



SPECIAL EVENTS

Policies and Procedures

Effective Oct. 1, 2024



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Introduction

Thank you for choosing the City of Martinsville for your special event. We are committed to facilitating a wide range of special events that highlight the diverse communities within the city. To ensure that all events are conducted safely and in an orderly manner, the social and economic benefits of the event are weighed with the general public's well-being, and oversight for all special events is the responsibility of the Special Events Coordinator and Committee. This committee is a group made up of various city departments and agencies that support and regulate special events.

A Special Event approval may be required when:

- Use of any city-owned property is involved.
- Coordination between two or more permitting agencies is needed.
- Food and alcohol are being sold or served to the public.
- The event requires street or road closures.
- Public safety may be at risk.

Additionally, it is recognized that tax-exempt non-profit organizations that benefit the community are central to the quality of life in Martinsville and that they often develop, through their special events, the resources to provide essential services to the citizens of Martinsville. It is further intended to provide coordinated policies for the regulation of specific activities to be conducted in conjunction with special events, to ensure the health and safety of patrons of special events, to prohibit illegal activity from occurring within unique event Venues, and to protect the rights and interests granted a Special Event Permit holder.

It is further intended to create a mechanism for cost recovery and revenue sharing for special events without harming those that contribute economically and socially to the community. The City of Martinsville also intends to protect the rights of its citizens to engage in protected free speech expression activities yet allow for the least restrictive and reasonable time, place, and manner of regulation of those activities within the overall context of rationally regulating special events that impact public facilities and services.

Guiding Policies

- It is the policy of the City of Martinsville to recognize the substantial community benefits that result from special events. These events provide cultural enrichment, promote economic vitality, enhance community identity and pride, and provide fundraising opportunities. To promote these objectives, it is sometimes appropriate for the city to bear all, some portion, or no portion of the costs.

- Partnerships between the City of Martinsville, event organizers, and the community are valuable in ensuring successful events. The City of Martinsville recognizes that events require logistical support and commitment from the city and the organizing entities. The City of Martinsville must protect public health, safety, and financial oversight of the citizens of Martinsville.
- It is the policy goal of the City of Martinsville to have successful, cost-effective special events that enrich and enliven the community and provide opportunities for agencies and organizations where deemed feasible and practical and where special events will be achieved that will not negatively impact public health and safety.
- This policy sets forth the application process for special event organizers to request City sponsorship designation and funding in Appendix I. The policy restricts designated co-sponsored organizations/City-sponsored special event organizers from double-dipping into various City department funds over and above the allotted City sponsorship funding. This would include City funds for economic development, multicultural events, athletic event bid fees, and quality-of-life events.
- The City sponsorship designation allows for the reimbursement, discount, or waiver of City fees. City fees include event rental space, application, and City staff resources for planning and implementing the event. The official City logo will be used if an event is designated city-sponsored.

Definitions as Used in this Policy

Special Event – means an activity that meets any one of the following definitions:

1. Any organized formation, parade, procession, or assembly which may include animals,
2. vehicles or any combination thereof, which is to assemble or travel in unison on any Street that does not comply with typical traffic regulations or controls.
3. Any other organized activity conducted by a person, organization, or company for common or collective use, purpose, or benefit that involves the use of or has an impact on a public property, park, or facility that requires City services beyond those conveyed in the course of normal City operation.
4. Any other organized activity conducted by a person, organization, or company that proposes to utilize any public property, park, or facility in a manner inconsistent with the design and usual function of such property, park, or facility.
5. Any organized activity conducted by a person, organization, or company on any public property, park, or facility that plans to sell alcoholic beverages.
6. Any organized activity conducted by a person, organization, or company on any public property, park, or facility that plans to charge an admission fee.
7. Examples of special events include, but are not limited to, concerts, parades, circuses, fairs, festivals, community events, mass participation sports (such as marathons and running events, bicycle races or tours, etc.).

City Services– means those services provided by the City that are required and necessary for event production and safety, such as police, fire, inflatable or ride inspection, food truck inspection, street closure, and trash removal.

Cost Recovery– means direct payment by an event organizer to the City in compensation for the direct costs of city services incurred during the special event.

City-Supported Special Event – means any special event organized and conducted by the City of Martinsville and an event organizer that the City has selected through a competitive application process to support the appropriation of funds within the City’s budget. This endorsement provides the producer of the event the following: reservation of date, a partnership of support and collaboration to create awareness, promotional opportunities, accommodations, or discounts regarding regularly chargeable City services (i.e., security, insurance, rental of venue, trash removal, etc.). These conceptual events must be submitted well in advance to be included in the budget process for any amount of funding.

City-Sponsored Special Event – Any special event or activities directly organized and conducted by the City of Martinsville or an event organizer that the City has selected through a competitive application process to support through the appropriation of funds within the City’s budget. These events are funded entirely by the City of Martinsville.

Event Organizer– means any person, organization, or company who conducts, manages, promotes, organizes, aids, or solicits attendance at a Special Event.

Fees – This means charges to event organizers for city services, venue usage, and permits.

General Events – An organized activity with a stationary footprint in an identifiable location for a specific duration, often involving amplified noise, food, beverage, merchandise, or other forms of entertainment. Examples include festivals, performances, rallies, markets, parties, tournaments, and other similar events.

General Event Tier 1 – means more significant impact on the community, which may involve the closure of multiple city blocks; closure that impacts numerous residents or establishments; excessive noise; attendance of 200 or more people; and significant event infrastructure that requires inspection and permitting by the Martinsville Fire Marshal, for example, events such as Oktoberfest, Christmas Parade, and Uptown Trick or Treat.

General Event Tier II – means low-impact events that close only one city block and are off-street venues; have fewer than 200 total attendees; affect a minimal number of residents or establishments; and have no significant event infrastructure. The event cannot include or require any of the following:

- Event attendance of less than 200 people
- Tents over 800 square feet or inflatable structures over 400 square feet
- Fireworks, pyrotechnics, open flame performances, or bonfires
- Special amusement buildings or rides
- Amplified sounds beyond the use of small speakers
- Closure of more than one city block
- Closure of the public right-of-way

Gross Revenues– means the sum of all revenues received by an event organizer for a special event, including, but not limited to, cash receipts, licensing, sponsorships, advertising and similar revenues, and concessions.

Recurring Event– The same event on multiple dates submitted via one application. Recurring Event Permits are good for 90-day periods.

Social Capital– The web of cooperative relationships between citizens, organizations, businesses and agencies that facilitate the resolution of collective action problems like poverty, human trafficking, obesity, social isolation, and economic sustainability.

Special Event Permit– A permit issued by the City that authorizes using public property, a park, or a facility for a special event.

Special Event Venue or Event Venue – means that area for which a Special Event Permit has been issued.

Street – This is a way or place of whatever nature, publicly maintained and open to use by the public for purposes of vehicular travel.

Vendor– This term is any person who sells or offers to sell any goods, food, or beverages within a special event venue and has been submitted to the event organizer’s vendor list. Vendors must be registered with the Virginia Department of Taxation for sales tax collection and the Martinsville Commissioner of the Revenue Office for meal tax collection. Food vendors must also meet Health Department requirements and safety inspections from the Martinsville Fire Marshall. Alcohol vendors must be licensed by the Virginia ABC and obtain a local ABC permit from the Martinsville Commissioner of the Revenue Office.

Management of Special Events

The City of Martinsville has created a Special Events Office that is authorized to carry out the provisions of the special events policies, city codes, and state codes. To ensure representation from all appropriate segments of city government, the Special Events Office will maintain a Special Events Committee for coordination, notification, and collaborative purposes that will include representatives from groups including but not limited to Community Development and Engagement, Public Works, Street and Traffic, Fire Marshal, Emergency/Safety Management, Police, Commissioner of the Revenue and the Public Information Office, as well as external agencies or organizations necessary for the coordination of specific events or with existing event knowledge that could prove beneficial to the group.

The Special Events Office will facilitate meetings approximately once per quarter to hear feedback and recommendations regarding current and future special events. This composition may be amended and updated to include the Virginia Department of Health, the MHC Chamber of Commerce, and the Virginia ABC. The Special Events Office is authorized to:

- Represent the city, under the authority of the City Manager, in discussions and in maintaining agreements or contracts with the person(s) who represent the special event.
- Coordinate with city departments and other government agencies to provide government services for such special events.
- Establish the terms and conditions, appropriate fees, time, place, and manner of the special event.
- Approve or deny a special event permit;
- Recommend special events policies and practices to the City Council and the City Manager.

1. Management Responsibility

The City of Martinsville Special Events Office serves as a liaison between city departments, event producers, and community members as it oversees organized events by coordinating enterprise-wide functions. All special event productions within the City require a permit from the Special Events Office. The Special Events Office will be the primary point of contact for all events covered in this policy and will review each event to ensure compliance with this policy. The Special Events Office shall either approve an event permit or may place conditions upon, reschedule, relocate, or deny any requested event that does not meet this policy.

2. Communication

City staff will maintain a website that allows community members to view the master events calendar, which will provide specific event details. Staff will also publish a weekly email digest of upcoming special events and maintain a feedback form that community members can access to comment on special events and their impacts.

3. Event Classifications

City-Sponsored Special Events

Events created, planned, funded, and implemented by city departments or agencies. Permit fees are waived for events falling in this category. Although events may continue to be classified as city-produced, seeking private and corporate sponsorships is encouraged. The Special Event Team shall assess each event based on its overall impact, cost, community benefits, and changes made accordingly.

Non-City Sponsored Special Events

Events created, planned, and implemented by non-city agencies. The city provides physical assistance and support for these events but does not financially support them.

Parades

The City Council can approve holding parades annually. Parades provide a unique experience and contribute to the city by promoting community and cultural enrichment.

Foot Races

Marathons and other foot races are allowed in limited locations throughout the city to ensure the safety of participants and spectators. The SEO may limit the number of permitted foot races annually.

Application Process

A Special Event application must be submitted to the Special Event Office to conduct a special event within the city limits. The Special Events Office will establish an event application and a user's guide that will outline specifically the process, deadlines, application materials, checklists, notification requirements, and additional information necessary to allow event organizers to submit proposed events for approval and have a more predictable timeframe for approval, with the further goal of allowing agencies to anticipate the impact of an event and plan accordingly effectively. The following procedures apply:

1. Application Submittal

- a. A special event application shall be submitted to the city's Special Event Task Force by the special event applicant. Applications not completed in full will not be processed and returned to the applicant. See section "9)" below for application deadlines before the proposed event date.
- b. First-time events are encouraged to list several options for location, route, date, time, and a site map with the special events application.
- c. Event applications must be submitted according to the deadlines for each specific event type as outlined below and will be accepted up to one year before the event date. Submission of an application does not guarantee the issuance of a permit. **Applications are only considered submitted once the application fee has been received.**

i. **General Events.** Applications for general events must be received by no later than the deadline correlated with each tier, as outlined below.

1. General Event Tier I: 90 days. Under certain extenuating circumstances, the Special Events Office may consider late Tier I applications and **charge an additional \$250 late application fee.** The City does not guarantee that any event will be reviewed if it is submitted after the deadline.

2. General Event Tier II: 45 days. Under certain extenuating circumstances, the Special Events Office may consider late Tier II applications and **charge an additional \$250 late application fee.** The City does not guarantee that any event will be reviewed if it is submitted after the deadline.

ii. Applications for neighborhood block parties, events that take place in residential zones that will need the closure of a street, must be received at least 30 days before the event's proposed date. It is recommended that organizers apply at least 45 days before the event date if the block party might require special permitting for the use of tents, amusement structures, fireworks, etc. Under certain circumstances, the Special Events Office may consider late block party applications and **charge an additional \$250 late application fee.** The City does not guarantee that any event will be reviewed if it is submitted after the deadline.

iii. **Filming.** Processing time for film applications is determined by the extent of the request, ranging from approximately 15 to 90 days. It is recommended that applications for extensive filming spanning multiple days or locations be submitted at least 30 days in advance. Low-impact productions can often be processed within two weeks. The Special Events Office will attempt to accommodate requests within reason but cannot guarantee that an application will be reviewed if it is not submitted at least 15 days before the shoot date.

In particular circumstances, the SEO may waive the above time frames.

2. Special Event Office (SEO) Review

The Special Events Office will review the application and determine if the event can be accommodated. Special Event staff will then meet with the applicant to review the proposed event's information and activities and ensure compliance with city and state codes.

3. Approval Requirements

In deciding whether to approve, approve with conditions, or deny a special event request, the Special Events Office shall determine:

- The event, as proposed, can be shown to function safely;
- The diversion of police and fire resources for this event will not deny reasonable police and fire protection to the city;
- The event will not cause irreconcilable interference with previously approved or scheduled construction, maintenance, and other activities, including any sidewalks, streets, and parking spaces;
- The location/route meets the criteria established in the procedures;
- Events will be scheduled in a way that does not overly burden any one neighborhood consistently;
- The proposed event shall not severely impact the quality of life within the area where it is being held.

The SEO shall make decisions based on the application and the information provided and set any conditions and fees per policy, understanding that the applicant shall meet all department requirements at least thirty (30) days before the event date.

Once the applicant has met all requirements of the special event regulations, the Special Events Office will issue a permit for the special event. The applicant shall be notified in writing of the Special Events Office's action concerning the application as early as possible but at least thirty (30) days after receipt of the completed special event application.

4. Changes

The SEO must approve any changes to the approved plans, including but not limited to the event date(s), time(s), and location/route. Any requests for changes shall be submitted to the SEO for review at least thirty (30) days before the event date.

5. Disapproval Reasons

The Special Event Office shall NOT issue an approval permit for a special event request if one or more of the following conditions exist:

- The application is incomplete.
- The applicant has failed or refused to meet the city requirements for approval of a special event.
- A prior application for a special event to be held at the same time and place has already been received or granted.
- The special event will interfere with vehicular ingress and egress to or from or travel on a road, state highway, or major arterial collector street of the city.
- The special event will unreasonably interfere with fire and police protection, including any contribution to any substantial traffic volume or safety hazard.
- The applicant or the organization on whose behalf the application is submitted has, on prior occasions, damaged city property or has other outstanding and unpaid debts to the City of Martinsville.

6. Late Applications

Any application received after the deadlines established is considered a late application. The City does not guarantee that any event will be reviewed if it is submitted after the deadline. The SEO shall not accept a late application unless they find that:

- a. The proposed special event is in response to an occurrence whose timing did not reasonably allow the applicant to file a timely application or
- b. The time limitations would be unreasonable and restrict the applicant's free speech rights.

Under extreme extenuating circumstances, the Special Events Office may consider late applications and charge an additional \$250 late application fee. If the SEO determines that the above conditions do exist, staff shall accept the application and process it unless it does not meet the criteria outlined in the application process or there is insufficient time for the city to make the necessary preparations for permits, staff availability, or other public safety matters before the proposed date of the special event.

7. Fees

- Application fees are due when the application is submitted. Applications will be reviewed once the fee is received. The application will then enter the approval process. **Payment of the application fee is nonrefundable and does not guarantee event approval;** however, event organizers can modify dates and locations at no additional cost if they are denied approval due to a scheduling conflict.
- Upon application approval, the associated permit fees will be required before a permit is issued. The event organizer shall be responsible for producing the permit upon request of any City official throughout the event.
- The City reserves the right to bill event organizers after the event for any extraordinary costs imposed on the City due to the event, such as on-site structure repair, dropping bollards for emergency vehicle access, trash pickup, or damage to streets or sidewalks. All bills must be paid within 15 days of receipt.
- Road races that include events of more than one distance shall only be required to pay the fee for the longest distance.

- If an activity classifies as more than one type of event, the organizer must pay whichever application and permit fee the Special Events Office determines most appropriate.

Application Fees:

- Special Event Application Processing Fee (One-Day Only Event) - **\$25***
- Special Event Application Processing Fee (2 and 3-Day Events, Max. 3) - **\$50***

Additional Fees, if Applicable, Added to the Application Fee:

- Utility (Water, Trash, Electric) Connection Fee - **\$50**
- Park and Shelter Fee: See Parks Webpage
- Parking Lot Fee: **\$50**
- Closure or use of a City Street or Right-of-Way (Non-Race or Parade)- **\$50 per street***
- Closure or use of a City Street or Right-of-Way (Race Event or Parade) - **\$100 per street***

Late Fees:

Under extreme extenuating circumstances, the Special Events Office may consider late applications and charge an additional **\$250 late application fee.**

Special Event Permit Fee:

- General Event Tier I: **\$100**
- General Event Tier II: **\$50**

***Fees are non-refundable if an event is canceled.**

8. Reimbursement Policy

- a. There is no reimbursement of application fees or late application fees.
- b. Permit fees will be fully reimbursed if an event is canceled at least 15 days before the event date. There is no reimbursement of permit fees if an event is canceled within 15 days of the event date.
- c. Fees may be transferable towards future event applications/permits if the event is canceled due to inclement weather or other emergencies, which will be determined at the discretion of the Special Events Office.



9. Event Type Deadline for Application, Additional Fees, and Late Fees

Application Submittal Deadline

Tier I Event – 200+ Persons (see page 5)	At least 90 days prior to the event setup date
Tier II Event – Under 200 Persons (see page 5)	At least 45 days prior to the event setup date
Demonstration/Expressive Activity/First Amendment Rights Activity	At least 10 days prior to the event setup date
All Runs, Bike Races, Parades	At least 90 days prior to the event setup date
Neighborhood Block Party	At least 30 days prior to the event setup date
Filming	At least 15-90 days prior to filming (see page 8)

10. Street and Right-of-Way Closures

Any proposed special event requiring street or right-of-way closures must include a completed acknowledgment form with the application, as shown in **Appendix II**.

Indemnification

The applicant shall indemnify and hold harmless the City of Martinsville, its officers, agents, employees, and volunteers from any claims, causes of action, penalties, losses, expenses, and any other liability for injuries or damages to persons or property resulting from the special event which caused by the omissions or authorized acts of the applicant officers, agents, or employees.

If the City of Martinsville incurs any costs as a result of the applicant’s failure to comply with any provisions or if city property is destroyed or damaged by the cause of the special event, the applicant shall reimburse the city for its actual costs, including the exact replacement or repair cost of the destroyed property.

1. Insurance Requirements

Any special event proposed to be held on city-owned property shall require the submission of a Certificate of Insurance. The applicant must obtain general liability insurance for one million dollars for the duration of the event, which names the City of Martinsville as the additional insured.

The applicant shall immediately provide notice of cancellation or non-renewal of insurance to the City of Martinsville in writing upon being notified of said cancellation or non-renewal by the insured. In the event of cancellation, the applicant shall promptly provide replacement insurance naming the City as an "additional insured."

2. ** SPECIAL NOTE (INFLATABLE DEVICES)

If the proposed event involves any inflatable device, please note that only COMMERCIAL devices are permitted within city event spaces and the right-of-way. Along with the aforementioned general liability insurance and applicable liquor liability insurance, an applicant shall provide the Special Events Office with a copy of the certificate of insurance associated with any proposed inflatable device(s).

Points of Contact for Questions

The Departments Listed Below May Be Contacted Prior to Application Submittal For Additional Information

Building Official/Permits & Inspections Department (Inflatables)	(276) 403-5171
Commissioner of the Revenue (Business/Local ABC Licensing, Meals Tax)	(276) 403-5133
Fire Marshal (Food Truck Inspection)	(276) 403-5205
Health Department (Food Handling Requirements)	(276) 638-2311
Police – Need to talk to Rob	(276) 403-5331
Risk Management (Finance Department)	(276) 403-5196
Virginia Alcohol Beverage Control Authority	(540) 562-3604
Public Works (Street Closures, Waste Management, Park Rental)	(276) 403-5154
Utilities (Electric)	(276) 403-5184
Community Development	(276) 403-5156
Special Events Office	(276) 403-5196
Disability Rights and Resource Center	(276) 226-1696

Appeal Process

If the event is not approved, the applicant may appeal the denial of the application or permit conditions to the Special Events Committee within 30 days of receiving the notice by emailing a written statement to the Community Engagement Specialist. The Special Events Committee shall act upon said appeal promptly but no later than the date and time of the proposed special event. If the Special Events Committee decides to deny the special event permit, that decision shall be final.

Annual Policy Review

Each year, City staff will review the Special Event Policy in light of the prior years’ experience and solicit the input of stakeholders. Any suggested changes will be forwarded to the City Council for approval.



Appendix I

Requesting Funding For City-Supported or City-Funded Special Events

During the city's annual budget process, the city manager will recommend to the city council a funding amount earmarked for special events, which is earmarked as city-sponsored status during the upcoming fiscal year. Public funding for City-Sponsored Special Events is not guaranteed beyond the current fiscal year in which it is approved. The City Council may elect to continue this funding annually during the budget process.

Applications for City-Sponsored Special Events should be submitted by March 1st so the City Manager can include funding consideration in the annual budget proposal. Special events that are funded financially by the City will be determined by the City Council using the following criteria matrix:

Public Safety Risk	High Level of Community Support	Non-Profit Status	Positive Community Contribution	Stable Financial Admin.	Ability to Effectively Host	Legacy Event	Novelty	Economic Impact	Organized by City Residents or Business
10 Pts.	10 Pts.	10 Pts.	20 Pts.	10 Pts.	10 Pts.	10 Pts.	5 Pts.	5 Pts.	10 Pts.

In addition to the matrix scoring, the organizer must provide the following:

- A financial statement with a letter of request addressed to the City Manager or Special Events Office by March 1st or 180 days before the event date.
- Submit a program proposal showing the total event expense the applicant/sponsor anticipates incurring.
- Provide a detailed business plan that outlines how the event will be autonomous and ensures that it will not require City funding after the third year of city funding.
- Provide a financial statement following the event that shows full details of all expenses incurred by the event sponsor and all revenue collected for the event, including, but not limited to, revenue collected before and during the event.

Note: Non-profit certifications are issued to non-profit organizations as approved under the IRS Tax Code, Section 501 (c). To qualify for reduced permit fees or no assessment, the applicant must submit proof of this certification as listed below in addition to the special event application:

- A copy of the IRS tax exemption determination letter
- Written permission of the property owner when the applicant does not own the property where the event is to take place
- Written permission from the church or school allowing the organization to hold the event on the property

**Special consideration outside the annual budget process may be made for the FY2025 budget year for city sponsorship of a special event that may meet the matrix requirements above.*

These changes will impact the applications received after October 1, 2024

Appendix II

Sample Petition Form for a City Street or Right-of-Way Closure for a Special Event (You may create your own as long as it contains the information below)

Petition Form For a City Street or Right-Of-Way Closure Throughout the Duration of an Event

For Residential Properties: Please obtain the name(s)/signature(s) of either the property owner or an adult occupant. For apartments or mixed-use retail spaces in the Uptown area, please provide a name/signature from the property manager.

For Business Properties: Please obtain the name/signature of the owner or manager on duty. If a business building/structure is vacant, please write the street address in the table below and indicate "VACANT" next to the address

For Vacant Lots/Properties: No information required.

Event Name	
Date(s):	
Start/End Time(s):	
Location:	

By signing this petition, I acknowledge that I am aware of the above-listed event. I may object to this event and will provide my reason for objecting to this form. However, I understand that my objection will not necessarily result in the denial of this event. My objection will be given full consideration by the Special Events Task Force during the permit review process.

Date	Printed Name	Signature	Business Name/Title or Residential Phone Number/ Address	Do you support this event? If no, why?