



**Request for Proposal (RFP):
Ambassador Program &
Public Space Management Services
Downtown Memphis, TN**

Index

03

Introduction

04

RFP Purpose

05

RFP Goals &
Service Area

06

Proposed
Service Area
& Map

07

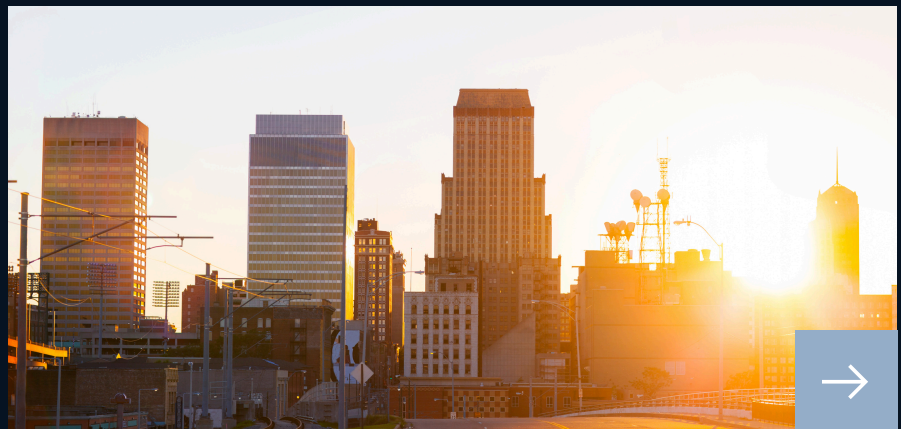
RFP Process
& Timeline

08

RFP Review
Criteria

09

Submission
Requirements



INTRODUCTION

Originally founded in 1977 as the Memphis Center City Commission (CCC), the Downtown Memphis Commission (DMC) is the quasi-public agency responsible for building a safe, clean, vibrant, and inclusive Downtown Memphis. To accomplish this goal, the DMC implements a strategic portfolio of programs and tools to foster equitable economic development and attract new investment in commercial property. The DMC is funded by a special assessment on commercial property within the Central Business Improvement District (CBID). Learn more about our [economic development programs](#) and the [CBID boundary map](#) on the DMC website.

The DMC measures its success primarily through two key metrics:

1. **Growth in Downtown Activity:** An increase in the number of people living, working, and visiting Downtown.
2. **Economic Impact:** An increase in Downtown’s commercial property values strengthens the property tax base for Memphis and Shelby County.

To accomplish this important work, the DMC is structured into four main departments:

- The **Planning & Development Department** plans and facilitates Downtown Memphis redevelopment and economic growth.
- The **Marketing, Events & Communications Department** promotes Downtown and brings vibrancy to the area through special events and activations. Typical departmental functions include public relations, special events, market research, advertising, and the production of internal and external communication materials.
- The **Operations Department** is responsible for making Downtown Memphis more attractive for investment by enhancing cleanliness, attractiveness, friendliness, and a sense of safety. The department includes the Blue Suede Brigade (DMC’s safety and hospitality ambassador team) and the Clean & Green team.
- The **Finance Department** is responsible for the general administration of financial policies and budgets. It works in conjunction with the City of Memphis and the Shelby County Assessor to administer the CBID assessment. The Finance Department also manages human resources for the DMC.



RFP PURPOSE

The DMC currently provides operations services internally using a mix of full-time and part-time DMC staff. The DMC understands that some peer organizations in the urban place management industry contract this work to outside service providers in an effort to realize potential cost savings, improve efficiency with the use of technology and innovation, and/or receive best-in-class performance. As part of its ongoing commitment to continuous improvement and a willingness to always explore reasonable alternatives, the DMC is now accepting proposals for a third-party company to provide ambassador and public space maintenance services for consideration.

Operations Department – DMC’s Current Approach:

The Clean & Green team currently consists of four full-time employees. This team works tirelessly to maintain a high standard of cleanliness in the public realm within the Downtown Core and adjacent neighborhoods. This work typically involves graffiti removal, litter removal, landscape maintenance, minor repairs, and similar tasks. Most special projects, landscape maintenance, minor repairs, and planting occur at Court Square Park, Main Street Mall and along Main Street, and three dog parks. In addition, the team takes on special projects such as DMC office building and parking facility maintenance and logistical support for DMC events and activations. The team’s service hours are typically 7:30 AM – 4:00 PM, Monday – Friday. The DMC has also contracted with local service providers to augment this work and provide additional weekend coverage when needed.

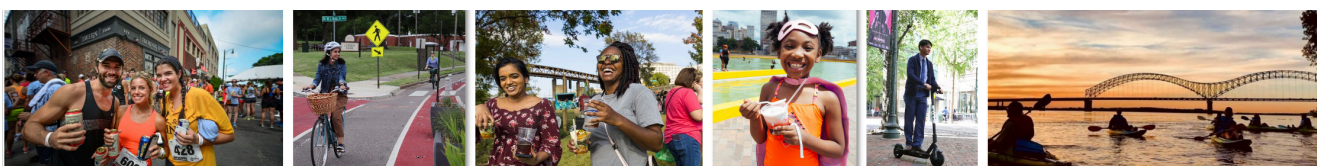
The Blue Suede Brigade (BSB) is the DMC’s safety and hospitality team. Anchored by full-time and part-time DMC employees (22 FTE and 10 PTE), the team is responsible for creating a welcoming environment within the CBID, including neighborhoods such as South Main, the Core, Beale Street, Riverfront, Pinch, and the Medical District. The current priority coverage area for the BSB team can be found on the map [here](#).

The BSB team currently provides the following services:

- Create a safe and welcoming environment for local residents and visitors by patrolling Downtown on foot, by bicycle, and using an overnight patrol vehicle and enforcing rules for public parks and special event permits.
- Provide directions and information about activities, attractions, history, development, businesses, and services.
- Offer daily reports on events, activities, contacts made, and assistance provided, as well as maintenance or safety conditions requiring attention.
- Trained in security, radio and patrol procedures, health and safety awareness, history and geography of Downtown, and hospitality and customer service.

The current service hours for the BSB team are:

- Sunday: 10 AM – 10 PM
- Monday-Wednesday: 7 AM – 10 PM
- Thursday-Saturday: 7 AM – Midnight
- Special Overnight Shift: Friday – Sunday (two people in a patrol vehicle)



RFP GOALS

If the DMC ultimately determines that it is in the public interest to contract with a third-party service provider for its ambassador program and public space management services in the future, key project goals will include the following:

1. Create an industry-leading ambassador program to effectively perform the DMC's hospitality, safety, and clean and green program work.
2. Leverage technology and innovation to improve program performance and significantly enhance the customer experience for key stakeholders, business and property owners, residents, and visitors.
3. Partner with an experienced service provider that has a proven track record of high performance within the urban place management industry. A three-year (3-year) initial contract term is preferred but negotiable.
4. Employ a data-driven approach to track progress, share results proactively, and maximize program impact.
5. Establish a supportive and inclusive team environment that fosters a culture of innovation and best practices, with a clear commitment to staff professional development and meaningful career advancement.

Proposed Service Area

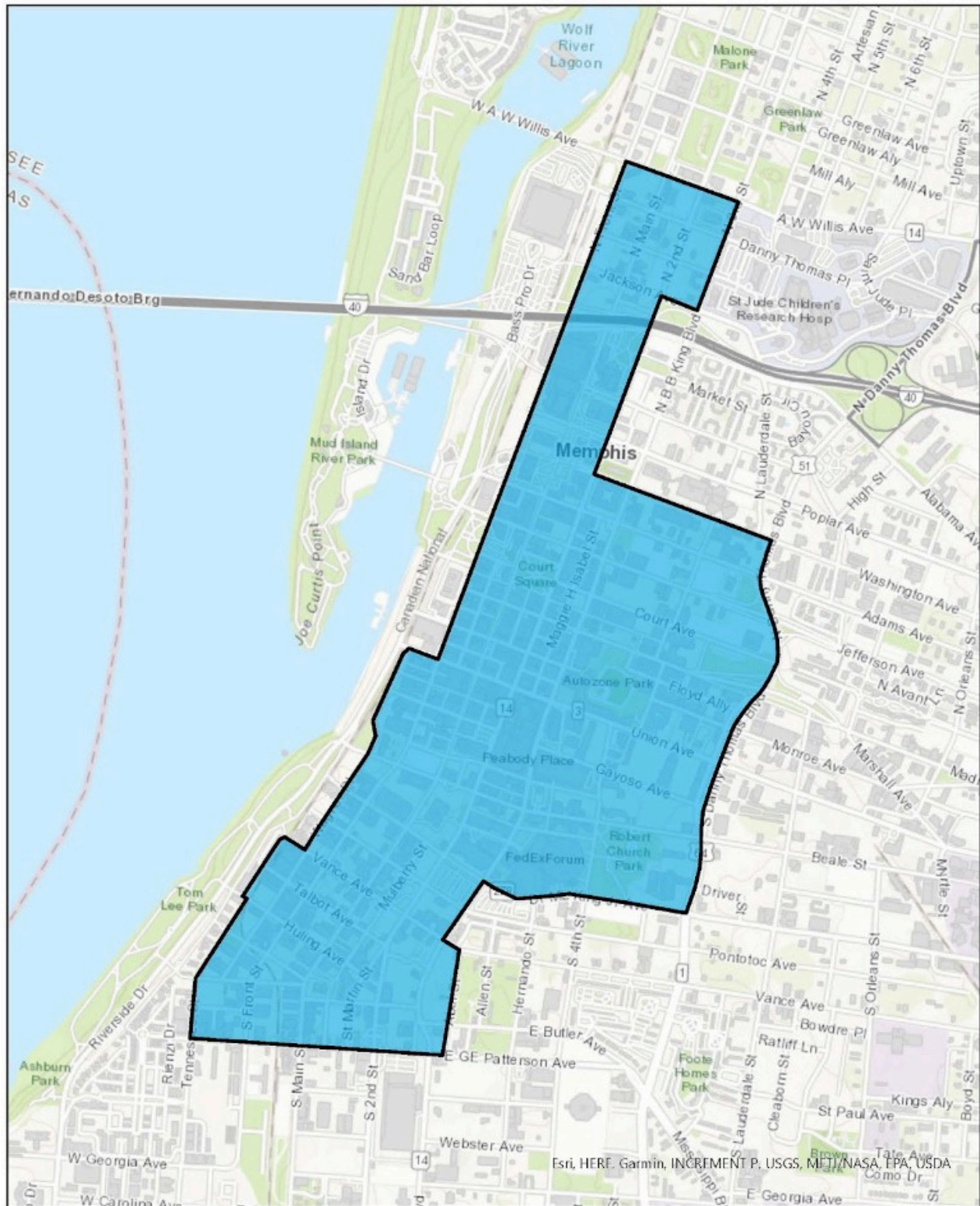
For the purposes of this RFP, the “Ambassador Program” will be interpreted to include all of the existing operations functions of the DMC. This includes the functions and services of both the BSB Team and the Clean & Green Team. Respondents to this RFP should also include any other program offerings or specialized services that are aligned with best practices and appropriate for Downtown Memphis.

The entire CBID is approximately 6.5 sq. miles in area. This area contains a wide range of variations in neighborhood types, building density, street patterns, concentrations of people, foot traffic, activity, and commercial businesses. As such, the DMC has identified two service zones for the purposes of this RFP. Going forward as a result of this RFP, **Zone A (see map on page 6)** is intended to be the focus of the ambassador program, including safety, hospitality, and clean and green services. The remainder of the CBID will be identified as Zone B.

The entire CBID will continue to be eligible for the full portfolio of DMC economic development incentives, marketing support, and placemaking programs. While the majority of the ambassador program work will likely occur in Zone A during the initial contract term, a special project team of DMC Staff will be available for dispatch to address high-priority clean and green projects within Zone B.



PROPOSED SERVICE AREA - MAP



Zone A

RFP PROCESS & TIMELINE

While subject to change, the following key dates and milestones are planned:



Please note that the DMC may need to request additional information from the respondents as part of the selection process. Moreover, DMC reserves the right to not select a proposal as a result of this process. In that event, the DMC may, or may not, elect to reissue the RFP if necessary to solicit additional interest in the project.

Due to the competitive nature of this RFP, detailed information about the proposed budget, staffing levels, and plan for coverage from each submission will be kept confidential until the RFP Selection Committee (“Committee” or “RFP Committee”) has identified a preferred firm and obtained DMC Board approval of the preferred firm. The full content of all RFP submissions will become part of the public record at that point in the process.

Equal Business Opportunity (EBO) Policy:

The DMC strives for a goal of at least twenty-five percent (25%) participation in all projects by minority- and/or women-owned business enterprises (MWBEs). This policy principally applies to projects where contracting and subcontracting is anticipated. DMC’s assumption is that the selected vendor will elect to self-perform the work required in this RFP. If the selected vendor does not self-perform the entire scope of work, the effort to identify and select any subcontractors must be compliant with the DMC’s EBO program.

In your response to the RFQ, please state clearly if you plan to fully self-perform the work and, if not, how your firm will achieve the EBO program goal.

→ RFP Committee Formed
Nov. 21, 2024

→ RFP Published
Dec. 3, 2024

→ Submit Questions to DMC Staff
Dec. 16, 2024 by 4:00 PM CST

→ Q&As Posted on DMC Website
Dec. 20, 2024

→ **RFP Responses Due**
Jan. 13, 2025 by 4:00 PM CST

→ Finalist Interviews
(In person at DMC office)
Feb. 10 - Feb. 14, 2025

→ Identify Preferred Firm
By Feb. 27, 2025

→ Final Contract
Negotiations Complete
By March 6, 2025

→ Program Ramp Up & Preparations
March 6 – May 5, 2025

→ **Proposed Program Start Date**
May 5, 2025

RFP REVIEW CRITERIA

A committee of DMC Board members and DMC staff has been formed to review RFP submissions, conduct interviews, and recommend a preferred vendor to the full DMC Board of Directors for consideration.

The ultimate decision to contract with an outside service provider and select a preferred vendor will be based on a range of factors including, but not limited to, RFP documentation submitted, Committee member ranking and score sheets, prior relevant experience, interview with Committee members (if requested), and DMC staff conversations with pertinent references.

The initial RFP submittal review process to shortlist finalists for an interview will use the following evaluation criteria (scale of 0-100):

40 Points



Firm Experience

Ex. What relevant experience does the firm have?

10 Points



Proposed Team & Leadership

Ex. Qualifications of the project team & leadership assigned to the account

10 Points



Ambassador Plan & Coverage Strategy

Ex. Adequacy of the proposed staffing levels & plan for coverage

10 Points



Equipment, Technology, & Sustainability

Ex. How will the firm leverage technology & equipment to maximize impact?

20 Points



Data Collection, Reporting, & Performance Review

Ex. How will the firm measure, track, and report progress?

10 Points



Proposed Budget & Cost Effectiveness

Ex. Does the overall proposal represent a good value proposition to the DMC?



SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

Should you be interested in submitting a proposal for this project, please email the response as a single PDF document to roler@downtownmemphis.com on or before **4:00 PM. CST on Jan. 13, 2025. No phone calls, please.** Please format the PDF to be printed at 8.5 inches x 11 inches and limited to a maximum of 40 pages in length.

Prospective firms should respond to this RFP with all of the information outlined below.

A. Experience:

Provide a concise summary of the firm's background, capabilities, experience, and qualifications relative to this project. Additionally, please provide a resume for the firm's key personnel that would be responsible for directly managing this project.

Please indicate if the firm plans to self-perform the entire scope of work. If not, identify any subcontractors to be used. Information shall include the name and address of the sub consultant, resumes of the key staff, and the tasks to be carried out.

B. Staffing Plan & Coverage Strategy:

Use this section to summarize your firm's recommended approach for this project briefly. Additionally, please summarize your recommendation for the appropriate number of staff to adequately cover Zone A. Each firm should use their own industry experience and knowledge of current best practices to recommend a mix of safety ambassadors, hospitality ambassadors, and clean and green ambassadors. Please provide a table summarizing the recommended staffing levels and service hours for each role for seven (7) days per week.

While service hours and staffing levels of the current DMC operations program can be viewed as a reference point, it should not necessarily be considered as the preferred approach. DMC's goal is to continuously improve and enhance its operations programming in line with national best practices.

C. Equipment & Technology:

The DMC intends to contract with a partner that has significant experience using technology and equipment to maximize the impact of the ambassador role. Please list and explain the specific equipment and technology you plan to deploy.

D. Environmental Sustainability:

Please describe any environmentally-friendly or sustainable practices that you plan to incorporate into the Downtown Memphis ambassador program.

E. Data Collection, Reporting, & Performance Review:

The DMC is a data-driven organization. Please describe your approach to collect, measure, and report key data to DMC Staff and key stakeholders. Provide examples of key metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs) that you typically measure and track as part of ambassador program administration.

Additionally, please outline the firm's specific experience integrating real-time and geo-located ambassador data with UPMO industry-standard CRM software platforms such as District360 or Ginkgo. Include at least three different examples of monthly reports that currently feature this data.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

F. Rollout Timeline:

Please outline your proposed schedule for ramping up the new ambassador program if selected for this opportunity. List all key milestones and critical assumptions.

G. Estimated Budget:

Provide an estimate of the expected total annual cost of the program you would recommend for the DMC. Please clearly specify any key assumptions or exclusions that could impact the proposed all-in cost.

If a decision to contract with a third-party company is made as a result of this RFP, DMC Staff will negotiate a final scope of work, budget, and draft contract with the preferred firm prior to requesting full DMC Board approval of the contract.

H. Contract Term:

Indicate your preferred length for the initial contract term and any extensions, if applicable. Indicate the minimum contract length that would be acceptable.

I. Insurance Coverage:

Please explain the type and amount of insurance coverage you plan to secure if selected for this opportunity.

J. Employment & Compensation:

The DMC fully supports equal employment opportunity and does not discriminate against any applicant for employment because of race, gender, age, religion, national origin, or disability. All employment decisions, including hiring, termination, promotion, compensation, and benefits, are based on the ability to perform the essential functions of the job and are made without regard to race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, national origin or ancestry, age, or disability or any other non-merit factor. Any contract resulting from this RFP is required to follow the same policy.

Please provide an overview of the typical benefits package and hourly salary for your employees under this proposal.

K. UPMO References:

Relevant experience with similar Urban Place Management Organizations (UPMOs) performing this work is required for a firm to be considered well-qualified for this opportunity. Please list three or more references, with updated contact information, who can speak to the firm's experience performing this type of work.

QUESTIONS

Please submit clarifying questions by Dec. 16, 2024, by 4:00 PM CST. All questions and answers received by that deadline will be publicly posted on the DMC website around Dec. 20, 2024.

Please send all questions to Brett Roler, DMC's COO, at roler@downtownmemphis.com.