



2026-27 Festival of Lights & Winter Lighting Program

Request for Proposals (RFP): Lighting Installations & Public Art

Date Issued	September 25, 2026
Contacts	Victoria Mariano, Program Director; Downtown Worcester Business Improvement District
Contact Info	508-622-3050 ext. 2 victoria@downtownworchester.org
Submittal Accepted Until	October 9, 2026

Overview/Purpose of RFP

The [Downtown Worcester Business Improvement District \(BID\)](#) is seeking proposals for the design and fabrication of semi-permanent lighting installations for the Worcester Common. Installations will debut during the City of Worcester's annual Festival of Lights on December 4, 2026, and remain on display through February 28, 2027.

The Winter Lighting Program is a partnership between the Downtown Worcester BID and the City of Worcester, with funding provided by both organizations.

Project Goal

The Winter Lighting Program aims to create a festive and welcoming atmosphere on the Worcester Common throughout the winter season. We are seeking creative lighting installations that enhance the Common, complement existing winter activities and events, and help attract residents and visitors to Downtown Worcester.

Location and Specifics

The Worcester Common is located behind Worcester City Hall at 455 Main Street, Worcester, MA 01608.

Installations are not permitted within the historic burial ground on the Common. Please refer to the map and reference photos included at the end of this RFP for site dimensions, available power sources, and examples of previous installations.

Project Considerations

- Installations must be durable, weatherproof, secure, and suitable for extended outdoor display during winter conditions.
- Trees may be incorporated into proposed installations, provided designs do not adversely affect tree health or surrounding landscaping.



- Staking is not permitted on the Worcester Common. Installations must include appropriate weighting or other approved methods for secure anchoring.
- Electrical power is available at designated locations. Please refer to the site map for available power sources.
- Energy-efficient LED lighting is strongly encouraged.
- Selected vendors will be responsible for installing and assembling their installations, monitoring and maintaining them throughout the display period, and fully disassembling and removing them in accordance with the project timeline.

Budget/Project Tiers

The total budget for the Winter Lighting Program is \$20,000. The BID may select one or multiple proposals, with total awards not to exceed \$20,000.

The goal is to create multiple lighting installations or features throughout the Worcester Common. Proposals may include a single installation or multiple installations and may be submitted within either of the following budget tiers:

- **Tier 1: Up to \$10,000**
 - Proposals may include individual or smaller-scale installations, such as lighting along pathways, standalone features, or installations within a specific area of the Worcester Common.
- **Tier 2: \$10,000–\$20,000**
 - Proposals should include multiple installations or a larger-scale lighting concept incorporating multiple areas of the Worcester Common, such as pathways, gathering spaces, landscaping, trees, or existing site features.

In-Kind Sponsorship Opportunity (Optional)

Vendors may choose to provide a discount on the value of their proposed installation in exchange for recognition as an in-kind sponsor of the Festival of Lights.

For example, a vendor proposing an installation valued at \$10,000 may offer to provide the project for \$5,000, with the remaining \$5,000 recognized by the BID as an in-kind sponsorship.

Sponsorship benefits may include recognition on event signage, the BID website and social media, and in press and promotional materials. Benefits will be based on the value of the in-kind sponsorship.

Vendors interested in this option should contact Program Director Victoria Mariano at victoria@downtownworchester.org prior to submitting a proposal to discuss available sponsorship benefits.



Proposal Requirements

All proposals must include:

- Project description, including whether the proposal includes a single installation or multiple installations
- Detailed cost breakdown, including materials, labor, installation/assembly, maintenance, disassembly/removal, and any additional expenses
- Proposed lighting fixtures and relevant specifications
- Design plan, including layout diagrams and renderings where applicable
- Installation and removal plan and timeline
- Examples of similar projects and/or relevant references
- Energy-efficiency considerations

Submission Guidelines

Submission Deadline: October 9, 2026

Proposals must be submitted in PDF format by email to:
Victoria Mariano, Program Director
Downtown Worcester Business Improvement District
victoria@downtownworchester.org

Questions regarding this RFP, project requirements, or site conditions may also be directed to Victoria Mariano at victoria@downtownworchester.org.

Project Timeline

September 25, 2026 — RFP issued
October 9, 2026 — Proposal deadline
October 14, 2026 — Selection notification
October–November 2026 — Off-site fabrication and preparation
November 16–December 2, 2026 — Installation
December 4, 2026 — Festival of Lights / installations debut
February 28, 2027 — Final day of Winter Lighting Program
March 7, 2027 — Disassembly and removal complete

Selection Process & Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- Cost Effectiveness — Overall value and alignment with the proposed budget



- Quality and Creativity — Visual appeal, creativity, and overall strength of the proposed concept
- Experience and Capability — Relevant experience and demonstrated ability to successfully complete the project
- Compliance — Ability to meet project requirements, specifications, and applicable regulations

The BID may select one or multiple proposals and reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received. Final project scope, terms, and conditions will be determined with selected vendor(s).

Thank you for your interest in the Festival of Lights and Downtown Worcester Winter Lighting Program. We look forward to reviewing your proposal.

Site Information & Reference Images

Worcester Common — Site Map



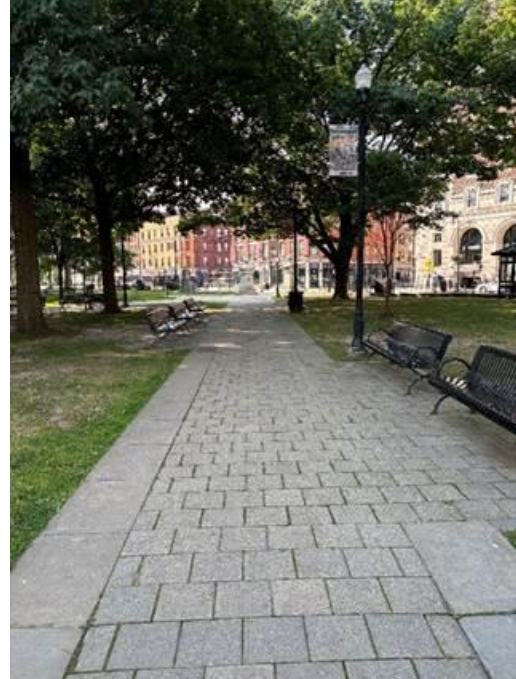
Map of Worcester Common showing pathway dimensions, available power sources, and restricted areas. Installations are not permitted within the historic burial ground.

Worcester Common — Site Reference

Selected views are provided to show the scale, pathways, landscaping, and general site conditions of the Worcester Common.



Front Street side, facing east



Franklin Street side, below the Oval, facing south



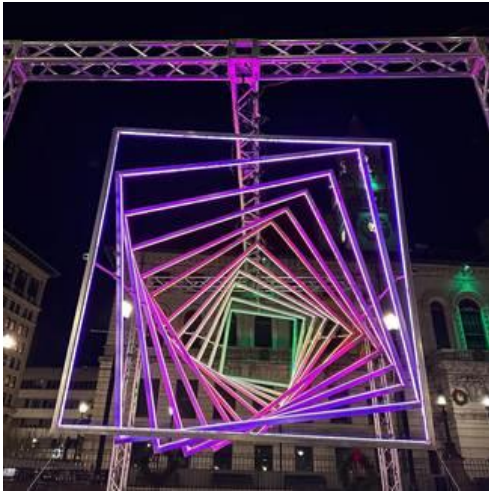
Franklin Street side, facing east



South side of the Oval, facing City Hall/Franklin Street

Previous Winter Lighting Installations

The following images are provided as examples of previous installations and are intended for reference only. Vendors are encouraged to propose original concepts and creative approaches.



*"Illuminaciones," Zebbler Studios, 2023 Festival of Lights |
Photo: Mike Hendrickson*



*Rainbow Tunnel, New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill,
2020 Festival of Lights*



*"Kinetic," Juan Fuentes Studio, 2025 Festival of Lights | Photo:
Josh Wingell*



*"Allium," Everything Good Studios, 2025 Festival of Lights |
Photo: Joe Santa Maria*



Tree and pathway lighting, 2023 Festival of Lights. | Photo: Mike Hendrickson