

CITY OF GALVESTON

SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Definition

A “Special Event” is any event that is held in whole or part on property owned, managed or controlled by the City of Galveston, including City right-of-way, that will:

- Have substantial visitor impact on the City of Galveston, or
- Result in a gathering of large crowds

A “Special Event” as determined by the City of Galveston shall include but not be limited to, the following:

- Circus or carnival
- Temporary outdoor concert, jazz or music festival, except those sponsored by the City
- Outdoor public exhibition
- Outdoor cooking contest
- Parades or processions
- Community events or celebrations
- Outdoor public festivals
- Street dances
- Fun runs or other events in which City streets are closed

NOTE: Activities at properties under the management and operation of the Park Board of Trustees are excluded from this policy. (These activities are addressed by the Special Events Policy of the Park Board of Trustees – Attached)

Introduction

The City of Galveston handles the permit process for special events in the City. The City operates all of the City parks (other than those operated and managed by the Park Board of Trustees) and oversees any impact an event might have on the citizens of Galveston related to security, traffic control and clean-up.

A completed application may be filed as early as 180 days before the event, but must be received no later than seventy five (75) days before the actual event date. The City of Galveston Municipal Code, Chapter Six, provides the framework and guidance for the issuance of Special Event Permits within the City of Galveston. In general, any organized activity with 75 or more participants, involving the use of, or having impact upon, public property, facilities, public parks, beaches, sidewalks or street areas requires a permit. (*In addition to requirements outlined in the permit application, any event held in a City park requires a site plan and approval by the Director of Parks and Recreation). Applicant shall comply with all state, federal and local laws, including city ordinances and zoning regulations. In addition, all special events must meet the public safety criteria of the city

police department, all other city departments and the Galveston County Sheriff 's Department. Offensive language, gestures, reckless driving or unruly conduct will not be tolerated at an event. Applicants are responsible for the actions of all spectators, visitors, guests, participants or invitees to a special event.

It is our goal to assist event organizers in planning safe and successful events that create a minimal impact on the areas surrounding the event site. We hope that you find these instructions helpful in completing the Special Event Permit Application.

Procedure

The permit application process begins at City Hall, in the City Manager's office. Keep in mind that acceptance of your application should in no way be construed as final approval or confirmation of your request. Upon receipt of your application, the City's Special Events Coordinator acts as a liaison to help guide you through the permit process. Copies of the application are forwarded and reviewed by all affected departments and/or agencies. During the review process you will be notified if your event requires any additional information, permits, licenses or certificates. During our initial application screening process, you will be allowed time to provide us with all pending documents. We must receive these items before issuing a Special Event Permit (i.e., certificate of insurance, secondary permits, etc.). Delays in providing these items often delay our ability to finish our review and approve your application in a timely manner. In some cases, Special Event Permits are issued only a few days in advance of the event, or not at all due to non-compliance with all City policies and procedures.

EVENT INFORMATION

Type of Event

If your proposed event is not listed in this section, please check "OTHER" and attach a written description of the event.

Set Up/Assembly/Construction

Some events may require more than one day to set up or the construction plan may be too complex to describe on the application. In these cases, attach a detailed plan with a timeline listing the various times and locations where streets or public property will be impacted and when dismantling will be completed.

APPLICANT AND SPONSORING ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

Chief Officer of Organization

This is the person from the sponsoring organization who has overall authority for the event.

Applicant

This may be the Chief officer or a designated member of the sponsoring organization who has been authorized by the Chief Officer to apply for the permit to plan the event. This person must be available to work closely with the City's event planning staff throughout the permitting process and the event.

Professional Event Organizer

The Chief Officer may contract with a professional event organizer to represent the sponsoring organization. This person will be authorized to plan the event and work with the City planners in implementing the plan. A letter from the Chief Officer of the organization authorizing the applicant or professional event organizer to apply for the Special Event Permit is required and must be attached as a cover letter to the submitted application.

Contact Person "On Site" Day of Event

A person representing the sponsoring organization must be immediately available, on the site, with the authority over all elements of the event. This person will usually be the APPLICANT or the authorized PROFESSIONAL EVENT ORGANIZER. The CONTACT PERSON should provide the City a cellular phone number, pager number, or designate some other way to contact them during the event.

See Attachment A – Event Information

See Attachment B – Applicant and Sponsoring Organization Information

FEES/PROCEEDS/REPORTING

Tax Exempt, Non-Profit

This refers to an organization that has been recognized as tax exempt by the Internal Revenue Service at least six (6) months prior to application. Please attach a copy of the IRS 501 C tax exemption letter to your application.

Estimated Gross Receipts

Applicants may attach a projected event budget in lieu of completing this section.

Sales Tax Issues

Admission fees to events are subject to sales tax, unless specific exemptions apply.

It is the event promoter/sponsor responsibility to determine that vendors have complied with sales tax rules.

All forms of parking are subject to sales tax, including municipal parking meter revenue.

Food in general is subject to sales tax with two exceptions:

- Churches and 501 C (3) organizations are allowed tax exempt sales for two days a calendar year
- Food prepared and made by/for a non-profit organization.

THE CITY OF GALVESTON HAS THE AUTHORITY TO REQUEST INVESTIGATION BY THE STATE OF TEXAS FOR VENDOR COMPLIANCE.

See Attachment C – Fees/Proceeds/Reporting

OVERALL EVENT DESCRIPTION / ROUTE MAP / SITE DIAGRAM / SANITATION/TRAFFIC CONTROL PLAN

When planning an event to be held in a particular location or an event requiring a moving route (i.e., parade or procession), the City's Traffic Department and Special Events Unit of the Police Department are available to assist you in planning your traffic control plan. Events requiring a route must have an approved route by these departments prior to the production of a traffic control plan. Consider the following in your planning:

- Conflict with public transportation, such as buses, trolleys and trains.
- Interference with people trying to reach hotels, their own residences, businesses, places of worship and public facilities.
- Impedance of emergency fire, police or paramedic vehicles.

You will be required to comply with a traffic control plan that must be approved by the City of Galveston's Traffic Engineer. At your expense, the City will provide this plan and all required traffic control equipment including, but not limited to, barricades, traffic cones and signs. Set up will be done by the City's Traffic Department or a certified and City approved traffic control contractor. Should you choose to hire your own Traffic Control Engineer to develop your Traffic Control Plan, the City of Galveston retains final approval of the plan. At your expense, this plan must be reviewed and have final field approval by the City of Galveston's Traffic Engineer. If your event involves street closure(s), you will be required to follow the guidelines outlined on page 11 of this application, Parking Plan/Shuttle Plan/Mitigation of Impact.

Alcohol

The sale or furnishing of alcoholic beverages will require an additional permit from the Texas Alcohol and Beverage Commission, and is allowed only in areas where consumption is permitted by City Code.

Sales Tax

An applicant applying for a seller's permit to sell food or beverages must indicate Galveston as the origin of sales. This will ensure that the City receives its share of these taxes.

Food Concessions or Preparation

Food Facilities: Guidelines are provided by the Galveston County Health Department. These should enable you to plan food handling, preparation and distribution in the most responsible and legal manner.

Health permits may be required by the Galveston County Health Department if food or beverages are sold or given away during special events. Different permits, policies and procedures depend on your tax classification (commercial or non-profit) and the number of days in your event.

Vendor booths that involve cooking require an inspection and permit by the City's Fire Marshal.

Toilet Facilities and Sanitation

It is the responsibility of the event organization to provide adequate toilet facilities appropriate for the size of the event. One (1) chemical toilet for every 250 people is recommended.

You must properly dispose of waste and garbage throughout the term of your event and immediately upon conclusion of the event the area must be returned to a clean condition. If you, as an event organizer, set a standard of leaving it better than you found it, you can have a highly beneficial impact on the Galveston community. Prior to the event, a \$1000 refundable deposit is required by the City of Galveston. The deposit will be returned to you after the conclusion of the event and upon inspection and satisfactory clean-up. Conclusion means the end of each day of the event. Should you fail to perform adequate clean-up or if damage occurs to City property and facilities, the \$1000 deposit will be forfeited and you will be billed at full cost recovery rates plus overhead for cleanup and repair. In addition, such failure may result in denial of future approval for a Special Event Permit. Authorized placement locations for portable toilets and trash receptacles will be determined by the City for each event.

Concessions

The Special Events Ordinance allows you exclusive control and regulation of any concessionaires to be present in conjunction with your event if it takes place on City streets or in City facilities. You are required to provide a plan for regulation and controlling such concessionaires. The City may require that City Code Enforcement Officers be on site during the duration of your event. You are responsible for paying for this service if it is required.

Fire Department Requirements

The Fire Department must review and approve the following: Your route for emergency vehicle access; parade floats; use of an open flame; use of fireworks or pyrotechnics; handling of vehicle fuel; cooking facilities; the location of power sources; the availability and location of on-site fire suppression equipment; the occupancy and spacing of tables or enclosures; and the use of tents, air-supported structures, canopies or any fabric shelters. A permit and inspection by the Fire Marshal's office is required for vendor booths that involve cooking. The Fire Chief will determine whether or not fire crews are needed for your event. You are responsible for paying for this service if it is required.

Emergency Medical Service

All plans for emergency medical service will be reviewed by the Galveston County EMS. Your plans for first aid and/or emergency medical services must be approved by the Galveston County EMS before a Special Event permit is issued. EMS officials will determine whether or not EMS crews are needed for your event. You are responsible for paying for this service if it is required.

Building Permits

Review by the City Planning Community Development Department may be required before your event. You will be notified if your event requires a review depending on the components of your event.

See Attachment D – Overall Event Description

SAFETY / SECURITY / ACCESSIBILITY

Crowd Control and Internal Security

Event Organizers are required to provide a safe and secure environment for their event. This is accomplished through sound planning by anticipating potential problems and concerns. The size, type, time of day, and location of the event, as well as the overall activities, are all areas that need to be analyzed in depth. Events having the potential to draw a large crowd, such as street fairs or concerts, are of particular concern. The City of Galveston Police Chief will make the final decision as to your required security needs. Should you plan to utilize the services of another law enforcement agency or a professional licensed security company, these plans must be approved by the Police Chief. The Police Department may require a minimum number of licensed private security guards and police officers to adequately staff the event.

Accessibility Plan

“Accessible” describes a site, building, facility or portion thereof that can be approached, entered, and used by persons with disabilities.

It is the applicant’s responsibility to comply with all City, County, State and Federal Disability Access Requirements applicable to the event. All indoor and outdoor sites for special events must be accessible to persons with disabilities. If a portion of the area is inaccessible, an alternate area must be provided with the same activities that are in the inaccessible areas. It cannot, however, be offered only to patrons with disabilities.

Disabled access may include parking, restrooms, telephones, clear paths of travel, transportation, accessible vendors and booths. If all areas are not accessible a map or program must be provided to attendees indicating the accessible restrooms, parking, phones, drinking fountains, etc.

See Attachment E – Accessibility Plan

PARKING PLAN / SHUTTLE PLAN / MITIGATION OF IMPACT

If an event involves closing a street for three (3) hours or more, the organizer will be required to provide temporary disabled parking outside the closed venue area. One space will be required for each block closed plus an additional space must be provided for each permanent disabled parking space displaced. For specific disabled parking requirements contact the Police Department Special Events Unit.

In some situations when sufficient parking is not available, the event organizer may be required to provide a shuttle plan.

You are required to include mitigation measures for negative consequences imposed on others by your event. We require that notices be sent or hand delivered four weeks before each special event to businesses, residences, churches, etc. You are required to get signatures in support of your event from those affected which will help show cooperation for the continuation of such events. Mitigation may include a notice in local community newsletters, flyers in business windows, local press releases including radio and television. Notices must reflect the date(s), day(s), time(s), location(s) and types of activities taking place during your event. The notice must give detour or alternate route information if normal access is affected or if transportation systems are impacted. Please attach a draft sample of the notice and a proposed list of recipients with your application. Provide copies of notices that have been approved by Island Transit, and others as appropriate.

In addition, should your event require the closing of a public street, you must obtain signatures from a minimum of 51% of the property owners, businesses or residential tenants whose property immediately abuts the designated street and/or intersecting street and lies in whole or in part within a two hundred-foot radius of the requested street closure.

You may be required by the Galveston Police Department or the City Traffic Division to provide federal, state or local advisory signs (placed a minimum of two weeks prior to the event) if your event impacts a major use roadway. Advisory signs are intended to provide advanced notice to the regular users of a road-way of the scheduled closure. Only city, State or Federal approved signage may be used.

ENTERTAINMENT / ATTRACTIONS / RELATED EVENT ACTIVITIES

Event organizers must be certain that all event activities comply with the local laws applicable to noise abatement. A separate Loud Speaker Permit is required. Please be aware that loud and unreasonable noise (including music) is a violation of Local Ordinances. **A police officer who determines that noise from your event is offensive to others may require you to stop the noise, even though your loud speaker permit has been issued.** Also, the police may order musical entertainment to end if it incites a crowd to become unruly and risks injury.

Banners, pennants, flags, signs, streamers, inflatable displays and similar devices are regulated by local ordinance. The number and location for these items will be determined by the City. In certain areas and under certain conditions these items are prohibited. Please contact the City for specific applications.

See Attachment F – Parking Plan/Shuttle Plan/Mitigation of Impact

PROMOTION / ADVERTISING / MARKETING / INTERNET INFORMATION

Please assure approval of your event BEFORE you promote, market or advertise your event. Conditional approval will be made after the event organizer submits the application and it is initially screened by your City liaison. Acceptance of your Special Event Application by the City is not a guarantee of the date, location or an automatic approval of your event. The event organizer must complete the application requirements entirely before the City will issue a Special Event Permit.

See Attachment G – Promotion/Advertising/Marketing/Internet

PAYMENT OF REQUIRED PERMIT FEES/CITY SERVICES

Payment of required City Services and all permit fees is due and payable no later than 15 days prior to event.

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

Before final permit approval, you will need the following basic insurance coverages: General Liability, Errors and Omissions, Automobile and Workers Comp. Based on the type of event, additional types of insurance might be required. The City of Galveston Risk Manager will determine the required limits and deductibles of each policy. All policies will require a waiver of subrogation, a hold harmless clause (indemnification) and the City of Galveston shall be named as an additional insured. Any other entities that might be impacted by this event shall also be named as an additional insured.

Please note: insurance requirements depend upon the risk level of the event. If your event will include alcohol, Liquor Liability coverage must be included on your certificate of insurance.

AFFIDAVIT OF APPLICANT

The applicant and, if applicable, the professional organizer, must complete, sign and date the application before returning it to one of the entities below:

The City of Galveston
Special Events Coordinator
PO Box 779
Galveston, Texas 77553

Please be certain to include all required attachments before submitting your Special Event Permit Application.

See Attachment H – Insurance Requirements

