

RES22-159 Testimony

MISC. COMM. 342

PARKS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

PARKS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES Meeting

Meeting Date: Aug 25, 2022 @ 02:30 PM

Support: 7

Oppose: 0

I wish to comment: 1

Name: John Knox	Email: johnmknox808@gmail.com	Zip: 96795
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Aug 23, 2022 @ 06:01 PM
<p>Testimony:</p> <p>Aloha Parks and Community Services Committee Members --</p> <p>My name is John Knox. I am a Waimanalo resident and a socio-economic research consultant who has been involved for decades in tracking resident concerns about tourism costs and benefits. I have designed and analyzed numerous resident surveys over the years and was the prime contractor for the last several strategic plans for the Hawaii Tourism Authority. The most recent of these emphasized Destination Management, and was the jumping-off point for creating HTA's / the City's Destination Management Action Plan (DMAP), which identifies the Koko Head Trail Climb as one of 17 O`ahu "hotspots" requiring action to alleviate resident impacts.</p> <p>Please pass the resolution as an important step toward restoring the needed balance between tourism costs and benefits on this island. I live in a section of Waimanalo, around the corner, which has also seen intensified use of recreational areas, and we can deeply empathize with the concerns of our neighbors in Hawaii Kai.</p> <p>Thanks for your attention and consideration!</p>		
Name: Carlino Giampolo	Email: carlinog@hotmail.com	Zip: 96815
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Aug 24, 2022 @ 06:27 AM
<p>Testimony:</p> <p>Dear Chair Tulba of the Committee on Parks and Community Service:</p> <p>My name is Carlino Giampolo, I live in Waikiki, and I am testifying in support of Resolution 22-159 because residents of Kaumakani Neighborhood, as well as all residents of Hawaii, deserve the highest level of respect of their dignity.</p> <p>Thank you for this opportunity to testify.</p> <p>Carlino Giampolo</p>		
Name: Ray Tsuchiyama	Email: ray.tsuchiyama@gmail.com	Zip: 96825
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Aug 24, 2022 @ 12:00 PM
Name: Daniel Nomi	Email: nomid001@hawaii.rr.com	Zip: 96825
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Aug 24, 2022 @ 03:42 PM
<p>Testimony:</p> <p>I want to make the neighborhood safer, less noise and less traffic congestion in neighborhood and most of all happy hikers. Solution open access to park consistently at 5:00 am. Add more parking at park. Add more restrooms.</p>		
Name: Ilihia Gionson	Email: ilihia.gionson@gohta.net	Zip: 96815
Representing: Hawai'i Tourism Authority	Position: Support	Submitted: Aug 24, 2022 @ 04:16 PM
Name: Noelani Schilling-Wheeler	Email: noelani@visit-oahu.com	Zip: 96815
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:

O'ahu Visitors Bureau	Support	Aug 24, 2022 @ 05:27 PM
Name: Kevin Mulkern	Email: KevinJMulkern@gmail.com	Zip: 96821
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Aug 24, 2022 @ 10:35 PM
<p>Testimony:</p> <p>Please open the gates at 4:00 AM to allow hikers and their cars to enter the park and enjoy the sunrise at the top of Koko Head.</p> <p>Support Councilman Waters resolution, hikers and the community.</p> <p>Access to the mountains and the beaches is part of Hawaii's constitution. I am concerned visitors and new residents do not know Hawaii is unlike the rest of the United States where private beaches and landlocked public lands are the norm. Our elected officials need to remember their oath of office.</p> <p>Over the last 25 years Hawaii has followed the rest of the nation by closing public hiking trails and banning parking at beaches.</p> <p>Sacred Falls was one of my first family hikes and one my daughter will not enjoy. Hiking is safer than using a crosswalk on Kalaniana'ole Highway where the average speed is 45 mph, and drivers running red lights is common.</p> <p>I am a Kuliouou resident I understand why people enjoy hiking here. Our problems are no different than Hawaii Kai. Why don't we accommodate our guests and residents by providing the bare necessities parking, water, trash cans, and a bathroom? This is something that the rest of the country does at their public parks and hiking trails.</p> <p>The Hawaii visitor Bureau could demonstrate what Aloha means by providing a free shuttle from the bus stop to the trailhead might even get Hawaii free national news coverage. Is there 4 AM city bus service to Koko Head?</p> <p>I do not understand why after-tax money was used to ensure public access to the trail at the end of Hao St. in Aina Haina. There is not one improvement - parking, water, trash can, bathroom or signs. It was one of my favorite hikes. I grew up in Aina Haina and hiked with my family just as my parents did with me.</p> <p>The city has an obligation to the residents and visitors whose numbers are growing to restore popular hiking trails such as Mariners Ridge, Kamehame Ridge and Stairway to Heaven.</p> <p>Support resolution 22-159 and open up the park and parking lot at 4:00 AM.</p> <p>Thank You for allowing me to testify</p> <p>Kevin Mulkern 808-396-6595</p>		
Name: Kevin Chun	Email: hwntaz@aol.co	Zip: 96825
Representing: Self	Position: I wish to comment	Submitted: Aug 25, 2022 @ 12:03 PM
<p>Testimony:</p> <p>My name is Kevin Chun I wish to address the issue of the Koko Head park gate issue. My parents have lived in this park area for over 50 years and we all have seen problems arise due to this park gate opening and closing. In the early hours of the morning we hear cars, people and groups arriving as early as 430am. All who have no respect for the people that live in the neighborhood. Issues such as littering, peeing in yards, loud talking, shouting car stereos all gathering waiting for the gate to open. I have personally called HPD for issues of blocking my driveway, parking in front fire hydrants, noise and lately tour buses parking in front of my house block my trash bins on pick up days. My parents are in their 80's and are rudely waken by these people who are tourists! I have watching via cameras and it's been 75% tourist (including military groups) 25% locals. NOT 50/50 like Mr. Nixon has told you prior plus the man doesn't live in the neighborhood but in Kalamazoo Valley! Plus the renewal of the trail caused increased activity in the area as well bring unwanted activity. Was there an neighborhood impact study done? I wonder as well was there a permit issued for the remodel of the trail?</p>		

Increased criminal activity has occurred since with car thefts, robbery drinking in the park after hours and people speeding and burning out coming out of the park. Numerous close calls of vehicles crashing into each other cause they ignore stop signs. Personally I have had 7 cars tagged and towed and who knows how many cars were ticketed but HPD.

Solutions! Here are some.

- * HPD presence in the early morning and at night to help curb illegal parking and activity.
- * High priority in hiring a reliable source to open and close gate. Current people are u reliable in the opening and closing times.
- * Posting signs that informs illegal parked cars will be ticketed and towed.
- * Post signs that hiking trail is at persons own risk and any costs incurred for rescue, emergency personnel will be charged to the injured, either fully or at a percentage.
- * Hiking hours clearly posted and enforced with fines of \$500 or more.
- * Make sure military top brass understand NO large group outings and their personnel act with respect when in civilian neighborhood. (worst incident with military is over 80 cars and a bus of military personnel in the early hours causing parking and noise issues.)

Action is needed IMMEDIATELY before tensions become worst.

Respectfully,
Chun Ohana

Fall 2021: The Mauna from The Kaumakani Neighborhood



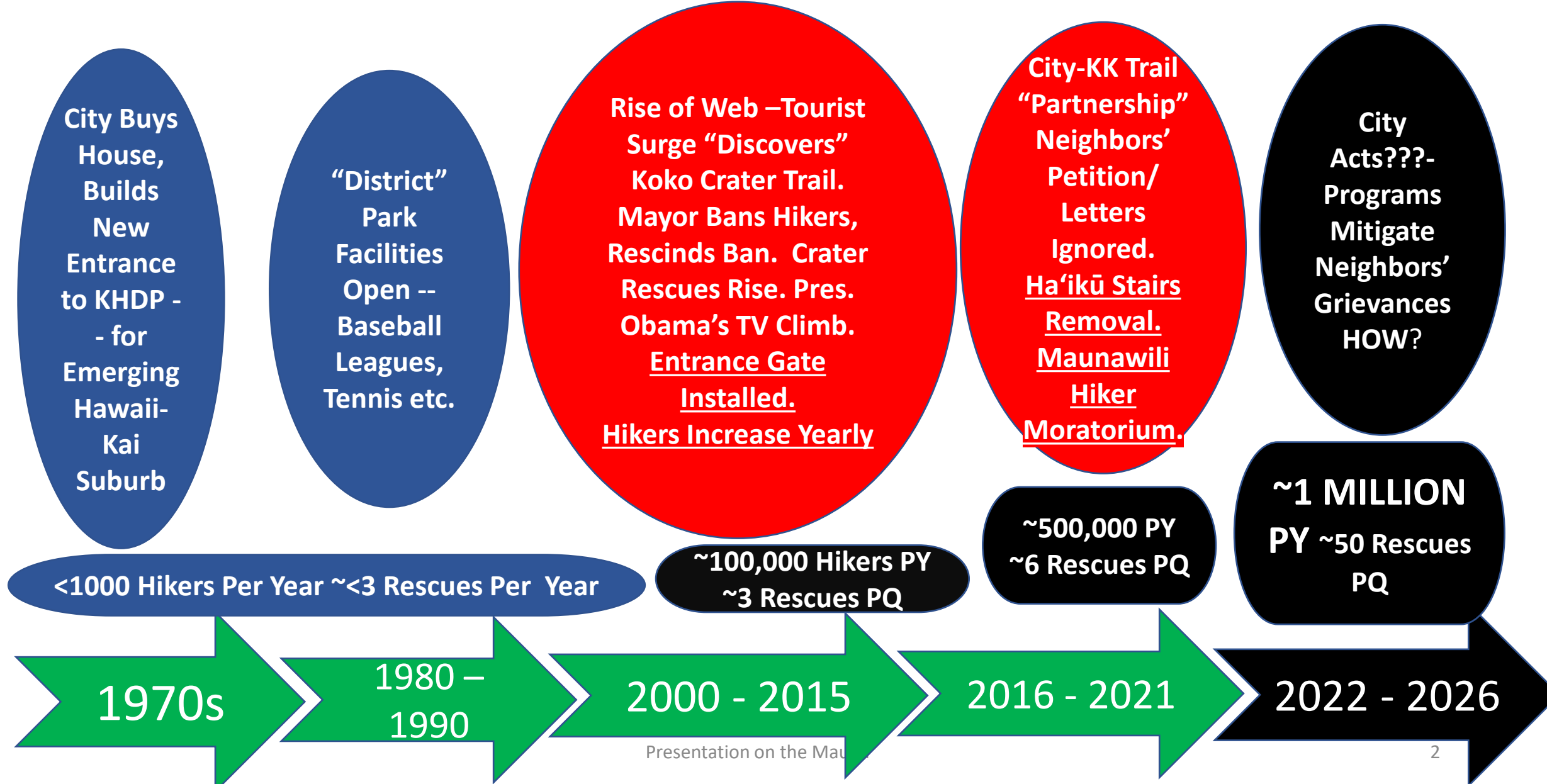
The “Root Cause” is Hiker Numbers – Let’s Not Forget This – Gates Do NOT Provide the SOLUTION – *Some “OPTIONS” LEAD TO MORE ISSUES.*

City in 2010s: “The Koko Crater stairs trail is considered unimproved public property. The city owns the land but does not maintain it nor encourage its use.”

And Today?

City is ACCOUNTABLE for Residents’ Safety, Security, and Health (Physical/Mental). 500,000 Hikers on Koko Crater per Year – the ROOT CAUSE for Negative Impact to Neighborhood + Park. A Koko Crater MASTER PLAN with ALL Stakeholders Results in a GLOBALLY-RECOGNIZED, AWARD-WINNING TRAIL + PARK + NEIGHBORHOOD.

Disaster Coming: Koko Head District Park - Koko Crater Trail/Hikers - Kaumakani Neighborhood – *It's NOT 1990.*



Ha'ikū Stairs, Maunawili Trail/Falls, North Shore/Laniakea, Diamond Head, Lanikai/Pillbox, Kuliouou, Koko Crater . . . 17 Neighborhood-Visitor “HOTSPOTS” identified by the Oahu Destination Management Action Plan. *Web Sites Promote Hikes and False Information.*



Diamond Head TODAY – Already 1 MILLION Hikers Per Year

4 AM At KHDP Entrance

This Summer the City & County of Honolulu announced the “Removal” of the **“Ha’ikū Stairs”** — **Mahalo Nui** to our City leadership who took the **“Pono”** action for residents.

“Ha’ikū Stairs” neighbor quote: *“It’s got to come down . . . “I live in the Ha’ikū neighborhood. Today already, I had four people trespassing through my backyard to get up to the stairs. They bring trash. They’re rude. They’re ruining the land. This has got to end.”* **What is DIFFERENT FROM KAUMAKANI TODAY?**

**It's Waikiki in
East Honolulu!**

**“Ethical Hiker” Training
or No Training – Local or Visitor
Please Don't Come @4 AM**



**Yes, This Truck
is Parked at the
Park Entrance**

**\$100 Bet This Driver is NOT a
PICKLE BALL PLAYER @4 AM!
Who Plays Softball @4 AM?**

Hiker Car Parked in Front of a Neighbor -- Towed



TODAY 5:47:55 AM

A Neighbor is a Caregiver for his Parents – One Requires Dialysis Treatment. Afraid that a Hiker Car Will Prevent an Ambulance From Reaching his House, My Neighbor Wakes @4 AM Daily to Watch the RING Camera – This is the LIFE We lead: Fear for our Family.

Live

...

More

**Neighbors Put Out Red Cones
@Kuliouou Neighbors Painted Sidewalk
Edges RED – We Totally Understand.
Lanaikai Moving to Permit-ONLY Parking +
HPD “Enforcement”. North Shore/Laniakea
Residents Barricade Street . . .**



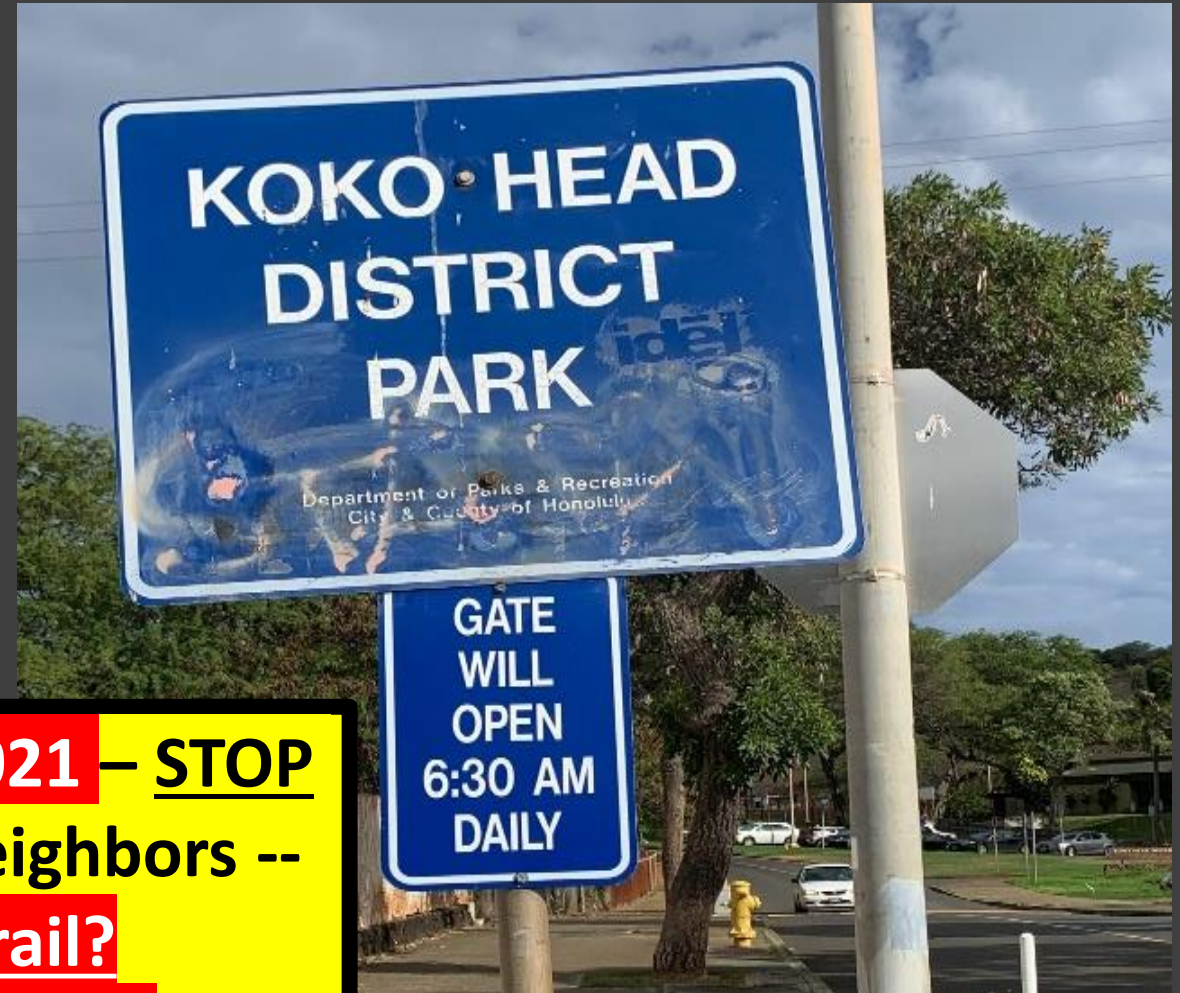
“Hiker Training”? Hawaiian Airlines Video on “Visiting Hawaii”: Three Minutes on Leaving Honu and Flowers Alone – and 50 Seconds on “Respecting” Neighborhoods!

Cannot “Scrub” 300 Web Sites Promoting Crater Hike and False Information. Who Wants to Do This?

911 on Speed-Dial on Neighbors’ Phones – But We Have Other Things to Do . . . Like Live Our Lives.

**Neighbors Ignore Hikers, Yell At Them, Call 911. Hikers expect “Aloha”.
Hikers become “Global Ambassadors” for Hawaii? What Do Hikers Say to Family and Friends?
BUT is This the Neighbors’ Fault?**

What do these Signs Exactly Mean? *But --*
With 1 Million Hikers – Changing Gates' Times Are Meaningless – Too Late.
Like Re-Arranging Deck Chairs on the Titanic.



If City Projected in 2017 500K Hikers in 2021 – STOP
Tramline Trail in 2017 To Mitigate with Neighbors --
Why Did City/KK Continue Work on the Trail?
Neighbors' Petition to Mayor Caldwell Ignored

By 2026 the Number of Hiker Cars Entering the Park > Total Number of Parking Spaces. 1 MILLION HIKERS divided by 365 Days = 2,700 PER DAY. 20% (Sunrise) = 540 Hikers. At ~2 - 3 Per Car = >250 Cars @4 AM. No Park User will be Able to Park – So They Shall ALSO Line Up at 4 AM to Enter the Park. Sunrise Hikers will Park along Kaumakani and Enter the Park BEFORE 4 AM – or “Camp” at the Park. Homeless Will be Attracted to the Park, and Vandalize City Buildings, Setting Fires. HPD Costs escalate for Park Security 24/7 – 100 Times Worse Than Before. . . Children Play in Urine/Feces in the Grass and Bushes. The Park Toilets . . . A Nightmare Scenario.



Anybody Can Walk in 24/7 – Cars In at 4 AM? (DARKNESS): City Office Thefts, Vandalism, Drug Use, “Wheelies”, Noise, Potential Assaults, Lot Filled with Hiker Cars – “Wait Until Baseball Season. . .” PARK USERS?

No Need for State DOT Approval? No Hanauma Bay Visitors Park at Upper Lot and Skip Paying \$3 per Day?



OPEN “Back Access Road” – Easy Left Turn from Kalanianaʻole Freeway? 70 Cars In Darkness and Rush Hour? 250 by 2026? Cars *NEVER* Park Along Access Road? Ambulances/HFD Easy Access 24/7? All Hikers Know Where It Is? Do You? IF This Road was Safe, Why did City Buy House and Tear Down for the Kaumakani Park Entrance?



“MARKED STALLS ONLY” For Park Users?

A “District” Park?

Q 1/2022 – Hiker Parking Surge

Park Activities: Walking/Running, Keiki Playground, Pickleball, Tennis, Basketball, Baseball, Softball, Pottery, Tai Chi . . . Call 911 to Ticket Illegal Parking? BUT THEY ARE “DISTRICT RESIDENTS”. Park Users Ask: Will There Be Stalls Marked “RESERVED FOR HIKERS”?



November 2021.

Cannot Find Parking? Park on Kaumakani Street!

Kūpuna WALK to Park . . . Too Late To See Grandkids Play . .

By Spring 2022 (Tourist "Re-Opening" + Baseball Season), MMA Fighter Pay-TV Ticket Sales Decline, as Koko Head District Park = Hiker-Baseball Players Fights Over Parking Spaces . . .



**If Neighbors Can't
Park – 10% Property
Tax Rebate?
HIKERS FREE! FREE!**

**Hiker/Park User Injured?
HFD/Ambulances Easy Access?
HFD Totally Approves?**

Presentation on the Mauna

Hikers bring violence to neighborhoods – injuring HPD officers, and potentially neighbors. *The City is responsible for protecting neighborhoods from unprovoked assaults:* <https://www.Hawai'i newsnow.com/2021/06/21/man-accused-illegally-entering-haiku-stairs-assaulting-hpd-officer/>



An 81-Year Neighbor Is Afraid of a
Fistfight with a Hiker. . . Can't Ask:
"Can You All Go Somewhere Else?"

The Root Cause is Hiker Numbers

1 % "Bad Apples" – 500K Hikers =
5,000 Rude Hikers. 1M Hikers =
10,000 Rude Hikers. That's
KCC + HCC Students COMBINED.

**Illegal Hotel Van
Parked – with
Engine Running
@4 AM in Front of a
Neighbor's
Bedroom**

**Hikers Arrive EVERY MORNING Via Car, Illegal
Hotel Van, Bikes, Scooters, Uber/Taxi Drop-Offs.
During COVID Shut-Down, It was HEAVEN –
'PEACE AND QUIET" – like MAUNAWILI TRAIL
TODAY – TWO-YEAR MORATORIUM ON HIKERS.
Wow . . .**

***THE COVID SHUT-DOWN MADE NEIGHBORS
THINK "WHAT IF . . ."***

- ☐ NEIGHBORS + HIKERS WERE SURVEYED ABOUT
THE MAUNA?
- ☐ VOICES WERE INCLUDED IN A MASTER PLAN?
- ☐ THE PARK AND PARKING WERE IMPROVED?
HIKER FEES\$\$\$ PAY FOR KEIKI AND KUPUNA
PROGRAMS AT THE PARK? QUID PRO QUO --
"ALOHA" EXPERIENCE FOR "SUNRISE HIKERS"?
- ☐ THERE WAS A SUSTAINABLE "CAP" ON HIKER
NUMBERS – THE ROOT CAUSE OF THE
PROBLEMS?
- ☐ ***"ALL REASONABLE REQUESTS?"***

**What Place Most Resembles Koko Crater Trail
Hikers - Neighbor Issues -- a Model? State has
Done Master Plans for Trails and Parks --**

**City Selects Koko Crater as FIRST City Park
Survey - Inclusive Master Plan – Now.
Nonprofit Funding Available!**

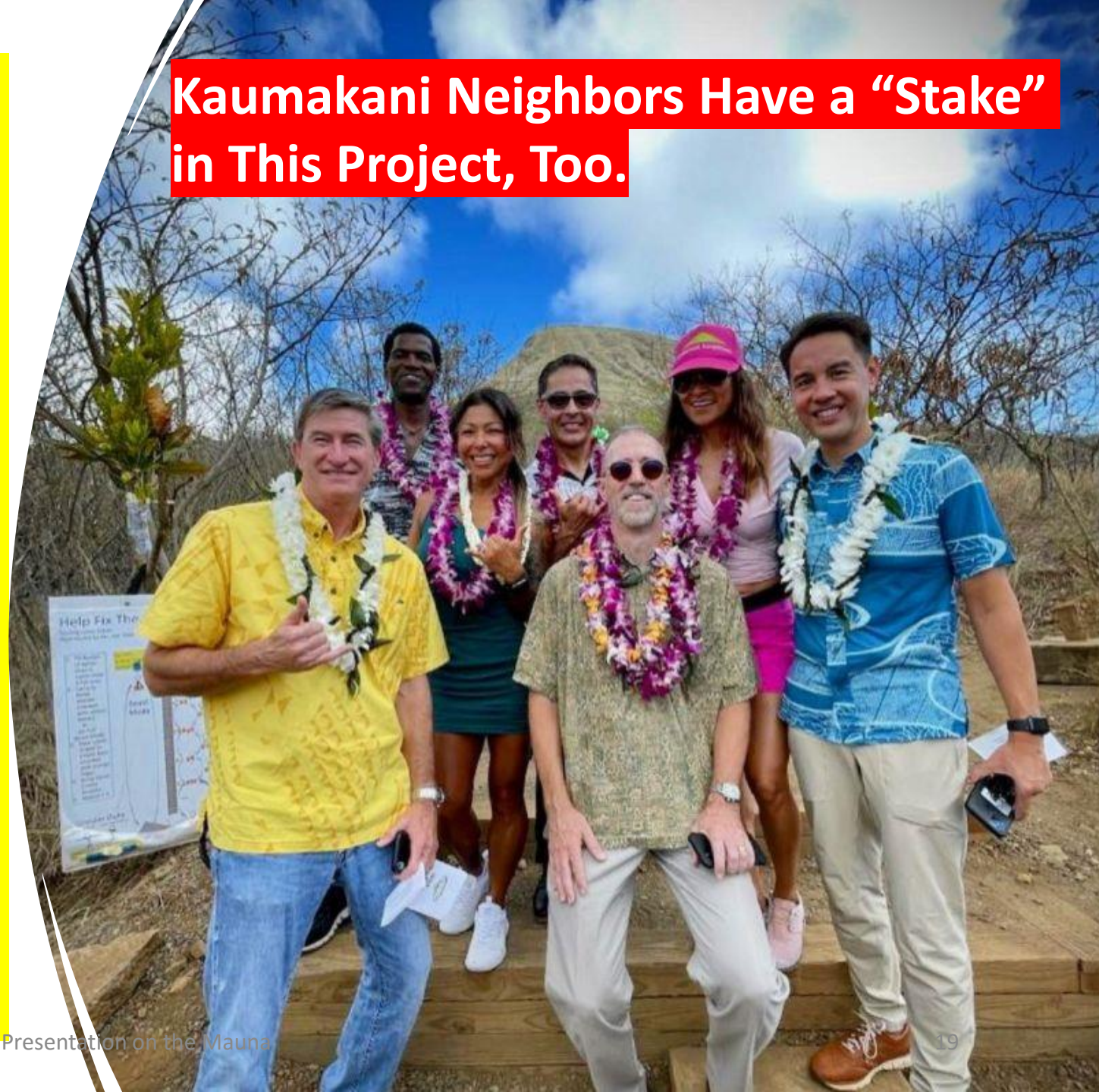
- **Ka'iwa Ridge Trail Management Plan (also known as Lanikai Pillbox) – INCLUSIVE Planning.**
- **Based On Ka'iwa Ridge Trail Online Survey Report**
- **(Neighbors + Hikers)**
- **Other -- Haena State Park Master Plan (Larger in Scope –**
- ***Inclusive of Community –***
- ***CAP on Visitor Numbers***

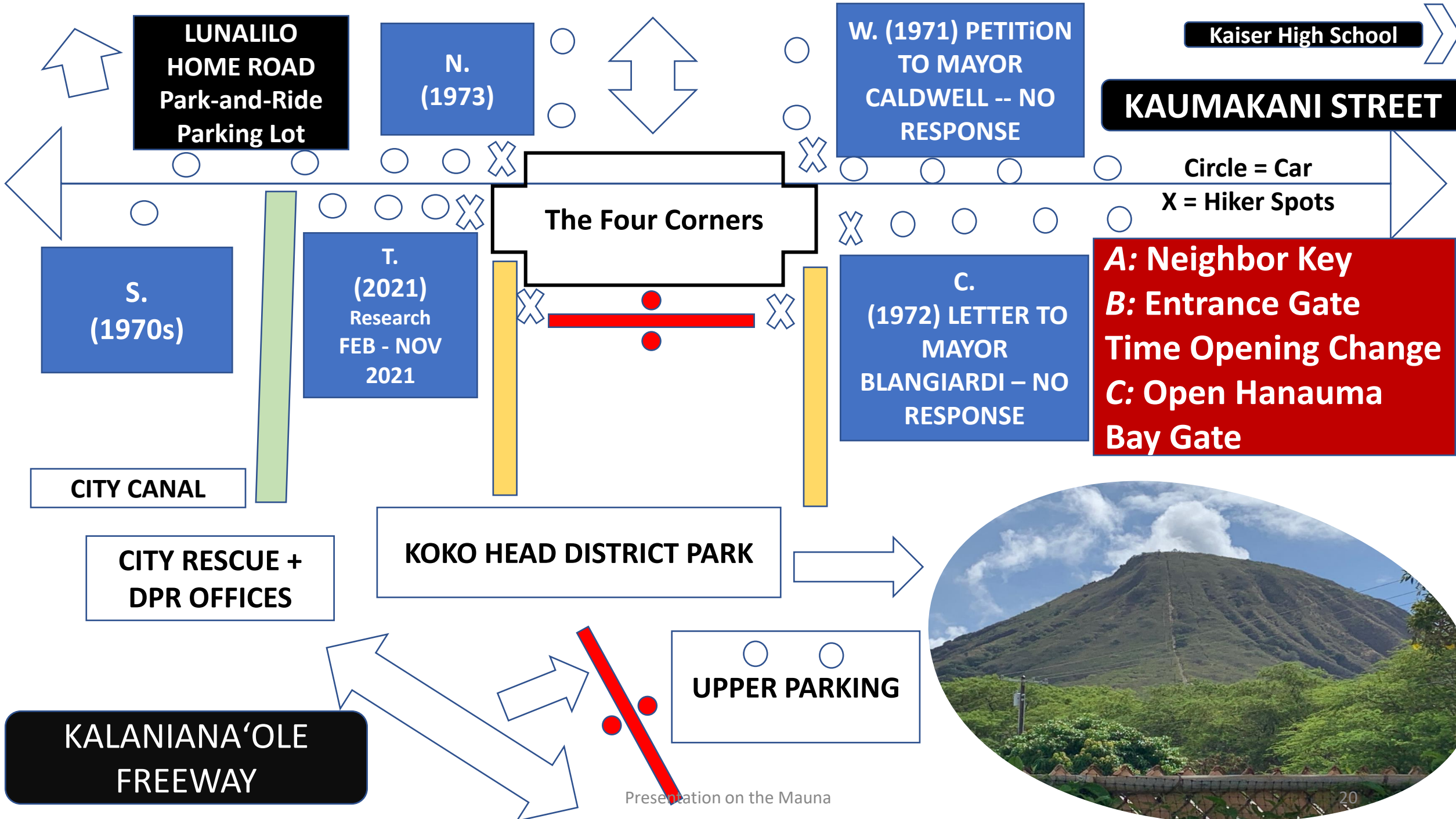


**COMMUNITY SURVEY + LONG-TERM
INCLUSIVE MASTER PLAN Shall Manage the
Mauna + Neighborhood + District Park in a
“Wholistic” Way.**

**The Kaumakani Neighborhood “Voice”
is Key to “Steward” the Mauna and
develop innovative “Pono” strategies
guided by Native Hawaiian Host
Culture values and knowledge that
have a positive outcome for the
Neighborhood, especially for Keiki and
Kūpuna.**

**Kaumakani Neighbors Have a “Stake”
in This Project, Too.**





LUNALILO HOME ROAD
Park-and-Ride
Parking Lot

N.
(1973)

**W. (1971) PETITION
TO MAYOR
CALDWELL -- NO
RESPONSE**

Kaiser High School

KAUMAKANI STREET

S.
(1970s)

T.
(2021)
Research
FEB - NOV
2021

The Four Corners

C.
(1972) LETTER TO
MAYOR
BLANGIARDI – NO
RESPONSE

**A: Neighbor Key
B: Entrance Gate
Time Opening Change
C: Open Hanauma
Bay Gate**

CITY CANAL

**CITY RESCUE +
DPR OFFICES**

KOKO HEAD DISTRICT PARK

UPPER PARKING

**KALANIANA'OLE
FREEWAY**





Hawai'i Convention Center
1801 Kalākaua Avenue, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96815
kelepona tel 808 973 2255
kelepa'i fax 808 973 2253
kahua pa'a web hawaii tourismauthority.org

David Y. Ige
Governor

John De Fries
President and Chief Executive Officer

Statement of
JOHN DE FRIES
Hawai'i Tourism Authority

Before the
HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL
August 25, 2022
Honolulu Hale

In consideration of
RESOLUTION 22-159
VEHICULAR ACCESS INTO KOKO HEAD DISTRICT PARK

Aloha Chair Tulba, Vice Chair Tsuneyoshi, and Distinguished Members of the Honolulu City Council Committee on Parks and Community Services,

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) **supports** Resolution 22-159 to provide immediate relief to residents in the vicinity of Koko Head District Park by aligning parking access hours with park hours, which will reduce the volume of vehicular and pedestrian traffic before sunrise in the otherwise quiet residential neighborhood.

Koko Crater Trail was identified as a hotspot – where demand for visitation outpaces the capacity to host – in the HTA-facilitated, community-driven O'ahu Destination Management Action Plan (DMAP), which is our guiding policy document for on-the-ground tourism management efforts. Several O'ahu DMAP actions call for reservation systems at popular sites and hotspots, including user fees that support capacity management and stewardship.

Beyond the community priorities voiced in the O'ahu DMAP, we have also been in direct contact with concerned residents in the neighborhood hoping for a solution.

We understand there are no simple solutions to many of the challenges facing hotspots like Koko Crater Trail, and that solutions including the one in this resolution will take resources to implement. The Hawai'i Tourism Authority stands willing and ready to work with the City in efforts to develop a longer-term strategy for the park and trail, sharing the lessons learned as we have worked toward management strategies at hotspots throughout Hawai'i.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share this testimony in support of Resolution 22-159, to Council Chair Waters for introducing this measure, and for your collective commitment to mālama O'ahu.



Aloha Chair Tulba, Vice Chair Tsuneyoshi and Distinguished Members of the Honolulu City Council Committee on Parks and Community Services,

The O'ahu Visitors Bureau (OVB), an Island Visitor Bureau of the Hawai'i Visitors and Convention Bureau (HVCB), supports Resolution 22-159 which aims to provide relief to residents in the vicinity of Koko Head District Park from early morning hikers by aligning parking access hours with park hours, which will reduce the noise, disruption and volume of vehicular and pedestrian traffic before sunrise in the quiet residential neighborhood surrounding the park, as a temporary solution to the problems the community currently faces.

Koko Head District Park is a well-used community park for our keiki junior sports leagues, such as baseball and basketball, for residents using the pickleball courts and basketball gym, for exercise, and for residents and visitors using it as an access to the Koko Crater Trail. The parking lot that currently exists has not kept up with the growing needs of users of the park, the heavy use of the park, and the use of the Koko Crater hiking trail. For residents neighboring the park, it is important that solutions are found to ensure a harmonious co-existence that prioritizes those residents concerns and the use of the park for our island's residents and visitors. This resolution will alleviate some of the residential concerns before sunrise until a more permanent management solution can be implemented.

In the Hawai'i Tourism Authority initiated, community driven O'ahu Destination Management Action Plan (O'ahu DMAP), which the OVB works closely with the HTA in facilitating, the Koko Crater Trail was identified as a hotspot by the O'ahu DMAP steering committee made up of community, government and industry stakeholders. It is a trail heavily used by both O'ahu residents and visitors. Working with the HTA we have heard the voices of the concerned residents and believe that this resolution will be a positive solution needed to support the community and residents around the park. We understand that there are no simple solutions to these challenges at hotspots and sometimes solutions require additional resources and solutions to implement. The OVB along with HTA stand ready to collaborate with the City and community in efforts to develop a longer term solution for this hotspot as identified by our island community in the O'ahu DMAP.

Mahalo for your consideration, for your commitment to mālama O'ahu and our communities, and for the opportunity to share this testimony in support of Resolution 22-159; and mahalo piha to Council Chair Waters for introducing this measure.

Mahalo,
Noelani Schilling-Wheeler
Executive Director
O'ahu Visitors Bureau