

Late Backup

Downtown Street Event Closure Taskforce

Report to City Council
December 18, 2008

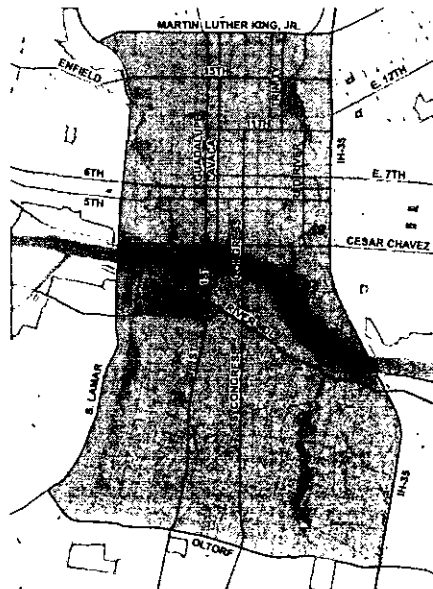
Background Information

- June 5, 2008 Austin City Council unanimously adopted Ordinance No. 20090605-045
- City Council Findings:
 - Foot races and walks benefit numerous local nonprofits and the community
 - These events help the City further its goal of being recognized as the fittest city in America by the year 2010
 - Festivals and parades enhance the quality of life for Austin residents
 - Many of these events occur in the downtown area, where the City aims to create a vibrant mix of uses
 - Users of the area continue to search for efficient travel routes, parking and street access
 - Such access is key to the sustenance of all downtown enterprises

Background Information

- City Council Action: Created the Downtown Street Event Closure Taskforce
- Included stakeholders affected by events involving street closures in the downtown and near south Austin area, bounded by Martin Luther King Blvd. on the north, Interstate Highway 35 on the east, Oltorf Street on the south and and Lamar Blvd. on the west

Taskforce Study Area



Background Information

- City Council and Mayor appointed Taskforce members representing the following groups:
 - Nonprofits that sponsor events requiring street closures
 - Organizers of foot races and walks
 - Houses of Worship
 - Downtown Austin Neighborhood Association and other neighborhood associations
 - Downtown Austin Alliance
 - Austin Convention and Visitor's Bureau
 - Downtown offices, hotels and businesses

Taskforce Members

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| □ Paul Carrozza,
Co-chair | □ Ramona Magid |
| □ Jack Hightower,
Co-chair | □ Gary Manley |
| □ Carol Arnold | □ Dave Merhar |
| □ Chip Brees | □ Paul Noetzel |
| □ John Conley | □ Tomas Pantin |
| □ Nad Elias | □ Matthew Payne |
| □ Jamie Lagarde | □ Tom Segesta |
| | □ Jen Stuart |
| | □ Kathie Tovo |

Taskforce Purpose

- Review and recommend revisions to ordinances affecting street closures for events
- Recommend strategies for creating a mutually beneficial schedule for events requiring street closures, including:
 - Alternate days for events
 - Alternate routes for access to businesses and buildings
 - Possible limit on the number of events and/or days per year on which streets are closed
 - Preset routes for foot races and walks
 - Other changes which respect the needs of all stakeholders

Taskforce Process

- Adopted Mission Statement: To develop a set of recommendations on the process associated with street closures that support planned and unplanned events in an efficient and well-communicated manner to
 - Encourage a diverse mix of new and existing events that support key community goals and values; and
 - Respect the needs of neighborhoods, residents, businesses and churches that are by their mere location involved.
- Taskforce held a total of 19 meetings from June through December with citizen and stakeholder input

Issues and Challenges

- Number of Special Events Increasing
 - FY 2005 – 110 (Permitted through ROW)
 - FY 2006 – 122
 - FY 2007 – 145
- Number of Downtown Residents Increasing
 - 2000 Census – 3,855
 - 2005 – 5,434
 - 2010 Estimate – 8,297
- Future Growth and Plan for Downtown
 - Seaholm, Green and other developments
 - ROMA Study – Improve access and mobility
- Balance among Moving and Stationary Events

Taskforce Focus

- A: Event Frequency, Number, Variety, Scheduling, Capping, Location, Grandfathering and Tiering
- B: Application Approval Process and Timeline, Permit Process, Appeals, Definitions, Waivers, Notification and Signature Requirements, Communication and Technology
- C: Set Race Routes, Street and Building Access, Entrapment and Public Safety
- D: Financial Cost/Impact and Event Fee Structure
- E: Political Events and Parades

Taskforce Definitions

■ Affected Parties:

- Person who is impacted by a street event closure
- Location or property in which access is impacted
- Association that is impacted

■ Street Closure:

- Full Street Closure allows no traffic on the street at all
- Local Access Only Street Closure allows no through traffic
- Temporary Street Closure has Officer controlled through traffic
- Lane Closure is a partial street closure or one in which a portion of the street is closed off

Taskforce Recommendations

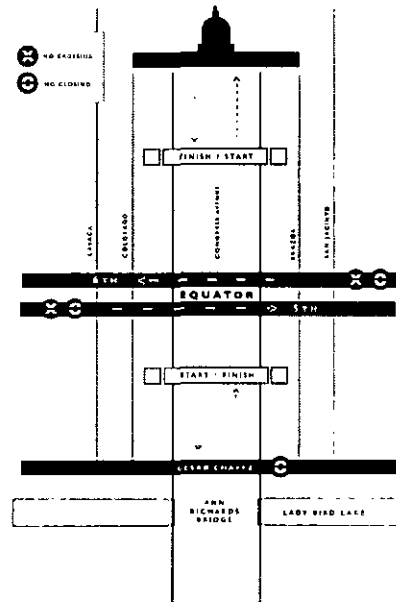
■ Special Event Management:

- Create Office of Special Events (OSE) to report to the City Manager's Office. OSE will serve as a centralized point of information and contact for City departments, event promoters and the public. It will consist of City staff across departments including Right-of-Way Management, Parks and Recreation Department, Austin Police Department and Emergency Management Services.
- Create Special Events Advisory Commission (SEAC) composed of community stakeholders such as event organizers, residents, businesses, churches, etc. SEAC will serve as a public forum, provide oversight, review event application appeals and advise Council.

Taskforce Recommendations

- Street and Building Access:
 - Designate 5th/6th Streets as the open access route for the downtown area with only 6 exceptions per year
 - No moving event shall encircle/entrap any area city-wide without an alternative route or reasonable ingress/egress
 - Require walks to be held in bubble formation
 - Cap the number of moving events at or below their current levels within the study area
 - Stationary events should meet certain scheduling and location requirements in connection with moving events
 - Improve placement and management of traffic control devices

Equator Map



Taskforce Recommendations

- **Special Event Application/Permitting Process:**
 - Expand timeline for the submission and review of applications from 60 days to 210 days before the event
 - Improve communication with affected parties and develop notification system through the Office of Special Events
 - Prior to approval, applications receiving 20% or more objections per route block or a registered association will be reviewed by the Special Events Advisory Commission
 - Event organizers must have an approved application before marketing/promoting their event
 - Finalize traffic control plans at an earlier date
 - Take into consideration a tiered system of events

Taskforce Recommendations

- **Financial Cost/Impact of Events:**
 - Create a comprehensive annual report of City's financial contribution to events including fee waivers, costs incurred for public safety, etc.
 - Recommend Council develop criteria to evaluate applications from event organizers seeking waivers for street event closure approval requirements and municipal fees

Taskforce Recommendations

□ Amend City Code:

- City staff review and align Chapter 14-7. Temporary Street Closure for a Parade and Chapter 14-8. Temporary Street Closure for a Street Event

Downtown Street Event Closure Taskforce

Questions and Answers