



Staff Report

City Council

Item No. 6.A

Meeting Date: April 23, 2025

From: Ryan Hunt, Communications & Events Manager

Title: Award Contracts to SoundSkilz, Hocker Productions, and Montage Agency to produce the Taste of Jalisco Festival, State of the City and Cathedral City LGBT+ Days

RECOMMENDATION:

To award contracts to the following vendors and authorize the City Manager or their representative to execute all necessary documents:

- Hocker Productions for State of the City (May 2026)
- SoundSkilz for Taste of Jalisco Festival (February 2026)
- Montage Agency for Cathedral City LGBT+ Days (March 2026)

BACKGROUND:

On January 17, 2025, the City of Cathedral City issued a request for proposals (RFP) seeking qualified professional special event production companies to plan and implement one or all city events known as the State of the City (May 2026), Taste of Jalisco Festival (February 2026) and Cathedral City LGBT+ Days (March 2026).

The RFP was advertised on the City's website, social media accounts, and through direct outreach to event production companies. The deadline for submissions was Friday, February 21, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. A total of four companies submitted proposals for one or more events.

A panel consisting of five City representatives evaluated the proposals based on established criteria including:

- past production experience,
- quality of event productions,
- size of event experience,
- promotional marketing communications plan,
- festival implementation plan,
- booking entertainment abilities,
- experience working with state and/or local government staff,
- budgeting experience, and
- community involvement or ability to network with volunteer groups and/or charities.

DISCUSSION:

The evaluation panel consisted of the following five individuals:

- Ryan Hunt, Communications & Events Manager (lead)
- Chris Parman, Events Consultant and 2025 LGBT+ Days event producer
- Antonio Baciú, Vice Chair of the Parks & Community Events Commission
- Adam Chastain, Events & Recreation Coordinator
- Richard Vogt, Finance Dept Senior Analyst

Each panelist independently scored each proposal on a scale of 1-100 based on the criteria outlined in the RFP. The scores were then averaged to determine the highest-scoring proposer for each event. The detailed scoring breakdown is as follows:

State of the City:

- Hocker Productions: 94.8 (Scores: 99, 88, 98, 94, 95)
- deHarte Group: 87.0 (Scores: 90, 76, 92, 91, 86)
- SoundSkilz: 76.6 (Scores: 75, 60, 75, 87, 86)

Taste of Jalisco Festival:

- SoundSkilz: 96.0 (Scores: 100, 88, 95, 98, 99)
- Hocker Productions: 87.6 (Scores: 90, 74, 85, 92, 97)
- deHarte Group: 82.4 (Scores: 90, 65, 83, 91, 83)

Cathedral City LGBT+ Days:

- Montage Agency: 90.0 (Scores: 75, 90, 92, 95, 98)
- deHarte Group: 88.6 (Scores: 85, 87, 90, 89, 92)
- Hocker Productions: 88.4 (Scores: 95, 88, 83, 83, 93)
- SoundSkilz: 77.0 (Scores: 75, 69, 70, 79, 92)

Based on the evaluation results, staff recommends awarding contracts to the highest-scoring vendors for each event:

- Hocker Productions for State of the City
- SoundSkilz for Taste of Jalisco Festival
- Montage Agency for Cathedral City LGBT+ Days

Based on the evaluation results, staff has successfully negotiated agreements with the highest-scoring proposers for each event:

1. Hocker Productions for State of the City
 - a. FY 2025/2026: \$25,000
 - b. FY 2026/2027: \$25,000
 2. SoundSkilz for Taste of Jalisco Festival
 - a. FY 2025/2026: \$113,000
 - b. FY 2026/2027: \$118,000
 3. Montage Agency for Cathedral City LGBT+ Days
 - a. FY 2025/2026: \$85,000
 - b. FY 2026/2027: \$90,000
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These agreements outline the scope of services, compensation terms, performance metrics, and other contractual requirements to ensure successful execution of each event. Each selected contractor will have exclusivity to produce their respective event for a two-year period, with optional renewal provisions subject to satisfactory performance. While a few of the cost proposals exceeded the current budgeted amount, Communications & Events was able to negotiate agreements satisfying the proposed FY 2025/2026 and FY 2026/2027 budget while maintaining the high quality and expectations for these City of Cathedral City signature events.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Funding for these special events is included in the FY 2025/2026 and FY 2026/2027 budget. The specific contract amounts are budgeted in Communications and Events (100-100-130-133-8600-8601) as follows:

State of the City, project M04519, (Hocker Productions):

- FY 2025/2026: \$25,000
- FY 2026/2027: \$25,000

Taste of Jalisco Festival, project M04506, (SoundSkilz):

- FY 2025/2026: \$113,000
- FY 2026/2027: \$118,000

Cathedral City LGBT+ Days, project M04515, (Montage Agency):

- FY 2025/2026: \$85,000
- FY 2026/2027: \$90,000

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN:

This action supports Goal F-3: Promote additional community events and celebrations.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Special Events Proposal Scoring Summary
2. Request for Proposals (RFP) for Special Events Contract(s) for Services
3. Cathedral City State of the City Event Services Agreement
4. CC LGBT+ Days Contract 2026-27
5. Taste of Jalisco Contract 2026-27
6. Winning Technical & Cost Proposals