



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mayor and Council

**FROM:** Ray Baray, Chief of Staff

**DATE:** November 18, 2015

**SUBJECT: Response to Council Resolution No. 20141002-042 Relating to West Campus Parties**

---

The purpose of this memo is to provide you with an update on code amendments and private party permits pursuant to Council Resolution No. 20141002-042 (see attached). The resolution was adopted in response to growing noise complaints and safety concerns arising from activity in the West Campus neighborhood near the University of Texas (UT). The resolution specifically directed the City Manager to initiate code changes as well as to create a permitting process for private parties.

In the past year, staff from various City departments, including the Fire Department (AFD), Police Department (APD), Code and Corporate Special Events, met with stakeholder groups from the West Campus neighborhood to discuss potential code amendments and code compliance issues. Officials from UT and various student organizations also participated.

During these meetings, neighborhood association representatives repeatedly expressed their opposition to any changes in existing City regulations with respect to outdoor amplified sound permits within 100 feet of property zoned and used as residential. Additionally, during one stakeholder meeting, representatives from at least one student Greek organization stated that they had no issue with the current regulations and instead wanted to better understand the City's special event requirements.

It has become apparent that the only consensus among stakeholders is that no changes to current City Code or to the special events permit policy are desired. Therefore, staff recommends:

1. No amendments to City Code Chapter 9-2 (Noise and Amplified Sound); and
2. AFD, APD and Code will continue working together through the Public Assembly Code Enforcement (PACE) team to enforce as well as to educate students and West Campus neighborhood associations about current rules and regulations.

The Austin Fire Department will also continue to host its annual West Campus student informational meeting, with representatives from AFD, APD, Code, UT, student organizations and neighborhood residents. This will serve as an opportunity to regularly educate students on the regulations for student-organized assemblies and events in an effort to minimize ordinance violations and citizen complaint calls.

Should you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Bill Manno, Corporate Special Events Manager, at (512) 974-2110 or via email at [William.Manno@austintexas.gov](mailto:William.Manno@austintexas.gov). Thanks!

cc: Marc A. Ott, City Manager  
Assistant City Managers  
Bill Manno, Corporate Special Events

Attachment (1) – Resolution No. 20141002-042

**RESOLUTION NO. 20141002-042**

**WHEREAS**, there are several City Code requirements that apply to a private party held in a residential dwelling; and

**WHEREAS**, these requirements are intended to promote safety and quality of life for those attending as well as those living in the area near a private party; and

**WHEREAS**, these requirements have not been consistently enforced, though some recent incidents that involved overcrowding of events in residential areas have spurred a stricter and more consistent approach, which will likely make it very difficult for residents to legally hold private parties; and

**WHEREAS**, the term 'private party' is not actually defined in the code; and

**WHEREAS**, there could be instances where private parties held in residential areas do not necessitate the level of requirements currently dictated by the code; and

**WHEREAS**, creating a more practical set of regulations and a permit for private parties may improve the rate of compliance with the sound ordinance, over-occupancy, and other important aspects of a private party; and

**WHEREAS**, the need for some agreement on private party regulations is of particular concern in West Campus due to a higher concentration of students and therefore parties; and

**WHEREAS**, both students and long-term residents in and near the area just west of the University of Texas have concerns that must be considered in balancing between reasonable nightlife and quality of life; and

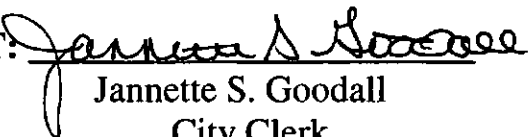
**WHEREAS**, a dialogue that includes, but is not limited to, representatives of West Campus residents, surrounding neighborhoods, Greek life, the University Area Partners, Student Government, Senate of College Councils, representatives of Co-ops, and the University of Texas, as well as city stakeholders including the Music Office, Austin Police Department, Austin Code Department, Planning and Development Review Department, Austin Fire Department, and others, will be vital to understanding the safety and quality of life needs for all stakeholders in the area to the west of the University of Texas; and

**WHEREAS**, until this permit is created, staff may work with students to allow some flexibility in the permit requirements while ensuring safety and quality of life are maintained; **NOW THEREFORE**

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:**

The City Council initiates code amendments that define “private party” and create a permit process for private parties, directs the City Manager to process the code amendments and bring them to Council by November 20, 2014, and directs the City Manager to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to provide input on the proposed code amendments as well as work with staff on any other recommendations related to private parties.

**ADOPTED:** October 2, 2014

**ATTEST:**   
Jannette S. Goodall  
City Clerk