



Date: October 6, 2026
Department: Clerk's Office
Presenter: Sarah Greenwald, Deputy Clerk
Subject: Work Session item: Ordinance No. 2026-015- Fireworks

Purpose:

Staff is seeking Council direction on the proposed fireworks regulations, including whether to prohibit all fireworks or allow exceptions for specific items, such as sparklers and novelty snakes, and whether Ordinance No. 2026-015 should move forward for First Reading.

Background:

The proposed ordinance was previously presented to Town Council on April 21, 2026, as Ordinance No. 2026-003 and did not advance. During discussion, Council postponed further consideration until the fall, recognizing that fireworks season was approaching and vendors had already made plans to operate.

The proposed ordinance, now numbered 2026-015, would repeal Ordinance No. 2022-13 and prohibit the sale, offering for sale, distribution, use, and discharge of fireworks within Town limits. Fireworks use would be allowed only through a Special Event Permit approved by Town Council, subject to conditions and safety requirements established by the Town. The draft includes enforcement provisions and a fine of up to \$750 per violation.

The current draft does not expressly provide exceptions for sparklers, novelty snakes, or similar items. Staff is seeking direction on whether Council wishes to include these items in the prohibition or specifically allow certain products. Any exceptions should clearly identify the permitted items and whether the exception applies to their sale, use, or both.

Alternatives:

Option A — Move forward with the proposed ordinance for First Reading at the October 20, 2026, Town Council meeting.

- **Benefits Include:** Advances the proposed restrictions and provides time to notify residents, vendors, and event organizers before the next summer fireworks season

- Challenges Include: Would restrict fireworks vendors and personal fireworks use within Town limits. Implementation would require public outreach, coordination with enforcement officials, and clear expectations for permitted events

Option B — Direct staff to make additional changes before scheduling First Reading, including any exceptions selected by Council..

- Benefits Include: Allows Council to refine the restrictions and determine whether specific items, such as sparklers and novelty snakes, may continue to be sold or used.
- Challenges Include: Requires additional staff work and review to clearly define exceptions, address safety considerations, and establish requirements that can be consistently enforced.

Option C — Do not bring it back at this time.

- Benefits Include: Avoids immediate changes for residents, vendors, and event organizers.
- Challenges Include: Leaves the existing ordinance in place and postpones consideration of the fire, safety, and enforcement concerns identified in the proposed ordinance.

Fiscal Impact:

A specific budget allocation for implementation has not been identified for this report. Any additional funding needs would depend on the regulations and enforcement approach Council selects.

- Financial Consideration 1: Staff time and expenses associated with ordinance review, publication, public notices, and outreach to residents and vendors.
- Financial Consideration 2: Potential costs associated with enforcement and administering Special Event Permits. Council may wish to consider whether permit fees should offset any review or administrative costs.

Strategic or Community Impact:

The proposed ordinance is intended to protect residents, visitors, and property by reducing the risk of fire, injury, and property damage associated with fireworks. Council should balance these safety objectives with impacts on local vendors, personal celebrations, and community events.

If Council proceeds, early communication would help residents and vendors understand the restrictions before the next fireworks season. Clear permit requirements would also help event organizers plan approved displays.

Key Questions:

1. Does Council wish to prohibit all fireworks outside of approved special events, or allow exceptions for specific items, such as sparklers and novelty snakes?
2. If exceptions are allowed, which items should qualify, and should the exceptions apply to their sale, use, or both?
3. Should permitted items be subject to conditions or restrictions during periods of elevated fire danger?
4. Should the ordinance proceed for First Reading on October 20, or should staff make further revisions??

Suggested Motion: I move to direct staff to prepare Ordinance No. 2026-015 for First Reading at the October 20, 2026, Town Council meeting, incorporating Council's direction regarding prohibited fireworks, any permitted exceptions, and associated conditions.