



STAFF REPORT

Meeting Type: City Council
Meeting Date: October 20, 2025
From: John Wallace, Recreation and Senior Services Manager
Subject: Community-Wide Event Declaration: Winterfest 2025

DECISION TO BE MADE:

Whether to declare Winterfest 2025 a Community-Wide Event

APPLICABLE COUNCIL GOAL:

- **Goal 5.1:** Invest in our park system for current and future residents of Sandy and continue expansion of recreational opportunities for the community
 - **Goal 5.1.3:** Continue to expand Winterfest, and make it sustainable in terms of funding and staff capacity.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT:

The Merry Makeover Challenge is a community-wide event designed to engage local businesses and encourage them to “pledge” their participation in Winterfest. By officially joining, businesses commit to:

- Decorating their storefronts and landscaping
- Participating in the annual citywide decoration competition, voted on by Sandy residents
- Opening their doors for the Family-Friendly Stocking Stroll

According to City Municipal Code [SEC. 15.32.080](#) - *Prohibited Signs*, businesses face certain restrictions on the types of holiday decorations they may use. Specifically, section J, prohibits the following:

- J - Attention attracting devices, flags, balloons, windsocks, pennants, streamers, valances, spinners, spirals and other wind-activated devices including propellers.

If Winterfest is designated as a *Community-Wide Event* under City Municipal Code [SEC. 15.32.035](#), many of the restrictions could be relaxed, allowing for more elaborate holiday displays. The code permits:

- Special signs, including but not limited to banners, flags, wind-activated devices, streamers, balloons, pennants, posters, etc., as approved by the city council may be permitted provided that:

- A - The applicant must submit a written request, specifying the time period for display of signs, type of event, types of advertising/display material and proposed locations of display materials.
- B - Time limits: 21 days prior to the event and removal within seven days following the event.
- C - Street banners proposed to be erected over the state highway right-of-way are subject to a permit issued by the State Highway Division and all applicable rules of that agency.

Per SEC. 15.32.080 and ODOT requirements, all holiday light displays must remain static (non-blinking/non-moving) to avoid distracting motorists along Highway 26.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS / ANALYSIS:

This would be a similar process the Council completed for Winterfest 2023, 2024, The Mt. Hood Farmers Market, and Sandy's First Friday events.

Winterfest 2025 will run from November 21, 2025 through January 4, 2026. According to Section B from code SEC. 15.32.035, businesses can start decorating 21 days before the start of the event and the removal of decoration must be completed 7 days following the event.

The Parks and Recreation Department will have an application process for businesses to take part in the Merry Makeover Challenge. As part of the application, there will be a signed agreement stating that the business owners understand the time frame, the parameters of our City Code and supply a written "scope of work" as to how they will be decorating. All applications will be reviewed and approved by Parks and Recreation staff members. Businesses that do not participate in the Merry Makeover Challenge will not benefit from the Community-Wide Event designation and will have to follow the Sandy Sign Code.

BUDGET IMPACT:

N/A

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends City Council declaration of Winterfest 2025 as a Community-Wide Event.

SUGGESTED MOTION LANGUAGE:

"I move to declare Winterfest 2025 as a Community-Wide Event from November 21, 2025 - January 4, 2026."

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS / EXHIBITS:

N/A