lookouts, and limited mobility options along Waimea Canyon Drive were persistent concerns raised during DMAP engagement. While prior planning efforts like the *2014 Kōke'e–Waimea Canyon Master Plan* identified access and circulation challenges, they did not evaluate specific visitor management tools such as shuttle systems, reservation models, or phased access approaches that are now being used in similar high-use natural areas.

This action advances a focused feasibility study to assess whether structured access strategies are appropriate and workable for the corridor by building (in part) on visitor-use and parking data generated through **KKW-1** and trail safety and access insights emerging from **KKW-2**, to ground analysis in observed conditions. By evaluating options, costs, and operational implications without presuming implementation, this action supports informed, coordinated decision-making among agencies and community partners.

Lead: Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA): *convening, funding, procurement, contractor oversight*

Projected key partners:

- Procured transportation and managed-access consultant: *technical analysis, modeling*
- Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) – State Parks: *long-term operational context*
- County of Kaua'i – Office of Economic Development (OED)**:** *island mobility solutions perspective*

Other projected invested stakeholders:

- On-island destination marketing organization (DMO): *convening support, visitor perspective*
- Hanalei Initiative: *consultation on community mobility development processes*
- Makaiwa Initiative: *consultation on shuttle and hub-based models*
- Park-based organizations, West Kauaʻi businesses, and stewardship partners: *community and business input*
- Tour providers: *industry perspectives and impacts*

Implementation framework:

PHASE	PROPOSED ACTION STEPS
FY 2027	**HTA:** • Convene partners to confirm study purpose, scope, roles, and desired outputs • Confirm how existing data sources, including automated visitor-use data from **KKW-1** and any relevant trail access or safety insights from **KKW-2**, will inform the study • Develop detailed scope, procurement requirements, and evaluation criteria for a visitor access and shuttle feasibility study • Conduct pre-procurement consultation with partners and invested stakeholders to refine study focus and engagement approach
FY 2028–FY 2029 (ONGOING)	**HTA:** • Procure a qualified transportation and managed-access consultant • Provide ongoing coordination, oversight, and outreach throughout the study period **Procured consultant:** • Compile and analyze baseline traffic, parking, and visitor-use data across the corridor, drawing on KKW-1 and KKW-2 data and other available sources • Baseline review other relevant and related plans, policies, projects, and use cases • Evaluate multiple visitor access and mobility models, such as: ◦ Shuttle or park-and-ride options (e.g., Waimea-based access points) ◦ Limited or redistributed parking at key lookouts ◦ Reservation, timed-entry, or hybrid access systems • Model circulation, parking demand, and safety conditions under different scenarios • Assess operational feasibility, including routing, fleet needs, service frequency, staging areas, and ADA considerations • Identify cultural landscape considerations and consultation pathways relevant to potential access-management approaches • Identify infrastructure, policy, permitting, and inter-agency coordination requirements associated with each option

KKW-3

FY 2028–FY 2029
(ONGOING)

- Examine seasonal, peak-period, and threshold conditions that may warrant different access management approaches
- Convene partners related to community and business engagement activities to gather feedback on feasibility, impacts, and priorities
- Develop refined scenarios and assess community, operational, economic, and visitor-experience implications
- Prepare high-level cost estimates for implementation and ongoing operations
- Produce a final feasibility report and a concise public-facing summary outlining evaluated options and recommended next steps

Anticipated deliverables:

- Defined project scope and kickoff completed in FY 2027
- Transportation and managed-access consultant procured (or DLNR in-house capacity confirmed)
- Baseline analysis integrating **KKW-1** visitor-use data, **KKW-2** trail and stewardship data, and related safety and access information
- Evaluation of multiple managed-access and shuttle scenarios
- Community and business engagement sessions conducted
- Final feasibility report and public-facing summary produced

Intended outcomes:

- Clear, data-informed understanding of viable visitor access and shuttle options for the Waimea Canyon–Kōkeʻe corridor
- Stronger alignment among State agencies, County partners, community members, and businesses around realistic access strategies
- Improved foundation for future decisions related to safety, mobility, and visitor flow management
- Reduced uncertainty about costs, operational requirements, and implications of potential managed-access approaches

KKW-4: DEVELOP A WAIMEA CANYON DRIVE HIGHWAY SAFETY & ACCESS MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

KKW-4

Management Strategy: Improve Visitor Movement by Car and by Foot, Strengthen Partnership and Shared Stewardship

Goal: Improve safety and predictability along the state highway segment of Waimea Canyon Drive by advancing a coordinated framework to address roadside stopping, congestion, and visitor access outside park boundaries.

Justification: The state highway segment of Waimea Canyon Drive is the primary access route to Waimea Canyon and Kōkeʻe State Parks, yet lacks clear, visible guidance for where visitors can stop, park, or circulate safely. This contributes to haphazard roadside pullovers, congestion at informal lookout areas, and unsafe pedestrian crossings, conditions that pose risks to visitors, residents, and emergency response.

While managed-access strategies within park boundaries are addressed in Action **KKW-3**, conditions along the highway approach require a distinct, jurisdictionally appropriate process led by the Hawai'i Department of Transportation (HDOT). At the same time, highway conditions directly impact park access, safety outcomes, and the feasibility of future shuttle or managed-access options.

This action calls for the development of a focused planning framework (e.g., corridor safety plan, technical white paper) that examines current conditions, identifies safety priorities, and outlines potential strategies for improving roadside behavior and access in a coordinated manner. The intent is not to prescribe specific solutions, but to create a clear, shared foundation for future decision-making and investment.

Proposed lead: Hawai'i Department of Transportation (HDOT) – Highways: *road jurisdiction, planning*

Projected partners:

- Department of Land & Natural Resources (DLNR) – State Parks: *park access, coordination*
- Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA): *convening support, data sharing, coordination*
- County of Kaua'i – Office of Economic Development (OED): *coordination, community interface*
- On-island destination marketing organization (DMO): *convening support, industry considerations*
- Emergency response and public safety partners: *context and input, as appropriate*

PHASE	PROPOSED ACTION STEPS
FY 2028-FY 2029 (ONGOING)	**HDOT:** • Lead development of a **corridor-level safety and access planning effort** for the Waimea Canyon Drive highway segment outside park boundaries • Examine existing conditions related to roadside stopping, parking behavior, pedestrian movement, visibility, and congestion • Explore a range of potential safety and access strategies appropriate to the corridor, which may include: ◦ Designated and formalized pullout or lookout areas ◦ Roadside signage and visitor guidance ◦ Safety barriers or edge treatments ◦ Adjustments to circulation or stopping behavior ◦ Implementation of a **Special Highway Enforcement Zone** for elevated fines for illegal parking, permitted through HRS §291C-163, Act 109 (2019) • Determine appropriate methods for informing analysis, which may include observational data, traffic counts, incident reports, or other available sources • Produce a planning document or technical memorandum outlining key issues, evaluated strategies, and recommended next steps

KKW-4

FY 2028-FY 2029
(ONGOING)

HTA:

- Share relevant visitor-use insights and aggregated data from **KKW-1**, as available, to inform corridor analysis
- Facilitate coordination between this action and **KKW-3** to ensure that any future park-based access strategies are considered in relation to highway conditions
- + **DMO:** Coordinate industry engagement to provide insights around corridor operations, as requested

State Parks:

- Provide context on how highway conditions affect park access, visitor behavior, and safety outcomes
- Coordinate on points of interface between highway access and park entry areas

Anticipated deliverables:

- Corridor safety and access planning document (e.g., framework, white paper, or technical memo)
- Identification of priority safety issues and opportunity areas along Waimea Canyon Drive outside park boundaries
- Evaluation of potential strategies to improve roadside safety and access behavior
- Clear articulation of jurisdictional roles and coordination points with park-based access management (KKW-3)

Intended outcomes:

- Planned safety & access management strategies related to implementation
- Improved clarity around safe and appropriate roadside behavior along Waimea Canyon Drive
- Reduced unsafe stopping and pedestrian movement along the highway corridor
- Stronger alignment between highway safety considerations and park access planning
- Determined roadway improvement projects added to State Transportation Improvement Program
- Clear foundation for future HDOT-led improvements or capital planning, as appropriate
- More predictable and safer visitor access to Waimea Canyon and Kōkeʻe State Parks

ADDITIONAL SITES UNDER STRAIN

In addition to **priority hotspots**, stakeholders identified other hotspots and sites under strain across Kauaʻi experiencing varying levels of tourism-related strain, access challenges, or community concern. These sites are listed below. While they were not advanced for targeted action in this DMAP cycle due to resource limitations, **other management actions** included in the following section are designed to shape destination-wide conditions in ways that are intended to improve conditions at multiple sites under strain.

Furthermore, work undertaken by community organizations, agencies, or other partners at these sites that advances the statewide destination management principles described in Section 1 and the island-specific management strategies outlined in Section 3 may be considered aligned with destination management objectives, where such efforts demonstrably contribute to improved safety and experience, reduced strain, cultural or environmental stewardship, and community well-being. The absence of site-specific actions in this plan is not meant to preclude aligned management efforts from occurring, provided such efforts remain consistent with all applicable legal restrictions, cultural protocols, and site-specific access limitations.

On that note, some sites may have **restricted or prohibited access** due to legal restrictions, access across privately held land, safety hazards, or presence of sensitive resources. Their inclusion reflects **observed or reported visitation and associated management concerns**, not an indication that they are appropriate for visitation or that intervention is warranted outside of authorized management actions.

HTA will continue to monitor these sites for changes in conditions, compounding pressures, and readiness for coordinated management action. As feasibility, resources, or partnerships evolve, these locations may be addressed within this DMAP cycle or considered for more targeted action in future DMAP cycles.

Additional Hotspots:

- Hāʻena Beach Park*
- Lumahaʻi**
- Wailua Falls*

Additional Sites Under Strain:

- Kalāheo Intersection (Kaumualiʻi & Papalina / Opu)
- Nā Pali Coast (by boat)
- Nāpali & Kālalau Trail (including Hanakāpiʻai)*
- Poʻipū and Kōloa (including Shipwrecks Beach, Spouting Horn)
- Polihale State Park*
- Tunnel of Trees
- Waimea Town

* Hotspot in 2021-2023 Kauaʻi DMAP

** Area Identified to be Managed More Intentionally in 2021-2023 DMAP

06. OTHER ACTIONS

This Destination Management Action Plan (DMAP) is **first and foremost focused on hotspots and sites under strain**. As described in the preceding sections, these are critical locations where tourism-related pressure, safety risks, and impacts on cultural and natural resources are most acute, and where targeted, site-specific management is most urgently needed. These sites emerged consistently through community and industry stakeholder engagement and remain the central priority of this plan.

At the same time, stakeholders were clear that **conditions at individual sites do not occur in isolation**. Visitor behavior at hotspots is shaped by decisions made elsewhere in the destination system: where visitors are encouraged to go, what they understand before arrival on-island or at specific sites, how broad access is managed, and how agencies and partners coordinate across the island. Research conducted at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa has observed that when access is restricted at a heavily visited location, displaced visitor demand often shifts to nearby sites rather than dissipating, reinforcing the need to consider how management at individual sites influences conditions elsewhere (Moromizato 2025). Without attention to these broader dynamics, even well-designed site-specific actions are more difficult to sustain and new hotspots can arise.

For this reason, the DMAP includes a limited set of other actions that **support and reinforce hotspot and site-specific management**. These actions align with Kaua‘i’s destination management strategies (**Prepare Visitors Through Values-Based Education; Improve Visitor Movement by Car and by Foot; Strengthen Partnership and Shared Stewardship**) and respond to recurring calls for action raised through stakeholder engagement. Each action was refined in consultation with the Kaua‘i DMAP Advisory Group and relevant partners to best ensure alignment, feasibility, and shared accountability.

Unlike the hotspot and site-specific actions presented earlier in this plan, the actions in this section are not accompanied by multi-year implementation frameworks with year-by-year action steps or designations for leads or partners. This distinction is intentional. Many of these actions will be advanced through existing programs, initiatives, and planning processes that operate on their own update cycles within HTA and other agencies, where duplicative timelines would add limited value. Others rely on interagency coordination that cannot be effectively sequenced in advance. In these cases, flexibility is essential to ensure actions can be assigned, integrated, timed, and adapted as conditions evolve.

Island-Wide Actions (**IW**) focus on broad action related to items like visitor education and communication, activation of existing programs, community support, stewardship improvements, resident engagement, and interagency coordination. While distinct from the targeted actions presented for hotspots and sites under strain, the actions in this section are designed to make those site-based efforts more effective, durable, and responsive to community priorities by enhancing the broader management system in which those sites operate.

To seek alignment statewide, complementary initiatives are included in the DMAPs for Hawai‘i’s other five main islands. The actions advanced here reflect concerns heard consistently in community engagements on Kaua‘i while contributing to shared statewide principles of stewardship, harmony, regeneration, and collaboration. As these initiatives are implemented and evaluated, successful approaches may be refined and expanded to other parts of the state.

For detail on how action items were developed through stakeholder engagement, drafting, and review, refer to Section 2: Development Process for the Plan.

ISLAND-WIDE ACTIONS (IW)

IW-1: ESTABLISH A VISITOR LOAD AND DESTINATION CAPACITY FRAMEWORK FOR KAUA'I

IW-1

Management Strategy: Strengthen Partnership and Shared Stewardship

Goal: Develop a shared framework for evaluating visitor load on Kauaʻi and its relationship to infrastructure capacity, environmental stewardship priorities, community well-being, and destination promotion, and identify indicators and potential thresholds that could guide future destination management decisions.

Justification: While this DMAP's primary focus is on managing hotspots and other sites under tourism-related strain, community input made it clear that many residents understand these locations not to be isolated nodes, but site-based symptoms of a broader, collective strain across Kauaʻi, described often by residents as overtourism. Indeed, tourism on Kauaʻi has grown substantially over the past two decades. The island's average daily visitor census (ADVC) has increased by approximately 49% over the past fifteen years from roughly 19,500 to nearly 29,000, placing increasing demand on roads, infrastructure, natural areas, and community spaces. These pressures are reflected in many of the site-specific challenges addressed throughout this plan.

At this time, however, Kauaʻi does not have clearly defined indicators or thresholds that link visitor presence to when tourism-related conditions should trigger specific management responses either at a site-specific or island level. While visitation levels are closely tracked by the Hawaiʻi Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) and agencies like DLNR Division of State Parks tracks site-specific usage for certain areas, decisions related to visitor management, infrastructure planning, and destination marketing or promotion are often not directly tied to shared visitor load benchmarks.

Other destinations, including Maui through its *Maui Island Plan* (2012), have identified desired visitor load levels as part of broader tourism planning discussions. This action seeks to establish a standing working group of diverse stakeholders to examine visitor load trends and impacts, develop indicators that signal tourism-related pressure, and explore potential thresholds and management approaches that could help guide future destination management decisions for Kauaʻi.

Anticipated deliverables:

- Multi-stakeholder working group convened of residents, community organizations, cultural practitioners, ʻāina-based organizations, industry representatives, agencies, and researchers
- Baseline assessment describing visitor load trends, spatial concentration patterns, and tourism-related pressure points across Kauaʻi
- Additional indicators identified for monitoring island-wide and site-specific tourism-related pressure (e.g., congestion, infrastructure utilization, environmental conditions, resident sentiment)
- Visitor load evaluation and/or determination framework produced outlining how indicators such as the average daily visitor census (ADVC) could be monitored and interpreted over time

- Policy and management recommendations documented, including ideal thresholds, monitoring approaches, management triggers, and potential actions or management approaches that could be pursued to move conditions toward those thresholds
- Considerations identified regarding how visitor load findings could inform destination marketing, promotion, and demand-management strategies

Intended outcomes:

- Clearer, collective, data-informed understanding among agencies, communities, and industry of how tourism growth affects infrastructure, natural resources, and community life on Kauaʻi
- Stronger alignment among State, County, and community stakeholders regarding tourism scale and destination management priorities at the island level
- Improved ability for HTA and partners to monitor tourism conditions and respond proactively to emerging strain at sites and infrastructure
- Foundation established for future policy discussions regarding visitor management, infrastructure planning, and destination promotion strategies

IW-2: CONDUCT A VISITOR ROAD SAFETY AND COURTESY CAMPAIGN



Management Strategy: Prepare Visitors Through Values-Based Education, Improve Visitor Movement by Car and by Foot

Goal: Promote courteous, safe, and respectful driving that reflects aloha and reduces resident-visitor conflicts on Kauaʻi's roads.

Justification: Many visitors arrive on Kauaʻi eager to begin their vacations and may be navigating different road rules, driving norms, and roadway conditions than those they are accustomed to at home. When excitement and unfamiliarity intersect with busy local roads, unintentional safety issues can emerge.

Residents across Kauaʻi consistently raised concerns about such unfamiliar or uninformed visitor driving behavior, pointing to issues such as illegal roadside parking, unsafe pull-outs, speeding, and confusion on narrow or unfamiliar roads. These conditions can create daily safety risks for residents, visitors, and emergency responders, particularly in high-traffic corridors and near popular destinations. Indeed, these concerns were key factors in identifying several hotspots and sites under strain included in this plan, thus making a collective initiative to address road conditions a form of hotspot management for multiple areas.

A coordinated road safety and courtesy campaign can offer visitors practical guidance at key moments in their journey, support safer behavior on the road, and reduce resident–visitor road-related friction.

Anticipated deliverables:

- Identification of **approximately 3–5** core behavior themes
- Adaptable creative assets produced for use across multiple visitor touchpoints (e.g., rental vehicles, accommodations, airport environments, and digital platforms)

- Pilot road safety and courtesy campaign launched in FY 2027 with participation from **at least two** rental car providers and **at least three** accommodation partners
- Campaign materials deployed across participating partner channels and visitor touchpoints
- Basic monitoring conducted to track campaign reach and engagement (e.g., distribution counts, QR scans, or digital interaction metrics)

Intended outcomes:

- Visitors receive clear guidance on courteous and safe driving practices while traveling on Kauaʻi.
- Improved visitor awareness of local road conditions and expectations
- Reduced frequency of behaviors that contribute to resident–visitor conflict, such as unsafe pull-outs, shoulder parking, and confusion on local roads
- Greater consistency in road safety and courtesy messaging across visitor-facing channels

IW-3: CONDUCT PILOT FOR VALUES-BASED VISITOR ORIENTATION IN SHORT-TERM RENTALS

Management Strategy: Prepare Visitors Through Values-Based Education

Goal: Pilot a consistent, values-based visitor orientation for short-term rentals to encourage considerate, safe, and place-appropriate behavior through values-based messaging paired with practical guidance.

Justification: Visitors staying in short-term rentals receive inconsistent orientation related to safety, cultural context, and local expectations. Unlike more centralized visitor environments, these accommodations rely on dispersed hosts and platforms, making it difficult to ensure that essential guidance is consistently shared.

Stakeholder engagement across Kauaʻi repeatedly highlighted concerns about visitor behavior in sensitive places and particularly at beaches and in the ocean, where multiple safety incidents and fatalities have been linked to unfamiliarity with ocean conditions, currents, and risk cues. Many of the island's identified hotspots are coastal areas where residents and safety professionals emphasized the need for clearer, earlier visitor education grounded in local values and lived experience.

This action advances a **Visitor Education & Post-Arrival Marketing** (**VEPAM**) pilot that uses shared values as an entry point for conveying practical, safety-critical information. While multiple areas of focus are intended, **ocean and beach safety will be a required content area of the pilot**, alongside guidance on neighborhood respect, environmental care, and emergency awareness. By testing coordinated tools and messaging within short-term rentals, this pilot supports destination-management goals across multiple hotspots and evaluates a scalable model for broader adoption on Kauaʻi and potentially statewide.

Anticipated deliverables:

- Themes identified and translated into practical visitor guidance, including ocean safety content
- Adaptable digital and print orientation materials produced (e.g., QR cards, host inserts)
- Pilot or full campaign participation of 100+ participating units and two major rental platforms
- Visitor and host feedback collected and incorporated into refined materials

IW-3

Intended outcomes:

- Visitors staying in short-term rentals receive consistent, welcoming, values-based orientation paired with clear safety and courtesy guidance
- Improved visitor awareness of ocean safety, cultural expectations, and neighborhood norms, supporting safer behavior at beaches and other hotspots
- Stronger coordination between visitor education efforts and destination-management priorities.
- A tested, scalable model for delivering post-arrival visitor education through dispersed accommodations

IW-4: ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN A VISIBLE MAINTENANCE PROGRAM FOR MAJOR LOOKOUTS AND HIGH-USE VISITOR SITES

IW-4

Management Strategy: Improve Visitor Movement by Car and by Foot

Goal: Improve visitor safety, access, and experience by establishing and maintaining a clear, regular, and publicly visible maintenance schedule for major lookouts and high-use visitor sites across Kauaʻi.

Justification: Throughout the DMAP engagement process, residents and industry partners repeatedly raised concerns about the visibility conditions of major lookouts, hotspots, and other high-use visitor sites, citing overgrown vegetation, obstructed views, and inconsistent maintenance. These conditions negatively affect visitor experience and perception of the destination and, more critically, can create safety risks when visitors leave designated areas or attempt unsafe behavior to access viewpoints.

Lookouts such as those at Wailua Falls are among Kauaʻi's most visited and iconic sites, and their condition directly shapes visitor satisfaction and behavior. When regular maintenance is not visible or predictable, visitors may assume access is informal or unmanaged, increasing the likelihood of unsafe movement, roadside stopping, or off-trail activity. Addressing these issues is both a visitor experience concern and a destination management responsibility.

This action supports a coordinated, transparent approach to ensure that sites receive routine maintenance aligned with safety, stewardship, and visitor expectations. By developing a shared maintenance calendar and clear, visible processes, this action strengthens accountability, coordination, and confidence that priority sites are being actively managed.

Anticipated deliverables:

- Prioritized list of major lookouts and high-use visitor sites requiring routine maintenance
- Maintenance calendar and standard maintenance approach established
- Interagency coordination processes clarified for shared or adjacent sites
- Ongoing maintenance implemented in alignment with the established schedule
- Publicly accessible record of maintenance activity or schedule updates

IW-4

Intended outcomes:

- Improved visitor safety and experience at major lookouts and high-use sites
- Reduced unsafe behavior driven by obstructed views or unclear site conditions
- More consistent and predictable maintenance of priority visitor areas
- Increased transparency and accountability in site management
- Stronger coordination among DLNR, transportation agencies, and management partners

IW-5: MAINTAIN AN ONGOING COMMUNITY DIALOGUE FOR KAUAʻI DMAP IMPLEMENTATION

IW-5

Management strategy: Strengthen Partnership and Shared Stewardship

Goal: Build trust, *pilina* (connection), and accountability by maintaining consistent, two-way communication between HTA and Kauaʻi communities throughout DMAP implementation.

Justification: During engagement on Kauaʻi for development of this plan, residents emphasized that how HTA shows up is as important as what it funds through its destination management functions. Community members expressed a desire to see HTA more present on the island: listening to concerns, sharing progress, and following through on commitments over time, not only during formal planning phases.

As visitor impacts, priorities, and pressures vary across Kauaʻi's regions, ongoing dialogue is essential to ensure that effective destination management remains grounded in lived experience and responsive to changing conditions. A predictable, transparent engagement cycle informs residents about which actions are underway, how decisions are being made, and how community observations are informing management as implementation evolves. This ongoing exchange reinforces shared stewardship and supports trust over the life of the DMAP.

Anticipated deliverables:

- A publicly shared engagement schedule outlining ongoing community dialogue opportunities
- Regular meetings held over the 2026–2028 DMAP cycle, including several regional in-person meetings in different communities throughout Kauaʻi
- DMAP implementation updates shared at each engagement
- Summaries produced for engagement activities and shared through accessible channels
- Compiled community themes documented and routed internally to inform implementation

Intended outcomes:

- Stronger pilina, trust, and accountability between HTA and Kauaʻi communities
- Clear resident visibility into DMAP actions, progress, and limitations
- Two-way communication ensuring community insight informs ongoing destination management
- Reduced frustration stemming from irregular or unclear engagement
- A stable, repeatable engagement structure that supports long-term stewardship and collaboration

EIA IHOLA NŌ KA PUANA O IA MELE NEI. E NĀNEA MAI.

Nani Kaua'i

A SONG TALKING OF KAUA'I'S PLACE-NAMES BY LIZZIE ALOHIKEA

Aloha a'e au i ku'u 'āina
I ke kū kilakila 'o Wai'ale'ale

'O ke one kaulana a'o Nohili
'Apo iho ā pa'a pono la i ka poli

Nā hala onaona a'o Māpuana
E naue 'oe i ka 'oni a ke kai

Inā paha 'oe ā e 'ike ai
I ka nani o ka Wai'ānapanapa

Hō'oni'oni iki iho ana 'oe
A he honehone i ke kumu o ka hana

Ha'ina 'ia mai ana ka puana
Ua nani Kaua'i i ka mālie

I recall with fondness my homeland
Where Wai'ale'ale stands majestically

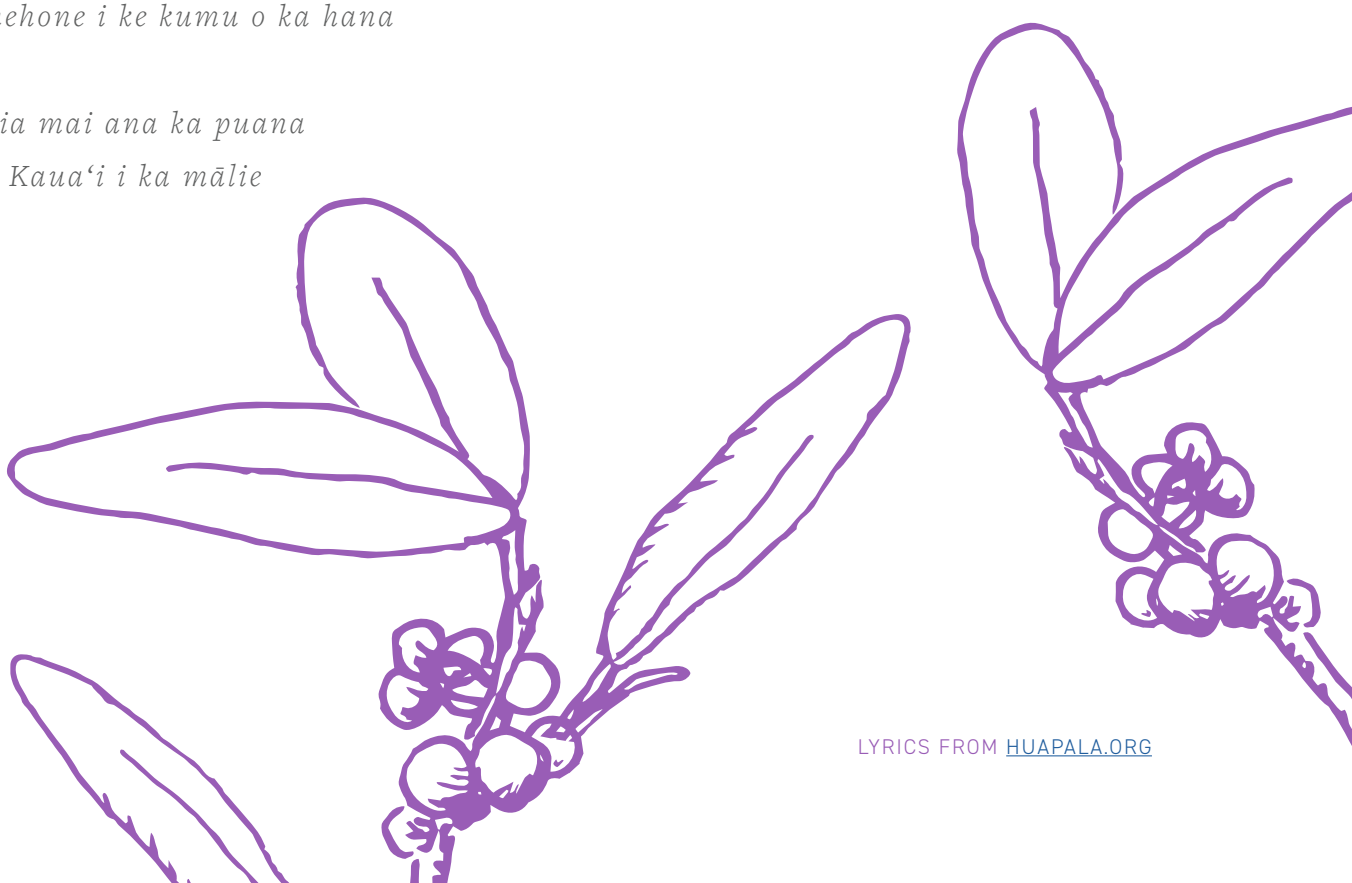
The famous sands of Nohili
That one holds in one`s heart

The fragrant hala of Māpuana
Seems to reach out to the restless sea

If you can only see the beauty
Of the glistening water

Being with you in this peaceful area
To do the things together with you

This is the end of my praise
Of beautiful Kaua'i in the calm



LYRICS FROM HUAPALA.ORG

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GLOSSARY

Average Daily Census:
The average number of visitors present in Hawai‘i on any given day.

Average Length of Stay:
The average number of days visitors spend in Hawai‘i, including both the day of arrival and the day of departure.

Community Benefit:
Positive outcomes for local communities resulting from tourism, which may include economic opportunity, reinvestment in infrastructure and public spaces, cultural preservation, environmental stewardship, and improvements to residents' quality of life.

Community-Led Stewardship:
An approach to caring for and managing places in which local communities, cultural practitioners, and lineal descendants play a leading role in protecting natural resources, cultural sites, and community well-being.

De Facto Population:
The total number of people present in a place at a given time, including both residents and visitors.

Destination Management:
The coordinated planning and management of tourism in a place to address impacts, protect resources, and improve experiences for residents and visitors through collaboration among government agencies, communities, and industry partners.

Destination Marketing Organization (DMO):
An organization that promotes and supports travel to a specific destination through marketing, visitor information, and industry coordination.

Destination Stewardship:
The shared responsibility of caring for a place so that it can thrive for future generations. While *destination management* focuses on planning and coordination, destination stewardship emphasizes collective care and long-term *kuleana* for the place itself.

Hotspot:
A location where visitor use and tourism-related pressure are concentrated and where targeted management actions are prioritized.

Lineal Descendant:
A person who can trace direct family ancestry to individuals historically connected to a particular place or *‘āina*. In Hawai‘i, lineal descendants often maintain genealogical, cultural, and familial ties to specific lands, waters, and resources, and their perspectives are important in decisions related to stewardship, cultural practice, and place-based management.

Managed Access:
Strategies used to regulate how people enter or use a site in order to protect resources and improve visitor experience. Examples may include reservation systems, permits, transportation controls, or timed entry.

Mobility Hub:
A location where multiple transportation options connect (e.g., shuttles, buses, bicycles, walking routes) allowing visitors and residents to move between destinations more efficiently.

Multimodal Transportation:
A transportation approach that integrates multiple forms of travel, such as walking, bicycling, buses, shuttles, and private vehicles, to improve mobility and reduce congestion.

Per-Person Per-Day Spending:
The average amount of money spent by a visitor per day during their stay in Hawai‘i.

Place-Based Management:
An approach to destination management that tailors strategies and actions to the specific conditions, culture, and needs of a particular community, *‘āina*, or site.

Priority Hotspot:
A hotspot selected for focused management action during the current DMAP implementation cycle.

Regenerative Tourism:
An approach to tourism that seeks to restore, strengthen, and sustain the environmental, cultural, and community systems of a place. Regenerative tourism goes beyond minimizing negative impacts by supporting activities and partnerships that help communities and ecosystems thrive over time.

Resident Sentiment:
Public attitudes and perceptions among residents regarding tourism and its impacts on their community and family system.

Site of Opportunity:
A location where visitor activity may be encouraged or better supported in order to distribute visitation more evenly and reduce pressure on heavily impacted sites.

Site Under Strain:
A location where strain is occurring due to visitor use, infrastructure limitations, environmental sensitivity, or other pressures. This designation may also apply where any level of visitor activity occurs in areas where public access is restricted or inappropriate.

Stakeholder:
An individual, organization, or group with an interest in or connection to tourism and its impacts in a particular place. In the DMAP context, stakeholders include residents, community organizations, cultural practitioners, lineal descendants, businesses, industry representatives, government agencies, and other partners involved in destination management and stewardship.

Strain:
Pressure affecting a place, resource, or community that may arise from visitor use, infrastructure limitations, environmental conditions, or other factors. In the DMAP context, strain may also occur when visitor activities or access take place in areas where said access is restricted or prohibited, including unsafe, culturally sensitive, or environmentally protected locations.

Transient Accommodations Tax (TAT):
A tax applied to short-term visitor accommodations such as hotels and vacation rentals. In Hawai'i, the TAT is collected by both the State and counties, with the State currently levying an 11 percent tax and each county collecting an additional 3 percent.

Visitor:
An out-of-state traveler who stays in Hawai'i for at least one night but less than one year.

Visitor Education and Post-Arrival Marketing (VEPAM):
An HTA program focused on marketing to and educating visitors after they arrive in the islands, including information about appropriate activities, experiences, and responsible behavior that supports cultural, community, and environmental stewardship.

Visitor Orientation:
Information provided to visitors before or during their trip to help them understand local conditions, cultural and environmental context, safety considerations, and guidance for respectful and responsible behavior.

Wayfinding:
Signage, maps, and other navigation tools that help people understand where they are and how to move through a place safely and efficiently.

ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

State Agencies
DBEDT: Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism
DLNR: Department of Land and Natural Resources
DOCARE: Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement (DLNR)
DOFAW: Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DLNR)
HDOT: Hawai‘i Department of Transportation
HTA: Hawai‘i Tourism Authority

County of Kaua‘i
DOPR: Department of Parks and Recreation
DPW: Department of Public Works
KPD: Kaua‘i Police Department
OED: Office of Economic Development

Locations in Action IDs
HF: Ho‘opi‘i Falls
IW: Island-Wide (referring to an Island-Wide Action within the DMAP framework)
KKW: Kōke‘e & Waimea Canyon
KWC: Kapa‘a & Wailua Corridor

Other Acronyms & Terms
DMAP: Destination Management Action Plan
DMO: Destination Marketing Organization
EKMH: East Kaua‘i Mobility Hub
FY: Fiscal Year
RCCA: Royal Coconut Coast Association
TAT: Transient Accommodations Tax
VEPAM: Visitor Education and Post-Arrival Marketing

Appendices

APPENDIX A:
DMAP ENGAGEMENT SCHEDULE

The development of this DMAP included multiple rounds of engagement with community members, industry representatives, government agencies, and the island Advisory Group. These engagements helped identify sites under strain, refine emerging themes, and shape the strategies and actions included in the plan.

Advisory Group Meetings

The island Advisory Group provided ongoing guidance throughout the DMAP development process, helping review emerging themes, identify sites under strain, and refine draft actions:

- August 12, 2025
- September 2, 2025
- September 12, 2025
- December 11, 2025
- March 24, 2026

Community Engagement

Community engagement focused on understanding how tourism is experienced in daily life across Kauaʻi and identifying locations where tourism-related strain is most visible.

Initial Virtual Engagement

- **August 26, 2025**
  Initial session conducted to gather insights for both the DMAP and the HTA Strategic Plan.

In-Person Community Input Session

Facilitated sessions held in three communities focused on themes that emerged early in the process:

- **September 10, 2025: Waimea Community Session**
- **September 11, 2025: Līhuʻe Community Session**
- **November 18, 2025: Hanalei Community Session**
  At all three sessions, participants discussed recurring concerns including:
  - traffic, infrastructure, and access
  - enforcement and safety
  - visitor education
  - resident engagement and communication

  These discussions helped further identify sites under strain and clarify desired outcomes for destination management.

Draft Review Sessions

- **February 19, 2026: Virtual Draft DMAP Review Session**
  Session to present the draft DMAP and gather feedback on proposed strategies and actions.

Industry Engagement

Industry engagement focused on understanding operational realities, sector perspectives, and the role businesses play in destination management.

- **September 5, 2025: Virtual Industry Input Session**
  Session conducted to gather *mana'o* (insight) from visitor industry representatives for both the DMAP and the HTA Strategic Plan.
- **September 22, 2025: Industry Engagement Session at the HTA Tourism Conference**
  Facilitated discussions across six sector groupings:
  - accommodations and lodging
  - tours and activities
  - transportation and access
  - food, retail, and events
  - marketing, media, and travel trade
  - community and cultural stewardship partners

  These discussions helped identify practical opportunities for industry participation in destination management.

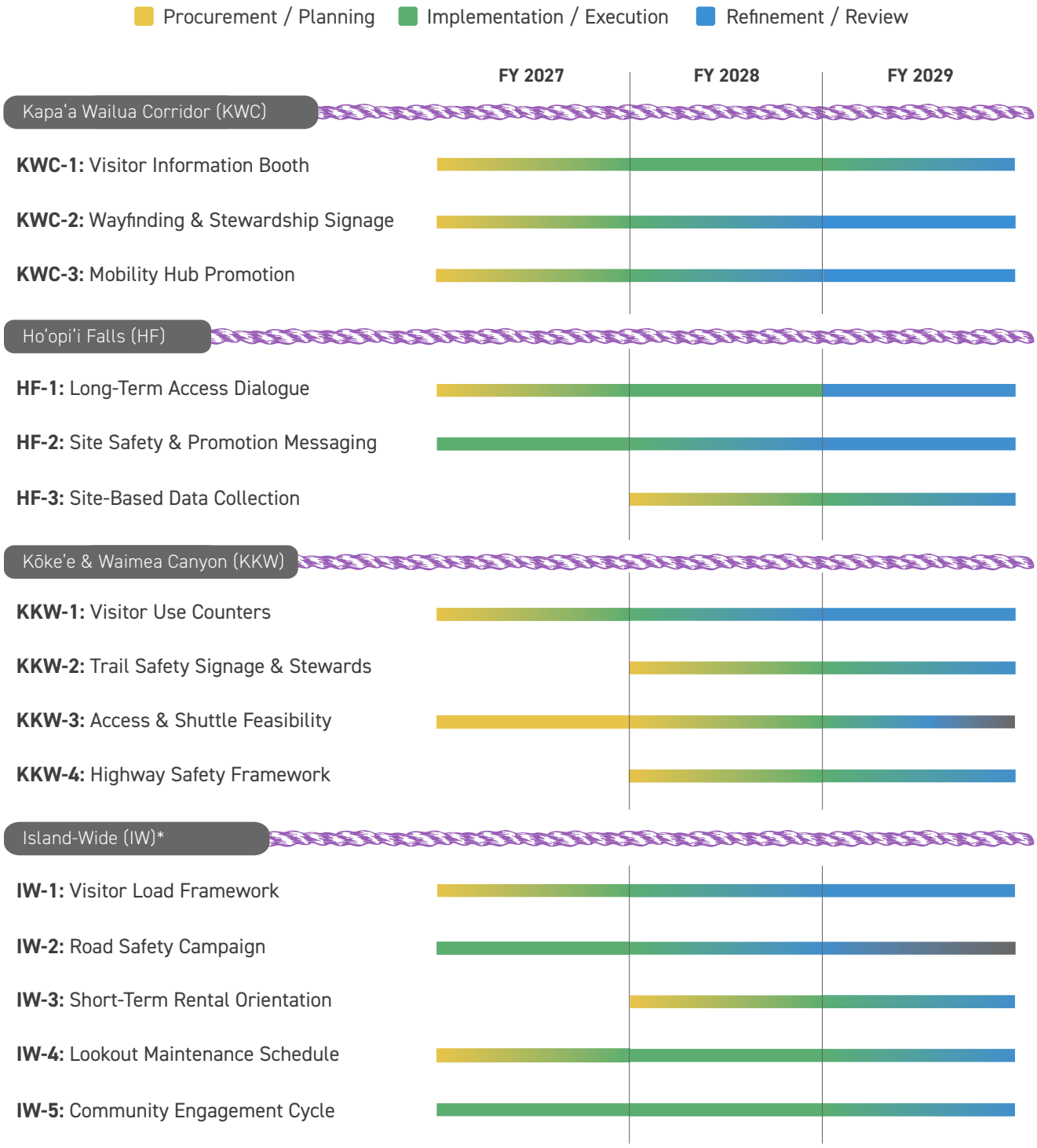
Public Comment Period: February 2026

An online commentary portal was made available on the HTA website to gather additional feedback from community members, industry participants, and other stakeholders on the draft DMAP.

Agency and Partner Coordination

Throughout the planning process, HTA Destination Managers and other HTA staff engaged regularly with State and County agencies, ʻāina-based stewardship organizations, and other partners. These conversations helped clarify agency roles, operational realities, and potential pathways for collaboration in implementing proposed actions.

APPENDIX B:
THREE-YEAR IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE



*Timeline for Island-Wide Actions (IW) has not been determined. Estimates provided.

APPENDIX C:
ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES IDENTIFIED THROUGH STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The DMAP identifies a set of priority actions that HTA and its partners will work to advance during the 2026–2028 DMAP implementation cycle. During engagement, however, stakeholders raised a wide range of additional issues, opportunities, and site-specific concerns related to destination management on Kauaʻi.

Given the breadth of topics raised and the practical limits of available resources, it is not possible for every idea or site identified to be translated into a formal DMAP action for the 2026–2028 implementation cycle. Many items relate to *kuleana* held entirely by other State and County agencies, while others may benefit from additional coordination, research, or feasibility assessment before specific actions can be defined.

Documenting these perspectives nonetheless helps ensure that stakeholder input gathered through the DMAP process remains visible and available to inform ongoing dialogue, coordination, and management efforts across all partners involved in caring for Kauaʻi as a home and visitor destination.

Opportunities identified through engagement fall into three categories:

1. **Agency Opportunities**
   Areas of progress identified through stakeholder input that fall fully within the responsibilities of other State and County agencies. These are recommended for further consideration.

   Examples include:
   - **Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR):** Develop additional accessible or family-friendly loop trails in Kōkeʻe and Waimea Canyon State Parks
   - **Hawaiʻi Department of Transportation (HDOT):** Evaluate feasibility of intersection redesign or roundabout installation at the intersection of Kaumualiʻi & Papalina / Opu
   - **Kauaʻi County Department of Public Works (DPW):** Improve pedestrian safety and multimodal circulation in Waimea Town

2. **Ongoing HTA Exploration**
   Topics raised during stakeholder engagement that HTA will continue exploring as partnerships, research, and planning efforts help shape potential future initiatives. These are recommended for continued exploration as opportunities evolve.

   Examples include:
   - **Improving trip-planning tools** that help visitors not just find and book experiences, but understand site conditions, safety considerations, and stewardship expectations of place
   - **Increasing support of community-led stewardship** elevating the role of communities of place, cultural practitioners, and lineal descendants in caring for sensitive sites
   - **Exploring expanded measures of tourism impacts and benefits** that incorporate environmental health, infrastructure strain, and community well-being

3. **Policy Considerations**
   Broader policy issues and community concerns that influence tourism, destination management, and community conditions but fall outside the scope of DMAP implementation as they typically require legislative action, statewide policy changes, or decisions by other agencies. These are recommended for further policy dialogue and consideration.

   Examples include:
   - **Strengthening civil penalty systems and enforcement follow-through** for illegal parking, trespassing, and unsafe site access at high-use visitor areas
   - **Expanding ocean safety infrastructure and lifeguard coverage at beaches** experiencing high visitor use but lacking adequate safety resources
   - **Addressing workforce stability and cost-of-living pressures** affecting Kaua'i's visitor industry workforce and broader community well-being

A broader listing of opportunities identified through DMAP stakeholder engagement across all six islands is available on the Hawai'i Tourism Authority website at HTTPS://HTA.HAWAII.GOV/DMAPS/.

APPENDIX D:
OTHER RESOURCES

Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism: **2024 Annual Visitor Research Report**
https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/visitor/visitor-research/2024-annual-visitor.pdf

Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism: **2025 Visitor Plant Inventory**
https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/visitor/visitor-plant/2025VPI.pdf

Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism: **Resident Sentiment Surveys**
https://dbedt.hawaii.gov/visitor/resident-sentiment-survey-report/

Hawai‘i Tourism Authority: **Visitor Satisfaction & Activity Reports**
https://hta.hawaii.gov/visitor-satisfaction-and-activity/

Hawai‘i Tourism Authority: **Kaua‘i Destination Management Action Plan** (2021–2023)
https://hta.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/HTA_KAUAI_DMAP_2021-2023.pdf

Hawai‘i Department of Land and Natural Resources: **Kōke‘e–Waimea Canyon Master Plan** (2014)
https://dlnr.hawaii.gov/dsp/files/2015/03/hsp_Kokee_master_plan_final.pdf

Kaua‘i Office of Economic Development: **Coconut Marketplace Mobility Hub Plan**
https://kauaiforward.com/coconut-marketplace-mobility-hub-plan/

Moromizato, N. (2025). *Analyzing travel flow to Hanauma Bay before and after the reservation system using big data*. University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, School of Travel Industry Management.

The Transformation of Hā‘ena State Park
https://static1.squarespace.com/static/68eca408ccbb4359adf91274/t/68edc20234978b76429833e8/1760412162288/Haena-State-Park-Case-Study.pdf

HAWAI'I TOURISM AUTHORITY