



Addendum Date: July 31, 2026

**ADDENDUM 1 TO RFP NO. 27-01
for
HAWAII TOURISM DESTINATION BRAND MARKETING SERVICES
FOR THE NORTH AMERICA MAJOR MARKET AREA**

STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

This Addendum includes:

- RFP 27-01 Hawai'i Tourism Destination Brand Marketing Services for the North America Major Market Area answers to submitted questions.

Note: A new version of the RFP is not forthcoming. All changes are documented in the Addendum(s). Applicants must refer to the Addendum(s) to know of the changes.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. Section 2.4 caps administrative costs, including staffing and the contract retainer, at 18% of the contract amount per period. If the Contractor engages an HTA-approved subcontractor to execute program activities (e.g., paid digital media management, social media administration, content production), are the subcontractor's fees for that execution treated as program costs within the applicable budget category, or as administrative costs subject to the 18% cap?
 - a. Subcontractor execution fees are treated as program costs, and only the contractor's administrative items count toward the 18% cap.
2. For evaluation Criterion 1, will FTEs and key personnel provided by named subcontractors be credited toward the Offeror's dedicated account team on the same basis as the Offeror's own staff?
 - a. No.
3. Are the Sprout Social and SnapSea platform licenses held and paid by HTA or by the Contractor?
 - a. By contractor.
4. Is the current agency of record eligible to rebid, and will their pricing or scope be shared with offerors?

- a. The incumbent agency is eligible to rebid. HTA will not disclose their pricing or scope.
- 5. Approximately how many agencies have responded to participate in the RFP from the brand or affiliate of HTA?**
- a. HTA will not disclose the number of responding agencies until the RFP process has concluded. Such information may be released upon request in accordance with the Uniform Information Practices Act (UIPA).
- 6. Can HTA share the FY2026 media budget breakdown by channel and market (U.S. West, U.S. East, Canada) to inform our plan?**
- a. HTA will not provide this information and expects offerors to determine the most effective channel mix and market allocations to achieve the objectives outlined in the RFP.
- 7. Is the 18% administrative cost cap calculated on total period budget or on billable labor only?**
- a. The 18% administrative cost cap is calculated based on the total contract amount for each period.
- 8. For the Brand Marketing Plan section (35 points), is the requirement to submit a full annual plan or a strategic framework with representative tactics?**
- a. HTA requires a full Brand Marketing Plan that follows Exhibit A and outlines strategies, tactics, KPIs, and market-specific detail.
- 9. Are incumbent creative assets and the "Hawai'i Stays With You" campaign guidelines available to offerors during the RFP window?**
- a. Creative assets and brand guidelines are available through HTA's Knowledge Bank and the brand guidelines link in the RFP.
- 10. Will oral presentations be in person in Honolulu or virtual, and roughly what week?**
- a. HTA prefers that oral presentations be conducted in person during the week of August 31, 2026.
- 11. Contractors are required to use "HTA's major campaign assets." Can HTA describe what assets will be available at contract start — specifically existing video, photography and brand toolkits — and what the process is for requesting new production?**
- a. Contractors will have access to existing creative assets in the Digital Library / Knowledge Bank, and new production may be proposed within budget.
- 12. Is there an incumbent contractor currently holding this contract for the North America MMA? If so, what is the structured transition timeline and what historical data — including media performance, audience segmentation and campaign analytics — will the incoming contractor have access to?**
- a. There is an incumbent contractor for the U.S. market, and past campaign results will be shared with the awarded contractor upon contract execution.

13. What constitutes "representing a competing destination" for purposes of the staffing firewall?

- a. Offerors shall conduct a market analysis that assesses market conditions, the competitive landscape, key competitors, and factors influencing competition in the global travel market. Proposed competing destinations are subject to HTA review and approval.

14. Section 2.3 notes HTA may fund a third-party ROI study. Will this study be funded from the contractor's contract budget or separately by HTA?

- a. HTA may fund the third-party ROI study, and this funding is outside the RFP contract budget.

15. Section 5(b)(ii) requires at least three examples of "proposed creative content to be used in a future Hawai'i campaign." Should these be speculative concepts developed specifically for this proposal or adapted from prior client work? And can video creative be submitted via URL rather than printed 8.5x11 format, given that video is central to the scope? (edited)

- a. Offerors should submit speculative future Hawai'i creative concepts, and URLs may be included though evaluators are not required to view them.

16. Would you be able to share the creative asset portfolio that has been build for the brand campaign?

- a. HTA's creative assets are available in the Digital Library / Knowledge Bank.

17. Do you have the mix of historical advertising channels and their associated performance metrics to share prior as a part of the RFP or after award?

- a. HTA will share historical advertising mix and performance metrics only after the contract is executed.

18. Have you ever used first party data to target tourists who have previously expressed interest in visiting The Hawaiian Islands?

- a. Yes.

19. What do you currently use as a metric of success from advertising campaigns? Is it overall brand exposure or do you use direct response and lead capture vehicles like landing page conversions to measure success?

- a. Offerors are expected to propose meaningful success metrics for advertising campaigns.

20. Does your solicitation award winner have to be based in Hawaii?

- a. Contractors do not need to be Hawai'i-based but must have, or establish, an office in the U.S. and/or Canada.

21. What are your most successful programs to date with the current messaging and branding?

- a. HTA will share the information once a contract is executed.

- 22. Would you consider working with an agency who has not worked in tourism in the past?**
- a. Please refer to Section Four: Evaluation Criteria.
- 23. Do you partner or co-market with other travel brands who have a vested interest in the campaign's success (i.e. co-marketing with hotels, airlines, etc.)?**
- a. Yes.
- 24. Do you have a sense within the US & Canada which geographies produce the most travelers or should we expect to do an assessment of which markets will deliver the most impact?**
- a. Offerors are expected to leverage their market expertise to assess and recommend the markets and audience segments that will deliver the greatest impact. For historic visitation statistics, please visit the HTA website.
- 25. Do you consider other specific travel destinations as competitors for your travelers?**
- a. Offerors are expected to conduct a Market Analysis that provides a comprehensive overview of the market conditions, including the competitive landscape, key competitors, and factors affecting competition within the global travel market.
- 26. Do you have a breakdown of the Daily Spend by categories - food, entertainment, lodging, etc.?**
- a. Yes. Please visit HTA website research section. It is found under monthly visitor statistics, Visitor Expenditures: <https://hta.hawaii.gov/research/monthly-visitor-statistics/>
- 27. Do you have a sense of whether you prefer a visitor who is net new or do you prefer a visitor who is recurring? Is there any breakdown of this in your research?**
- a. Offerors are expected to propose target audiences that provide the best ROI based on their expertise and market knowledge. Please also visit HTA website for more information.
- 28. Can you explain the internal team structure?**
- a. The HTA's Brand Marketing team will oversee this contract. The team consists of a Chief Brand Officer, 2 senior brand managers, a brand manager, and an administrative assistant. The Contractor will work directly with the Chief Brand Officer and a Senior Brand Manager.
- 29. What is your perspective on AI as a lever for growth and increased efficiency across the communications function? Are there tools you already use?**
- a. HTA is open to innovative approaches that enhance efficiency and effectiveness across the communications function. Offerors may propose the use of AI-powered tools, technologies, and emerging channels where appropriate, and should describe how such solutions will support the objectives of the RFP while maintaining quality, accuracy, and accountability.
- 30. Have you gone through any AI/LLM visibility audits and/or restructuring content to support LLM visibility?**
- a. HTA is currently conducting an AI visibility audit.

31. The RFP outlines support across a number of different disciplines – do you have a breakdown in mind in terms of priority? For instance, should PR be 40% of the total budget?

- a. Offerors shall propose the appropriate budget breakdown with rationale supported by their expertise.

32. Can you share more insights into existing marketing and/communications metrics in the past year? For instance: a. Which channel drives the most bookings? b. What time of content gets the most engagement on owned channels? c. Alternatively – anything that HASN'T worked?

- a. HTA will share these metrics once a contract is executed.

33. From an earned media (PR) perspective – can you give us an example of a big “win” in the last year or so? An activation or campaign that has driven visitation?

- a. HTA will share examples once a contract is executed.

34. Will HTA provide historical paid media investment by channel (TV/CTV, paid search, paid social, display, OOH) and market, as well as prior campaign performance benchmarks to inform KPI-target setting?

- a. HTA will share the information with the contractor once they are selected.

35. How many social media accounts will the contractor be responsible for managing, and across which platforms? Please confirm whether this includes island-specific accounts?

- a. At a minimum, the contractor will be responsible for managing the U.S. social media accounts on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok, as well as the Canada Facebook and Instagram accounts.

36. Please describe the existing consumer database – approximate size, what platform it lives in, who owns it, and its consent status for continued email marketing in the U.S. and Canada

- a. Relevant information will be shared with the awarded contractor as appropriate following contract execution.

37. What prompted this search?

- a. The search was prompted because the current contract ends in December 2026.

38. What do you feel are the biggest misconceptions around tourism in Hawaii?

- a. Offerors are encouraged to read the HTA 2026-2030 Strategic Plan (<https://hta.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/HTA-Strategic-Plan-2026-2030-ADA-Single-Pages.pdf>) which details the HTA's guiding principles, challenges, opportunities, and priorities.

39. Are there parts of the year, cultural traditions, holidays, etc. That should be taken into extra consideration in the proposal process?

- a. Yes. Offerors should account for the island-specific shoulder periods listed in the RFP.

40. Are there any concerns or considerations we should be aware of as we think about the program? For instance, large scale planned projects, that would impact visitor experience?

- a. Offerors should consider factors that may affect visitor experience, including infrastructure improvements, community sentiment, environmental conditions, special events, and other developments during the contract term. Contractors are expected to monitor market and destination conditions and incorporate these factors into their strategic planning.

41. Are you open to an agency responding to portions of the scope, rather than the scope in full?

- a. No. Offerors must respond to the full scope of work.

42. The evaluation criterion places emphasis on familiarity with the Hawai'i brand and product. Can you help us understand if this will be exclusively based on past experience (case studies of work in this market) or based on a demonstrated understanding of communities and culture in the proposal submitted?

- a. Familiarity with the Hawai'i brand and product is evaluated through both past experience and demonstrated understanding within the proposal.

43. Would the selected agency be working with other partner agencies involved with campaigns that might support things like influencer contracting and support?

- a. Yes.

44. Does the 18% in administrative costs (staffing, office expenses) include media planning/buying labor (inside this 18% admin cost) or is it program delivery outside of it?

- a. Media planning and buying labor performed by the contractor fall under administrative costs within the 18% cap, while media spend itself does not.

45. Will the HTA-funded third-party incrementality study be the governing measure of campaign success?

- a. The HTA-funded third-party incrementality study will serve as an important measure of campaign success.

46. How frequently will HTA be sharing market data to inform program optimization?

- a. HTA and DBEDT track and publish visitor statistics continuously and release monthly updates.

47. What ad platforms, ad accounts, and ad tech tools (i.e., ad servers, DSPs, verification/brand safety tools) are currently in use, and will existing / historical data transfer to the new Contractor? Are there any existing ad tech or vendor partnership agreements that the Contractor is expected to maintain?

- a. Relevant information will be shared with the awarded contractor as appropriate following contract execution.

48. Please confirm the content management and publishing tools currently in place (Sprout Social, SnapSea), and whether HTA holds these licenses or the Contractor is expected to procure them

- a. Contractor is expected to administer and fund these tools using the contract budget.

49. What analytics or reporting tools will the Contractor have access to?

- a. Please visit HTA website research section.

50. Does HTA currently have any data partnerships or licenses (i.e., travel intent data, booking data, credit card spend data, etc.) that the Contractor will have access to for media targeting and measurement? If not, may the Contractor propose new data partnerships within budget?

- a. Existing HTA research is available on the HTA website, and contractors may propose new data partnerships within budget.

51. Page 3, HTA Strategic Plan, 4th line, How will coordination with Destination Stewardship be governed?

The contractor must coordinate visitor education with HTA's Destination Stewardship Branch. QUESTION: What responsibilities, decision rights, content inputs, approval processes, and performance measures will apply to the leisure contractor versus the Destination Stewardship Branch? Who is accountable for continuity across the pre-arrival, in-destination, and post-visit journey?

- a. The marketing contractor is responsible for pre-arrival visitor education, while HTA's Destination Stewardship Branch is responsible for in-destination visitor education. HTA will provide guidance on the collaborative approach and alignment between pre-arrival and in-destination visitor education during contract implementation.

52. Page 10, Section 2.1, How will targets be adjusted when HTA changes funding, scope or priorities?

The RFP allows HTA to revise KPIs, funding, priorities, service levels, and work activities during the contract term. It also contains language indicating both that the scope will remain unchanged following certain budget adjustments and that services may be increased or reduced.

QUESTION: When funding, scope, timing, market conditions, HTA priorities, or required activities change, will the contractor's KPI and activity-measure commitments be recalibrated through mutual written agreement? Please clarify the notice, planning, approval, and contract-amendment process that will apply.

- a. The RFP and contract scope of work will remain unchanged for the duration of the contract term. However, activity and service levels within the general scope may be adjusted if funding levels change. Should funding be modified, HTA will make corresponding adjustments to applicable KPIs and Activity Measures through a written change order and/or contract amendment.

53. Page 10, Section 2.1, How should offerors reconcile arrivals growth with the strategic emphasis on value?

The RFP requires growth in arrivals in every market while also requiring visitor spending growth to exceed arrivals growth and directing the contractor toward high-value, mindful travelers.

QUESTION: Is arrivals growth itself an essential outcome, or is it principally a means of

achieving sustainable expenditure and demand objectives? Would HTA accept flat or lower arrival growth if total or per-person economic contribution, shoulder-period performance, visitor behavior, and community benefit improve?

- a. HTA's objective is to maximize the overall value and benefits of tourism for Hawai'i and its new Strategic Plan measures success on the growth of visitor expenditures outpacing growth in visitor arrivals. While growth in visitor arrivals may contribute to this objective, performance will be evaluated holistically, including visitor spending, visitor value, seasonal demand distribution, responsible visitor behavior, and community benefits. HTA may consider alternative outcomes if they support stronger economic contribution and align with HTA's strategic goals.

54. Page 10, Section 2.1, Is expenditure measured nominally or in real terms?

Total visitor spending can increase because of inflation and higher accommodation prices without reflecting greater local economic benefit or greater contractor effectiveness.

QUESTION: Will expenditure targets be assessed in nominal dollars or adjusted for inflation and changes in lodging and transportation prices? Will HTA also consider per-person-per-day spending, length of stay, locally retained spending, and the distribution of spending into Hawai'i-based businesses?

- a. Visitor expenditure performance will be measured and tracked in both nominal and real terms. HTA also tracks per-person-per-day spending, length of stay, and other indicators of visitor value and economic contribution to Hawai'i's economy when evaluating tourism performance and outcomes.

55. Page 10, Section 2.1, Is increased multi-island travel always the desired outcome?

The contract requires annual increases in Average Islands Visited Per Person, while the broader strategy emphasizes resident wellbeing, stewardship, appropriate demand, and island-specific conditions.

QUESTION: Should multi-island visitation be increased across all markets and islands regardless of capacity and community conditions, or should it be pursued selectively where airlift, infrastructure, resident priorities, environmental conditions, and visitor experience support it? May an offeror propose an island-distribution measure based on appropriate market-island fit rather than uniform growth?

- a. Multi-island travel should be pursued strategically to help increase demand during shoulder periods and in a manner that aligns with island-specific capacity and community-informed priorities on each island, destination management goals, resident sentiment, and unique visitor experience.

56. Page 11, Section 2.2, Scope of Work, How will brand awareness and travel intent be treated?

The scope requires campaigns to increase awareness and intent to travel, and HTA indicates that intent will be tracked through its Brand Health Trends Study. These are not included among the three contractor KPIs.

QUESTION: Will HTA establish market-specific baselines and targets for brand awareness and travel intent? Will these measures be included in formal performance evaluation, and when will the contractor receive the underlying study data?

- a. While brand awareness and travel intent are not currently identified as primary key performance indicators, they will be used to inform performance evaluations and assess overall marketing effectiveness. Travel consideration and intent are currently tracked through HTA's Brand Health Trends Study, and related reports are available on HTA's website.

During the contract term, HTA may also conduct third-party research to evaluate campaign effectiveness, including impacts on brand awareness, travel intent, and conversion.

57. Page 11, Section 2.2, Scope of Work, How will spending in Hawai‘i-based businesses be measured?

The scope specifically directs the contractor to drive spending into Hawai‘i-based businesses and organizations.

QUESTION: What data will HTA provide to establish and measure this outcome? Will HTA accept measures such as referrals, bookings, partner-attributed revenue, participation by Hawai‘i-based businesses, geographic distribution of spending, or locally retained economic value?

- a. Yes. HTA will accept measures such as referrals, bookings, partner-attributed revenue, participation by Hawai‘i-based businesses, geographic distribution of spending, locally retained economic value, and other reasonable metrics that demonstrate spending in Hawai‘i-based businesses and organizations. HTA will work with the contractor during contract implementation to identify appropriate data sources, methodologies, and performance measures for tracking these outcomes.

58. Page 11, Section 2.2, Scope of Work, 2nd paragraph, and Page 39, Exhibit A, E. Strategies and Tactics, 2. What is the boundary between leisure and MCI responsibilities?

The RFP says MCI marketing is expressly excluded, but Exhibit A directs the leisure contractor’s travel-trade work to support HTA’s MCI contractor in attracting groups and optimizing use of the Hawai‘i Convention Center.

QUESTION: Please clarify the required leisure-contractor support for MCI, including deliverables, staffing, budget responsibility, decision rights, and performance accountability. How should offerors price this responsibility while maintaining the stated exclusion of MCI marketing from the scope?

- a. The successful Offeror will not be responsible for leading MCI sales and marketing efforts, as these functions are performed by a separate HTA MCI contractor. However, the leisure contractor is expected to provide reasonable in-market support for MCI-related opportunities. Such support may include referring MCI leads to the HTA MCI contractor, spotlighting major events, sharing visuals, and amplifying community impact stories that straighten Hawai‘i’s overall destination brand. No dedicated budget or staffing allocation is required for these MCI-related support activities.

59. Page 11, Section 2.2, paragraphs (b), (c), and (p).

The Scope of Work includes responsibilities related to increasing multi island utilization, monitoring and optimizing airline load factors, maintaining and expanding airlift, and ensuring initiatives are metric driven.

Question: Can HTA clarify which of these performance areas will be evaluated as Contractor responsibilities where outcomes may be influenced by third parties, including airlines and airport capacity, that are outside of the Contractor's direct control?

- a. HTA will evaluate the Contractor based on efforts and activities within its control. Recognizing that outcomes may be affected by external factors beyond the Contractor’s control, performance will be assessed primarily on the Contractor’s actions, execution, and demonstrated progress toward established goals.

60. Page 12, Section 2.2 Scope of Work, Public Relations (b.)

Develop partnerships with key media influencers to extend the Hawai‘i welcoming message to

target audiences.

QUESTION: Are “key media influencers” defined by editors/writers/journalists who influence media coverage and editorial calendars or lifestyle influencers and content creators?

- a. Both.

61. Page 12, Section 2.2 Scope of Work, Public Relations (I.)

Provide a monthly clippings report.

QUESTION: Will the list of generated coverage included in the monthly report suffice?

- a. Yes.

62. Page 13, Section 2.2, Scope of Work, Partnerships, a. How are shoulder-period outcomes defined?

The RFP identifies shoulder months by island but does not specify the desired scale, baseline, or appropriate type of demand.

QUESTION: Will HTA provide island-specific shoulder-period baselines and demand targets? Should success be measured through arrivals, occupancy, spending, air-seat performance, length of stay, visitor mix, or another measure? How should the contractor respond when island capacity or community conditions make additional demand undesirable?

- a. The Offeror shall develop strategies focused on optimizing visitor distribution, yield, seasonality, and visitor quality rather than solely increasing visitor volume. The goal is to reduce seasonal demand fluctuations by strengthening visitation during shoulder periods while supporting sustainable tourism objectives, destination capacity considerations, and community priorities. Success should be measured by the Contractor’s ability to improve demand patterns and economic value in a manner that aligns with each island’s unique needs and carrying capacity, which may be informed by the Contractor’s derived baselines or analysis.

63. Page 13, Section 2.2, Scope of Work, Owned Channel Management, c. How will HTA approval timelines affect performance?

The contractor must involve HTA in planning and obtain approval before content is finalized.

QUESTION: Will the contract establish expected HTA review and approval timelines? If an approval delay affects campaign timing, media efficiency, activity measures, or KPI performance, how will that delay be reflected in the contractor’s evaluation?

- a. The Contractor shall be responsible for developing and managing timelines, including incorporating sufficient time for HTA review and approval of deliverables prior to planned publication/launch. Both the HTA and Contractor will work collaboratively to review materials in a timeline manner consistent within the agreed-upon schedule. Contractor performance will be evaluated based on activities and deliverables within the Contractor’s reasonable control. To the extent that HTA approval timelines materially affect campaign launch dates, media performance, or KPI attainment, such delays will be taken into consideration when assessing performance and overall contract compliance.

64. Page 14, Section 2: Background and Scope of Work, 2.3 Key Performance Indicators (KPI) & Activity Measures

QUESTION: Are the KPIs listed in this section for the initial 2027 contract year or for every year of the contract term.

- a. The KPI targets listed in this section apply to all three contract periods.

65. Page 14, Section 2.3 Key Performance Indicators & Activity Measures

Section 2.3 identifies Total Visitor Arrivals, Total Visitor Expenditures, and Average Islands Visited Per Person as the three KPIs for which the contractor is responsible. The HTA Strategic Plan identifies Resident Sentiment, Visitor Satisfaction, Average Daily Visitor Spending, and Total Visitor Expenditures as agency KPIs. The scope also requires brand awareness, travel intent, responsible-travel education, support for local businesses, community engagement, shoulder-period demand, airlift development, and cultural integrity.

QUESTION: Please clarify the hierarchy among these measures. Which measures will determine the contractor's formal annual performance evaluation, and which are intended as contextual, agency-level, diagnostic, or supplemental measures? Which measures ultimately govern contractor performance?

- a. The primary key performance indicators are listed in the Section 2.3. Additional measures, such as brand awareness, travel intent, responsible travel education, support for local businesses, community engagement, shoulder-period demand, airlift development, and cultural integrity, will serve as supporting indicators to assess overall marketing effectiveness, strategic execution, and progress toward HTA's broader destination marketing and stewardship objectives. While HTA identifies Resident Sentiment, Visitor Satisfaction, Average Daily Visitor Spending, and Total Visitor Expenditures as agency KPIs, the successful Contractor may be asked to contextualize how their own performance may translate or contribute to HTA's Strategic goals.

66. Page 14, Section 2.3, Key Performance Indicators & Activity Measures, How will contractor influence be distinguished from external conditions?

Total arrivals, expenditures, island visitation, and airlift performance are materially affected by air capacity, accommodation inventory and pricing, inflation, exchange rates, economic conditions, natural disasters, and other factors outside the contractor's control.

QUESTION: What methodology will HTA use to distinguish the contractor's contribution from external market conditions when evaluating achievement of the three KPIs? Will the assessment consider forecasts, available air seats, lodging capacity, pricing, exchange rates, economic conditions, island conditions, media investment, and other relevant variables?+

- a. HTA recognizes that the KPIs are influenced by external factors beyond the Contractor's control. Performance evaluations will consider both market conditions and the Contractor's demonstrated efforts, strategies, and execution, with emphasis on outcomes reasonably attributable to the Contractor's work rather than external factors alone.

67. Page 14, Section 2.3, Can alternative KPI targets replace HTA's preliminary targets?

The RFP permits offerors to propose alternative targets supported by data and analysis.

QUESTION: If HTA accepts an offeror's alternative KPI targets, will those targets replace the preliminary targets in Section 2.3 as the binding standards for contract evaluation? Will an offeror be evaluated adversely during proposal scoring for proposing lower, differently

- a. If HTA accepts an Offeror's proposed alternative targets for the three KPIs, those agreed-upon targets may become the basis for performance evaluation under the contract. Offerors will not be evaluated adversely for proposing alternative targets for the three KPIs, provided they are supported by sound data, analysis, and a reasonable methodology.

68. Page 14, Section 2.3, Can the contractor propose supplemental outcome measures?

Many of the most consequential requirements in the scope—responsible behavior, support for local enterprises, cultural respect, visitor preparation, community participation, brand health, and shoulder-period demand—are not reflected in the three contractor KPIs.

QUESTION: Will HTA accept a supplemental measurement framework covering brand awareness and intent, responsible-travel message recall, beneficial visitor behaviors, visitor satisfaction, local-business engagement, shoulder-period demand, resident or community outcomes, and incremental campaign impact? If accepted, how will these measures factor into the contractor’s annual evaluation?

- a. Offerors may propose supplemental performance measures, subject to HTA approval. Once approved by HTA, these measures will be incorporated into the Contractor’s performance framework and considered as part of the annual performance evaluation.

69. Page 14, Section 2.3 Key Performance Indicators, 4th paragraph, How will responsible-travel education be assessed?

HTA will measure recall of pre-arrival messages through the Visitor Satisfaction and Activity Survey.

QUESTION: Will responsible-travel message recall be a contractor performance measure or an agency monitoring measure? What baseline, sample size, market-level detail, reporting cadence, and attribution methodology will be available? May the contractor recommend measures of behavior in addition to message recall?

- a. Responsible travel message recall will serve as one measure of the effectiveness of pre-arrival education and outreach efforts. HTA will utilize data from the Visitor Satisfaction and Activity Survey and may conduct third-party research to further evaluate the effectiveness of pre-arrival messaging and educational initiatives. Offerors may propose additional measures, including behavior-based indicators, subject to HTA’s approval. Please visit the HTA website for additional information about the Visitor Satisfaction and Activity Survey.

70. Page 14, Section 2.3 Key Performance Indicators, 4th paragraph How should the contractor contribute to resident sentiment?

Resident sentiment is a Strategic Plan KPI, but marketing directed toward Hawai‘i residents is expressly excluded from the RFP.

QUESTION: What specific role does HTA expect the leisure marketing contractor to play in improving resident sentiment when resident-directed communications are outside the scope? Will resident sentiment affect contractor evaluation, and, if so, how will the contractor’s influence be isolated?

- a. Resident sentiment is an HTA Strategic Plan KPI and a broader destination management objective. While resident-directed marketing is outside the scope of this contract, the Contractor is expected to support resident sentiment indirectly through responsible destination marketing, visitor education, demand management, promotion of respectful visitor behavior, and alignment with community and cultural priorities. Resident sentiment will be considered as contextual information rather than a primary Contractor performance measure, and Contractor evaluation will focus on activities and outcomes that are reasonably within the Contractor’s control.

71. Page 14, Section 2.3 Key Performance Indicators, 4th paragraph How should visitor satisfaction be incorporated?

Visitor satisfaction is also an HTA Strategic Plan KPI but is not a contractor KPI under Section 2.3.

QUESTION: Does HTA expect the contractor’s work to be evaluated against visitor

satisfaction? If so, which aspects of satisfaction are considered reasonably attributable to marketing, visitor preparation, and content rather than to transportation, accommodations, attractions, infrastructure, or other visitor-experience providers?

- a. Visitor satisfaction is an important HTA Strategic Plan metric but is not identified as a KPI under this contract. It may be considered contextual information, with evaluation focused only on areas reasonably influenced by the Contractor, such as visitor expectations, trip planning resources, pre-arrival information, responsible travel messaging, and destination storytelling.

72. Page 14, Section 2.3, Key Performance Indicators and Activity Measures, 4th paragraph, What data and research will HTA provide?

4th paragraph: In addition, HTA will track and measure visitors' recall of pre-arrival messages about safe, responsible travel and respect for Hawai'i's culture, people, and environment through its Visitor Satisfaction and Activity Survey, and Percentage of People "Intent to travel to Hawai'i within the next 12 months" through its Hawai'i Brand Health Trends Study.

QUESTION: What research and data will be available to the selected contractor, including Hawai'i Target Traveler segmentation, Brand Health Trends, visitor satisfaction and activity data, resident sentiment, campaign performance, website and social analytics, airlift and load-factor data, booking data, island-level capacity, and visitor expenditure data? At what level of detail and on what schedule will these data be provided?

- a. Please visit the HTA website's Research section for additional information on available studies, surveys, and research related to visitor satisfaction, resident sentiment, and other destination performance metrics.

73. Page 16, Section 2.6, First Bullet – KPIs

Section 2.6 states that the contractor "must meet" all three KPIs, but it also permits a written explanation when a target is missed because of circumstances outside the contractor's control.

QUESTION: If HTA accepts the contractor's explanation that a KPI was missed because of factors outside its control, will the contractor be considered to have performed satisfactorily for that measure? What is the contractual effect of an acceptable external-factors explanation? Please clarify how an accepted explanation affects the annual evaluation, remedies, renewal decisions, and any determination of default.

- a. HTA recognizes that achievement of the KPIs may be affected by factors outside the Contractor's reasonable control. If a KPI target is not met, the Contractor may provide documentation and analysis demonstrating the impact of external factors. HTA will review such information as part of its overall performance assessment. Any accepted explanation will be taken into consideration during the annual evaluation. Performance evaluations will consider not only KPI outcomes, but also activity measures, strategic execution, demonstrated efforts, and the Contractor's responsiveness and adaptability to changing market conditions.

74. Page 16, Section 2.6, How will the 85% activity-measure requirement be applied?

Section 2.6 requires achievement of 85% of the total number of approved activity measures. A simple count could give the same importance to minor output measures and strategically material outcomes.

QUESTION: May activity measures be weighted according to strategic importance, investment, timing, and contractor control? Will HTA distinguish required measures from developmental, experimental, or contingent measures when calculating the 85% threshold?

- a. Offerors are expected to establish reasonable activity-level targets that align with their proposed work plan, budget, and performance objectives. HTA will hold the Contractor accountable for achieving at least 85% of the total number of approved activity measures.

75. Page 22, Section 3: Proposal Content and Submission, 8. Activity Measures Worksheets

QUESTION: Are we to provide a worksheet for the initial 2027 contract year only or for every year of the contract term? If a multi-year response is required, please specify whether we are to create additional worksheets for the additional years or create a separate document file for each contract year.

- a. Please provide the Activity Measures Worksheet for the initial contract period (Period 1) only.

76. Page 29, Criterion 2, How will “value in relation to administrative fees” be evaluated?

Criterion 2 evaluates the Brand Marketing Plan partly on “overall value delivered in relation to the administrative fees,” while cost is separately scored and administrative costs are capped at 18%.

QUESTION: Please clarify how evaluators will assess value relative to administrative fees. Will value be assessed against total proposed cost, program investment, administrative percentage, staffing levels, or another standard? How will HTA avoid penalizing an offeror for proposing the staffing and operational infrastructure necessary to manage the full scope responsibly?

- a. Evaluation will consider the relationship between the proposed staffing, resources, operational approach, and administrative costs, and the Offeror’s ability to successfully deliver the required services and achieve contract objectives. Offerors should clearly demonstrate how their proposed budget and staffing structure support efficient, effective, and successful achievement of contract objectives.

77. Page 29, Criterion 2, How should offerors prioritize markets and objectives?

Offerors must differentiate among the U.S. West, U.S. East, and Canada, while the RFP emphasizes U.S. East growth, Canadian recovery, shoulder periods, multi-island travel, high-value travelers, airlift, and spending.

QUESTION: Does HTA expect approximately equal attention and investment across all three markets, or should offerors propose a deliberate hierarchy based on market opportunity and island needs? How will evaluators distinguish strategic concentration from insufficient coverage?

- a. Offerors are expected to propose a strategic allocation of resources based on market opportunities and performance potential, supported by sound data and analysis. Strategic concentration in higher-opportunity markets will not be viewed as insufficient coverage, provided the Offeror demonstrates a clear rationale and an effective plan for achieving contract objectives across all target markets.

78. Page 39, Section 6: Attachments and Exhibits, Exhibit A: Brand Marketing Plan (BMP) Outline

QUESTION: Is the BMP addressing the initial 2027 contract year or the full 2027-2029 contract term? If a multi-year response is required, please specify whether separate plans should be submitted for each contract year.

- a. Offerors shall submit a single marketing plan covering the entire contract period, with a primary focus on the initial contract period. The plan should outline the overall long-term strategy while providing greater detail on activities, tactics, budgets, and performance measures for the initial contract period.

79. Page 40, Exhibit A, 4th bullet Research, Will HTA commit to campaign incrementality research?

The RFP says HTA “may” fund a third-party study of incremental trips, spending, and taxes.

QUESTION: Does HTA intend to fund an independent incrementality study for major campaigns? If not, what level of attribution evidence will the contractor be expected to provide, and should offerors include the cost of such research within their proposed fixed price?

- a. At a minimum, HTA will fund a third-party study during the initial contract period to support the major campaign effectiveness study.

80. Page 40, Exhibit A, Notes, Digital Platform, How will shared-platform dependencies affect accountability?

GoHawaii.com and the mobile application are managed by another contractor, while the leisure contractor is expected to use them to guide travel decisions.

QUESTION: What service levels, access, analytics, implementation support, and decision rights will be established between the leisure contractor and the digital-platform contractor? How will contractor performance be adjusted when required implementation or data access depends on another HTA contractor?

- a. HTA expects the leisure marketing contractor and the digital platform contractor to collaborate closely, with HTA providing oversight and guidance to support shared program objectives. Contractor performance evaluations will focus on responsibilities and deliverables within the Contractor’s reasonable control. Metrics related to the performance of GoHawaii.com will not be used as primary measures of this contractor’s performance.

81. Page 41, Exhibit A, F. Major Campaigns and Programs, How much flexibility exists after “Hawai‘i Stays With You”?

The campaign is required through December 31, 2027 “or as directed by HTA,” while the proposal must provide a three-year roadmap.

QUESTION: Should offerors assume that “Hawai‘i Stays With You” continues unchanged through 2029, evolves after 2027, or may be replaced at HTA’s direction? What level of new creative development should be budgeted for 2028 and 2029?

- a. Offerors should present a flexible three-year roadmap that accommodates potential campaign evolution while including reasonable provisions for ongoing creative optimization and refreshes.

82. Page 41. Section G, Describe the methodology used to develop the quarterly targets

i. **QUESTION: Is this a measurement of the campaign in the market or other third-party inputs? Will the HTA resume its Advertising Effectiveness Research Study or is the contractor expected to procure this research?**

ii. **QUESTION: structured, or conditional targets when the supporting analysis demonstrates that they are more realistic? For example, is there a mistake that the U.S. West target for average number of islands visited by 0.5% and the U.S. East at 0.3%. Shouldn’t they be reversed?**

- a. Offerors are expected to explain the methodology used to develop the quarterly activity-level targets included in the Activity Measures Worksheets.

