

Special Events Ordinance

Downtown
Commission Update
April 18, 2018



Agenda

- Ordinance Overview
- Summary of Feedback
- Recent Revisions
- Remaining Challenges
- Staff Recommendation
 - Notifications
 - Appeals
- Alternative Policy Option
- Next Steps

Ordinance Overview

- Formalizes Austin Center for Events (ACE)
- Offers scalability in permitting process
- Establishes base requirements:
 - Application deadline
 - Contents of application
 - Staff decision deadline
- Consolidates event related ordinances

Community Outreach

- Public Meetings: 9
- Boards and Commissions Briefings: 15
- Event Stakeholder Small Group Meetings: 5
- Mayor and Council staff briefings: 8
- Digital Feedback Portals: 2



Special Events Ordinance Community Update

Summary of Feedback

- Tier approach does not address permitting based on size and scale
- Application and approval process is unclear, lacks certainty
- Denial/appeal process needs clarity
- Applicants need more guidance during approval process- single point of contact

Summary of Feedback

- More clarity on special event impact zones & criteria used to limit events in those areas
- Centralized citywide special event calendar
- Offer incentives hosting events outside of core areas/downtown footprint

Summary of Feedback

- Event performance, including complaints, kept in an easily accessible public database
- Clearly defined prior performance standards for application approval
- Support for an iterative appeals/objection process that includes discussions between ACE & event stakeholders before Council option

Summary of Feedback

- Earlier deadlines to accommodate an appeals/objection process that includes a path to Council would unfairly impact new or out-of-town event organizers.
- Offer higher fee expedited special event application/permit option
- Ordinance sections with vague or opaque language need definition

Summary of Feedback

- A streamlined interdepartmental process to resolve issues with unanticipated changes to venue capacity during special events
- More efficient final site inspection/approval process

Recent Revisions

- Simplified Tier 1; focuses on events protected by first amendment
- Simplified application deadlines for Tiers 1 and 2
- For Tier 2, staff must provide decision 30 days after completed application submitted
- Revised definition of “attendee”

Recent Revisions

- Payment required within 20 business days from date ACE issues bill
- Simplified application review about events blocking traffic during peak commuter hours
- Changed “emissions reduction plan” to “emissions management plan”
- Clarified that staff will engage in interactive review process
- Applies to applications submitted on or after October 2, 2018

Remaining Challenges

- Appeals process
 - Staff recommends administrative process
 - Right of appeal lies with the applicant (event organizer)
- Public notification requirements
 - Changes to appeal process could impact application and/or notification timelines

Staff Recommendation Notifications & Appeals

- Goals
 - Better reflect ACE's current process of working collaboratively with all event stakeholders to address and resolve issues
 - A process that more accurately reflects community sentiment within the entire special event impact area
 - Lessen potential event "limbo" waiting for Council action

Staff Recommendation Notifications

- Requirements to be defined in administrative rules development
- Completing notification process does not guarantee event approval
- Community concerns about impact on public safety, health, transportation/mobility remain a top priority
- Council action no longer automatically required for events with objections from neighborhood associations or more than 20% of affected residents per block.

Staff Recommendation Appeals

- Event organizers may appeal an application denial to the appeal team
- Appeals must be submitted to ACE no later than 10 business days after denial notification
- Appeal team must act on the appeal within 10 business days
- Appeal team to use same evaluation criteria as ACE, defined in 4-19-34

Alternative Policy Option

Notifications-Objections-Appeals

- Provides framework for community stakeholders and event organizers to engage in an ACE facilitated interactive, collaborative process to resolve outstanding concerns before bringing event objections and appeals before Council for action.

Next Steps

- Council Consideration
 - May 10
 - Possible action on 3rd reading