



AGENDA REPORT SUMMARY

Meeting Date: October 24, 2023

Subject: Special Events Policy

Prepared by: Anthony Carnesecca, Assistant to the City Manager

Reviewed by: Jon Maginot, Assistant City Manager

Approved by: Gabriel Engeland, City Manager

Attachment(s):

1. Ordinance No. 2023-XX LAMC 9.25 Special Events
2. Ordinance No. 2023-XX LAMC 9.25 Special Events Appendix A

Initiated by:

City staff

Previous Council Consideration:

None

Fiscal Impact:

Lower application fees may lead to lower revenues, but more events qualifying as special events may lead to a higher number of applications that could offset the lost revenue. The cost for staff time will still be invoiced to applicants in addition to the application fee.

Environmental Review:

Not applicable

Policy Question(s) for Council Consideration:

- Does the City Council wish to adjust Los Altos Municipal Code 9.25 “Special Events” with the recommended changes?

Summary:

- City Council created Los Altos Municipal Code 9.25 “Special Events” in March 2007 that governs special events.
- This section of the Municipal Code must be updated in context of the current special event landscape and current special events coming into the City for review.

Staff Recommendation:

Waive second reading and adopt Ordinance No. 2023-XX.



Subject: Los Altos Special Events Policy

Purpose

Update Los Altos Municipal Code 9.25 “Special Events” by streamlining the special event process.

Background

The City Council adopted Los Altos Municipal Code 9.25 “Special Events” in March 2007 that governs special events. This section has governed how the City has managed special events for the last fifteen years. Over the course of those fifteen years, special events have changed and this code section needs to be re-evaluated based upon the current needs of the Los Altos community.

So far in 2023, the City has received 23 special event applications. These special event applications vary from one-time concerts at Grant Park to the weekend-long Art and Wine Festival to the weekly Farmers Market in downtown. They also vary in attendance from large events such as the weekend-long Fine Art in the Park to the multi-minute (depending upon the speed of Los Altos children in any given year) Spring Egg Hunt.

Discussion/Analysis

City staff recommends a number of changes to Los Altos Municipal Code 9.25 “Special Events” that will allow the City to simplify a confusing code section, retain control over more events on public property, and simplify the special event and block party process.

Below are the major edits for the Special Events code section:

- Add new bullet points to our “special event” definition that will incorporate more events that have not historically been defined as a special event
- Remove unnecessary language that will make the code section more coherent
- Create uniform standard response times for all special event sections regardless of activity
- Remove subjective language regarding “expressive activity”
- Condense application requirements for future special events
- Break block parties into their own subsection of the Municipal Code so there will be two types of events in special events and block parties
- Change the name of sponsored special events to be more accurate

At the City Council meeting on October 10, 2023, City Council waived first reading and provided the following edits that have been incorporated into the ordinance:

- Incorporate consistent language for public property in 9.25.010
- Remove “fax” from written notification section
- Add 9.25.040.J.9 back into ordinance
- Explicitly state there will be no cost for a block party
- Explicitly state that there is no refund for an event cancelled for a reason within the control of the applicant



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- Allow City Manager to refer appeals to Hearing Officer if City Council cannot do so in a timely manner

Recommendation

Waive second reading and adopt Ordinance No. 2023-XX.