



OFFICE OF SPECIAL EVENTS
200 South Lamar, Austin, Texas 78704
(512)974-6797 (512) 974-6756 Fax
reservations@austintexas.gov
www.austintexas.gov/parkevents
www.austintexas.gov/citystage

SPECIAL EVENTS POLICY

The staff of the PARD Office of Special Events (OSE) is available to assist with large scale event planning (>1000 attendees/day or as determined by PARD). The office will provide an overview and understanding of the City's requirements of logistical and behind-the-scenes planning to help ensure your event is safe, high quality, well organized, and enjoyable for all of your guests.

Large scale event planning requires careful and deliberate consideration of many details including safety and security planning, entertainment scheduling, sound mitigation, insurance coverage, road closures, special needs access, temporary permits, transportation and shuttle services, waste management and environmental measures, and much more!

The following guidelines will serve you well as an Organizer anticipating the details of the proposed upcoming large scale event. Don't hesitate to contact the PARD Office of Special Events to assist you every step of the way!

AUTHORIZATION, PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF POLICY

RELATED CODES, RULES AND POLICIES

Chapter 8-1 Parks Administration: General Provisions, Restrictions on Park Use, Motor Vehicles in Park, Amplified Sound; Park Rules including: Use of Park Facilities, Occupancy Limit, Assembly, Disruptive Behavior and Ejection from Park and Wildlife Preserve Facilities, Vending, Peace and Quiet, Weapons and Firearms, Animals, Fires, Smoking, Firewood or Fireworks, Camping and Overnight Use, Motor Vehicles, Parking, Trail Use, Adherence to Park Signs, Alcohol, Glass Containers, Performing, and Artists in Parks. In addition, turf and tree protection guidelines and policies are established to help preserve the natural environment.

AUTHORIZATION STATEMENT

As per the City of Austin Personnel Policies and City Code Chapter 8, the Parks and Recreation Department Director has the authority and responsibility of maintaining efficiency within the operation, determining the methods of operation to accomplish the department mission and objectives. The Director may require a permit to reserve or temporarily use a public recreation area, and may establish written guidelines for reservation and/or use.

PURPOSE

To establish guidelines and minimum standards for Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) in planning and facilitating safe, well run, high-quality and enjoyable special events.

POLICY SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

It is the policy of the Parks and Recreation Department that employees and events/organizers are required to follow the Special Event guidelines and procedures for planning and monitoring all special events with an anticipated ≥1000 participants/day, or as required by PARD for events with unique planning requirements.



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ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

THE EVENT ORGANIZER

The event organizer is responsible for planning the event, which commences by submitting a detailed and completed request Austin Center for Events (ACE) Application (form available) that provides the following required information:

- a. **TIMELY** and **ADVANCED** submittal of Citywide Event Application (NOTE - This often requires advance approval of park availability by PARD.
- b. Due diligence
- c. Responsible on-site management during all pre-event, event, and post-event hours.
- d. In depth quality summary of basic event information
- e. Entertainment sound requirements (incorporating directional speakers, flown arrays)
- f. Draft number/volume of food/beverage and alcohol concessions
- g. Draft number of merchandise/outreach concession (non-food/beverage) requests listed
- h. Public Safety Plan and Requirements
- i. Transportation planning, shuttle, and documented parking plan.
- j. Public notification, signage of event
- k. ADA accommodations documented and provided via public information outlets (event website, brochures, flyers, etc..)
- l. Sanitation and Waste Management Plan which includes toilets, hand washing, trash, recycling, and active event litter control along with proper disposal mechanisms.
- m. Detailed **CAD-LIKE** Site Plan
- n. Copies of additional required permits, plans and contracts to be obtained by the event organizer, including but not limited to:

- **Examples...**
- Traffic control plan and Permit
- Event Safety and Security plan (Police and EMS coverages)
- Sanitation Plan (litter control, recycling and trash removal services/plan, toilets and hand sanitation)
- Transportation, parking and shuttle plan (form)
- Inclement weather plan (form)
- Required Insurance(s)
- Concessions and Vendors
- Health Permits
- Alcohol Permits
- Sound Permit and Sound Impact Plan (7500+ people or as required)
- Fencing and Tent installation (if applicable)
- Public/Neighborhood Notification Plan
- ADA Accommodations for parking and transportation access
- Building Permit (structures, stages, bleachers)
- Electrical Permits
- Tree Permits



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ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

OFFICE OF SPECIAL EVENTS STAFF

Parks and Recreation Department-Office of Special Events staff is responsible for the review of all requests for PARD special event property reservations. This process will include:

1. Confirmation and negotiation of the availability of event dates, which includes confirmation of known area conflicts (input may be garnered from neighboring event centers, stakeholders, and other City Departments)
 2. Negotiation of event location and logistics.
 3. Consultation with event organizer on best practices for event production.
 4. Consultation with other PARD and City staff, as needed to determine the feasibility of the proposed event.
 5. Draft written agreement and distribute to key city staff for review.
 6. Securing copies of required contracts/submittals for the event from the Organizer in compliance with contract terms/conditions.
- 1) Fees/Payments:
1. Collect 25% non-refundable event deposit 14 days from the time of event date(s) confirmation/approval. This non-refundable fee serves as your event confirmation, subject to final contract negotiation and submission of all required documents and plans. Failure to pay the event deposit within 14 calendar days of event approval may result in immediate cancellation and date release WITHOUT notice.
 2. Collect remaining balance owed at least 30 days prior to event.
- 2) Execute an event contract with Organizer.
- 3) In general, **Fees are NOT refunded** for failure to take possession, event rain outs when the organizer has failed to proactively cancel an event or event day to protect parkland or when the City terminates the contract for cause.
- 4) Event Organizer submits required detailed authorization plan, forms, and copies of support contracts as specified in the provisions section of the executed Reservations agreement.
- 5) Site walk through scheduled with detailed organizer provided site plan.
- 6) Authorization of permits (sound, alcohol, occupancy) will ONLY be issued AFTER event requirements are submitted.
- 7) Events office confirms all provisions of the written reservations agreement have been met. (Reservations office will confer with PARD Office of the Director if all contractual provisions have not been met).



PROCESS and PROCEDURE (applicant)

1. **Selecting Event Site:** Event organizer will coordinate reservation of the event location, date and time with the PARD Office of Special Events. Annual events (those with 3 or more continuous years of event coordination) receive standing reservations. Non annual events must complete a reservation under the adopted reservation policies and procedures utilizing the lottery or first-come first-served period.
 - a. **Note:** Due to the high public demand for daily public use of the city's trail system, organized events of any size are not permitted on City of Austin-PARD hike and bike trails. In addition, varying path widths and slopes do not allow for appropriate medical response access to the trail.
2. **CAD-Like Site Plan** – A site plan is required in most cases, including a route map for running events, to illustrate fencing line(s), as well as designate location of Public Safety Command Post, EMS stations, entrances and exits, stage/booths, tents, portable toilets, bicycle parking spaces, alcohol service areas, hand sanitizer stations, concessions/vendors and any other pertinent information. In addition, materials storage, access routes, and support equipment in/around trees must be notated. All site plans must be approved by Parks and Recreation Department. Events site plans are to be in CAD format (preferred) with scaled renderings.
3. **Event Duties** – Event organizer must develop and assign the list of event job duties to its hired contractors, subcontractors and entertainers. All personnel hired by the organizer should be fully briefed on expectations, requirements, event operations, safety and medical plans, allowed and prohibited items, as well as park rules.
4. **Irrigated Park Land Use** - Event organizer must strictly adhere and uphold the irrigated parkland use policies which incorporate city required protections, equipment styles and practices. Organizers are expected to fully brief, manage and message all vendors, sponsors, and subcontractors to comply with the use policies.
5. **Concessions** – Event organizer may subcontract with an outside vendor(s) at the approved event venue. Contractual requirements will include a comprehensive waste management plan (including grease and waste water services provision), in addition to vendor briefing on park regulations by event organizer, and careful management of vendor load in/out and concessions.
 - a. Concessionaires (food and/or merchandise) should be clearly instructed as to event and park rules/requirements.
 - b. Single use bags ordinance is in effect as of March 2013.



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- c. Product lines and merchandise should be removed from all packaging, cellophane, boxes, etc. to reduce waste/litter from the event stream. It is preferred that food items should be hand held or consumable without the use of plates and utensils. Pump style condiment dispensers are encouraged.

6. Waste Management/Recycling/Portable Restroom Plan – A waste management plan is required for major special events. Dumpster, portable toilets and hand sanitizers must be delivered and removed WITHIN the contracted set up, event day(s) and/or take down period as confirmed by contract by a licensed hauler/provider.

- A. Portable Toilets – It is estimated that a minimum of two (2) portable toilets per each five hundred (500) estimated in attendance are required. Separate portable toilets are required for entertainers and food handlers. One (1) per one thousand (1,000) persons must be ADA accessible. Placement should allow for servicing of the toilets during the event while considering minimal impact to the grounds.
 - ⇒ Every portable toilet installation MUST include hand sanitizers or hand washing station installations.
 - ⇒ Most parks have standard allowable toilet installation areas. Please consult with the department before placing toilets.
- B. Dumpster(s) – contract for services (both trash and recycling) – clearly labeled so all vendors/staff are easily aware of proper disposal containers.
- C. Recycling services are required at all events. Minimally the organizer should provide co-located 1:1 ratio and CLEARLY identifiable recycling containers at all trash container locations.
- D. Litter management - the organizer is required to provide a written litter control plan which includes:
 - ⇒ Litter management staff on site during event hours.
 - ⇒ Post event hours litter clean up staffing.
 - ⇒ Litter control/patrol along affected area sidewalks, streets and/or neighborhoods. This includes affected neighborhood and park areas, and hike/bike trails/bridges.
- E. Grease and waste water/gray water areas must be provided on site for vendor use. All vendors should be briefed, and preferably walked through key infrastructure locations. A mandatory briefing day host by the organizer on site is considered a best practice.

7. Alcoholic beverage consumption, sale, and/or service

- ⇒ A Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission (TABC) Permit is required for the sale of alcoholic beverages. Sale is typically defined as events that include a cash bar or the cost of the alcoholic beverage is included in the cost of the ticket or donation.
- ⇒ Proof of purchase of a liquor liability insurance policy in City required amounts, naming the City of Austin as an additional insured is required.



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- ⇒ Event organizer, sponsors and vendors shall comply with all laws and regulations servicing the sale, possession or use of alcohol.
- ⇒ Event must comply with service standards as published by the Austin Parks and Recreation Department.

- **see alcohol service standards policy**

8. Event Safety and Security Plan - An event Safety and Security plan must be approved by Austin Police Department. The plan can be expected to be comprised of staffing in a compilation of the following forms:

- i. Austin Police Department Special Events Unit personnel (required for alcohol sales/service AND for permitted street/sidewalk closures/control);
- ii. Off-duty private contract commissioned licensed peace officers,
- iii. private licensed peace officers;
- iv. private licensed security agency;
- v. private (t-shirt) event security.

The plan should include sufficient and appropriate public safety personnel, a private licensed security agency, peace officers for crowd management and control, road closures (if applicable and permitted), emergency communications, and an emergency action plan.

All security must be in uniform and have the ability to communicate with the event's central Command or emergency services if necessary. Security Personnel are not allowed to consume alcoholic beverages while on duty.

NOTE: Alcohol sales/service: Where alcohol is served/sold, it should be anticipated that minimally **2 licensed public safety personnel per 1000** attendees are staffed for general crowd control and safety IN ADDITION to personnel required for admissions, gate control, backstage security, etc...

9. Transportation Plan – Special Events must include a comprehensive traffic control plan (where applicable), and provisions for parking, ADA, hike/bike trail access routes, bicycle parking rack/area, and shuttle service plan (if adequate public parking cannot be secured and demonstrated). This plan should consider and ensure minimal impact on neighborhoods, sufficient crowd control personnel, traffic patterns and emergency access. Street closures, lane reductions and any use of the public right of way must be approved by the Transportation Department, and the parking and transportation plan by PARD. All



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proposed street closures and traffic plans must comply with the street closure requirements of Chapter 14 of the Austin City Code.

10. Parking Plan – Event organizer must coordinate with area garages and parking lot owners to ensure adequate event parking is available for attendees. Parking plan may include shuttle service route, public transit routes, bike parking infrastructure/area, and on-site/area ADA designated parking accommodations. Parking plan must be submitted for review by PARD and must be clearly provided to the public/customers minimally by the event website.

11. Amplified Sound Code and Policy (Sound Permit) – Event organizer intending to use amplification devices shall observe the requirements of City Code (noise ordinance), Chapter 8, Parks and Recreation, and the following provisions.

- Event organizer shall actively comply with the sound ordinance, and make a diligent effort to minimize the impact of amplified sound on surrounding neighborhoods and businesses (i.e., placement of stage and directions of speakers).
- Premium sound equipment shall be used including directional style speakers, incorporating flown arrays pointed down/at crowd (versus at large across grounds).
- Use of amplified sound is expected to be scalable to event size. “All day” or longer events are expected to start amplified sound at lower levels, gradually approaching the decibel limit at the end of the daily permitted time frame. Likewise, with smaller crowds, amplified sound is expected to be commensurately lowered. Saturation of non-park areas, neighbors and residences with amplified sound when crowds or smaller is not aligned with good use of public space.
- All sound will be measured on the “A scale slow” and set for decibel levels at peak not mean, in addition the City may take into consideration C scale ratings to aide in appropriate music impact mitigation.
- Failure to keep the peak sound levels at or below the required decibel level will result in revocation of the noise permit and/or on-site cancellation of the event. Enforcement of the noise ordinance is “complaint” driven and responded to by the Austin Police Department, and City Staff monitored. In addition, complaints received or violations witnessed by City of Austin staff will be investigated and considered when allowing continuance of an event, or reviewing requests for future years.
- **Sound Impact Plan** – events over 7500 people are as required by the City must obtain a Sound Impact Plan from the City of Austin Music Office. The City may require plans for events close to residential, with a history of potential sound issues, or as required.
- **Sound curfew extensions** are to be requested, reviewed and ultimately approved by the Director by law, based on the special events staff recommendation of the request. Sound curfew eligibility is **RESTRICTED** by law.
 - By CODE, curfew extensions are ONLY considered if:
 - The property in question is GREATER than 600’ from residential property,
OR



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- The property in question has a PERMANENTLY installed stage/bandstand or is held in a building intended for public events.
- Written Request for curfew extension (if applicable and allowed by Code) which demonstrates extreme necessity for extension as well as an outreach plan to area businesses, and neighborhoods. The organizer is encouraged to receive letters of support from the subject areas to provide for the event file. Letters may be required at the department's discretion.

12. Grass Permits – Grass permits are to be used for loading and unloading, and approved parking on park grounds. By law, no vehicle may drive on parkland without permission (a permit). The following requirements must be met prior to event date:

- a. Coordinate approval of permits with the Office of Special Events for Parks Grounds Manager approval. This will be strictly enforced. (completion of provided **FORM**)
- b. Limit the number of requested permits to a minimum where physical need is clearly demonstrated.
- c. Display the permit on the left front vehicular windshield area at all times.

13. Moon Walks, Inflatables, and Rock Walls - A concession permit is required through the Office of Special Events for the use of a moonwalk on parkland, and must obtain approval from Parks Grounds Manager.

- a. Moon walk companies are required to have valid general commercial and auto liability insurance naming and on file with the City.
- b. Companies must have a current license/inspection from the State of Texas, Department of Insurance.

NOTE – miniature trains, petting zoos, water slides/rides are NOT permitted.

14. Fireworks – Events that incorporate fireworks are required to follow the Fire Marshall's Office regulations, and in addition must be approved by all affected departments with permitting responsibilities. Due diligence is required on behalf of the event organizer.

- **SEE fireworks policy and process overview information**

15. Electricity – All requirements for electrical work must be coordinated with the event venue Parks Grounds Manager and noted on a site plan to be developed no later than (30) thirty days prior to the scheduled event. Failure to meet the (30) day requirement may result in the loss of electrical staff support by Austin Energy. **A licensed electrician must complete all electrical work and a copy of the valid electrician's license is required.**



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- 16. Emergency Safety/Medical Services** – Event organizers shall procure services and receive a permit (approval) for the service level from the Austin/Travis County Emergency Medical Services Department. EMS plans may include component of stationary and/or mobile emergency services staffing.
- a. Copies of the detailed contract/service plan should be provided and approved by EMS no later than 30 days in advance of the first event date.
 - b. Medical services should take into consideration weather factors, average patron ability level, event type (athletic versus concert), whether or not alcohol will be on site and event duration when drafting plans for medical services.
 - c. Stationary emergency medical services should be clearly identified from all areas on event grounds and it is suggested to perimeterize the area for privacy.
- 17. Fencing** – Minimally, chain link fencing is required where alcohol is being sold. Fencing should be installed during set up and be removed during take down.
- a. The type of fencing to be used will be a minimum of six (6) feet in height with poles placed a maximum of ten (10) feet apart and minimum of eleven and one half (11 ½) gauge wire.
 - b. Fencing shall be free standing utilizing “footings” designed for installation while minimizing park impact.
 - c. Designation of fencing shall be included in the site plan.
 - d. Trails, sidewalks and any official paths must remain open at all times unless otherwise approved by the Parks and Recreation Department Director.
 - e. Fencing installation should be designed to provide sufficient entry/exits gates which over accommodates for patron movement and must be approved by the Austin Fire Department.
 - i. Exit gates must be clearly marked with red/white signage placed above average crowd height, and illuminated by dual methods after dusk.
- 18. Carnivals** -Carnivals are NOT permitted on park land.
- 19. Inclement Weather** - Event organizer must develop and provide the Parks and Recreation Department the written details of their inclement weather plan and include a plan for activation of information to emergency personnel worker and volunteers. The event organizer will attend at least one event planning meeting to orient, train city staff, event workers and volunteers if required.
- a. In addition to a thorough inclement weather plan, the organizer is **encouraged** to review the company/organization business practices and public policies to ensure that **accurate cancellation information is available to consumers** for public notification purposes in case of weather or muddy condition event cancellation.
 - b. Event organizers are also encouraged to **review their insurance coverage** for rain out provisions for personal company/business entity coverage.
 - c. Event organizers may also wish to include **information on cancellation policies** in relation to event funders, sponsors, vendors (food and/or merchandise).



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d. The City and/or PARD will make the final determination to protect public safety, and public property.

20. Insurance Requirements (Commercial General Liability Insurance required) - Evidence of insurance will be required before final permit approval. Some events may require a higher limit of insurance based on risk exposure. Additionally, event organizer must list the City of Austin as additional insured on their certificate of insurance.

A copy of the minimum insurance requirements for the proposed event will be provided upon request.

21. Pre-/Post-Event Walk-Thru - Event organizer is required to contact the designated Park Manager to schedule and conduct a pre-/post-event walk thru of the event site to determine site conditions and readiness, confirm the feasibility of the event/site plan. The purpose of the post event walk-thru will be to assess any event related damage to park property or facilities, to establish a punch list/post event restoration action plan, and/or to discuss anticipated damages.

22. Permit(s) - Please note that all components of the event are subject to PARD approval and may require approval by and/or permits from other city agencies. PARD approval does not constitute permission from other agencies. It is the responsibility of the applicant to secure all necessary permits and exercise due diligence in all scenarios of event development.

A sample range of permits required MAY include:

- | | | |
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| 1. | Grounds Permit (permission to occupy the space) (event contract) | |
| 2. | Grass Permits (for ANY vehicle on park grounds) | |
| 3. | Sound Permit | Austin Parks and Recreation Department |
| 4. | Health Permits (food/beverage) | Health and Human Services |
| 5. | TABC Permit (alcohol) | Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission |
| 6. | Street Closure Permit | Transportation Department |
| 7. | Fire Inspection | Austin Fire Department (primary contact) |
| 8. | Building Permits | Planning and Development Review |
| 9. | Electrical Permits | Planning and Development Review |
| 10. | Tree Permits | PARD Forestry and City Arborist |
| 11. | Moonwalk Permit | PARD and State of Texas |
| 12. | Pyrotechnics Permit | Austin Fire Department |
| 13. | EMS and APD Approvals | APD, EMS approval of medical/safety plans |