

# REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

## Holiday Lighting & Seasonal Decor Program

### **Stamford Downtown Special Services District (Stamford Downtown)**

Issued by: Stamford Downtown Special Services District (on behalf of the City of Stamford, CT)

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#### 1. Introduction & Background

The Stamford Downtown invites qualified and experienced holiday lighting and seasonal décor vendors to submit proposals for the **design, installation, maintenance, removal, and storage** of a large-scale **Downtown Holiday Lighting Program**.

Stamford Downtown is a dense, mixed-use urban center that includes retail corridors, parks, public plazas, civic institutions, residential buildings, and high pedestrian traffic areas. The holiday lighting program is a signature seasonal initiative designed to:

- Enhance the visual character and festive atmosphere of Downtown
- Support local businesses and tourism
- Encourage pedestrian activity during evening hours
- Create safe, well-lit, high-quality public spaces

Stamford Downtown is seeking a vendor capable of delivering **high-quality, durable, and visually compelling holiday lighting** at a Downtown-wide scale, with strong project management, responsiveness, and maintenance performance.

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#### 2. Program Overview & Scope of Work

The selected vendor will provide **turnkey holiday lighting services**, including but not limited to the following:

##### A. Design & Planning

- Collaborative design development with Stamford Downtown staff
- Conceptual layouts and visual references for major corridors and parks
- Recommendations for creative enhancements, upgrades, or efficiencies
- Coordination with City departments, utilities, and public safety agencies

##### B. Installation

- Installation of holiday lighting and décor across multiple Downtown locations, which may include:
  - Street trees (15'–60'+ deciduous trees)
  - Decorative lamp posts and traffic signal poles
  - Parks, plazas, and gateways
  - Building facades and architectural features
  - Large feature trees – including the oak trees at Columbus Park and the Ferguson Library – and focal installations

- All required equipment, lifts, traffic control coordination, and safety measures
- Compliance with all local, state, and federal regulations

#### C. Maintenance & Operations

- Ongoing inspection and maintenance throughout the holiday season
- Replacement of failed lights or damaged décor within defined response times
- On-call support for storm-related or emergency repairs

#### D. Removal & Storage

- Safe and timely removal of all seasonal lighting and décor
- Proper packing, labeling, and storage of reusable materials
- Inventory documentation for all client-owned materials

### 3. Performance Standards & Expectations

Proposals must address how the vendor will meet or exceed the following standards. These standards will be enforced through a **Service Level Agreement (SLA)** with associated credits.

#### A. Quality & Craftsmanship

- Clean, uniform, professional installations
- Concealed wiring and secure mounting
- Consistent appearance across corridors and locations

#### B. Reliability & Uptime

- Target uptime of **98% or greater** across all installed elements during the season
- Proactive inspections to identify outages before public reporting

#### C. Maintenance Response Times (SLA)

Maintenance response times are measured from the time Stamford Downtown notifies the vendor.

Priority Level	Location Type	Required Response
Priority 1	Gateways, major corridors, feature trees, civic parks	Within 24 hours
Priority 2	Standard street trees, lamp posts, garages	Within 48 hours
Priority 3	Minor or decorative elements	Within 72 hours

Proposals must address how the vendor will meet or exceed the following standards:

- **Quality & Craftsmanship:** Clean, uniform, professional installations with concealed wiring and secure mounting
- **Reliability:** Minimal outages; proactive inspections
- **Maintenance Response:**
  - Priority locations: response within 24–48 hours

- Standard locations: response within 72 hours
  - **Safety:**
    - OSHA-compliant work practices
    - Traffic and pedestrian safety plans
    - Adequate insurance and bonding
  - **Professionalism:**
    - Dedicated project manager
    - Clear communication with DSSD staff
    - Advance notice of installation and removal schedules
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#### 4. Materials & Technical Specifications

The following specifications represent **baseline requirements** derived from Stamford Downtown's existing holiday lighting program. Vendors may propose equal or superior alternatives but must clearly note any deviations.

##### A. Street Trees (Baseline)

- Deciduous trees ranging from approximately **12' to 60'+ height**
- **LED 5MM miniature lights**, commercial grade
- Color options:
  - Warm White
  - Cool White
  - Multicolor (select feature trees)
- **Non-blinking** unless otherwise specified
- Average light density:
  - 500–1,700 lights per tree depending on size
  - Large feature trees may exceed 15,000–60,000+ lights
- Installation method:
  - Individual branch wrap or canopy wrap (location dependent)
  - Lighting to begin approximately **12' above grade** where applicable

##### B. Decorative Lamp Posts & Traffic Signal Poles

- Approximately **180–200 decorative lamp posts** across Downtown corridors
- Installation of LED lighting to poles on:
  - Bedford Street
  - Atlantic Street
  - Grey Rock
  - Other Downtown corridors as designated
- **Traffic Signal Poles (Key Intersections):**
  - Wrap from base to arm
  - **LED 5MM miniature lights**
  - **Pure White and Red Candy Cane pattern**
  - Non-blinking
  - Approx. 6 poles across multiple intersections

### C. Parking Garage & Building Installations

- Garland and décor for municipal parking structures, including:
  - Main pedestrian entrances
  - Secondary entrances
  - Interior and exterior tunnel conditions
- Garland specifications:
  - Mixed Pine garland
  - Warm White LED lights
  - Ornaments included
  - Select locations to include **slow twinkle lighting (approx. 1/5 bulbs)**
- Wall-mounted décor:
  - **30” illuminated snowflakes (Warm White)**

### D. Parks & Feature Locations

- Large artificial or natural holiday trees (up to ~20'+)
- Specialty elements such as:
  - Cascading light rods
  - Decorative C7 or C9 bulbs
  - Ornaments and specialty décor
  - Tree toppers or stars
- **All elements listed above shall be fully vendor-supplied**
- Vendor responsible for wiring, programming timers, power distribution, and safe mounting

### E. Maintenance & Durability Standards

- All materials must be:
  - Commercial / municipal grade
  - Weather-resistant for Northeast winter conditions
  - Rated for extended seasonal use (Nov–March)
- Weekly inspection and maintenance included
- Clear protocols for outages, damage, or weather-related impacts

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Vendors should clearly specify proposed materials, including:

- LED lighting type (e.g., 5mm, C7, C9, specialty fixtures)
- Color temperature options (warm white, cool white, multicolor)
- Energy efficiency ratings
- Expected lifespan and durability
- Weather resistance and commercial-grade standards

Stamford Downtown encourages proposals that: - Provide **all decorations, lighting, hardware, fasteners, wiring, controllers, and accessories** as part of a turnkey service - Reduce long-term maintenance costs - Improve visual consistency across Downtown - Offer scalable or modular solutions

**All holiday lighting, décor, ornaments, fixtures, garland, specialty elements, and related materials shall be supplied, installed, maintained, removed, and stored by the Vendor.** Stamford Downtown will not provide decorations, lighting materials, or specialty elements.

### 5. Term & Timeline

The anticipated contract term is **one (1) to three (3) seasons**, with renewal options at Stamford Downtown’s discretion.

#### Key Milestones (Subject to Adjustment):

- RFP Issued: April 1, 2026
- Mandatory Walkthrough: April 17, 2026; 9:00AM at office of Stamford Downtown
- Questions Due: 4pm on April 24, 2026
- Proposals Due: 4pm on May 8, 2026
- Vendor Interviews (if required): May 18 – May 22, 2026
- Notice of Award Target Date: June 5, 2026
- Installation Complete By: **No later than the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of November**
- Program Duration: 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of November through St. Patrick’s Day
- Removal Begins: January–March (weather dependent)

### 6. Cost Proposal Requirements

Vendors must submit **detailed, transparent pricing** using the **Mandatory Pricing Worksheet** below. Proposals that do not include a completed worksheet may be deemed non-responsive.

#### Mandatory Pricing Worksheet (Excel-Style)

Category	Location / Description	Quantity	Unit Cost	Extended Cost	Notes
Street Trees	15’–25’ Trees (Branch or Canopy Wrap)	–	\$__	\$__	Vendor-supplied lights
Street Trees	26’–40’ Trees	–	\$__	\$__	Vendor-supplied lights
Street Trees	41’–60’+ Feature Trees	–	\$__	\$__	High-density wrap
Decorative Lamp Posts	Downtown Corridors	–	\$__	\$__	Includes hardware

Category	Location / Description	Quantity	Unit Cost	Extended Cost	Notes
Traffic Signal Poles	Candy Cane Wrap (Base to Arm)	—	\$__	\$__	Red/White 5MM LED
Parking Garage Entrances	Garland + Snowflakes	—	\$__	\$__	Interior/exterior
Parks & Plazas	Feature Trees / Displays	—	\$__	\$__	Fully vendor supplied
Specialty Elements	Arches, Snowflakes, Rods, Bulbs	—	\$__	\$__	As proposed
Seasonal Maintenance	Weekly inspections & repairs	L	\$__	\$__	Nov–Mar
Removal & Storage	Seasonal takedown & storage	L	\$__	\$__	Secure storage
Traffic Control	Police / traffic coordination	A	\$__	<small> Specify assumptions </small> ** <small>TOTALPROGRAMCOST *</small> <small>*     **__**</small>	

Vendors must clearly state: - All assumptions - What is included vs excluded - Any optional alternates or enhancements

Stamford Downtown reserves the right to: - Negotiate scope and pricing - Select individual components from proposals - Award a contract that best balances **cost, quality, and value**

Vendors must submit **detailed, transparent pricing**, including:

- Line-item pricing by location or installation type
  - Labor vs. material costs
  - Seasonal maintenance costs
  - Removal and storage costs
  - Optional enhancements or alternates
  - Assumptions regarding traffic control, police details, or permits
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## 7. Vendor Qualifications

Proposals must include:

- Company background and years of experience
  - Demonstrated experience with **municipal or downtown-scale projects**
  - At least three (3) references from cities, BIDs, or comparable clients
  - Sample project photos or portfolio links
  - Proof of insurance and licenses
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## 8. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- Relevant experience with large-scale municipal lighting
  - Quality and creativity of proposed solutions
  - Cost competitiveness and transparency
  - Maintenance and service responsiveness
  - References and demonstrated performance
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## 9. Submission Instructions

Proposals should be submitted electronically in PDF format to:

**Michael Little**

**Director, Public Realm Operations**

Stamford Downtown

**Email:** [little@stamford-downtown.com](mailto:little@stamford-downtown.com)

Subject Line: **RFP – Stamford Downtown Holiday Lighting Program**

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## 10. Asset Ownership, Buy-Out & Transfer Option

### A. Vendor-Owned Assets (Base Assumption)

Unless otherwise negotiated, all holiday lighting, décor, fixtures, wiring, and specialty elements shall remain the property of the Vendor during the contract term.

## B. End-of-Term Buy-Out Option (Mandatory Pricing Disclosure)

Vendors **must disclose and price an optional buy-out** of all reusable holiday lighting and décor assets at the conclusion of the contract term (or any renewal period).

Proposals shall include: - Estimated fair-market buy-out value at the end of Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3 - Itemized inventory of assets eligible for transfer - Asset condition standards at time of transfer

Stamford Downtown reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to: - Purchase all or select assets - Decline the buy-out option and require full removal - Negotiate asset ownership during contract renewals

## C. Transfer & Storage

If a buy-out is exercised: - Vendor shall transfer ownership free and clear of liens - Vendor shall provide an inventory list and condition report - Vendor shall coordinate delivery or storage at a Stamford Downtown-designated facility

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## 11. Service Level Agreement (SLA) & Credit Penalties

The selected vendor shall be subject to the following SLA credit structure. Credits will be applied against the final seasonal invoice or future payments.

### A. Missed Maintenance Response Credits

SLA Violation	Credit Applied
Priority 1 response exceeds 24 hours	2% of total seasonal contract value per incident
Priority 2 response exceeds 48 hours	1% of total seasonal contract value per incident
Priority 3 response exceeds 72 hours	0.5% of total seasonal contract value per incident

### B. Repeated Performance Issues

- Three (3) or more SLA violations in a single season may constitute **material non-performance**
- Stamford Downtown reserves the right to:
  - Require corrective action plans
  - Withhold payments
  - Reduce scope
  - Terminate the contract for cause

### C. Exclusions

- Credits shall not apply to force majeure events (severe storms, declared emergencies)
- Credits shall not apply where delays are caused by City-mandated access restrictions

### D. Documentation

- Vendor must maintain a service log of all reported issues and resolution times
  - Stamford Downtown may audit logs upon request
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## 12. General Conditions

- Stamford Downtown reserves the right to reject any or all proposals
  - Issuance of this RFP does not commit DSSD to award a contract
  - All costs incurred in proposal preparation are the responsibility of the vendor
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## 11. Site Visit

Vendors may be invited to participate in an optional Downtown site walk to review locations, access constraints, and infrastructure conditions.

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