

POLICY TITLE	Special Event Policy
CATEGORY	Administrative
POLICY NUMBER	ADMIN-031
POLICY OWNER	City Manager
ACCESS	Public

1. LEGAL

This Policy uses specially defined terms which are indicated by being capitalized. The reader of this Policy should refer to Section 4 to understand the special meaning of each such defined term when using this Policy.

The legal effect of this Policy is to set out the limited authority Council has delegated to certain City employees with respect to Special Events and the terms and conditions on which they are to exercise their limited authority under this Policy.

The *Vancouver Charter* does not permit any employee of the City to issue permits or enter into contracts for the City unless Council has delegated such authority to such employee in writing.

2. SCOPE

This Policy only applies to Special Events within the City of Vancouver. Section 5 sets out the official definition of “Special Event” for the purposes of this Policy.

Council has expressed a desire to ensure that Vancouver residents experience a streamlined process for applying for and obtaining Special Event Permits whether or not they are on a Street, Civic Space, Park or a combination of same. The Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation will be provided with this Policy in order to enable opportunities for alignment of their special events policy with the intent of this Policy, as appropriate.

3. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to set out the terms and conditions on which Council has resolved to facilitate Special Events in Vancouver and thereby provide clear guidance to the public and to the City employees responsible for administering such terms and conditions, particularly as it relates to approving valid Applications to hold Special Events, the Permitting Process, entering into the required permit/licence agreements, and ensuring compliance with such permit/licence agreements by the Special Event Host.

Furthermore; this policy aligns with the City’s Climate Emergency Declaration with the express purpose of eliminating the use of fossil fuel generators as an energy source at Special Events.

4. ADMINISTRATION OF POLICY

Council has designated the City Manager as the owner and administrator of this Policy. Except where separately authorized in writing by this Policy or the City Manager, this Policy is to be administered and managed by the City Manager.

5. DEFINITIONS

In this Policy, the following terms have the following meanings.

Applicant means the person or persons applying for a Special Event Permit, such as an individual, group of individuals (e.g. community group), society or corporation.

Application means the documentation and other requirements to be met by an Applicant in order for their application for a Special Event Permit to be admitted into the Permitting Process.

City means the City of Vancouver.

City Engineer means the person appointed by Council pursuant to section 288 of the *Vancouver Charter* as the City Engineer.

City Operational Services has the meaning set out in Section 6.3.3.

Festival Expediting Staff Team (FEST) means the designated City staff from various Engineering Services branches, as well as Permits and Licenses, Park Board, Vancouver Fire & Rescue Services and Vancouver Police Department, as well as external partners, Coast Mountain Bus Company, TransLink, BC Ambulance, Liquor Control & Licensing Branch, Vancouver Coastal Health, and Ministry of Transportation as required. The staff representatives form a FEST Committee that assists the City to assess and address issues like traffic disruptions, noise, health and safety concerns when processing an Application.

Film and Special Event Branch (FASE) means the City department that oversees filming activities and Special Events in the public realm.

Free Event is defined as a public event open to all members of the general public without charge. For certainty,

- a Free Event may also include a ticketed event where the tickets are free of charge and available to the general public on a “first come- first served” or lottery basis.
- a Free Event does not include a ticketed event (such as a recreational, athletic or sports event) where participants are required to pay to participate but the event is expected to draw a larger number of spectators than participants and the general public is free to attend as spectators.
- a Free Event does not include an event where there is a requirement to donate or fundraise in order to participate or gain entrance to the event.

Licensing Office means the City of Vancouver department or office that oversees special events on private property.

Location means the location where an event might take place. This can include the following:

Civic Space means any plaza or open space that is owned or controlled by the City and designated by the City Manager as Civic Space under this Policy. For the purposes of this Policy, the following areas are currently designated as Civic Space:

- Helena Gutteridge Plaza
- Alley-Oop
- Ackery’s Alley
- Ƨxʷł ɚnɛq Xwtl’e7énk Square (formerly the Vancouver Art Gallery north plaza)
- 800 Robson
- Bute & Robson Plaza
- Jim Deva Plaza
- 14th and Main Street
- 18th and Cambie St.
- 14th and Granville St.
- Kamloops and Hastings St.

Park means any and all land under the jurisdiction of the Vancouver Park Board and includes small neighbourhood parks in residential areas, large destination parks like Queen Elizabeth Park and Stanley Park, and many other Vancouver parks, gardens and beaches.

Private Property means any land or building which is not Street, Park or Civic Space. Under this Policy, Private Property includes other public property not owned by the City or Park Board. For example, Federal, Provincial, or School Board properties as well as properties operated by Vancouver Civic Theatres and Vancouver Public Library are all considered Private Property under this policy.

Sidewalk means the portion of a Street, for the use of pedestrians, between the roadway curb and the adjacent property lines.

Street includes public roads, highways, bridges, viaducts, and lanes open to the use of the public. Streets include Sidewalks but do not include a private street or lane on private property.

Non-Eligible Events are those events or activities which are outside of the scope of this Policy, namely the following:

Ancillary Activities means all activities that may be part of but are supportive of or ancillary to a Special Event such as traffic control, parking, loading, or stopping activities, as determined by the City Engineer. Such Ancillary Activities may require a separate Street Use Permit or other arrangements with the City.

Commercial Event means an event where the primary activity or purpose is the promotion, marketing or advertising or selling of a product(s), a corporation(s), a business(es), a brand or other goods or services. Examples are: Street markets, food and beverage festivals, and experiential marketing events.

Excluded Activities mean any activities which are outside of the scope of this Policy for the following reasons:

- They are proposed to take place on a Location which is Private Property, Park, or public property that is not Civic Space, Street, or Sidewalk.
- They are legally defined as protests or demonstrations and are therefore permitted under the Constitution Act, 1982 (Freedom of Assembly rights).
- They are activities which are primarily or exclusively activities which require a different type of permit from the City, namely Street Use Permit, Encroachment Agreement, Street Vending Permits, Street Entertainment Permits.

Private Event is an invitation-only admission event, whether it is free to the public or not.

Regular Event is any event held more often than once per year, such as farmers' markets or other events that are part of a regular series.

Non-Free Events are events that are not Free Events, namely where access is limited by a mechanism other than capacity, including, admission fees, or paid ticketed admission. For certainty, a Non-Free Event includes a ticketed event (such as a recreational or sports events and charity fundraisers) where participants are required to pay to participate but general public spectators are allowed to attend at no charge as spectators.

Other Permit Fees means any fees payable pursuant to the Street & Traffic By-law or other City by-laws for anything ancillary to a Special Event Permit which are not Special Event Costs, all as further defined in Section 6.3.

Park Board means the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation which is the elected body and legal authority that manages and maintains Park pursuant to the *Vancouver Charter*.

Permitting Process refers generally to the process whereby the City accepts an Application through to the point where the Application is approved and a Special Event Permit is issued or not issued, including the Application documentation requirements, the targeted timelines for each step, and the terms and conditions set out in this Policy for processing the Application.

Public Safety Services has the meaning set out in Section 6.3.3.

SEP Resolution has the meaning set out in Section 8 below.

Special Event means an organized gathering that brings people together for the purpose of supporting or participating in a community, cultural, recreational, and

sport or other type of experience for a limited or fixed duration. As noted above, any Non-Eligible Event (as defined above) is deemed not to be a Special Event covered by this Policy. Special Events can be either Free Events or Non-Free Events but must otherwise fall into one of the following sub-categories:

Block Party is a small-scale event on a full or half block residential local street and brings neighbours together for a social activity.

Community Celebration and Festival means a community-based event or festival focused around art and culture. Community celebrations are often smaller neighbourhood focused events and festivals are often larger destination events.

Parade means a parade or procession of people, vehicles, animals or other things which is mobile, travels all together and is based on a specified route with the event focused around art, culture, or religion.

Sport/Recreational Event means an event that is focused around a recreational or athletic, sport or other physical activity, such as a walk, run, bicycle ride, swimming or for leisure, competitive or charitable purpose. Sport or recreation events often have similar features to parades as they are mobile and route-based.

Designated Civic Event or Parade means an annual event that has been specifically endorsed by Council as a Council-designated civic event or parade with event-specific or parade-specific terms and conditions. Currently, the Designated Civic Events or Parades are:

- Chinatown Spring Festival Parade
- Vaisakhi Parade
- Pride Parade
- Celebration of Lights
- Grey Cup Parade & Grey Cup Festival
- Remembrance Day Service & Parade

Special Event Costs means the City's financial costs of supporting a Special Event (excluding Other Permit Fees) and are comprised of the City's costs of providing the Public Safety Services and the City Operational Services.

Special Event Host means an Applicant that has been approved by the City to host a Special Event and therefore has been issued a Special Event Permit.

Special Event Permit means the official permit or license issued by the City upon successful completion of the Permitting Process.

Special Event Power Plan means a written assessment prepared by the Applicant and submitted as part of the Application,

- describing all of the types/sources and amounts of energy (diesel, gasoline, natural gas, electricity) to be consumed by the proposed Special Event Host, including those from third party vendors participating in the

- Special Event (such as food trucks)
- setting out the applicable carbon footprint calculations,
- setting out the percentages of energy supplied by renewable sources and the percentage supplied by non-renewable sources,

and all prepared in accordance with Section 6.2.3

6. POLICY STATEMENTS

The City welcomes Special Events that support community, arts, culture, heritage, sport and recreation activities as they contribute to making Vancouver a vibrant city. Special Events reflect our diversity and neighbourhood character, and are associated with how we experience Vancouver. The City recognizes that Special Events contribute to the individual, social, economic and environmental well-being of our community and this Policy seeks to responsibly support these contributions.

6.1 Goals

This Policy is guided by the following goals:

- Encouraging greater use of renewable energy sources for Special Events while reducing and ultimately eliminating reliance on non-renewable energy sources such as fossil fuel generators.
- Promote environmental and financial sustainability of Special Events.
- Encourage social connection, active living, and enjoyment of urban life.
- Balance the needs of City services, residents, event organizers and event participants.
- Support planning, early dialogue, monitoring, and assessments to maintain baseline regional public safety and emergency service during large events.
- Support a diverse range of social and cultural opportunities for creative expression.
- Support Special Events of all sizes as they contribute to the local economy and highlight Vancouver as a desirable tourism destination.
- Provide fair and equitable support and services for Special Events, regardless of their individual size or their social, cultural, creative or other attributes or target participants.
- Establish a streamlined and transparent Permitting Process.

6.2 Application Process and Rules

6.2.1 The City Manager will approve and publish on the City's website, and update from time to time as the City Manager considers appropriate,

- an application form to be completed by the Applicant to initiate the Permitting Process,
- a description of the Permitting Process enabling Applicants to easily understand the various stages and expected timing of the Permitting Process, including

- the Applicant's deadlines for providing information to the City
- when the Applicant has to pay a Permit Fee
- consequences to Applicant for failing to pay a fee or provide required information by the scheduled deadline,
- clear links to the licence agreement or permit terms and conditions and fees chargeable for each type or category of Special Event Permit issuable by the City under this Policy,
- summary of the key Special Event Permit terms and conditions to assist Applicants to better understand, if approved,
 - what the Applicant will be required to do as a Special Event Host
 - how the Special Event will be managed by the City in terms of balancing the public interest in public space with the Special Event Host's interests
 - how to meet the mandatory requirements for mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions in accordance with the Special Event Power Plan they will be required to submit.
- a user guide or handbook, to assist members of the public in navigating and completing the steps of the Permitting Process.

6.2.2 The City of Vancouver may decline a Special Event application based on prior misconduct of organizer or organized event, as determined by the City's General Manager Engineering, including but not limited to:

- a) Supplying false or misleading information or making a material misrepresentation in an application for a special event.
- b) Failing to complete the application or to supply other required information or documents at all or within the City's required timelines.
- c) Showing an unwillingness or inability to comply with the applicable terms or conditions contained in the City's application process or, if applicable, the proposed permit.
- d) Failing to restore the public space or restore or replace damaged property, post any required security or insurance within the required timelines, or pay to the City the restoration reimbursement costs or other costs or fees due to the City.
- e) Or otherwise having engaged in discreditable, fraudulent, or other conduct contrary to the public interest or the City's policies.

6.2.3 In order to achieve a meaningful and continuous decrease in the use of non-renewable energy sources associated with the Special Event for which the Special Event Permit is being sought, the City Manager will set out in the material referred to in the above Section 6.2.1 the form and content for the Special Event Power Plan required to be submitted with each Application,

including details on how to describe the steps and actions the Applicant has taken prior to the Application being submitted and will be taking if the Special Event Permit is issued.

The City Manager will also set out in a user guide or handbook produced by the City pursuant to Section 6.2.1 above a minimum annual percentage of renewable energy that must be used at Special Events, including the requirement for an annual increase in the percentage of renewable energy with the intent that all Special Event energy sources must be 100% renewable on or before 2030¹.

6.2.4 In publishing the material referred to in this Section 6.2, the City Manager may set out how the Application and Permitting Process will vary based on the type of Special Event (e.g. Block Party, Festival, Parade, etc.), Location, and proposed number of participants and size of area being utilized and how these factors determine:

- Application Form to be used
- Extent of Preliminary Review to be completed by City staff
- Extent of event plans and additional documents required
- How long a full review and conditional approval will take place
- When a FEST review is required
- When a FEST meeting is required
- When other permits may be or are required
- What deposits are required
- What insurance is required
- What public notifications are completed by the Special Event Host and how replies to those notifications are utilized
- How long it usually takes until Permit(s) issued
- Guidelines to assist Special Event Host during Special Event
- Debrief and potential for additional costs to be paid by a Special Event Host following Special Event

6.2.5 The City Manager may, in approving and publishing any material referred to in this Section 6.2, delegate in writing any decision or authority of the City under this Policy to the City Engineer or other City staff, provided such delegation is expressly set out in the approved material and the criteria for and limits of the authority are made clear.

6.2.6 The City Manager will ensure that all of the material approved under this Section 6.2 is consistent with the other provisions of this Policy.

¹ In future years the City may, at its discretion, introduce requirements in the event permitting handbook that sets additional standards, measures, and examples for the requirement to reduce, and ultimately eliminate, the use of fossil fuel generators at events.

6.3 Special Event Costs

- 6.3.1 Where the proposed Special Event also includes certain Non-Eligible Event activities, the Event Host is responsible for all costs, including City Operational Services, Public Safety Services, and Other Permits Fees that may be payable based on the requirements of the Non-Eligible Event.
- 6.3.2 In order to promote the goals and objectives of the Policy, City Council has established cost sharing principles between the Event Host and the City, and defined City contributions to Special Event Costs for eligible Special Events under this Policy, as described in Table 1 below:

Table 1 “Event Host Contribution”

	Event Host Portion of Special Event Costs	City Portion of Special Event Costs
Free Special Event With Qualifying Level of Renewable Energy (as set out in any user guide or handbook issued pursuant to Section 6.2) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Operational Services Costs first \$1,000 ▪ Operational Services Costs \$1,001 and above (to a maximum City contribution of \$75,000)²³⁴ ▪ Public Safety Services 	<p>0%</p> <p>25%</p> <p>0%</p>	<p>100%</p> <p>75%</p> <p>100%</p>
Non-Free Special Event With Qualifying Level of Renewable Energy (as set out in any user guide or handbook issued pursuant to Section 6.2) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Operational Services Costs first \$1,000 ▪ Operational Services Costs \$1,001 and above to a maximum payment of \$75,000³⁴ ▪ Public Safety Services 	<p>0%</p> <p>100%</p> <p>0%</p>	<p>100%</p> <p>0%</p> <p>100%</p>
Non-Eligible Event <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All Operational Services Costs ▪ Public Safety Services 	<p>100%</p> <p>100%</p>	<p>0%</p> <p>0%</p>

² The City’s maximum contribution to Special Event Costs for Free Special Events will be \$75,000. Event Hosts will be responsible for 100% of costs over \$75,000 except as determined by Council on an exception basis.

³ For additional clarity, fees and costs related to Park Board use such as permits and operational support in Parks are not included within this Policy and will be separately chargeable in accordance with applicable Park Board policy.

⁴ The percentages set out in Table 1 above do not apply to any services not defined in Section 6.3.3 or other amounts which might become due and owing by the Special Event Host as a result of a requirement or legal obligation set out in the Special Event Permit.

6.3.3 For the purposes of this Section 6.3 and this Policy, the following terms define the following types of services and therefore costs payable for same by the City or the Special Event Host, as the case may be:

City Operational Services means the City's costs attributable to providing operational support to an Event Host at a Special Event Location and providing basic public health and safety measures. They are generally services that only the City can supply and are required to facilitate the full or partial closure of a Street, Sidewalk, or Civic Space so that it can be used as a Special Event Location as set out in the Special Event Permit and typically primarily consists of the following:

- VPD Traffic Control: Assist in implementing the Special Event Hosts approved traffic management plan.
- VPD Foot Patrol & Crowd Patrol: Assist in crowd management within the event area, for example lost children, altercations between event attendees, crowd flow and control.
- VPD Liquor License Enforcement: Assist in management of licensed liquor areas, such as beer gardens.
- Engineering Traffic Operation (TSZs/Signage): Installation of signage and meter hooding to strip streets of public parking during the event.
- Engineering Traffic Operations (event day): To assist with delivery and installation of City equipment as part of the implementation of the Special Event Hosts approved traffic management plan.
- Engineering Sanitation: To provide sanitation services, before, during, or after the event that include removal of waste and recyclables from existing City receptacles, streets, and sidewalks in preparation for, or as a the result of, a higher volume of use during the event. Alternatively, this could also include the sealing of City receptacles to prevent public use; so that event participants use the Event Hosts waste management program.
- Vancouver Fire & Rescue Service: repositioning for road closures when a route-based event's traffic control plan would cause delay in a VFRS vehicle moving across the route, costs may be incurred to reposition those vehicles to a location less impacted by the event.
- By-law enforcement costs that wouldn't have otherwise been required if not for the Special Event taking place, such as additional parking enforcement Officers or Street Use Inspectors.
- Engineering Permit Fees and other various work orders necessary to facilitate the event plans.
- Engineering Operations administration fees.

Public Safety Services means the City's costs attributable to protective units for the mitigation of deadly threats to participants and all other residents in the vicinity of the Special Event taking into account the VPD's current assessment of global threats and risks. The provision of these services is at the sole discretion the VPD and generally outside of the control of the event organizer. Deployments of these services are over and above the management and operational services listed above and consist primarily of the following:

- All VPD and Engineering costs related to the provision of Heavy Vehicle Barriers, including labour and equipment

- Protection of waterways on the perimeter of the event (excluding the protection of any event assets installed in the waterway at the request of the organizer, such as fireworks barges)
- Cost related to the search and seal or removal of public trash cans, newspaper boxes, or other items assessed as a significant public safety risk.
- Costs related to transit queuing away from the event, such as transit stations.
- Joint Operations Centre (JOC) Deployment
- Internationally Protected Person; where a dignitary is scheduled to attend the Special Event who is considered an international Protected Person, such as the Prime Minister, any additional cost related to the protection of that person.

There will be cases where the nature of the event requires protective measures that will not be disclosed to the City or Organizer for security reasons. Organizers should not have any expectation that the VPD will expose the purpose and or function of all units in these cases.

6.3.4 The actual internal staff resource costs and direct out-of-pocket costs associated with the provision of Public Safety Services and City Operational Services, as determined by the Director of Finance, will be the costs utilized by the City to allocate the Special Event costs between Public Safety Services costs and City Operational Services costs for the purposes of this Section 6.3.

7. RELATED POLICIES, LEGISLATION & BYLAWS

A Special Event Host must comply with the following:

- All terms and conditions of the Special Event Permit, including any and all applicable licence or other agreements signed as part of the Permitting Process
- All applicable municipal bylaws (including without limitation Noise, Street & Traffic, and License Bylaws), provincial and federal regulations and laws.
- City policies
- Health and safety policies and regulations of the Vancouver Police Department, Vancouver Fire & Rescue, and Vancouver Coastal Health, BC Liquor & Cannabis Regulation Branch, and the BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

8. RESPONSIBILITIES

- Council approved this Policy by resolution dated September 10, 2019 (the “**SEP Resolution**”) and may at any time and from time to time amend this Policy.
- Council has delegated the formal articulation of this Policy to the City Manager, who in turn has the authority of Council to approve the detailed terms and conditions of this Policy (subject to the basic terms of the SEP Resolution) along with the authority to amend and sub-delegate authority under this Policy to other City staff.

- Upon and subject to the City Manager’s approval and publishing of the material referred to in Section 6.2, the City Manager now delegates to the City Engineer, the responsibility and authority to implement this Policy and to further sub-delegate such functions to FASE and FEST as are set out expressly in such materials.
- Until amended to include Park Locations, this Policy will not apply to events occurring exclusively in Parks or on Private Property.
- Nothing in this Policy alters the requirements of a person to obtain all other necessary permits for an event or activity, such as for example, an event on Private Property or Excluded Activities.

APPROVAL AND REVIEW HISTORY:

Version 1 approved by:	City Manager	3/30/2020
	General Manager	3/25/2020
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	General Manager - Engineering	11/15/2022
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Version 4 approved by:	General Manager - Engineering	01/29/2024

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