

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) FOR EVENT PLANNING SERVICES

**DATE:** September 8, 2017  
**TO:** Interested Bidders  
**FROM:** The Delmar Loop Boards of Directors

### INTRODUCTION

The West Loop Special Business District (“SBD”) and East Loop Community Improvement District (“CID”) jointly request a proposal from you/your organization to produce our 2017 Holiday Events and our 2018 Loop Ice Carnival (collectively, the “Events”). For purposes of this RFP, the SBD and CID are collectively referred to as “The Loop”.

Based on the responses provided, it is the intent of The Loop to select, at its sole discretion, an individual or firm to provide event planning and production services for the above-referenced Events.

The timeframes and hard budget allocation for each of the Events are as follows:

1. 2017 Holiday Events: All I Want for the Holidays is in the Delmar Loop. This program of individual events and activities for the 2017 Holiday day season commences with Small Business Saturday (Nov. 25) and continues through the end of the year (Dec. 31).
2. The Loop Ice Carnival. January 12 – 14, 2018. Two and a half days of events commencing with an Snow Ball (Jan. 12) followed by two (2) days of outdoor activities on Jan. 13 and 14.

With respect to this RFP, please prepare your written response in the same order as the information requested below, and submit to [www.VisitTheLoop@gmail.com](mailto:www.VisitTheLoop@gmail.com) by 6:00 p.m. on September 25, 2017.

### WHO WE ARE

The Delmar Loop is a six-block restaurant, shopping, arts and entertainment district (from Kingsland to Hodiament) along the 6000 – 6600 blocks of Delmar Boulevard, straddling St. Louis City and St. Louis County, Missouri. The Delmar Loop includes a diverse mix of galleries, retailers, restaurants, bars, concert venues, a bowling alley, a boutique hotel, a movie theatre, and offices. Designated by the American Planning Association as one of the “10 Great Streets in America,” the Delmar Loop is also home to the St. Louis Walk of Fame, which honors over 150 great St. Louisans with sidewalk stars.

The Delmar Loop is uniquely positioned to draw a diverse mix of visitors including Washington University students, residents of adjacent neighborhoods and the St. Louis Metropolitan area, and tourists visiting St. Louis and Forest Park (which includes the St. Louis Art Museum, History Museum, Science Center, and St. Louis Zoo). The proximity of Highway 40, Forest Park Parkway, and major north/south arteries including Big Bend Blvd. and Skinker Blvd. make the Delmar Loop an easily accessible destination within the St. Louis Metropolitan area.

The Loop Trolley is a 2.2-mile fixed-track vintage trolley system that runs from the University City Public Library near Kingsland Boulevard east on Delmar to DeBalivier Avenue and then south on DeBalivier to the Missouri History Museum and back. It is anticipated that this connection to Forest Park will increase foot-traffic in the Delmar Loop throughout the year.

The Delmar Loop is also served by bus service and by the St. Louis MetroLink light rail system, which opened in 1993. The Delmar MetroLink station is located at the eastern edge of the Delmar Loop and provides transportation to the Delmar Loop from downtown St. Louis and Clayton hotels and attractions as well as

other areas within the St. Louis metropolitan area. Parking in the Delmar Loop is available via free surface lots (behind Midtown Farmers Market and The Pageant), a paid lot (near The Tivoli), free and metered street parking, and a parking garage (6300 Delmar).

Please visit [www.VisitTheLoop.com](http://www.VisitTheLoop.com) for additional information about the Delmar Loop, including a map.

The SBD is a governmental entity formed pursuant to ordinance of the City of University City, Missouri and was formed to pursue projects that improve those portions of the Delmar Loop corridor located within University City, St. Louis County, Missouri. The SBD is governed by a nine-member Board of Directors, with each board member elected to a three-year term. Joe Edwards is the Chairman and President of the Board of Directors, Michael Alter is the Vice President, Tom Schmidt is the Treasurer, and Jen Rieger is the Secretary. The SBD derives its' funding from area merchants and building owners and a portion of the Economic Development Tax (a quarter-cent retail sales tax), which funds are administered by the City Council of University City, Missouri.

The CID is a community improvement district created in 2016 by ordinance of the City of St. Louis, Missouri to pursue the improvement of the eastern corridor of Delmar Loop located within the City of St. Louis. The CID is an independent non-profit organization governed by a seven-member Board of Directors, with each member serving a four-year term. Joe Edwards is the Chairman of the Board of Directors, Vice-Chair is Steve Rotskoff, Treasurer is Dave Mastin, and Secretary is Tameka Stigers. The CID's funding is derived from an assessment on real property based on a formula including square footage, number of stories, and other factors.

It is anticipated that the agreement with the selected respondent will be executed by that respondent and both the SBD and CID.

## **DESCRIPTION OF EVENTS**

The SBD and CID desire, through the Events and related marketing efforts, to increase visibility, foot-traffic, customer base, and sales (both retail and food/beverage) from mid-November 2017 through mid-January 2018. Both Events will require advance planning and on-going management through the end of the applicable Events. Available information on past Events will be made available to the successful respondents.

The following descriptions of events are from past seasons and/or activities in the planning stage:

### **1. All You Need for The Holidays is in the Delmar Loop, Nov. 25 through Dec. 31, 2017**

The holiday season – commencing on Small Business Saturday (Nov. 25) - is a critical period for the small businesses along the Delmar Loop. In recent years, holiday revenues have been negatively impacted by on-line merchants, big box retailers, and perceived difficulties with parking availability. The respondent will be asked to develop and implement a marketing plan including organizing and managing events to stimulate foot-traffic and increase the customer base in the Delmar Loop during this season. Given the limited Hard Budget, all such marketing efforts will need to include free or sponsored marketing including appearances on local television and radio and print coverage (beyond advertising). Past events have included:

Small Business Saturday (Nov. 25):	Creative sale specials to highlight the locally owned and operated retailers on Delmar Loop. Capitalize on the national Small Business Saturday campaign (American Express) in a manner that (a) brings customer to Delmar Loop for this event and (b) encourages them to return
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throughout the holiday season for additional holiday related activities.

Tree Light & Santa's Arrival:

Fitz's provides and decorates a large live tree, which is lit on a Fri. or Sat. evening in early December. Last year, holiday carolers sang before and during the lighting ceremony and Santa arrived via convertible driven by Joe Edwards.

Great Gift Hunt:

2017 would mark the third year for this popular activity. Shoppers are given the chance to "find" gift certificates from participating retailers (make a purchase, get a gift bag). Each participating retailer will be provided with 20 or more pre-stuffed bags. One bag will contain a gift certificate for that business, the others will contain candy, and one bag from all of those distributed throughout the Delmar Loop will contain a "Loop Family Day Package" (consisting of gift certificates or merchandise donated by local businesses) or other "grand" prize.

Ugly Holiday Sweater Pub Crawl:

The intention is to capitalize upon National Ugly Christmas Sweater Day by creating a bar hop throughout the Delmar Loop with prizes for Ugliest Sweater awarded by each participating bar and a grand prize for the Delmar Loop winner. Specialty drinks, characters in Ugly Sweaters (the Delmar Loop owns a Reindeer and a Pikachu costume along with ugly sweaters for each). Inclement weather negatively impacted this event last year.

Hanukkah (Dec. 12-20)

Menorah Lighting is traditionally held at the Market in the Loop with Rabbi Novak officiating. The Delmar Loop has a large menorah and this event requires no planning beyond confirming the date and time with Rabbi Novak and ensuring that the Menorah is put out and put away.

Kwanzaa (Dec. 26 – Jan. 1).

Community Kwanza celebration including lighting of the Kinara. Last year students from Bertha Knox Gilkey Pamoja Prep. Academy at Cole performed in the Market on the Loop. The school was given \$500 for its participation.

Other Activities:

One of the challenges of the holidays is to find a fresh and fun incentive to bring customers to the Delmar Loop when many of the other St. Louis neighborhood districts have competing events.

## 2. The 13th Annual Loop Ice Carnival, January 12 - 14, 2018

The Loop Ice Carnival is the signature event in the Delmar Loop and takes place every year, regardless of the weather, on the weekend before MLK Day. This year the event is being expanded to two and half-days. In addition to the Hard Budget, some individual events are paid for with sponsorships, primarily from local beverage distributors. The respondent is expected to work with Joe Edwards and other designated persons to organize, oversee and manage all (a) the events, (b) the vendors/sponsors forming, and (c) volunteers involved in this Event as well as all applicable marketing and promotion.

**Snow Ball (Jan. 12):** The Moonrise Hotel traditionally hosts a Snow Ball as the kick-off event for the Ice Carnival. Costumes are encouraged, prizes are awarded, signature drinks and food. In prior years, a food drive has been part of the event.

**Zip Flyte Rides:** For a small fee, people can thrill to the longest, tallest mobile zipline in the country. In past years the 350-foot-long, 32-foot-tall Zip Line has been located at Delmar and Leland.

**Ferris Wheel:** For a small fee, ride the Ferris Wheel. Warm your hands and have a s'more afterwards while supplies last.

**Cosmonauts on Ice:** Atop the two Moonrise Hotel Rooftop stations, individuals can special drinks while supplies last.

**Skateboards in The Sky:** One-of-a-kind ramp on the Moonrise Hotel roof by No Coast Skateboards. Live demos by regional talent – open to all with a signed waiver.

**Ice Breaker:** Test your strength with two swings of a sledge hammer to break the ice block.

**Ice Slides:** Great family sliding fun next to Blueberry Hill.

**Ice Sculptures:** Delmar Loop businesses purchase individual ice carvings which are created by Ice Visions and placed in front of the businesses on Sat. morning. Ice Visions also provides demonstrations of ice carving throughout the day. In past years, the Delmar Loop has provided some subsidies for business ice carvings and additional ice carvings, which funds come out of the Hard Budget.

**Ice Cube Giveaway:** Approximately 10,000 ice cubes are distributed among participating businesses. 1,000 of the cubes contain \$1 coins and the other 9,000 contain chocolate coins. Buckets of cubes are distributed to businesses the morning of the event.

**Temporary Tattoo Scavenger Hunt:** Children are encouraged to collect all the free tattoos from participating businesses, with prizes awarded to winners.

**Putt-Putt Pub Crawl:** Wild & crazy holes of golf at participating businesses. Scorecards are distributed and prizes are awarded to the winners.

Performers: Stilt walkers, fire eaters, and costumed characters roam the Delmar Loop.

## **PROJECT DELIVERABLES**

The selected individual or firm will be expected to furnish all services necessary and appropriate to produce each of the Events, including all the deliverables stated in **Appendix A – Scope of Services**.

## **DOCUMENTATION REQUESTED**

### **1. INDIVIDUAL/COMPANY BACKGROUND AND QUALIFICATIONS**

- a. Firms are requested to provide an overview of your organizational chart, areas of specialization, number of years in operation, etc. Include an overview of similar services provided on a regional and local basis.
- b. Individuals are requested to provide an overview of educational background, specialized training, areas of specialization, years of experience. Note that a comprehensive resume will be acceptable documentation.
- c. Provide a minimum of two (2) recent (2014 - 2017) examples of success in large-scale event planning, preferably in an outdoor retail setting.
- d. Respondents should include any special circumstances or capabilities that you would like The Loop to know about you, your firm/team.
- e. Include a brief statement about any key relationships, business or personal, that you, your firm/team has that they believe might bring value (sponsorships, media exposure, access or otherwise) to achieving the objectives of each of the Events.

### **2. PROPOSED FEES FOR YOUR SERVICES**

- a. Please include a budget that includes all anticipated costs and fees associated with planning and executing all of the Events, including the deliverables stated in **Appendix A – Scope of Services**.
- b. All actions and anticipated expenses should be itemized with all hourly rates for services included.

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR PROPOSALS**

Please provide a written response to each of the above requested documents including (i) full name of the firm or individual respondent, (ii) names and titles of each principal of a firm, (iii) contact information for each such person (address, phone, email), (iv) proposed project team who will manage and work on this assignment, and (v) licensures (if applicable).

The Loop reserves the right to accept or reject any and/or all proposals, and to grant final acceptance to the proposal that best meets the needs and interests of The Loop, as determined by The Loop in its sole discretion. The Loop may require oral presentations for clarification of a proposal, but reserves the right to accept or reject a proposal without prior discussions. The Loop will be the sole judge of whether a proposal meets the required criteria.

## **DEADLINE**

Respondents are asked to provide this information on or before September 25, 2017 by email to [visittheloop@gmail.com](mailto:visittheloop@gmail.com).

## **NEXT STEPS**

Responding firms or individuals must agree to keep their proposed project budget and the other terms of their engagement open for a period of at least 60 days past the submission deadline.

Once a firm or individual is selected, The Loop and the selected firm will enter into a written contract for the Events.

Each respondent shall assume all fees and costs (including but not limited to legal fees) incurred in responding to this RFP and negotiating a contract with The Loop. The Loop shall bear no liability to any respondent for any costs, fees or liability incurred in connection with this RFP or any response thereto.

## **QUESTIONS**

Questions about this RFP should be directed by email to [visittheloop@gmail.com](mailto:visittheloop@gmail.com). Please note that phone calls will not be accepted. All questions and The Loop's answers will be made available to all potential RFP respondents, upon request.

## **IMPORTANT**

The selected individual or organization will perform the duties requested as an independent contractor and not as an employee of The Loop.

In the interest of fairness, we ask that you not directly contact any Board members of the SBD or the CID, or those who may otherwise have an affiliation with The Loop with questions about this RFP or to provide any other information. Candidates who do not abide by these guidelines may be disqualified from the RFP process.

We look forward to working with the successful candidate to promote the Delmar Loop and these wonderful Events.

## APPENDIX A – SCOPE OF SERVICES

1. Supplier/Sponsor/Volunteer Procurement. Bid out (if required) or contract with (via invoice or written contract approved by The Loop) and award all necessary vendors for each individual activity forming a part of each of the Events and recruit all necessary volunteers, including but not limited to:
  - Print Advertising
  - Signage
  - Costumed Characters
  - Santas
  - Ice Carnival Performers
  - Carolers
  - Activity Sponsors
  - Prizes to be purchased
  - Prizes to be volunteered
  - Volunteers for individual activities
  - Entertainers
  
2. Supplier/Sponsor/Volunteer Management.

Once vendors or volunteers have been selected, reach out to

  - Each vendor or sponsor, to confirm the scope work and the finalize the costs/sponsorship commitment
  - Each volunteer, to confirm each of the activities and responsibilities agreed upon
  - Create a detailed Contact List for vendors, sponsors and volunteers and keep updated
  - Produce a Production Time Line for each component of each of the Events and oversee load in and load out activities. The Production Time Line should include, for each component of each of the Events:
    - Load-in and loadout on event day
    - A master time line to include all entertainment and interactive elements happening throughout the day
    - A working site plan
  - Meet with vendors, sponsors, volunteers, and The Loop appointees, as necessary. This includes attendance at the monthly SBD/Loop meeting (second Tues. of the month) and the monthly marketing meeting (fourth Tues. of the month) at Blueberry Hill.
  - Once marketing plans have been finalized, provide the designated volunteer(s) with visual and copy suitable for inclusion on the website and all social media platforms.
  
3. Volunteer Support. Provide the planning committee with a key list of volunteer positions to cover the components of each of the Events.
  - It is the responsibility of the planning committee to provide the volunteers.
  - Provide a Volunteer Coordinator/Manager day of event to assist in managing all on-site volunteers and their individual areas of responsibility.
  - Meet with the Volunteer Coordinator prior to each of the Events to ensure that both parties have a clear understanding of volunteer resources and allocation.
  - Create a Volunteer Contact list, updated as needed, and provide the same to the Volunteer Coordinator.

4. Budget. Maintain a budget spreadsheet of vendor costs and sponsorship commitments for each of the Events, including:
  - Maintaining and managing, in [Quick Books] (or other form acceptable to The Loop), an electronic operational budget.
  - Providing updated and timely accounting to The Loop on all expenditures
5. Permits, Licensure, City Interaction. Work with a Board Member of The Loop to interface with the University City or City of St. Louis departments including, but not limited to,
  - Securing any necessary permits and to coordinate with all such city agencies to make sure the permit process moves smoothly. Manage any on-site inspections on event day.
  - Work with police/fire departments from University City, City of St. Louis, Washington University, and MetroLink to address any parking, street closure and/or other safety concerns related to each of the Events. Liaison with each such entity on the day of the Events.
6. Professional Staffing. Provide one Project Manager to oversee all event logistics for the Loop Ice Carnival and for two (2) signature Holiday activities. Provide management staff for day of the event for the Loop Ice Carnival to manage vendor set and breakdown and management of overall event logistics.
7. On Site Communication Plan. Develop an on-site communication plan for the Loop Ice Carnival. Procure necessary radio equipment for management staff (cost of radios to be included in Hard Budget costs).
8. Entertainment. Entertainment for each of the Events can include musicians, carolers, characters, or street performers.
  - For staged/stationary entertainment, coordinate with selected entertainers and create a production schedule related to the staged entertainment (all such entertainers will be responsible for their sound needs as well as all necessary equipment).
  - For “roaming” entertainment, create a schedule including times and areas of appearance.
9. Sponsor Fulfillment. Manage all on-site sponsor fulfillment including but not limited to banner placement, load-in of special supplies to sponsor areas/tents. The Loop will provide an initial list of sponsors secured along with their contact details. Respondent will be responsible for updating such list.
10. Marketing. Develop a marketing plan for each of the Events including:
  - Creation of one or more press releases for each of the Events and distribution of the same on a timely basis.
  - Develop print, radio and/or tv marketing plan including appearances and/or public interest stories.
  - Create a social marketing plan.
  - Once the marketing plans have been finalized, provide the designated volunteer(s) with visual assets and approved copy suitable for inclusion on the website, local event calendars, newsletters, and all social media platforms.
  - Develop analytics to assist with evaluation of the impact of the components of each of the Events.

11. Post Event Support. Provide for and/or prepare:

- Committee, vendor, sponsor evaluation.
- Final event expense budget to include in-kind donations, discounts and actual costs.
- Prepare final wrap-up report and meeting.