

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT & CEO

AUGUST 2025

This August report highlights the Hawai'i Tourism Authority's (HTA) activities and actions taken by the staff from July 19 through August 15, 2025 in support of the organization's overall mission and its strategic plan.

At the time this report was put together, the latest visitor statistics available is June 2025. Our KPIs are total visitor spending and per-person-per-day spending, and each have shown an increase compared to the first six months:

- Total Visitor Spending: \$10.95 billion, compared to \$10.35 billion in the first six months of 2025 (+5.8%).
- Total Per Person Per Day Spending: \$253.9, compared to \$243.3 in year-to-date June 2024 (+4.3%).
- State Tax Revenue (direct, indirect, and induced): \$1.27 billion, compared to \$1.03 billion in the first six months of 2025 (+5.2%).

I. OFFICE OF THE CEO

Staffing

Of HTA's 30 approved positions, six are either interim, acting, or vacant. These include the CEO & President (interim), Chief Administrative Officer (acting), Chief Brand Officer (acting), Chief Stewardship Officer (vacant), Brand Manager (vacant – active recruitment), and the Account Clerk III (vacant and will be redescribed).

Office Spaces Update for Neighboring Islands

Progress continues in securing office spaces for our Destination Managers across the neighboring islands.

- **Moloka'i:** The staff member has successfully moved into the assigned office space at State Civic Center 2, since August 4, 2025.
- **Kaua'i:** Due to delays in the existing tenant's out-boarding process at the Līhu'e State Office Building, HTA will move forward with a subletting option at HVCB. The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) / lease document has been approved by both internal teams and DAG Cole. We are now waiting for the FY 2026 funds to be released before we can finalize the payment and the move-in date.
- **Maui:** As no government facilities are currently available, we have identified a promising 434 square foot commercial office space to rent. We have signed the Letter of Intent (LOI) and have now received the revised draft lease agreement from the landlord. A negotiated early termination provision has been incorporated,

allowing termination from month 13 with 60 days' prior written notice. This provision includes an early termination fee of four months' gross rent, in addition to the landlord's attorneys' fees and costs to document the termination. We are now finalizing the lease agreement and waiting for the FY 2026 funds to be available for payment before we can set a final move-in date.

- **Island of Hawai'i:** The search for a commercial office space has not yet commenced. No suitable spaces that meet our requirements are currently available, as most of the available offices are too large. The destination manager will continue to work from home for the time being.

Hawai'i Convention Center Roof Top Project

HTA, DAGS, and HCC staff meet weekly with HTA's project and construction management firm (Rider Levett Bucknail Ltd) and architect/engineering consultant (Allana Buick & Bers) for the HCC rooftop terrace deck repair project. Below is the latest RFP timeline (Addendum 8 issued July 18, 2025).

Site Visit (by appointment only)	Week of August 25, 2025
Proposal & Bid Due Date / Evaluation Period Begins	September 3, 2025 @ 2:00 PM HST
Priority-Listed Offerors Notification	Week of September 22, 2025
Oral Presentation & Interviews (if necessary)	Week of September 29, 2025
Best and Final Offer (BAFO) (if necessary)	Week of October 6, 2025
Notice of Award General Contractor (estimate)	Week of October 13, 2025
Construction Contract Execution Date	Week of October 27, 2025
On-Site Construction Start Date	January 2, 2026
Jobsite Completion Date	November 20, 2027

II. PROGRAM UPDATES

Destination Stewardship

While the direction for the search to replace the Chief Stewardship Officer continues, a crucial leadership position, each Destination Manager (5) and Brand Manager (3) continues to move forward and manage its destination and programs they oversee. The destination stewardship team continues to meet weekly and update the CEO and department heads on deadlines, contract renewals, and invoice payments in order to maintain accurate timelines and schedules.

Destination Management

Destination Management Action Plans (DMAPs)

Destination Managers across all islands have completed their initial advisory group meetings, which focus on each island's Destination Management Action Plan. In addition, several islands have convened industry and community meetings. These engagement sessions will continue through December.

Smart Destination App

This initiative aims to support both visitors and residents with statewide airport wayfinding, streamline the Department of Agriculture's biosecurity form, and integrate a reservation system for state and national parks. HTA is working with DBEDT Director on procuring this project.

Maui Visitor Assistance Program (VAP)

After a long-standing contractor retired in March 2025, HTA is seeking a new contractor to provide services to our visitors who have encountered adversity while vacationing on the islands of Maui, Moloka'i and Lāna'i. Lead staff are currently working on a new Request for Proposal (RFP) for this program, which is expected to be released soon. This will be the third time the HTA has issued a solicitation to fill this need for the Maui nui.

Waikīkī Historic Trail

The Cultural Advisory Committee completed their review of the new content and Augmented Reality component of the Waikīkī Historic Trail refurbishment. The subcontractor, DTL, is finalizing all content and is on track to provide the final deliverables by October.

Community Programs

'Umeke FY26

Award notifications for the FY26 'Umeke community programs (Community Enrichment Program, Kūkulu Ola, Kāhu 'Āina, Ho'okipa Malihini Initiative, & Signature Events) were issued from July 15th to July 21st. A total of 136 organizations have been awarded a total of nearly \$5.1M to reinvest in our communities during the time period of July 16, 2025 to June 30, 2026. The media release for Ho'okipa Malihini Initiative was issued on 8/4/2025 and Signature Events was issued on 8/7/2025. Media releases announcing the Community Enrichment Program, Kūkulu Ola, and Kāhu 'Āina awardees will be issued in the upcoming weeks.

Workforce Development

Ho'oilina Hawaii Scholarship Program 2025 Cohort

The prestigious Ho'oilina Scholarship, created by HTA in partnership with the Hawai'i State Legislature, the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's Shidler College of Business, School of Travel Industry Management (TIM) and Hawai'i Lodging and Tourism Association in 2019, provides financial support to seven (7) deserving Hawai'i public high school graduates interested in the visitor industry. Each recipient receives up to \$12,000 annually for four years to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Travel Industry Management (TIM) at UH Mānoa. The 2025 cohort begins this Fall 2025 semester (August). A media release announcing the seven scholars will be issued soon.

Sports

HTA continues to meet with LPGA to finalize this year's contract. The LPGA is working with a local tournament director (Danny Zane) from En Pacific Management Group, who is subcontracted by the LPGA to run the local tournament at Hoakalei Golf Course. We are finalizing the terms of the contract, last year LPGA had contracted SeatGeek as their POS for ticketing, and the attendance numbers for the entire tournament was the lowest attendance since the tournament began. HTA is collaborating with the local tournament director to help maximize the promotion of the tournament to international golf fans that follow women's golf and are issuing five thousand tickets to partners in Japan, S.Korea, Australia and New Zealand through our Global Marketing Teams (GMT) partners.

HTA is also working with Big West Conference (BWC) regarding a change in the University of Hawaii Women's Volleyball Championship Tournament. In 2024, the

University of Hawaii Women's Volleyball team moved into a different conference (Mountain West Conference) and the change impacts the BWC Women's Volleyball Championship Tournament that was slated to be held at the SimpliFi Arena at Stan Sherrif Center in Manoa. The BWC marketing team is proposing a UH Men's & Women's Basketball Championship sponsorship, however, this tournament will not be held in Hawaii but in Henderson, Nevada this year. HTA is still negotiating an appropriate tournament sponsorship replacement, or the state may need to cancel its agreement with the Big West Conference due to breaches of contract.

Brand Marketing

The marketing RFPs for China, Taiwan, Oceania, and Cruise Consultant Services stayed on track and the winners for each will be awarded by the end of August. This month, the brand team is reviewing the 2026 brand marketing plans for each major market area, which will be presented at the upcoming HTA Tourism Conference. In addition, the team is preparing a robust schedule for the global marketing teams during conference week, including the two-day conference, an internal meeting with HTA staff, DBEDT READ staff, Kilohana and island visitors bureaus, and a Mālama Hawai'i FAM on O'ahu. In early August, in partnership with Brand USA, the B2B Hawai'i Badge training program was officially launched on Brand USA's website, making it available in 11 international markets and multiple languages.

\$ 6 Million USA Maui Emergency Marketing Campaign

The Maui Emergency Marketing Campaign continued to run the co-op program – scheduled to run through December 15 - with partners including Expedia, Costco Travel, Delta Vacations, and others. Paid media was temporarily paused in July and will resume August 25–October 31, maintaining the call-to-action "Hawai'i Special Offers." To benchmark performance, a pre-activation effectiveness study was conducted June 27–July 3. Looking ahead, HVCB is finalizing Public Relations initiatives in partnership with Gray Media (Hawai'i News Now) and coordinating Maui media visits. In addition, Meet Hawai'i is running a targeted campaign through October 31, aimed at securing new definite group business for Maui.

Campaign Timeline

Initiatives	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Expedia								
Costco Travel								
Pleasant Holidays								
ALG Vacations								
Delta Vacations								
Classic Vacations								
Direct Booking Programs – Hawai'i Special Offers (Maui focus)	Paid Digital Media & LA Rams Maucamp				Paid Digital Media			
Social Media – Maui Creative					Maui Creative			
Paid Social Media					Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, TikTok			
Public Relations	Satellite Media Tour				Satellite Media Tour & Maui Media Visits	IMM LUX		
Travel Trade Education Events	Travel Advisor Education & Training			Travel Advisor Education & Training				
MCI Incentives		Targeted Offers						
Post Conversion Brand Study		Pre-Wave QR Developmen t & Data collection			Impact Assessment Wave QR Development & Data collection			ROI Assessment Wave Questionnaire Development

Oceania MMA – Webinar Partnership with Marriott International

The HTO team hosted a successful webinar in partnership with Marriott International, drawing over 400 registrations and more than 140 live attendees. Special guests included Krystal Bourget, Senior Account Executive, Leisure – Area Sales, Hawai'i & French Polynesia, and Jason Burns, Leisure Sales Manager for The Waikiki Collection. Both speakers delivered valuable on-the-ground insights into Hawai'i's accommodation offerings. The session was recorded and shared with all registrants for extended reach and long-term value. Additionally, on the media front, in July, the team achieved a strong feature by Kate Armstrong in Traveller (reach: 1.4 million) stemming from her May famil, and coverage in Escape (reach: 1.3 million) by Narelle Bouveng, which they supported ahead of IPW.

Japan MMA – Educator FAM

HTJ, in partnership with MEXT and Hawaiian Airlines, hosted an educator FAM on O'ahu from July 26-30 for 15 Japanese high school teachers to develop inquiry-based overseas study programs. Activities included cultural and historical site visits, research excursions on O'ahu and the island of Hawai'i, live broadcasts to schools in Japan, and volunteer work. Participants will present their findings at the end of August.

Korea MMA – Influencer Fam with Air Premia

HTK's influencer FAM, held July 2-6 in collaboration with Air Premia, showcased the airline's new HNL route through content featuring both iconic attractions and locally owned dining spots. As of July 31, the campaign had produced 33 Instagram and Naver Blog posts, over 100 Instagram Stories, and 651,000 total impressions, with additional content scheduled for August.

Europe MMA – Your Personal Aloha Campaign

HTE has launched the Your Personal Aloha campaign, an AI-powered UK/Germany marketing initiative that delivers personalized Hawai'i travel recommendations based on user preferences collected via interactive ads. The campaign will feature a bilingual microsite, targeted advertising, integrated tour operator itineraries, and retargeting to drive bookings. Partner tour operators will receive branded media packages in exchange for contra media value. The campaign aims to reach nearly 1.5 million users with projected interaction rates of 3%.

China MMA – The Best of U.S. 2025 Travel & Tourism Roadshow

From July 28-30, HTC took part in *The Best of U.S. 2025 Travel and Tourism Roadshow* in Chengdu, Sichuan, organized by the U.S. Embassy Beijing Commercial Department. The event aimed to strengthen connections between U.S. tourism destinations and companies and key outbound travel operators in Southwest China. Highlights included a VIP dinner with executives from 13 leading Chinese travel companies, 195 targeted one-on-one meetings, product and destination presentations to over 100 in-person and 230 online travel professionals, and a roundtable discussion providing market insights through interviews with three prominent travel enterprises.

Cruise – HDOT Energy Security and Waste Reduction Plan

HTA and DBEDT have been closely following feedback on the draft of the Hawai'i Department of Transportation's Energy Security and Waste Reduction Plan that was released at the end of June, especially in relation to cruise tourism. We have been meeting with internal state and external cruise stakeholders to collect feedback and ask questions regarding the plan. With a possible response by HTA geared towards helping the state meet emissions goals while addressing potential issues with the draft plan in relation to the cruise industry during the public comment period that ends on August 31st.

Meet Hawai'i - Sales Production

As of July 2025, Meet Hawai'i had secured 114,292 definite room nights, representing 57.6% of the CY25 goal. Performance was on track, as bookings typically concentrated in the second half of the year. Citywide bookings reached 9% of the annual goal, while

Single Property bookings achieved 47% of the annual goal and were tracking at 104% of YTD expectations. Key challenges to conversion remained uncertainty around the HCC construction timeline and broader geopolitical factors. However, tentative activity remained strong, with 118,856 tentative room nights generated in July. Current interest remained focused on 2028-2031, while Meet Hawai'i continued to pursue short-term opportunities, advance longer-term bookings, and prioritize Single Property events during the 2026–2027 HCC closure.

Planning

The Planning section has completed an initial round of Advisory Group meetings on each island to inform the Destination Management Action Plans (DMAPs). Our initial round of Advisory Group meetings centered on orienting this round of DMAPs against the lessons learned from the last round, identifying priority hotspots (where multiple visitor pressures converge on a site that lacks adequate management resources), and brainstorming strategies for engaging community members. Virtual “town hall” style meetings were also held for industry partners on Maui, Moloka'i and Hawai'i Island to gather input for both HTA's Strategic Plan and the DMAPs. Content and questions for the virtual meetings were supplied by HTA staff, while our vendor Pacific Policy Research Center (PPRC) handled meeting logistics and facilitation. Virtual meetings for industry and community stakeholders for the remainder of islands will be held through the end of August.

Following the virtual town hall meetings, we will reconvene the DMAP Advisory Groups and hold community listening sessions on each island from September and into October. The purpose of these meetings is to introduce the planning process for this round of DMAPs, refine our methodology in identifying priority hotspots, and solicit community input on other tourism-related issues and hotspots in their area. While we recognize that so many places are in need of relief, we are moderating community input through our Advisory Groups on each island to determine and advocate actionable, site-specific interventions that leverage in-progress destination management efforts through our community partners, identify promising new sites or stakeholders, and de-risk innovative opportunities by estimating project costs up-front and designing measurable progress indicators.

This month, we are making good progress on all our planning efforts. We have completed or scheduled over 30 interviews with key industry, community and government stakeholders through our vendor Better Destinations. We have also developed surveys for industry and community stakeholders to ascertain their views on

visitor-industry related subjects across HTA's various activities to inform the Strategic Plan. Final results from these surveys are expected between October and November 2025 to inform a final draft of HTA's next Strategic Plan by the end of the year. Lastly, the positive receptions by the DMAP Advisory Group on each island have greatly aided our ability to synthesize emergent themes, hotspot current conditions, and the beginnings of proposed implementation items have put us on track for final draft DMAPs by the end of the first quarter of 2026.

III. FINANCE BRANCH

Finance

The final fiscal year 2025 financial results and report will be provided in the September 2025 board packet. The Finance Department has finalized the FY 2026 budget, which is scheduled to be uploaded to the HTA's financial system by September 2025.

Procurement

Executed Contracts

Pursuant to Hawai'i Revised Statutes §201B-7 (9), below are contracts executed during the month of June 2025.

Contract No.	Contractor	Description	Contract Amount	Total Contract Value	Start Date	End Date
25009 S1	AEG Management HCC, LLC dba Hawaii Convention Center	Management of the Hawaii Convention Center	\$50,910,588.00	\$69,511,733.00	7/21/2025	12/31/2034
21042 S6	Visitor Aloha Society of Kauai, Inc.	Visitor Assistance Program 2025 Kauai	\$0.00	\$178,000.00	7/23/2025	12/31/2025
Contract Type: • Sole Source † Procurement Exemption Θ Emergency			\$51,267,310.00			

Current Procurements

HTA regularly issues open solicitations – Requests for Proposals (RFP), Requests for Qualifications (RFQ) and Invitations for Bids (IFB) – to secure professional services from qualified contractors in support of HTA's mission on behalf of the State of Hawai'i. A list of active solicitations is below.

RFP No.	Description	Release Date	Deadline
25-11	Hawaii Convention Center Rooftop Terrace Deck Repairs	4/01/2025	8/22/2025

For more information, visit: www.hawaiitourismauthority.org/rfps.

IV. HTA EVENTS/HTA-SUPPORTED EVENTS

Date	Location	Event/Project Name	HTA Program
7/10 - 12	Fort Lauderdale, FL	Global Travel Marketplace (GTM)	USA MMA
7/14	Japan	Mariott Workshop & Cocktail Reception	Meet Hawai'i
7/15	Kaua'i	Kaua'i MCI Update – Virtual	Meet Hawai'i
7/16	Webinar	Virtuoso training webinar	USA MMA
7/17	Chicago, IL	Chicagoland Destination Reps	Meet Hawai'i
7/26	Austin, TX	CEMA Summit – Networking	Meet Hawai'i
7/28-30	Phoenix, AZ	GTM Luxury – Global Travel Market Place	US MMA
7/28 - 8/2	Seattle, WA	AOGS Conference	Meet Hawai'i
7/30	O'ahu	Pacific Asia Travel Association's Christinas in July networking event	Meet Hawai'i
7/31	Chicago, IL	GMC PCMA Pickleball Networking	Meet Hawai'i
7/31	O'ahu	Women in Lodging – HLTA Fundraiser	Meet Hawai'i
8/2-8/4	Freshwater, Sydney	Aloha Freshie (annual event in honor of Duke Kahanamoku) with a special screening of <i>Waterman</i>	Oceania MMA
8/2	Kyoto	Kyoto Takashimaya Talk show	Japan MMA
8/19	Australia and New Zealand	Grin Creative Native Hawaiian content partnership	Oceania MMA
8/23	Online	Aloha Program Webinar	Japan MMA
7/11-8/17	Korea	Signature Hawai'i Consumer Campaign with The Hyundai	Korea MMA
8/8	Korea	Hawai'i Destination Expert Webinar with Hanjin Tour	Korea MMA
July 18 & 19	Moloka'i	Molokai Holokai Hoolaulea	Community Enrichment Program
July 19	Maui	Keanae Hoolaulea	Community Enrichment Program

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July 19 & 20	O'ahu	The 48 th Annual Prince Lot Hula Festival	Signature Events
July 19 & 20	O'ahu	The 4 th Annual Luau- Hawaii's Largest Grass Volleyball event	Community Enrichment Program
July 20	O'ahu	International Ukulele Festival of Hawaii 2025	Community Enrichment Program
July 20 & 27	O'ahu	Molokai 2 Oahu Paddleboard World Championships	Signature Events
July 24-26	O'ahu	2025 Queen Lili'uokalani Keiki Hula Competition	Kūkūla Ola
July 30	O'ahu	The Return of Kapaemahu Hula Mound Performances	Ho'okipa Malihini Initiative
July 31 – Aug 2	O'ahu	Honua Finals: The World Cup of Interscholastic Surfing	Community Enrichment Program
August 2	O'ahu	21 st Annual Korean Festival	Community Enrichment Program
August 2 & 3	Kaua'i	Heiva I Kaua'i	Community Enrichment Program
August 5	Hilo, Hawai'i	Hilo Harbor Pier Greetings Program	Ho'okipa Malihini Initiative
August 5	Hilo, Hawai'i	Hilo Gateway Information & Hawaiian Culture Program	Ho'okipa Malihini Initiative
August 6	O'ahu	The Return of Kapaemahu Hula Mound Performances	Ho'okipa Malihini Initiative
August 6	Kona, Hawai'i	Aloha Greeting & Cultural Program	Ho'okipa Malihini Initiative
August 9	Maui	Lahaina O-bon Festival	Community Enrichment Program
August 12	Hilo, Hawai'i	Hilo Harbor Pier Greetings Program	Ho'okipa Malihini Initiative
August 12	Hilo, Hawai'i	Hilo Gateway Information & Hawaiian Culture Program	Ho'okipa Malihini Initiative
August 13	O'ahu	The Return of Kapaemahu Hula Mound Performances	Ho'okipa Malihini Initiative
August 13	Kona, Hawai'i	Aloha Greeting & Cultural Performances	Ho'okipa Malihini Initiative
August 14	Kaua'i	An Interpretive Plan for Limahuli Tours	Kūkūla Ola
August 15-24	O'ahu	Duke Kahanamoku OceanFest	Signature Events
August 15	Kaua'i	Kauai Invasive Species Committee	Kahu 'Āina

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August 16	Kaua'i	Laulima I ke Kahakai: Reviving Kauai's Shores Through Hoohana Hou	Community Enrichment Program
August 16	Waimea, Hawai'i	Kahilu Festival Series	Community Enrichment Program
August 16	Hilo, Hawai'i	Haarii Boat Festival	Community Enrichment Program
August 17	Kaua'i	Malama Kukui Heiau- Wall & Signage Project	Kahu Āina