



## STAFF REPORT

**Meeting Date:** August 6, 2013  
**To:** Honorable Mayor & City Council  
**From:** Megan Roach, Marketing & Economic Sustainability Manager   
**Subject:** Recommendation from the Rodeo Drive/Special Events/Holiday Committee Regarding the City's 2013 Holiday Décor Program and the Holiday Ice Skating Rink  
**Attachments:** None

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### INTRODUCTION

This item provides a recommendation from the Rodeo Drive/Special Events/Holiday Committee regarding the overall design theme and specific decor components for the City's 2013 holiday décor program and a recommendation to not proceed with a holiday ice skating rink this year.

### 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.

The 2012 holiday program consisted of a variety of elements ranging from decorations, to music and an ice skating rink. Together they represented significant investment by the City in a major holiday program. On June 25, 2013, the Rodeo Drive/Special Events/Holiday Committee (Vice Mayor Bosse and Councilmember Krasne) met to discuss creative direction for the City's 2013 holiday décor program. The Committee recommended replicating the 2012 décor program by focusing on traditional holiday décor elements for the city's commercial areas.

The Committee recommended a total décor budget of \$500,000 or less, including the following changes/enhancements (this excludes Rodeo Drive holiday décor, which is funded through the City's annual funding agreement with the Rodeo Drive Committee):

- Install existing 'Joy to the Hills' holiday banners in the business triangle and other commercial areas; and
- Add warm, white lights and red bows to the garlands on N. Canon Drive; and
- Add warm, white lights to the ficus trees on Camden Drive; and
- Add more multi-colored ball spheres to the ficus trees on S. Beverly Drive; and
- Based on feedback from the merchants, do not provide holiday music on N. Canon Drive, but include music on N. Beverly Drive and N. Rodeo Drive.

In addition, the Committee recommended not proceeding with an ice skating rink this year due to the lack of support for a Crescent Drive street closure. The Committee reviewed the boat court location and concluded that it does not have sufficient visibility and is unlikely to achieve incremental spending in the business triangle. The Committee indicated their support, in terms of priorities, for funding requested by the Rodeo Drive Committee for a holiday lighting ceremony and 9021-Snow event series, which are likely to drive incremental spending in the business triangle.

In June, City staff initiated discussions with Utopia Entertainment, Inc. for a proposal to replicate last year's décor program, as well as to include the additional décor items recommended by the Rodeo Drive/Special Events/Holiday Committee. Utopia Entertainment is a full service design and production company that specializes in themed entertainment and special events through a turn-key approach, which includes conceptual design services, technical design services and overall project management services, including being 'on-call' to address technical and maintenance issues that arise during the seven-week décor run.

It should be noted that the City does not have the resources necessary to bid and manage individual contracts for the décor program components. Therefore, the proposal from Utopia Entertainment includes a range of services aimed at providing seamless management of the City's holiday décor program. Principal services include competitive bidding for service vendors, oversight and management of vendors, responsibility for coordination between a variety of City departments and vendors, response and correction of technical and maintenance issues during the display period, and oversight of storage of the décor. In addition, Utopia's proposal includes a management fee of 5%. This is considerably less than other event management companies which can charge anywhere from 10% to 20% depending on the budget and type of events.

As part of their FY 2013-14 funding request, the Rodeo Drive Committee is requesting \$168,000 to replicate last year's holiday décor program for the street. The décor provides a framework for a possible partnership with Baccarat in 2014, which would include new crystal chandeliers for the Rodeo Drive street medians. The Rodeo Drive Committee's proposal is separate from the City's contract with Utopia Entertainment, Inc. The Rodeo Drive Committee will return to the Rodeo Drive/Special Events/Holiday Committee with a décor proposal for review and feedback in the coming weeks.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The City's Finance Department projects \$32,062,800 in TOT revenue for the 2013-2014 Fiscal Year, which results in a Tourism and Marketing budget of \$5,561,204. The Rodeo Drive/Special Events/Holiday Committee recommends \$500,000 for holiday décor, excluding Rodeo Drive. The agreement with Utopia Entertainment, Inc. is for a total of \$488,594.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the City Council approve the 2013 holiday décor program as outlined in this staff report. The Agreement with Utopia Entertainment, Inc. is included on this evening's formal agenda for City Council consideration.

Don Rhoads  
Finance Approval



Cheryl Friedling  
Approved By

