



## STAFF REPORT

**Meeting Date:** August 19, 2014  
**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 2014 Holiday Décor and Lighting Program  
**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 2014 holiday décor and lighting program.

### 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 2013 holiday program consisted of a variety of elements ranging from decorations, to music and a lighting ceremony on Rodeo Drive. Together they represented significant investment by the City in a major holiday program.

On August 11, 2014, the Rodeo Drive/Special Events/Holiday Committee (Mayor Bosse and Councilmember Krasne) met to discuss creative direction for the City's 2014 holiday décor program. The Committee recommended replicating the 2013 décor program by focusing on traditional holiday décor for the city's commercial areas. A focal point of this year's program will be the sixteen Baccarat crystal chandeliers on Rodeo Drive. The Committee also recommended adding lights to the palm trees on East Wilshire and the ficus trees on La Cienega, per the recommendation from the City's Southeast Task Force to enhance holiday décor in the southeast areas.

The Committee recommended a total décor budget of \$704,160, including the following changes/enhancements (this excludes the Baccarat chandeliers and holiday décor for Rodeo Drive, which is funded through the City's annual agreement with the Rodeo Drive Committee):

- Install existing 'Joy to the Hills' holiday banners in the business triangle and other commercial areas;
- Alternate 'Joy to the Hills' banners with new chandelier-themed banners in complementary colors featuring GEARYs, Baccarat and City logos as part of GEARYs sponsorship arrangement for ten Baccarat chandeliers;
- Enhanced décor for southeast areas as recommended by the Southeast Task Force, including warm, white lights for East Wilshire and La Cienega; and
- Change out the bright white bulbs to warm white bulbs for the six arch spans across Wilshire Blvd. and upgrade the electrical wiring.

### **Request for Proposal – Holiday Program Management**

On March 13, 2014, the City released a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Comprehensive Management of the City's Holiday Décor and Lighting Program. The deadline to submit proposals was April 10, 2014. The RFP was posted on the City's website and transmitted to fifteen companies.

The City received two proposals, one from the current vendor, Utopia Entertainment, and a proposal from The Vox Group. The Vox Group did not meet the minimum qualifications of at least two years producing décor programming and event management for a local government agency, as outlined in the RFP. Therefore, The Vox Group was not invited to the next stage in the process. Utopia Entertainment's proposal met the minimum qualifications in the RFP. In addition, Utopia's expertise in managing the City's holiday lighting and décor program for the past eight consecutive years demonstrates the firm's ability to successfully manage this year's program.

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.

Following consultation with the City Attorney's Office, an Agreement for Services was prepared for Utopia Entertainment to undertake 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, oversight of storage of the décor. In addition, the agreement with Utopia includes a management fee of 4%. This is considerably less than other event management companies which can charge anywhere from 10% to 20% depending on the budget.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The Rodeo Drive/Special Events/Holiday Committee recommends \$704,160 for holiday décor for the City's commercial areas. This amount excludes funding for the Baccarat

chandeliers and holiday décor for Rodeo Drive, which have already been funded through the City's agreement with the Rodeo Drive Committee.

The \$704,160 includes \$80,650 for the warm white lights for East Wilshire and La Cienega and this amount will be charged to CIP No. 854 – Southeast Enhancements. The remaining \$623,510 will be charged to the Tourism and Marketing Programs budget. The Tourism and Marketing budget includes \$500,000 for holiday décor. Therefore, it is recommended the remaining \$123,510 be charged to the contingency programs line item in the Tourism and Marketing Programs budget.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the City Council approve the 2014 holiday décor program as outlined in this staff report. The Agreement with Utopia Entertainment, Inc. for \$729,160 is included on this evening's formal agenda for City Council consideration. The agreement includes \$704,160 for the base program and \$25,000 in contingency funding should the Council wish to add décor leading up to or during the holiday décor program.



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Cheryl Friedling  
Approved By