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Mayor Victorino endorses Tourism Group recommendations

Mayor Michael Victorino endorsed recommendations today from his fact-finding Tourism Group that call for ways to address the environmental and community impacts of the visitor industry.

The group's recommendations include: empaneling a permanent Tourism Advisory Committee; providing more visitor education opportunities; enhancing cultural awareness for visitors; improving ground transportation to reduce traffic congestion; and increasing enforcement for illegal vacation rentals, to name a few.

"Tourism is the main engine of our economy," Mayor Victorino said. "But the industry needs to work better for residents and visitors alike. It's not enough to set visitor arrival and spending records, although both are much appreciated. Now, we need to look at ways to respect our residents' home and culture while maintaining the health of our visitor industry."

At the beginning of his administration, Mayor Victorino appointed former Maui Visitors Bureau Executive Director Terryl Vencil as a Community Liaison in the Office of the Mayor, assigning her the task of implementing his vision of collaborative tourism management. The first step was form his fact-finding Tourism Group to meet regularly and make recommendations.

"Maui County's tourism industry is strong, but it has segments – like resorts, hotels, small businesses, activity providers and ground transportation – that don't always communicate as well as they should," Mayor Victorino said. "Creating a permanent Tourism Advisory Group for the mayor would get representatives of these groups talking and break down silos as a way of improving collaboration as well as communication."

Details on the formation of the Tourism Advisory Committee have yet to be worked out.

See the attached sheet for more detailed information on the fact-finding group's recommendations.

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RECEIVED AT MT MEETING ON 9/30/19
Committee Chair