

ORDINANCE/RESOLUTION REQUEST

Please email requests to the Mayor’s Legislative Team

at MileHighOrdinance@DenverGov.org by **9:00am on Friday**. Contact the Mayor’s Legislative team with questions

Date of Request: November 24, 2023

Please mark one: **Bill Request** or **Resolution Request**

1. Type of Request:

Contract/Grant Agreement **Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA)** **Rezoning/Text Amendment**

Dedication/Vacation **Appropriation/Supplemental** **DRMC Change**

Other:

2. Title: (Start with *approves, amends, dedicates*, etc., include name of company or contractor and indicate the type of request: grant acceptance, contract execution, contract amendment, municipal code change, supplemental request, etc.)

Approves a contract for \$1,150,000 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding between the City and County of Denver and Downtown Denver Partnership, Inc. through 12-31-2025 to design and execute downtown recovery activations to fully leverage the reconstruction and reopening of the 16th Street Mall, in District 10.

3. Requesting Agency: Denver Economic Development & Opportunity

4. Contact Person:

Contact person with knowledge of proposed ordinance/resolution	Contact person to present item at Mayor-Council and Council
Name: Deborah Cameron	Name: Patrick Walton
Email: deborah.cameron@denvergov.org	Email: patrick.walton@denvergov.org

5. General description or background of proposed request. Attach executive summary if more space needed:

See Executive Summary.

6. City Attorney assigned to this request (if applicable): Brian Martin

7. City Council District: District 10

8. **For all contracts, fill out and submit accompanying Key Contract Terms worksheet**

To be completed by Mayor’s Legislative Team:

Resolution/Bill Number: _____

Date Entered: _____

Key Contract Terms

Type of Contract: (e.g. Professional Services > \$500K; IGA/Grant Agreement, Sale or Lease of Real Property):

Professional Services

Vendor/Contractor Name: Downtown Denver Partnership, Inc.

Contract control number: OEDEV-202370197

Location: Central Business District

Is this a new contract? Yes No **Is this an Amendment?** Yes No **If yes, how many?** _____

Contract Term/Duration (for amended contracts, include existing term dates and amended dates):

01/01/24 – 12/31/25

Contract Amount (indicate existing amount, amended amount and new contract total):

<i>Current Contract Amount</i>	<i>Additional Funds</i>	<i>Total Contract Amount</i>
<i>(A)</i>	<i>(B)</i>	<i>(A+B)</i>
\$1,150,000	N/A	\$1,150,000

<i>Current Contract Term</i>	<i>Added Time</i>	<i>New Ending Date</i>
01/01/24 – 12/31/25	N/A	N/A

Scope of work:

The Downtown Denver Partnership will design and execute downtown recovery activations to fully leverage the opportunity for the reopening of the 16th Street Mall, five categories of support are necessary that will leverage the current investments by the City and County of Denver and the Downtown Denver Partnership for the repositioning and reopening of 16th Street:

- A. 16th Street **Vision and Ground Floor Activation Strategy (Phase II)**
- B. 16th Street **Branding, Positioning and Marketing**
- C. 16th Street **Business Recruitment and Retention**
- D. 16th Street **Public Realm Activation and Experience**
- E. Administration of Activities (charged at 10%)

Was this contractor selected by competitive process? No

If not, why not? Downtown Denver Partnership, Inc. was selected via Sole Source to be the contractor for this contract based on their unique position as the Downtown Denver Business Improvement District.

Has this contractor provided these services to the City before? Yes No

Source of funds: ARPA Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

Is this contract subject to: W/MBE DBE SBE XO101 ACDBE N/A

WBE/MBE/DBE commitments (construction, design, Airport concession contracts): N/A

Who are the subcontractors to this contract? N/A

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this resolution is to approve a contract for \$1,150,000 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding between the City & County of Denver and Downtown Denver Partnership, Inc. in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Partnership will focus the funds on the repositioning and reopening of the 16th Street Mall (Mall).

In April 2022, the City and County of Denver broke ground on a reconstruction project to address infrastructure and public realm repairs and improvements to the Mall, with a commitment of \$150 million in funding, which represents the magnitude of importance and commitment to the project. In addition, the Partnership has partnered with the City to lead community engagement, communications, and business support initiatives to help mitigate the impacts of a construction project of this size and scale.

Today, one of the greatest opportunities for Downtown Denver's post-pandemic revival hinges on the iconic 16th Street Mall experience and currently there are limited resources to address its future beyond infrastructure, landscape, and hardscape. Daily pedestrian traffic in Downtown remains 45% below 2019, and retail vacancy rates, along what was once a thriving retail corridor, are 27%, equating to more than 100,000 square feet of vacant ground floor space. A post-pandemic decline in public transportation use of 50% has also significantly impacted the corridor, and the high concentration of empty offices that were once fully occupied are now shying away due to concerns about public safety and lack of amenities.

The City & County of Denver awarded the Partnership initial funding for background work to support a new Vision and Ground Floor Activation Strategy for the 16th Street Mall as a part of a greater package of ARPA I funding to support business recovery. The scope for the initial funding focused on data collection and stakeholder engagement, providing a clear picture of both opportunities and challenges that could be addressed in a second phase of the strategy development. In the initial phase, the Partnership also convened a stakeholder task force to help guide the strategy, establishing a level of engagement and communication among participating property owners, tenants, city representatives, non-profits and advocacy groups that will be invaluable as we enter the visioning and implementation phases.

In the next phase of work, to ensure comprehensive, resilient and long term-impact, the Partnership will pursue an expanded community engagement framework; develop tenanting strategies; identify any policy and/or funding barriers to achieving the strategic vision; and draft an Urban Neighborhood Strategy that identifies retail and additional use types and locations that marries the current design of public space along the Mall with the ground floor experience. These elements will create and implement a new vision for the 16th Street Corridor as a modern anchor for Downtown Denver, the City of Denver, and the region.

16th Street Branding, Positioning and Marketing

Imperative to building vision, attracting people to a place, and supporting thriving businesses is the ability to brand, position and market the experience. To complement the revisioning of the 16th Street Mall, the Partnership will create a lasting identity, brand, and position for the destination as well as a marketing campaign to bring locals back to rediscover this iconic signature spine of Denver and draw visitors as a national destination, all feeding the businesses and community of Downtown Denver. From the community engagement mobilized through the Ground Floor Activation Strategy, campaign materials and execution will be developed, including:

- **Brand:** Market research led value proposition, positioning statements and physical design elements. (logo, color palette, taglines and headlines)
- **Campaign Elements:** Digital, social, print, multi-channel advertising and a toolkit for government, community, and business partners.
- **Public Relations:** Media strategy and Outreach.
- **Celebrating the Re-Opening:** Comprehensive strategy for a significant push around the timing of the reopening of the 16th Street Mall. As funding allows, The Partnership will consider block opening celebrations focused on promoting the businesses located on the block opening.

16th Street Business Recruitment and Retention

The greater package of ARPA I funding to support business recovery included funding to initiate a strategic tenant recruitment initiative, including the development of a "Why Downtown Denver" website to act as a market information hub with free resources for property owners and commercial real estate brokers to help convey the competitive advantages of a downtown Denver location. The Partnership also began proactively engaging potential tenants in key markets across the country, including six out-of-market prospecting visits (Chicago, D.C., Portland, Austin, NYC, Los Angeles), participation in four Metro Denver EDC business development programs (San Diego, Austin, NYC, Japan) and a presence at the 2023 ICSC retail site selection conference.

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In the second phase of the recruitment initiative, the Partnership will incorporate the plan elements of a ground floor activation strategy to target its recruitment efforts toward the goal of “reimagining downtown” and repositioning the anchor of the 16th Street Mall. This includes proactive and strategic recruitment efforts to attract:

- Grocery stores, daycares, and other amenities to support additional residential population downtown;
- Retail concepts that generate a clearer identity for activity nodes along the spine of the 16th Street Mall and along “rib” streets connecting the Mall to nearby attractions, with a strong mix of local and national targets;
- Denver-based local and independent retail entrepreneurship development and recruitment through the continued implementation of the Popup Denver program;
- Continued promotion of the “Why Downtown Denver” message and platform with out-of-market visits and national presence at the ICSC 2024 conference;
- This phase would also add a strategic business retention effort that includes coordinated outreach to major employers, major leaseholders, and marketing support. The marketing support will build on campaigns like “My Denver” that promote the sense of inclusion and belonging behind the concept of “reimagining Downtown,” while raising the profile of downtown as a global city, a city of neighborhoods and sports teams, a city rich with cultural institutions, and a city that is always moving forward while rooted in tradition.

16th Street Public Realm Activation and Experience

Attracting people to a place is, ultimately, about the experience. And to create an environment where businesses can be successful, attention to activation and moments that draw people in large numbers is a widely proven successful strategy.

The 16th Street Mall reconstruction project will reinstall fixtures, furniture, and equipment as the daily programming of the public realm. The Partnership has identified some strategic gaps in this programming necessary to reinstate the Mall as an iconic “must-see-experience” in downtown Denver, and more intentionally promote the destination open market functions of the space alongside other public and private amenities. Beyond the furniture (seating and planters) and several “moments of joy”, the Partnership believes there is an opportunity to curate the experience of the street by increasing the physical branding of the space through major elements such as bus wraps, kiosk design, and other attractive placemaking elements. This program will partially fund:

- **16th Street Kiosk Evolution:** The Partnership will develop an iconic design template for kiosks that are unique to Mall and serve several desired functions (e.g. micro retail, food and beverage, entrepreneurial pop-up vending). The Partnership will work with fabricators to design, build, and install 2-5 kiosks to use as templates for a future kiosk program. The Partnership has had initial agreements with the University of Colorado Architecture program to be involved in the design and fabrication of kiosks. The scope of work includes.
 - Kiosk functionality study
 - Kiosk design
 - Kiosk fabrication and installation
- **Free Mall Ride Refresh:** The buses themselves are iconic and unique to the 16th Street Mall – an easily identified convenience for everyone traversing the corridor. This program would provide funds to wrap Free Mall Ride buses with a fresh new design that echoes the urban design color pallet of Mall amenities and mimics the outdoor themes of the key amenity features of the street.
- **16th Street Brand Gateways and Accents:** This program would fund a curated pallet of decals and images to reflect the identity of the place (artistic clings on trash cans) and provide additional wayfinding and legibility (i.e. static map clings and vinyl stencils on IKEs).

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