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Hawai'i Tourism Authority Board of Directors Establishes Permitted Interaction Group to Support Maui Recovery Efforts *Planning Services Sought for Tourism Recovery Plan*

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) Board of Directors has established a Disaster Response Permitted Interaction Group to support HTA's Maui recovery efforts. HTA has issued an Invitation for Bids (IFB 24-05) to procure planning services for a Tourism Recovery Plan, as part of the organization's ongoing efforts to support Hawai'i's communities and economic recovery.

"As we continue to assess the needs of Maui's people and how they envision rebuilding for the future, a Tourism Recovery Plan is critical to supporting Maui's revival and the state's immediate, mid-term, and long-term recovery efforts," said Mahina Paishon-Duarte, Chair of the Disaster Response Permitted Interaction Group and HTA Board Vice Chair. "HTA is working on tourism-related business data with the State Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism's Research and Analysis Division, which will also guide our efforts."

Qualified applicants will have proven experience in strategic planning and economic development, particularly in tourism and facilitation. The selected contractor will provide services to support the HTA Disaster Response Permitted Interaction Group and HTA staff in the development of a messaging strategy, a Tourism Recovery Plan, and key learnings and recommendations for future planning.

In the wake of the Lahaina and Kula wildfires, an emergency HTA board meeting was held on August 15, 2023, pursuant to Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS) §92-8(a). During this meeting, the board of directors approved to request a Tourism Emergency Declaration from Hawai'i State Governor Josh Green, M.D., pursuant to HRS §201B-9.

In addition, the board also formed among its members a Disaster Response Permitted Interaction Group to address Maui's communities and visitor industry impacts. Specifically:

- To assess and understand the current situation and needs of residents, community, employees, visitors, businesses, and the industry;
- To allocate resources to respond to the tourism emergency that is in effect due to the Maui brushfires experienced in West Maui and Kula;
- To develop short and long-term plans to determine optimal and effective use of HTA's available resources;
- To record and document emergency response and recovery activities that may be replicable for future disaster and crisis events related to the West Maui fires and broader crises; and
- To develop a strong messaging strategy that will be creative, consistent, shared, and coordinated with key stakeholders.

Gov. Green declared a tourism emergency through his Sixth Emergency Proclamation on August 19, 2023, which unlocked the Tourism Emergency Special Fund. He further authorized HTA, in coordination with the Department of Budget and Finance, to use monies in the Tourism Emergency Special Fund to respond to the emergency and provide relief under section HRS §201B-10.

On August 31, 2023, the HTA board approved the [Maui Marketing Recovery Plan](#), which is expediently being implemented through mid-November 2023. The plan is centered around a new Mālama Maui campaign and prioritizes rebuilding travel demand from the United States, Maui's largest visitor source market.

"HTA continues to work among the community and visitor industry as we support the people of Maui," said Daniel Nāho'opi'i, HTA's Chief Administrative Officer. "This Tourism Recovery Plan will correspond with our comprehensive stewardship, destination management, and visitor education initiatives, fostering a more regenerative future for all of Hawai'i."

Responses to the IFB are due to HTA by 2 p.m. HST on September 27, 2023. Work will commence on October 2, 2023, and will end on December 1, 2023.

HTA is issuing the IFB through the Hawai'i State eProcurement System (HlePRO) at hiepro.ehawaii.gov. Applicants are required to register on HlePRO to submit offers and receive any addenda to the IFB. Inquiries regarding the IFB should be directed to procurement@gohta.net.

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About the Hawai'i Tourism Authority

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority is the state agency responsible for representing The Hawaiian Islands around the world, and for holistically managing tourism in a sustainable manner consistent with community desires, economic goals, cultural values, preservation of natural resources, and visitor industry needs. HTA works with the community and industry to Mālama Hawai'i – care for our beloved home. For more information about HTA, visit www.hawaiitourismauthority.org or follow @HawaiiHTA on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), Threads and [Twitter](#).

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