

Request for Proposals



2024 Día de los Muertos



Submissions due by 6pm on June 21, 2024

Civic Center Conservancy

1410 N. Grant St., Suite 108, Denver CO 80203 | 303-861-4633

Día de los Muertos at Civic Center

1) SUMMARY OF SOLICITATION

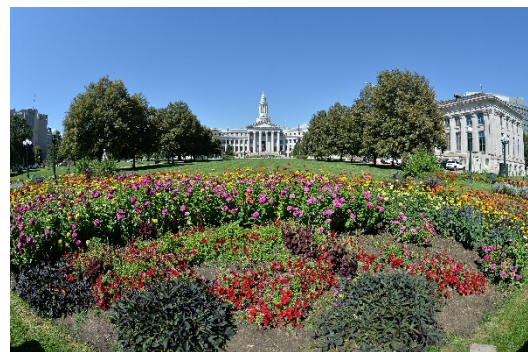
We are seeking a proposal from organizations, either individuals or teams, that can bring to life the important cultural celebration of Día de los Muertos to Civic Center Park on October 26, 2024. This “Partner” would lead the vision, planning, and execution of the event. Civic Center Conservancy would support the permitting processes, advise on best practices for putting on an event in the park, and provide some baseline funding.

We are seeking a Partner who has:

- Deep cultural connection and competency around the Día de los Muertos tradition
- A strong team, whether internal or through partnerships, that can execute the production of the event and provide curatorial and artistic direction.
- Excitement to continue this important celebration for Civic Center Park and Downtown Denver through their artistic stamp and direction.
- Commitment to amplifying Denver’s quality of life, civic and community engagement, and economic vitality
- Commitment to elevating vendors and performers from historically marginalized groups and communities. Ideally, their team composition also reflects representation from these groups.

2) ABOUT CIVIC CENTER CONSERVANCY

Civic Center Conservancy is dedicated to keeping Denver’s Civic Center Park **active** and **thriving** for all. As an independent nonprofit, the Conservancy engages individuals, businesses, and community groups as champions for this essential public space. It attracts people to the park, supports the park’s upkeep, and ensures it meets the needs of anyone who gathers there for today and for the future.



The Conservancy was born in 2004 when a group of private citizens, concerned about the state of Civic Center Park, stepped in to care for it. It works closely with the City and County of Denver to ensure the Community’s vision is brought to life through its mission while elevating and sustaining this historic space as a vibrant iconic cultural community hub.

Civic Center Park was created over a century ago as the City's primary public gathering space and governmental center. It is one of the few intact City Beautiful parks left in the Country and is recognized

as Denver's first National Historic Landmark. Civic Center Park is the primary green space in the center of Denver and serves as both a regional and neighborhood park.

Civic Center Park remains the heart of Denver, which is primarily due to the Civic Center Conservancy's work. The Conservancy continuously strives to ensure the park is welcoming, clean, and beautiful for everyone, every day. We structure our goals to accomplish that around three pillars:

- **For the Park** – The Conservancy supports the Park's upkeep by raising funds to restore its historical structures, enhance its natural spaces & advocate for investment in this essential public space. We do this in partnership with the City through a public-private partnership. The City takes care of the basic needs of the grounds, while we step in to fill the gaps & ensure the park reflects the people & the spirit of the City.
- **For the People** – The Conservancy serves as the Park's community builder, activating the space & providing opportunities for engagement year-round. Events & programs like Civic Center EATS & the Black Love Mural Festival ensure those who visit the park connect with the spirit of the City & become part of its legacy. The Conservancy also engages small businesses, neighboring cultural institutions, arts organizations & other local groups in bringing diverse voices & audiences to the park. In addition, it serves as the keeper of the park's rich history & educates others on its role in shaping Denver.
- **For the Future** - Spaces like Civic Center Park require a caretaker who is connected to the people who use the park, who advocates for improvements & who transforms the space to meet the needs of anyone who gathers there today & long into the future. The Conservancy is responsible for shaping the vision for the future of the park, coordinating conversations between the City leaders & those who use the park every day, & advocating for public & private investment needed to keep this space thriving.

3) CIVIC CENTER CONSERVANCY'S COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, ACCESS, AND INCLUSION



Civic Center Conservancy has a goal of engaging 200 diverse communities by 2027 using its Park Utilization Framework. This framework uses a collective social impact programming model that empowers underserved voices to tell their stories in the heart of Denver.

Starting in 2021, the Conservancy has worked to transform how it engaged, built relationships, and partnered with communities that have historically been excluded from or not had meaningful access to public spaces like Civic Center

Park. In an effort to better reflect Denver and its diverse communities, the Conservancy changed its internal operations and composition, as well as the types of external-facing programs we create and support. In three years, our board has gone from 4% BIPOC-identified to nearly 30%; likewise, our BIPOC-identified staff went from 0% to 40%. Programmatically, we changed how we approach our work through a lens of Collective Social Impact – how can we partner with organizations where, together, we can affect

societal change on a local level. We developed the Civic Center WORKS program in partnership with an organization that provides workforce development for unhoused people, employing them while providing landscaping training and mentoring alongside Denver Parks & Recreation staff. In 2024, we expanded this program to include youth workforce development in partnership with two organizations specializing in that field. Civic Center EATS, our food truck program, has a food access program, EATS for ALL, where we help lower cost barriers for anyone who needs it. Lastly, we have intentionally developed relationships with leaders of diverse community groups to empower them to bring their events to Civic Center Park, letting them tell their own stories and celebrate their own communities in this important civic space.

In an effort to elevate Denver's diverse communities, the Conservancy is committed to having high representation of vendors and performers from groups historically marginalized from accessing opportunities to vend at large events in Denver, including but not limited to women, BIPOC, immigrant, LGBTQ+, and people-with-disabilities communities.

4) OVERVIEW OF OPPORTUNITY

Civic Center Conservancy ("Conservancy", "CCC") is seeking to develop a partnership with a cultural organization, non-profit, or local for-profit company, or a collaborative team of different entities ("Partner"), that will serve as both curatorial director and event planners for a Día de los Muertos event for Civic Center Park. This Partner will provide the creative vision and direction for the event, as well as lead the operational and logistical execution.



In 2023, Civic Center Conservancy supported the inaugural Día de los Muertos Festival in Civic Center Park. The event was a rousing success, drawing in over 10,000 visitors for a single-day activation. Through musical and dance performances, Catrina competitions, local artisan retail vendors, and food, visitors got to celebrate Día de los Muertos in a large cultural festival. That said, we have identified the need for a Partner that has the capacity to continue running this event at a similar scale in Civic Center Park.

Building and improving on last year's success, the Conservancy wants to support an organization, or a partnership of organizations, to continue the Día de los Muertos celebration in Civic Center Park. This event is not meant to replace smaller, more community-centered events and celebrations around Denver and the metro area but is intended to be a place for residents of the Denver metro area and beyond to come together in community to celebrate, and learn about, this important cultural practice of Mexican and Mexican-American people.

Civic Center Conservancy has already secured a permit from Denver Parks & Recreation for the event – Saturday, October 26. An alternative possible dates would be Saturday, October 5. In addition, CCC has confirmed Denver Botanic Gardens as Title Sponsor for this event, providing \$25,000 for event costs, with the possibility of more procured through joint fundraising efforts through sponsorships.



We envision an event that celebrates the cultural holiday through art, education, food, and performances. That said, we are open to working with our Partner on a different scope for the event. Some non-negotiables are the date and the need for a set-up and strike in 1-3 days. We desire attendance to range from 7,500 – 10,000 patrons between ages 0-99, with a concentration of patrons in the 21 – 45 age range.

5) PARTNER QUALIFICATIONS

The Conservancy realizes that producing an event of this nature and size requires a team with many distinct competencies, experiences, skills, and abilities. We have identified the following areas as critical for the success of an event like this:

- Festival/Large-scale event planning
- Artistic Direction/Curation
- Project Management
- Development/Fundraising/Business Development
- Operations
- Education/Programming
- Partnerships
- Cultural Competency

We realize that any single organization may not have all of these competencies within their organization, and we welcome individual organizations to collaborate on this proposal. Ideally, the collaborators will have a history of working together. That said, we will expect the Partner to identify one lead organization/point of contact.

6) ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Partner will:

- Lead the overall creative vision and direction of the event, including scale and scope, with the goal of attracting 7,500-10,000 people and honoring the cultural significance of Día de los Muertos.
- Lead the production and execution of the event, including securing all production vendors (fencing, portable restrooms, waste management, etc.), running logistics, recruiting and selecting vendors and other partners.
- Provide CCC with administrative requirements for all necessary City permits and contracts, within the communicated timelines and deadlines.
- Meet with CCC on a regular basis for permitting processes.

Civic Center Conservancy will:

- Lead the acquisition of all permits and licenses necessary for the activation through the city and County of Denver's ("CCD") relevant agencies: Parks & Recreation, Special Events, Arts & Venues, and Excise & License, amongst others.
- Advise on the best practices and ideal operations for events in Civic Center Park, per CCC requirements, including activation layout within the Park, best event design for the space, etc.
- Lead the permitting administrative process, including setting necessary meetings, deadlines, and milestones.
- Provide financial underwriting of \$25,000 for event costs through title sponsorship from Denver Botanic Gardens.
- Lead the marketing and promotion responsibilities of each event.

7) FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

The Conservancy, through its partnership with Denver Botanic Gardens, is providing \$25,000 to support this event. We realize that, depending on the scale and scope of the event, this will be just a portion of the costs needed to produce the event. We have identified other potential sources of funding for the Día de los Muertos Festival that the Partner may pursue, including but not limited to:

- Corporate Sponsorships
- Product Sponsorships
- Vendor Fees
- Beverage Sales



The Conservancy anticipates there is the ability to generate at least \$5,000 for in vendor fees and beverage sales alone.

As part of your proposal, please indicate your strategy to acquire the necessary funds to put on this event at your anticipated scope and scale.

8) SELECTION CRITERIA

Interested applicants must meet the following criteria to be successful:

- Be based in Denver or the 6-county metro area (Adams, Arapahoe, Broomfield, Douglas, and Jefferson)
- Be in good standing with the Colorado Secretary of State.
- Capacity to deliver design, planning, and execution of a Día de los Muertos event on Saturday, October 26.
- Commitment to amplifying Denver's quality of life, civic and community engagement, and economic vitality.

- Commitment to elevating vendors and performers from historically marginalized groups and communities. Ideally, their team composition also reflects representation from these groups.
- Ability to meet partnership expectations of regular planning meetings and delivery of permitting and licensing requirements.
- Compile a team that demonstrates the experience and ability to successfully execute a Día de los Muertos Festival activation.

9) APPLICATION

Potential Partners should submit their application to activations@civiccenterconservancy.org by 6pm on June 21, 2024. Only complete applications will be considered. The application should contain and address the following:

Background Information

- Primary Contact Name
- Email
- Phone Number
- Company/Organization Name
- Organization's bio (mission, values, etc.)
- Is your company or organization women-owned or women-led, BIPOC-owned or BIPOC-led, or Immigrant-owned or Immigrant-led?
- Organizational Annual Budget

Organizational Qualifications

- Key Staff/Team – Name, roles, years of experience in those roles
- Organizational Relevant Experience and up to three examples.
 - In your examples of past work, please provide information about the following:
 - Experience, if any, producing events in outdoor venues in Colorado, especially any managed by Denver Parks & Recreation
 - Experience, if any, producing other Día de los Muertos events
 - Sustainability efforts within the entire event
 - DEIA efforts made
 - Any awards or acknowledgments you received for the events
 - (Optional) – any media or collateral for the event
- Potential or Committed Partners – what other organizations or companies might/will you work with to put on this event outside of CCC? Describe the role of each partner in the collaboration. Please indicate whether you've worked with them previously and if you have a commitment from them to partner for this event.
- At least 3 Professional References (contact information only, no letters)
- Disclosures – Do any staff or Board members, past or present, of the applicant organization have a relationship with staff or Board members, past or present, of the Conservancy? *Note – having*

a relationship to the Conservancy is not grounds for disqualification, however, knowingly failing to disclose a relationship to the Conservancy is grounds for disqualification.

- Any other pertinent information not addressed above

Budgets

- Please share one example of a past event's budget, including revenue and expenses. You can leave out any proprietary information.
- Please provide a budget for a Día de los Muertos Festival.

10) SELECTION PROCESS

Once the deadline has passed, all applications will undergo a thorough review process, which includes the following:

- Review by Conservancy Staff for application completeness
- A holistic review and scoring by the Community Activation Collaborative, a body of 12 diverse community members charged with representing their respective communities in the Conservancy's work.
- Interviews with top finalists by Conservancy Staff
- Final selection of Partner by Conservancy staff by early July
- Formal Partnership Agreement executed no later than July 12

11) QUESTIONS

We welcome questions and requests to meet about this RFP. Please reach out to Eric Raya Steinbeiss, Director of Community Partnerships + Activations, at ers@civiccenterconservancy.org with any clarifying questions you may have or to request an informational meeting.

