

Highway 1 Tourism Alliance – Post-Survey Communications Plan

Background

In November 2025, the Highway 1 Tourism Alliance (H1TA) conducted an outreach survey of its constituents. A key finding was that members—hotel and vacation rental owners and managers—were more likely to rate the organization as *effective* or *very effective* when they were informed about, and involved in, the strategies and outcomes of both their local fund area (LFA) and the broader Highway 1 Road Trip initiatives.

H1TA currently collaborates with 10 communities, 8 boards and 35 volunteer board members, offering multiple opportunities for engagement. Survey results also revealed that many constituents who are not actively involved expressed interest in learning more about H1TA's initiatives and results.

In addition, as the organization works toward renewing its '89 district, and transitioning to the '94 Property and BID law, leadership identified a strong need for clearer, more consistent communication about H1TA's goals, impact, and successes.

In summary, feedback from the survey showed:

- Strong support for marketing
- Importance of beautification and infrastructure projects
- Calls for stronger ROI reporting and governance clarity
- Uneven understanding of how funds are allocated

Communication Objectives

1. Increase stakeholder understanding of how funds are collected and spent
2. Demonstrate measurable ROI tied to tourism marketing
3. Clarify H1TA's role vs. County vs. Local Fund Areas
4. Increase two-way engagement with lodging stakeholders
5. Strengthen trust of Local Fund Area initiatives

Other Key Deliverables

- Establish clear steps to ensure constituents who expressed interest in the survey have opportunities to become more informed or involved.
- Summarize and synthesize relevant survey feedback, with emphasis on insights that inform next steps for the 89 renewal and 94 formation.
- Engage approximately 250 business partners who have benefited from H1TA programs during the renewal and formation process.

Key Questions

- What budget is available for constituent outreach and communications?
- Who will be responsible for managing and executing communications?
- How can H1TA strengthen and expand its constituent email database, particularly among individual vacation rental owners?



Strategies

Launch Bi-Annual “Impact Dashboard” (similar to the marketing piece recently produced) that could include:

- Revenue collected (regional and local areas)
- Dollars spent by category
- Campaign performance metrics (in easy to understand terms), including website traffic and major initiatives
- Local B&I project and Event funding updates
- Budget snapshot

Stakeholder Forum (Virtual or Hybrid) to present:

- Budget preview
- Campaign updates
- Announce open board seats
- Open Q&A and discussion
- **Note:** Consider also hosting a regional vacation rental meeting—potentially in partnership with Visit SLO CAL—to share information and gather feedback on issues specific to this segment of the hospitality community.

Quarterly LFA Reports

- Enhanced reporting by LFA Administrators and Marketing Partners at regular LFA board meetings to share updates and results, including specific outcomes of their participation in the LFA Imperative programs.
- Encourage direct monthly outreach by LFA Administrators to members to collect and update email contact information and grow the database to allow for more economical distribution of information.

Annual Reports

- Share Year End Report and Annual Reports (as required by the non-profit)

Potential Communication Tactics

- **Email Newsletters:** Distribute regular updates on strategies, programs, and market insights; offer constituents the option to opt into the consumer-facing newsletter.
- **Social Media:** Use platforms such as LinkedIn to connect with hotel managers and share industry news; utilize direct messaging on other platforms as appropriate.
- **Webinars / Virtual Member Meetings:** Host larger online sessions (similar to “All Agency Meetings”) to share H1TA strategies, programming, and performance results with lodging partners.
- **Member Portal:** Continue to post plans, reports, and resources on the member portal for easy access.



- **Postcard Program:** Develop a recurring postcard program to both communicate key messages and encourage email sign-ups over time. Postcards should also remind constituents about available member tools and the member portal.
- **Update LFA funding applications:** Focus on how we can better work with our non-profit and local businesses to ensure residents and community leaders understand the contribution and impact of each LFA. Some ideas include requesting a thank you letter be provided once funding is received, sharing a press release with local media, sharing projects funded and outcomes on social media platforms, etc.

Anchor Message:

Highway 1 Tourism Alliance (H1TA) exists to drive measurable tourism demand that benefits assessed businesses.

Tone & Style - Survey responses show the need for:

- Less marketing language in internal communications
- Financial clarity
- Direct, plain-language explanations
- Honest acknowledgment of structural constraints

Supporting Themes:

- Marketing is the primary mission
- Funds are tracked and reported transparently
- Local voices matter
- Governance modernization improves alignment (related to 94 communication)

Suggested topics include:

- Who the Highway 1 Tourism Alliance is (people, mission, and strategies)
- The Highway 1 Road Trip brand and its reach
- How H1TA fits into the broader tourism promotion ecosystem (including collaboration with Visit SLO CAL)
- How H1TA's efforts benefit local communities (e.g., TOT growth over time)
- Infrastructure and capital improvement program updates
- Event funding examples and outcomes
- Ways constituents can get involved
- FAQs related to H1TA role in our local communities – What can be funded and what can't be funded

Some additional ideas for consideration:

- Add plaque or signage on all funded local projects
- Add "Funded by" tag on event promotions
- Create social posts highlighting local investments
- Consider investment in local PR to inform locals and constituents of infrastructure investments.
- Create a "welcome to H1TA" onboarding piece that helps orient new hospitality professionals and vacation rental owners about the efforts regionally and locally.



Potential Roadmap Timeline:

Q1 (July–September 2026) - Foundation & Transparency Launch

- Launch Quarterly Impact Dashboard (Q1 edition)
- Publish FAQ: “What H1TA Does / Does Not Control”
- Create “Welcome to H1TA” onboarding packet
- Develop standardized attribution guidelines

Q2 (October–December 2026) - Engagement Expansion

- Stakeholder forum (following 1994 Formation)
- Release “H1TA Major Initiatives” one-pager
- Launch project attribution signage program
- Distribute budget summary

Q3 (January–March 2027) - Measurement & Feedback

- Share mid-year performance summary

Q4 (April–June 2027) - Alignment & Modernization Messaging

- Share budget recap + next FY preview
- Publish year-end performance summary
- Publish Annual Report

In conclusion:

The 2026–2027 Communication and Marketing Strategy will signal:

We are confident in our marketing results.

We hear concerns about increasing clarity and enhanced governance.

We will look to improve cadence of reporting and engagement.

We are modernizing structure with the 1994 Formation.

