

# MANHATTAN BEACH POLICY



**POLICY #:** A-02  
**ESTABLISHED DATE:** MARCH 15, 1989  
**REVISION DATE(S):** JULY 17, 2018, MARCH 4, 2025  
**APPROVED BY CITY MANAGER:** BRUCE MOETALYN MIRZAKHANIAN

**SUBJECT:** Special Events Policy

**SUMMARY:** Establishes a process for application and review of special events.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this policy is to establish clear guidelines for processing event applications to ensure compliance with local laws; facilitate collaboration among organizers, local authorities, public safety teams and other stakeholders; manage use of public resources effectively and fairly; establish protocols for crowd control, emergency response, traffic management and security; and promote fairness and consistency in decision-making, ensuring all event organizers are treated equally under the policy.

## General Provisions

### 1. Definitions

- A. **Special Event** - any activity that requires more than the normal amount of City Services or Resources for a successful completion and/or includes any of the following:
  - i. City streets or public rights-of-way more than one block long
  - ii. Utilizes public area or facility
  - iii. Requires reserved parking in or on a City parking lot, structure or street
  - iv. A likelihood to cause traffic delays, changes to the normal flow of traffic, or reduction in public parking
  - v. Attracts a substantial number of people
  - vi. Potential City exposure to liability
  - vii. Amplified sound or performances
  - viii. Gathering of over 50 people in a public space not reservable through Parks and Recreation
- B. **Pass-through Event** - event participants pass through the City of Manhattan Beach and the event does not begin or end in Manhattan Beach.
- C. **Legacy Event** - longstanding annual community special events that occurred in fiscal year 1987/1988 and continue to the present.
- D. **Annual Event** - event that occurs around the same time every year
- E. **Peak Season** - May 15 - September 15

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- F. **Commercial Activation** - an event with the purpose of promoting a commercial interest, including but not limited to, product launches and promotions, movie premier campaigns and book launches. Commercial activations and events are not permitted.
- G. **County-Permitted Event** - event takes place completely on the beach requiring a permit from Los Angeles County department of Beaches and Harbors
- H. **City Services** - services provided by City staff
- I. **City Resources** - City-owned, operated or leased equipment and/or supplies
- J. **Fee Waiver** - Organizations may request from City Council, a waiver of costs for City Services and City Resources and/or fees for City Permits or Special Event Application. Fee waivers may only be granted by the City Council. Fee waivers to not apply to any third party costs incurred to support the event
- K. **Special Events Committee** - a committee of representatives from each City department meeting monthly to discuss staffing needs, departmental concerns and logistics for new and upcoming special events.
- L. The following locations are not eligible for Special Event permits:  
Bruce's Beach, Larsson Street Parkette, 8<sup>th</sup> Street Parkette

2. Use Classifications and Impact Characteristics

Special events will be categorized as a Level I, II, or III event based on information provided in the special event application, Impact Characteristics Worksheet. Events requesting service or consumption of alcohol on public property, a multi-year contract, and/or expected attendance of over 1,000 are automatically classified as Level III and are subject to approval by the City Council.

- A. Impact Level I events are low impact events requiring little to no City Resources.  
Impact Level I characteristics may include but are not limited to:
  - i. 300 or fewer expected participants
  - ii. Event date is not in the peak season
  - iii. Event does not have amplified sound
  - iv. Event does not begin or end in Manhattan Beach (pass-through)
- B. Impact Level II events are medium impact events.  
Impact Level II characteristics may include but are not limited to:
  - i. 300-1000 expected participants/attendees
  - ii. Event occurs on the weekend
  - iii. Event occurs in a park or facility
  - iv. Reserved parking may be requested
  - v. Street closures may be requested
  - vi. Event requires amplified sound

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- C. Impact Level III events are high impact events  
Impact Level III characteristics may include but are not limited to:
  - i. Over 1000 expected participants/attendees
  - ii. Involves alcohol on public property
  - iii. Event occurs on a Holiday
  - iv. Event occurs on the Strand or Pier area
  - v. Street closures are required
  - vi. Event occurs in Peak Season
  
- D. Special events occurring entirely on private property, which do not require City services, may require a Temporary Use Permit or Group Entertainment Permit, issued by the Community Development Department.

3. Special Events Approval Guidelines and Process

- A. Event limits – the number of approved events shall be governed by available resources and is at the discretion of the City Council.
- B. Application submittal deadlines - Special Events applications must be submitted as follows:
  - i. Level III events: must be submitted at least 180 days prior to the desired event date. Upon approval by the Parks and Recreation Commission and City Council, permit will be processed and issued by the Parks and Recreation Director. Legacy events may be approved by the Special Events Commission as long as there are no significant changes to the event.
  - ii. Level II events: must be submitted at least ~~90~~120 days prior to desired event date and will be reviewed by the Special Events Committee and Parks and Recreation Commission. Upon the Parks and Recreation Commission recommendation, the Parks and Recreation Director may process and issue permits. Should the Parks and Recreation Commission recommend denial of a Special Event, that decision may be appealed by the applicant, to the City Council. City Council may call any event up for review that has been approved or denied by the Parks and Recreation Commission within 30 days of the Commission's decision.
  - iii. Level I events: must be submitted at least 90 days prior to the desired event date. Level I events will be reviewed and permits will be issued by the Director of Parks and Recreation on the recommendation of the Special Events Committee. Should the Special Events Committee recommend denial of a Special Event, that decision may be appealed to the Parks and Recreation Commission.
  - ~~iv.~~ iv. Pass-through Events: must be submitted at least 90 days prior to the desired event date.

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- v. Priority will be given to Manhattan Beach resident organizations and businesses (a resident organization is one composed of at least 60% Manhattan Beach residents).
  - vi. Established events shall have priority over first-time events.
  - vii. Events submitted earliest will be given priority for their preferred dates.
- C. At the discretion of the Director of Parks and Recreation, applications may be submitted and approved after the application submittal deadline has passed, provided:
- i. There are unforeseeable circumstances (memorial service, team victory celebration, etc.) or,
  - ii. The event is one that requires minimal City staff support and is not deemed to negatively impact City businesses or residents.
- D. Spontaneous events which are occasioned by news or affairs coming into public knowledge less than forty-eight hours prior to such event may be conducted on the Civic Plaza located between City Hall and the Police/Fire Facility without organizers first having to obtain an event permit. If practicable, the organizers should give notice to the Police Department at least four hours prior to the event, informing the City of the date and time of the event and providing an estimate of the approximate number of persons who will be participating.
- E. Annual Events
- i. Applications for Legacy Events will be requested at the beginning of the calendar year and will be reviewed by the Special Events committee for approval.
  - ii. Annual Events will be required to apply for their continuing special events on an annual basis. Applications for the following year shall be submitted within 90 days of the event.
  - iii. Legacy Events and established Annual Events shall have first right of refusal in the event of a date conflict with a newer event.
  - iv. If any significant changes are requested for Annual and Legacy Events, City Council or Parks and Recreation Commission approval may be required.
  - v. Legacy Event status may be requested by event organizers after 10 consecutive years of successful event execution. Legacy status may only be granted by the City Council.
4. Parking and Transportation
- A. A parking plan is required for Level II and Level III events, to show that adequate provision has been made for satellite parking, shuttle transportation and traffic control.
  - B. Level II and Level III events must offer Rideshare codes to their patrons and actively promote rideshare options.
  - C. Reserved parking for special events may be requested through the special event process but is not guaranteed.

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- D. County Permitted Events: Special Event Parking permits may be requested with a Special Event application for events taking place on the beach under the jurisdiction of Los Angeles County Beaches and Harbors. A copy of the County issued permit will be required before parking permits are issued.
5. Fees and Charges
- A. An application fee will apply. Current fees are available on the City website [www.citymb.info](http://www.citymb.info) ~~www.manhattanbeach.gov~~ or by phone.
  - B. Fees and charges for City personnel, materials and services shall be charged as deemed necessary by the City Council or Special Events Committee. The cost of services study will be used for billing at fully-burdened rates. A deposit may be required by the City if deemed necessary by the City Council or Special Events Committee.
  - C. If an event is cancelled, fees may be charged for costs incurred by the City for personnel, materials and services.
  - D. All third party costs incurred by the City to support the event will be billed to the event organizer. If third party services are deemed necessary, an estimate of costs will be provided prior to the event.
  - E. Application fee waivers or reductions may be granted at the sole discretion of the City Council.
6. Insurance
- A. The City may require insurance and/or indemnification as protection from liability in amounts commensurate with the risks involved in the event. Applicants must provide adequate certificate of insurance and an executed endorsement form in compliance with City insurance requirements.