



STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: November 1, 2016
To: Honorable Mayor & City Council
From: Megan Roach, Marketing and Economic Sustainability Manager
Subject: 2016 Holiday Décor, Activity and Lighting Ceremony Enhancements
Attachments: 1. None

INTRODUCTION

In September, the City Council approved the 2016 holiday décor and lighting program, which includes décor, lighting, and banners for the commercial areas. Council directed staff to look into décor and activity enhancements for the upcoming season to ensure that Beverly Hills remains top of mind as a destination during the holidays.

This report transmit suggested enhancement developed based on feedback received from the City Council and the City's partners including the Beverly Hills Conference and Visitors Bureau and the Rodeo Drive Committee and seeks Council direction on whether to proceed with implementation.

DISCUSSION

The development, execution, and promotion of a cohesive holiday program is a key goal of the City Council and its partner organizations, including the Beverly Hills Conference and Visitors Bureau ("BHCVB") and the Rodeo Drive Committee ("RDC"). Each year the City sponsors a signature holiday program designed to celebrate the season and attract visitors from around the region to visit, shop, and dine in Beverly Hills. As we continue to discuss how best the City and its partners can maintain the brand and competitive edge, it has become clear that an important aspect of marketing the business community is to improve and build on the shopping experience. Therefore, you will notice that the proposed enhancements are primarily focused on that element. In addition to this experience, these added enhancement are intended to create a sense of place as an attraction destination.

In response to Council's direction at the September 6th study session meeting, staff developed a proposal of holiday décor and activity enhancements for consideration for the upcoming holiday season, as follows:

Holiday Entertainment

Utopia Worldwide, the City's holiday program management firm, would procure the Camden Carolers and Bedford Brass Band to perform in the commercial areas for a total of nineteen days (Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays) from November 25th through December 30th, 2016. The performers would roam the commercial areas and stop and perform at key points of interest, including Beverly Canon Gardens Park and The Paley Center. The performers would also be integrated into the 'jolly trolley' sponsored by the Beverly Hills Conference and Visitors Bureau, which includes Santa and Mrs. Claus. The total cost for the performers for the holiday season is \$23,000.

Holiday Décor Enhancements

In recent years, the City's holiday décor program has expanded beyond the business triangle to include the southeast and other areas of the city. Recently, City staff was contacted by representatives from the newly formed South Santa Monica Business Improvement Association to request that the City look into décor enhancements for the area. The City's current holiday décor program includes lights for the palm trees on South Santa Monica to Wilshire Blvd. and lights for the ficus trees from Wilshire to Moreno. In response to this request, City staff and Utopia Worldwide conducted a site visit to the area and recommend the following décor enhancements:

Décor Enhancement	2016 Budget Estimate
Garland, Warm, White LED Lights and Bows for 23 Street Poles from Wilshire to Moreno – purchase, install, maintain, remove and store décor.	\$17,600
Wilshire/Santa Monica Entrance – purchase, install, maintain, remove and store warm, white LED lights to wrap four tall palm trees and two entrance poles.	\$6,400
Hanging Snowflake Lights – purchase, install, maintain, remove and store snowflake lights for 42 ficus trees, an average of seven lights per tree.	\$53,000
TOTAL	\$77,000

Holiday Lighting Ceremony – Fireworks Enhancement

On October 4, 2016, the City Council approved the overall design theme and specific components for the Rodeo Drive holiday décor program and lighting ceremony scheduled for November 20, 2016. The City's Fiscal Year 2016-17 funding agreement with the Rodeo Drive Committee includes \$200,000 for the lighting ceremony event. While the ceremony budget is the same as in prior years, the Committee and its new agency of record, AGENC, have expanded the footprint of this year's ceremony to include a holiday food and beverage component on the 200 block of Rodeo Drive. The ceremony will also feature expanded street entertainment and experiences. At the study session meeting, Council emphasized the importance of a 'wow factor' for this year's

ceremony. In response to that direction, City staff, the Rodeo Drive Committee and AGENC recommend adding a fireworks display as the ceremony finale. The 2-minute display off the City parking structure at Brighton and Rodeo is estimated to cost \$30,000.

Rodeo Drive Holiday Photo Activations

This year's lighting ceremony will feature decorative photo activations where people can take a photo and share it with family and friends via social media using #OnlyOnRodeo and #LoveBevHills. As proposed, the Rodeo Drive Committee would keep the activations up past the ceremony for six weeks to attract visitors during the shopping season. The activations would be placed at 2 Rodeo and on the 300 block, in front of the Battaglia store, where there is sufficient clearance on the sidewalk. The total cost for the activations for the six-week period is \$85,000. This includes fabrication, installation, project management, and 24/7 security. As proposed, the cost would be split between the City and its partner organizations; with the City funding \$45,000, the Conference and Visitors Bureau funding \$20,000, and the Rodeo Drive Committee funding \$20,000.

FISCAL IMPACT

The City's Finance Department projects \$39,140,000 in Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) revenue for the 2016-2017 Fiscal Year, which results in a Tourism and Marketing budget of \$5,951,429 and is budgeted in program account 0101311. The budget includes \$320,000, a combination of \$120,000 for contingency programs and \$200,000 for the buffer/reserve account. The City's Finance Department has advised that early Transient Occupancy Tax receipts look encouraging in that they are exceeding projections for the year so far. The proposed holiday entertainment, décor, Rodeo Drive lighting ceremony, and photo activation enhancements total \$175,000. Staff recommends these items be funded through the contingency and buffer/reserve funding, which would leave a balance remaining of \$145,000.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council provide direction to staff on the proposed 2016 holiday entertainment, décor, Rodeo Drive lighting ceremony, and photo activation enhancements.

Cheryl Friedling 
Approved By