

# **Special Events in the City of Gainesville**



# AGENDA

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Strategic Initiatives  
January 2022

- Overview of Special Events Services
- Ordinances and Policy Manual Draft
- Policy Questions for City Commission
- Q&A



# **First - A Big Thank You**

**Departments / Divisions / Charters / Teams / Neighbors Involved In This Project:**

- **Attorney**
- **Audit**
- **City Manager**
- **Clerk of the Commission**
- **Code Enforcement**
- **Communications and Engagement**
- **Emergency Operations**
- **Equity and Inclusion**
- **Event Hosts**
- **Facilities**
- **Finance**
- **Food Waste Recovery**
- **Gainesville Fire Rescue**
- **Gainesville Police Department**
- **GRU IT**
- **Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs**
- **Public Works**
- **Risk**
- **Solid Waste**
- **Strategic Initiatives**
- **Sustainable Development**
- **Transportation & Mobility**
- **Zero Waste**



# Special Events

## **Project Overview**

# What is the Special Events Service?

The Special Events Service is a new program that is being created by the City of Gainesville.

The service will help event organizers create safe and successful public events - festivals, concerts, sporting events, parades, walks and runs, block parties, etc.

How might we:

- connect our neighbors
- build neighborhood bonds
- create community memories

While we also:

- improve disaster preparedness
- plan city resources and services
- be financially responsible

# Why are we creating a new service?

The current process to host a special event is confusing and difficult for both neighbors and community builders.

Events must follow rules from a variety of departments and agencies (municipal, county, state, and federal). These rules are difficult to find and follow.

Our current process is not scalable or adaptive to new ideas and events types.



# How does this relate to the Strategic Plan?

Special Events Services is a cross-charter, cross-department, city operations process improvement project that is part of Goal 5 of the Strategic Plan: Best-In-Class Neighbor Services.

The project streamlines internal operations and makes it easier for event hosts to follow municipal, county, state, and federal law.

Staff recommends the following changes...





# Changes for the New Service

- **Unified Service.** We have created a new unified service for Special Events. All events will follow the same process.
- **Online Form.** We created a single online form instead of each department having different paper applications. Launched January 2022.
- **Digital Workflows.** New software will streamline reviews, approvals, payments, and documentation. Approved in 2022 Budget.
- **Ordinance.** We are updating ordinances, policies and procedures to reflect modern best practices.
- **Fees.** We are exploring fees to make Special Events a self-funded program.
- **Collaboration.** We are dedicated to providing a transparent experience for our Event Hosts. We want our Organizers to know what to expect, so we can have safe and successful events.
- **Data.** As we embark on this new service, we will be collecting data for analysis and future improvements.





# Special Events in The City of Gainesville



# Event Conditions and Considerations

The Policy Manual outlines rules for how common activities occur during a Special Event.

- Accessibility
- Alcohol
- Animals
- Athletic Events
- City Facilities
- Congregation of People
- Crowd Control
- Drones
- Emergency Planning
- Event Advertisements
- Film Production
- Food Vendors
- Food Waste Recovery
- Health Safety
- Land Use Zoning
- Noise
- Parking
- Road / Sidewalk Closures
- Retail Sales
- Security
- Site Plans
- Special Effects
- Temporary Structures
- Temporary Utilities
- Toilets
- Traffic Control
- Transportation
- Waste and Recycling
- Youth



# Ordinance & Policy Manual

- The Attorney's Office (with support from staff) has drafted a Special Events Ordinance and Operational Policy Manual.
- The ordinance defines what a special event is and authorizes the City Manager to create policies to administer the service.
- We have a few policy-related questions that we would like guidance on before we start a broader neighbor engagement effort.



# Policy Questions

1. **Political Events.** Is the city allowed to co-sponsor political events?
  - *Staff recommendation:* City cannot sponsor partisan political events (Republican/Democrat) but can co-sponsor civic events (voter registration, voting encouragement)
2. **Road Closures.** If an event organizer wants to close off a sidewalk or street, but the business owner does not want it closed, what happens? Who decides if road closure can occur? Current workflow is:
  - Event Organizer must attempt 3 times to request affected business or property owners to sign the Road Closure Petition.
  - Event Organizer must notify the affected business or property owners in writing of the Event Organizer's request to the City to close roads or sidewalks.
  - *Need Guidance:* What happens when business/property owner refuses to sign petition?
3. **Exclusive Use of City Facilities.** City Commission gave approval for fencing off parks for private use events, does this include film permits/location agreements that would close off city parks and facilities?
4. **Fee Reductions.** As we start to charge service fees for special events, how do we lessen the financial impact while remaining financially responsible? How do we encourage local community building events (like block parties) and economic tourism events (Fest, Tom Petty, UF Football)?
  - *Staff Recommendation:* City Manager has authority to reduce fees (except for labor fees and some facilities).
    - Large economic tourism events (Invoices over dollar amount \$10k) up to 25%
    - Non-profit / community based events (Invoices over dollar amount \$?) up to 50% after application fee (\$67)
  - *Need Guidance:* What about facility rentals - What if somebody wants to pay full price to rent the facility after the discounted event was approved?



# Q&A Discussion

