

PART I INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose and Background

The Maine Tourism Association is seeking a consultant to assess and improve the customer flow and overall visitor experience at four of the Maine State Visitor Information Centers. Maine Tourism Association operates the 7 Maine State Visitor Information Centers on behalf of the Maine Office of Tourism and will be working on this project in collaboration with MOT. This Request for Proposal (RFP) document provides detailed instructions for submitting proposals, outlines the criteria and procedures for selecting the winning consultant, and defines the contractual terms that will govern the relationship between the Maine Tourism Association and the chosen consultant.

Maine Tourism Association (MTA) was founded in 1921 as the Maine Publicity Bureau. The organization has been promoting tourism in the state for over a century.

MTA is designated by the IRS as a 501c6 organization, allowing it to serve as an advocate for tourism and business. Strengths include a membership of more than 1,500 business members, legislative advocacy, workforce development, and operating the 7 Maine State Visitor Information Centers on behalf of the State of Maine.

MTA's Mission:

Leading the growth and sustainability of Maine's tourism businesses.

Tourism is an important economic engine for Maine with an estimated 15.23 million visitors in 2023 that contributed approximately \$9 billion in direct spending throughout the state. Research conducted by the Maine Office of Tourism shows that 82% of visitors are driving to the state and 23% of those visitors utilize visitor information centers as a top (rated #3) in-market visitor resource. The Maine Tourism Association, in collaboration with the Maine Office of Tourism seeks to continue the positive movement of visitation to and the utilization of the State's Visitor Information Centers as a top in-market resource for visitors; sustaining and growing tourism related jobs, improving year-round tourism movement throughout the state and uphold the [State's 9 Tourism Stewardship Principles](#).

This RFP is funded through the US Department of Commerce/Economic Development Administration ARPA State Tourism Grant Program and is an unprecedented opportunity to make transformational change and ensure an equitable recovery for the tourism industry from the devastating economic effects of the COVID19 pandemic throughout the state.

Maine Tourism Association seeks to contract with a firm that will assess and suggest improvements based on customer flow and overall visitor experience at four of the Maine State Visitor Information Centers. The goal is to improve traffic flow to create a welcoming and seamless experience for a visitor that educates, informs and directs visitors to information about destinations and businesses in Maine.

PART II SCOPE OF SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED

1. MTA seeks to contract with a firm that will complete the scope of services below for the following State of Maine Visitor Information Centers:

1. **Kittery**

- I-95 and US Rt. 1, Po Box 396, Kittery, ME 03904

2. **Hampden North**
I-95 North Mile Marker 175, Hampden, ME 04444
3. **Yarmouth**
US Rt. 1/Exit 17, I-295, 1100 US Rt. 1, Yarmouth, ME 04096
4. **Acadia Gateway Center (Opening May 2025)**
Gateway Center Dr, Trenton, ME 04605
5. **Hampden South**
I-95 Mile Marker 179, Hampden, ME 04444
6. **Fryeburg**
97 Main Street, US Rt. 302, Fryeburg, ME 04037

2. Analyze traffic flow, recommend, and execute a floor plan that maximizes space and position of displays, interactive kiosks, brochure racks, and other experiential installations.
3. The firm must understand the projected timeline and must complete the assessment by October 1, 2024.
4. Provide recommendations in a final report to the MTA and MOT for interactive, experiential, and informational kiosks and/or displays including but not limited to: electronic information, event and weather boards, digital brochure racks, wall/window wraps, branded paneling and other design components.
 - (a) Recommendations must include an appropriate mix of traditional (existing brochures and magazines) with new technology according to the size and traffic at each Visitor Information Center location.
 - (b) Design recommendations must align with [State branding guidelines](#) and reflect the MOT's [Destination Management Plan & Stewardship Principles](#)
 - (c) Designs must work with and factor in dedicated space for interpretive story-telling panels, displays, or interactive installations representing Maine arts, history, culture, and Maine products, with input from, but not limited to: the Maine Arts Commission, MaineMade and Indigenous/Tribal Organizations.

PART III REQUIREMENTS

1. **Experience in Retail and Visitor Center Design:** The firm must have proven experience in assessing and improving customer flow and visitor experiences, particularly in retail environments or visitor information centers.
2. **Data-Driven Analysis:** The firm must demonstrate the ability to conduct comprehensive data-driven analysis of customer behavior to inform design recommendations.
3. **Innovative Design Solutions:** The firm must have a portfolio showcasing innovative design solutions that enhance customer experience and efficiency.
4. **Project Management Expertise:** The firm must possess strong project management skills, ensuring timely assessment and recommendations.

Timeline

- RFP Release Date: July 15, 2024
- Proposal Submission Deadline: August 16, 2024
- Evaluation Period: August 19-23, 2024
- Award Notification: August 26, 2024

Contact Information for questions and submissions, please contact:

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