RFP# 53-26-044 - ADDENDUM 2

FAILURE TO RETURN THIS RFP ADDENDUM IN ACCORDANCE WITH INSTRUCTIONS MAY SUBJECT YOUR PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL TO REJECTION ON THE AFFECTED ITEM(S).

INSTRUCTIONS: Please make the following change(s) in the RFP referenced above.

Refer *ALL* Inquiries regarding this RFP to: Marie Humphrey Marie.humphrey@ncports.com	**Request for Proposal # 53-26-044**
	Proposals will be publicly opened: August 19, at 4:00PM
	Commodity No. and Description: 8210 Advertising Services
	Using Agency: North Carolina State Ports Authority (The Authority)

Execute Addendum:

VENDOR NAME: _____

ADDRESS (CITY & STATE): _____

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

NAME and TITLE (Print): _____

Questions & Answers:

#	RFP Section, Reference	Vendor Question	Answer
1	Section 1.1 (p.6)	Is the $500,000 annual budget expected to remain consistent across the three-year initial term, or will it flex by year based on business forecasts?	While we are a profit-driven agency and the contract is subject to the business forecast, the contract is expected to be held steady at $500,000 for several consecutive years.
2	Section 2.4 RFP Schedule (p.7)	Could you please clarify the proposal's due date for this opportunity? The timeline lists the due date as Monday, August 18, however, August 18 falls on a Tuesday. Would you please confirm the correct due date?	Per Addendum 1, the RFP Schedule was revised. Due Date is Wednesday, August 19, 2026, at 4:00PM ET
3	Section 2.6 (p.8)	If a vendor designates no information as confidential or proprietary, is a separate redacted copy still required?	No
4	Section 2.7(e) Proposal Contents	Proposal Contents Vendor Response and Proposal, we wanted to confirm two apparent cross-reference discrepancies: Should the reference to Specifications and Scope of Work be Section 5.2 rather than Section 5.0? Should the reference to SOS Verification be Section 4.11 rather than Section 4.12?	Section 5.0 provides general background and an overview. Section 5.2 contains the specific items and any specifications that vendors should respond to. Please use Section 5.2 when preparing your proposal responses. Yes, the correct reference for SOS Secretary of State Registration is section 4.11.
5	Section 2.7(h) Proposal Contents	Under Section 2.7(h) – we wanted to confirm that the Attachment this links to is labeled Attachment F vs. Attachment E, as indicated in the RFP.	Yes, the links direct you to the correct attachments. Please rely on the attachment titles rather than the lettering. For example, the link for" Attachment E - Location of Workers Utilized by Vendor" correctly opens the Location of the Workers document, and the link for

			"Attachment F - Certification of Financial Condition" correctly opens the Certification of Financial Condition. The titles reflect the correct documents.
6	Section 2.7 (p.9)	Is there a page limit for the Vendor Response narrative (Sections 4.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.2), and are there required formatting standards for font, margins, or spacing?	No page limit or standard formatting or margins, spacing required.
7	Section 3.3 (p.10)	Does the Authority anticipate requesting oral presentations? If so, approximately when in the evaluation timeline?	Oral presentations may be requested by the NC Ports Authority.
8	Section 4.3, Page 12	Does the Authority require resumes for all personnel working on the account, or would bios be sufficient?	Bios are sufficient.
9	Section 4.3 Vendor Corporate Background and Experience, page 12	The RFP requests experience supporting an international shipping facility and purchasing advertising in international logistics trade publications. Will vendors with comparable experience supporting transportation, freight, logistics, or economic development organizations be considered responsive if they demonstrate similar capabilities and results?	Yes
10	Section 4.4 (p.13)	Should the three references reflect similar budget size, similar scope of services, or both? Will public-Section tor references be weighted differently than private-Section tor references?	No
11	Section 4.10, 5.2.3 (p.15, 17)	For a PR partner named and disclosed in the proposal, is subcontractor approval granted upon award, or is a separate approval required before work begins?	Subcontractors identified in the proposal will be reviewed as part of the evaluation. Final subcontractor approval will be granted by the State after award, in accordance with Section 4.10.
12	Section 4.12 (p.15)	What is the anticipated Effective Date, and will there be a transition overlap period with the current provider?	The anticipated effective date will be determined based on the award timeline. Any transition or overlap period will be established after award, according to The Authority's needs.
13	Section 5.1, Page 16	Could the Authority provide a baseline breakdown or percentage estimate of how the historical advertising budget has been split across digital, print, trade publications, and PR/event sponsorships?	Media activity has typically accounted for half of the total annual budget. Of that total, tradeshows and sponsorships have accounted for $50,000, digital has accounted for roughly $100,000, and print has accounted for roughly $75,000. However, this is reevaluated on an annual basis.
14	Section 5.2, Page 17	Could the Authority provide the number of marketing activities performed in 2025, such as the number of campaigns based on the channel (paid ad, digital, print, etc.)?	Media activity has typically accounted for half of the total annual budget. Of that total, tradeshows and sponsorships have accounted for $50,000, digital has accounted for roughly $100,000, and print has accounted for roughly $75,000. However, this is reevaluated on an annual basis.
15	Section 5.2, 5.1 (p.16)	To inform planning, can the Authority share the current annual media allocation by channel, or by audience segment (shipping industry, business and economic development, vertical industries)?	Media activity has typically accounted for half of the total annual budget. Of that total, tradeshows and sponsorships have accounted for $50,000, digital has accounted for roughly $100,000, and print has accounted for roughly $75,000. However, this is evaluated annually.

16	Section 5.2.2 Strategic Market Planning	How does NC Ports currently move prospects from initial marketing engagement through business development and customer conversion? Are there established definitions of a qualified lead and systems in place to measure marketing's contribution to commercial outcomes?	Beyond the scope of this RFP.
17	Section 5.2.2 Strategic Market Planning	Of the initiatives outlined in Strategy 2031, which are the highest priorities for the selected agency to accelerate during the first 12 to 24 months?	Beyond the scope of this RFP.
18	Section 5.2.3, 5.2.5 (p.17)	Given the sealed, mailed submission requirement, may vendors include URLs to hosted video and interactive work samples in addition to files on the flash drive?	Yes the URLs and interactive work samples may be provided.
19	Section 5.2.3 / 5.2.4, Page 17	Does the Authority allow standard media buying commission models, or must all media be billed at net cost with agency work billed strictly via hourly rates per Attachment A?	We anticipate for media to be billed at net cost.
20	Section 5.2.6 Webmaster, page 17	Please clarify the anticipated scope of website support. Is the contractor expected to provide content updates only, or will website design, development, user experience improvements, and CMS administration also be required?	Website support should include website design, development, user experience improvements, and CMS administration. We have worked with ad agencies who have sub-contracted this work out. The NC Ports internal team handles day-to-day content updates.
21	Section 5.2.6 (p.17)	Section 5.2.6 requires website changes to comply with State DIT requirements. Can the Authority describe the current website platform or CMS and hosting environment so vendors can scope webmaster capability accurately?	Our website is currently hosted by Nexcess, and WordPress serves as our content management system (CMS).
22	Section 5.2.6 Webmaster	Should the website primarily serve as an informational resource, a lead-generation tool, or both? How do you envision digital channels supporting customer acquisition over the next several years?	Beyond the scope of this RFP.
23	Section 5.2.6, Page 17	The Webmaster scope notes that technical changes must comply with State DIT requirements. Will the agency have full access to the website back-end to perform content updates and landing page optimization?	Yes
24	Section 5.2.7 (p.17)	Does the scope of Public Relations services anticipate crisis communications support (rapid-response messaging, incident statements, media monitoring during an active issue), or is crisis communications outside the scope of this Contract?	Rapid-response messaging, incident statements, and media monitoring are managed by the Authority's internal team. During crisis communications or other rapid-response situations, the selected agency may be asked to provide support services, including graphic design, website updates, and other communications materials as needed.
25	Sec 5.2.7 (p.17)	Can the Authority provide an estimate of anticipated press release or proactive media announcement volume (per month or per year) so Vendor can appropriately scope PR staffing and pricing?	Press release activity and proactive media announcements are handled by the in-house team.
26	Section 5.2.7 (p.17)	Does the Authority currently have trained spokespeople for media interviews and public appearances, or is media training expected to be part of the awarded Vendor's Public Relations responsibilities?	Media training is not expected to be part of the awarded vendor's public relations responsibilities.
27	Section 5.2.7; Attachment A (p.17, 23)	Section 5.2.7 describes Public Relations as an hourly-rate line item in Attachment A. Is hourly pricing intended to apply per-project or as an ongoing retainer-style engagement billed hourly?	This hourly pricing could apply per project. However, winning bidder will not be expected to work exclusively on an hourly basis, so please include best project estimates.

28	Sec 5.2.7, 5.2.3, 4.10 (p.15, 17)	Given that Public Relations is listed as a distinct pricing line item, how does the Authority prefer Public Relations capability to be staffed and structured under this Contract?	PR-related work might include graphic design for infographics and social media, website content updates or landing pages, paid media message development and strategic communications.
29	Section 5.2.8 Copy, and 5.2.5 Creative Ability	As NC Ports executes Strategy 2031, what shift in perception do you most want your key audiences to make over the next three years?	Beyond the scope of this RFP.
30	Section 5.3 Tasks/Deliverables, and 6.5 Periodic Reports	Strategy 2031 emphasizes becoming increasingly customer-centric and data-driven. To what extent is NC Ports open to recommendations that improve the commercial marketing ecosystem, such as CRM optimization, lead nurturing, closed-loop reporting, or marketing automation?	Beyond the scope of this RFP.
31	Section 5.3, Page 18	There aren't any specifics in the 5.3 deliverables that list public/media relations planning requirements, but the competency is referenced in the campaign background. Are public relations included in #5 media planning/buying deliverables? What are the expected deliverables for the public relations portion of the proposal?	PR-related work might include graphic design for infographics and social media, website content updates or landing pages, paid media message development and strategic communications.
32	Section 5.3, Page 18	Deliverable item #1 lists "Market Research." Is the Authority looking for the selected vendor to conduct primary market research (e.g., proprietary surveys/focus groups with cargo owners), or leverage existing secondary industry data and syndicated research tools?	The Authority possesses the existing secondary industry data and syndicated research tools. The selected agency will have access to that data. Market research, including potential audience focus groups, could be included in the scope of work.
33	Section 5.4, 6.1 (p.19)	Which marketing and communications functions does the Authority's internal team currently handle versus expecting the agency to perform (for example social community management, PR, or reporting)?	The Authority's internal team handles organic social media (though on occasion may ask agency for the creation of a social media graphic), news media outreach, press releases, event planning (though on occasion may ask agency to assist with supporting materials or visuals), government relations, corporate communications, internal communications, and crisis communications.
34	Section 5.4, 6.3 (p.19, 20)	Does the Authority expect the agency to be onsite in Wilmington for meetings, and if so at what frequency? Are travel costs reimbursed separately, or should they be built into the hourly rates?	The Authority does not expect the agency to be onsite in Wilmington for routine meetings. However, the agency's onsite presence may be requested for key activities, such as annual planning sessions, campaign-related creative shoots, or other significant project milestones. Travel costs can be reimbursed separately or built into hourly rates.
35	Section 6.3 and 6.5 (p.20)	Section 6.3 references weekly business review meetings at the State's request; Section 6.5 requires quarterly analytics reports. What standing meeting and reporting cadence should vendors plan for and price?	Vendors should include in their pricing weekly business review meetings (check-in meetings) and quarterly analytics reporting.
36	Section 6.3, Page 20	Section 6.3 references weekly post-award business review meetings. Are these meetings expected to be conducted in-person at the Wilmington headquarters or via virtual conference call?	Business review meetings are typically conducted via virtual conference call.

37	Section 6.5 (p.20)	What primary KPIs does the Authority use to measure advertising success today, and are there current benchmarks a new agency should plan to improve upon?	Current KPIs/ goal tracking include: Paid Search: calls from paid search, website conversions, impressions, clicks, conversions, conversion rate, click through rate, cost per click, brand impression share, cost per conversion. Paid Social (LinkedIn): impressions, clicks, conversions, conversion rate, click through rate, cost per click, reach, social interactions Digital Media: impressions, clicks, click through rate, sessions, engaged sessions, engagement rate Website performance: sessions, engaged sessions, engagement rate, total users, events, views, average time per session, conversion (key event) rate Print: Calls from print ads
38	Section 6.5 Periodic Reports	Beyond increasing awareness, what measurable KPIs and outcomes should the selected agency influence during the contract term, and how will NC Ports evaluate success?	Current KPIs/ goal tracking include: Paid Search: calls from paid search, website conversions, impressions, clicks, conversions, conversion rate, click through rate, cost per click, brand impression share, cost per conversion. Paid Social (LinkedIn): impressions, clicks, conversions, conversion rate, click through rate, cost per click, reach, social interactions Digital Media: impressions, clicks, click through rate, sessions, engaged sessions, engagement rate Website performance: sessions, engaged sessions, engagement rate, total users, events, views, average time per session, conversion (key event) rate Print: Calls from print ads
39	Section Attachment A Pricing	Does the $500,000 annual advertising services budget include or exclude ad spend (i.e., working dollars)?	The $500,000 annual budget includes ad spend.
40	Section Attachment A, page 23	Are media buys included in the proposed budget?	Yes
41	Section Attachment A, page 23	Approximately how does the Authority anticipate allocating the annual advertising budget among agency professional services, media purchases, creative production, and other communications activities?	In years past, roughly half of the annual budget is allocated to media buying. However, this is evaluated annually.
42	Section Attachment A, Page 23, Section 1.0, Page 6	The RFP lists an annual advertising services budget of $500,000. Does this total budget include pass-through media buying expenditures, or is it strictly allocated for agency professional fees and retainer services?	The $500,000 annual budget is all-inclusive and should include pass-through media buying expenditures.
43	Section Attachment A (p.12, 23) Section 4.1	The pricing form requests hourly rates by category and notes a $500,000 annual budget. Does the $500,000 include paid media placement and third-party production (working dollars), or does it cover agency labor only, with media and production billed separately as pass-through?	The $500,000 annual budget is all-inclusive and should cover both media placement and any third-party production costs.

44	Section Attachment A (p.23)	How would the Authority like paid media and pass-through production costs represented in the proposal, given the pricing form captures only hourly labor rates?	We are aware that paid media varies greatly depending on platform and frequency. However, winning bidder will not be expected to work exclusively on an hourly basis, so please include best project estimates.
45	Section Attachment A Section 3.4;	For pricing evaluation, will the Authority compare individual category rates, a blended hourly rate, or estimated annual hours by category? If hours, can the Authority provide an estimated annual hours or budget allocation by category?	However, winning bidder will not be expected to work exclusively on an hourly basis, so please include best project estimates.