



HAWAI'I LODGING & TOURISM

A S S O C I A T I O N

HOTELPAC – 2020 Candidate Questionnaire (County)

1) The future of tourism in Hawai'i

Despite tourism's status as one of our state's top economic drivers, the COVID-19 pandemic has led some to call for our economy to diversify away from tourism. HLTA's longstanding position has been that our economy should look to diversify within tourism, i.e., develop and expand industries that complement tourism. Would you support this policy given the challenge of identifying industries that could immediately replace the number of jobs and revenue tourism generates for our state's economy? If not, what are your proposals for diversification?

Pre Covid19, Hawaii's Tourism industry was the pinnacle of our economic engine. Today, because of the pandemic, the engine needs to "restart." On Maui, we need to ask ourselves, "How do we successfully "restart" our economic engine and restore employment to approximately 30,000 unemployed residents?" The impact of the pandemic, in my opinion, is allowing us to remap and strategically provide assurance to the visitors and more important to our residents how Tourism will diversify and expand industries that complements the industry. In developing this plan we recognize that restaurants, and other industries were not independent from Tourism. Closures of businesses have indicated its dependency. How do we create industries intertwined with the visitors yet independent from the industry? I support the position that one of the approaches to expand industries that complement tourism with some of my thoughts, questions and plan that I have noted.

2) Tourism Management

HLTA has long maintained that we believe in the "quality" tourism model rather than the "quantity" tourism model. Effective execution of this responsible management model takes many forms, one being the establishment of user impact fees at popular visitor attractions such as O'ahu's Hanauma Bay. Do you support user impact fees? Do you have other ideas that would embrace this model?

I support “quality” Tourism. Impact fees may be applicable for Visitor Sites that are heavily visited. Another form of quality Tourism is to involve residents and communities to develop a community-based type of visitor industry. This process may create community support from its residents.

3). Real Property Tax [SEP]Hotels and lodgings historically have been among the highest real property taxpayers in all counties, paying from \$10.70 to \$13.90 per \$1,000 of assessed value. In FY2019-2020 alone, hotels were seven of the top ten taxpayers based on the amount of taxes levied. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, hotels have already come due on one installment of real property taxes, even though many of them have not generated revenue since March. As our industry looks to recover from the pandemic, will you oppose any increase in real property taxes over the next three years? Five years? [SEP]

Yes, county will need to seek reductions and efforts to sustain its revenue source and a “freeze” on tax rate increases will help with economic recovery. We can reduce for the next 3-5 years. This reduction of revenues will recognize that government will also need to reduce its expenses.

- . 4) Transient Vacation Rentals [SEP]HLTA’s position has always been one of fairness, i.e., legal TVRs such as those on AirBnB or VRBO should be allowed to operate in areas that have been zoned for resorts so long as the property owner pays the real property taxes associated with a resort property, as well as the GET and TAT. Where do you stand on this issue? Would you support a measure to increase enforcement to rein in the proliferation of properties that are operating illegally? Moreover, would you support an increase in the amount of the fine assessed to illegal operators?

TVRs may be able to operate in its designated zoned area. I support increased fines for illegal properties/operators. All visitor accommodations should be required to pay GET and TAT.

5) Homelessness Solutions [SEP]In recent years, HLTA has dedicated significant time and resources to address homelessness in our community. In addition to funds generated through our Visitor Industry Charity Walk, we secured \$1 million in State matching funds that we used to subsidize the efforts of homeless service providers around the state. Please provide a detailed description of an initiative that you would implement to address homelessness in your county. [SEP]***To address Homelessness, is to provide Housing First and provide the Capacity to provide Case Management.***

- 6) Sustainability in the Visitor Industry ^[L]_[SEP]Hawai'i's visitor industry has gone to great lengths to make its businesses more "green" and eco-friendly. What government incentives would you propose or support to help our industry bolster these initiatives? ^[L]_[SEP]

I feel it is important residents accept plans for the industry's efforts to address and implement initiatives for protection of the environment. An element of these initiatives is to impose respectable and acceptable exposure to the Native Hawaiian Culture. Continue to recognize that the greatest assets of Hawaii are the natural hospitality of its people; and to protect and appreciate the special unspoiled qualities of its natural environment and resources.

- 7) Visitor Industry Health, Safety & Security Standards ^[L]_[SEP]As the COVID-19 pandemic began to spread throughout our state, it became clear that establishing health and hygiene standards would be critical to restoring trust in our industry. As such, we developed the HLTA Health, Safety & Security Standards. These were created after reviewing the latest information from the CDC, WHO, and EPA, as well as input from industry stakeholders. Our standards were submitted to the State Department of Health for its review. After receiving DOH approval, we shared our standards with the governor, HI-EMA, State Attorney General, and all the mayors. Please answer yes or no: Would you support the adoption of our standards as statewide policy for lodging properties? If not, please explain. ^[L]_[SEP]HLTA Health, Safety, & Security Standards – Click to view ^[L]_[SEP]

I would support adoption all standards of health, safety and security standards.

- 8) Public Safety ^[L]_[SEP]To date, HLTA has held two highly successful Visitor Public Safety Conferences on O'ahu. These conferences have brought together hotel management, security professionals, lawmakers, law enforcement, social service providers, and other stakeholders to discuss possible solutions to issues such as late-night cabarets and the need for more security cameras throughout Waikiki, the homeless population in Chinatown, and a spike in shoplifting around the island. Each conference led to significant progress in addressing these community issues. ^[L]_[SEP]Neighbor Island Candidates Only: Would you support HLTA in convening a Visitor Public Safety Conference in your county in 2021? If so, what specific public health and safety issues would you like to see discussed?

Yes, in collaboration with the Maui Visitors Bureau, and the County's administration, I would support a Visitor Public Safety Conference. I am not able to submit specific public health and safety issues at this time.

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[SEP] O'ahu Candidates Only: For O'ahu's third Visitor Public Safety Conference, to be held in 2021, what specific public health and safety issues would you like to see discussed? [L]
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- . 9) If elected, what do you hope to accomplish during your first year in office, which will undoubtedly be one of the most challenging and difficult times the state and counties have ever faced.
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During these difficult times, I hope to accomplish addressing Maui County's basic needs. Identifying and balancing our revenues and expenses. Economic Recovery. Establish safe and healthy communities.
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- . 10) Please share with us one fun fact about yourself.
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A fun fact of myself is that I enjoy fishing/throwing net. [L]
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