



# **City of San Marcos**

## **Special Events Ordinance Update And Policy for City Support of Arts and Public Event Grants**

August 20, 2024

# Purpose



- Update on the implementation of the Special Events Ordinance that went into effect in April 2024.
- Presentation regarding the 2019 Public Events Policy, proposed changes regarding City support of public events to be implemented in FY25, the grant request process, and provide direction to the City Manager.



# Special Events Ordinance and Process

# Special Events Ordinance History



- **September 7, 2010** – Established Chapter 19 Special Events Ordinance.
- **September 19, 2023** – Work session on proposed amendments to Chapter 19 - Special Events of the City's Code of Ordinance
- **October 17, 2023** – Approval of Ordinance 2023-77 amendment, second of two readings, Chapter 19 of the San Marcos City Code.
- **April 2024** - New process went live

# Special Events Process Update



## Outreach

- Engaged with a range of event organizers, from large and small events, and connected with key stakeholder groups including the Downtown Association, Main Street, Grant workshops, Outlet Malls, Conference Center, State of the City, etc.
- Conducted multiple one-on-one meetings with events such as Sights and Sounds, Mermaid Parade & Faire, Back the Bobcats/Texas State, Fiesta San Marcos, Concerts in the Park, Farmer's Market, etc.
- **60+** events have been through some portion of the new process since April 2024
- Held monthly internal meetings and distribute special event updates via email to both internal and external stakeholders

# Special Events Process Update



## What has changed to streamline the process and ensure equity & consistency between events?

- Apply online through same permitting software as all Development Permits (MyGovernmentOnline)
- Stand-alone webpage under the Communities tab on City website
- Emergency Action Plan (EAP) required
- Hard Stops required for street closures that have pedestrians
- Ensuring Engineered Traffic Control Plans (TCP) where required

# Special Events Process Update



## Concerns we've heard or seen

- Trouble meeting the deadline of 60 days or just not applying
- Phasing out in kind services
- Fees being charged
  - No new fees, enforcing existing (Road Closures, Temporary Structures/Tents)
  - Engineered plans
- Inspections
- Neighborhood Block Parties

# Special Events Process Update



## What's coming?

- Website improvements and search optimization
- Process improvements with staff review times and comment consistency
- Free Barricade usage
- Free Engineered Road closure and parade routes
- Fillable Road Closure Templates for common closures
- Forms updated (Form fillable pdfs, Road Closure Flow Chart, continuing to add details into the application and resource document as find to create clarity/consistency)
- Staff liaison to coordinate across major departments to ensure alignment with the big picture goals of the process





# Public Events Policy

# Introduction – 2019 Public Events Policy



## Who

- City receives requests from outside organizations and agencies to support events/programs in San Marcos.

## What

- City seeks to support events providing public purpose through cultural and educational enrichments, celebrating diversity, history, and heritage, enhancing pride and positive image in our community, and endorsing economic vitality.

## Why

- Policy for outside organizations creates a transparent, consistent and equal process for event organizers and staff to follow.

# Overview - Public Events Policy



- City of San Marcos awards grants annually for events/programs that bring people together to celebrate and enjoy different forms of artistic expression, music, food, sports and traditions in San Marcos. Funding is dependent upon eligibility and the availability of funds as approved annually in the city budget.
- The process is created to provide an equitable opportunity for those seeking City support for arts and cultural programs, activities and events.
- Staff is seeking approval for the change in policy from 2019 Policy.

# Public Events Policy History



- **December 12, 2018** – Staff presentation regarding the proposed City-Sponsored Event program and seeking direction to form a policy.
- **June 4, 2019** – Staff presentation of the City Support of Public Events policy.
- **September 17, 2019** – Council approval of the policy.
- **August 20, 2024** – Proposal of a new City Support of Arts, Community and Public Events Policy to replace the previous policy as adopted in 2019. This policy includes all event and program grant types for equality purposes.

# Event Support Types – 2019 Policy



- **Grant**
  - Monetary contribution from the City to support Events/Programs with significant community benefit.
- **In-kind Donation**
  - City's staff hours, services, or resources in return for certain benefits. Does not include monetary funding.
- **Sponsorship**
  - Consists solely of financial support (Grants) limited to funds approved in the City's annual budget. Events created by non-City agencies.
- **Partnership**
  - May consist of City staff hours, resources, services, and/or financial support (Grants). Event organizers must reimburse the City of San Marcos for 100% of costs in excess of the support level authorized.

# Event Support Types - 2025 Policy



- **Grant**

- Monetary contribution from the City to support Events/Programs with significant community benefit **and/or tourism impact.**

- **In-kind ~~Donation Resources~~**

- ~~City's staff hours, services, or resources~~ parkland for Signature Events. ~~in return for certain benefits.~~ Does not include monetary funding.

- ~~**Sponsorship**~~

- ~~Consists solely of financial support (Grants) limited to funds approved in the City's annual budget. Events created by non-City agencies.~~

- ~~**Partnership**~~

- ~~May consist of City staff hours, resources, services, and/or financial support (Grants). Event organizers must reimburse the City of San Marcos for 100% of costs in excess of the support level authorized.~~

# Funding Sources



- **Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) fund**
  - HOT funds must be used to directly enhance and promote tourism and the hotel and convention industry in San Marcos. State law sets the rules on how this money may be spent.
  - Fifteen percent of the grant award must be used for paid advertising outside a 50-mile radius of the San Marcos city limits.
- **General fund**
  - Projects/events that have artistic and cultural value but may not attract overnight visitors.
  - Projects/events must enhance the arts and benefit San Marcos residents.
  - Paid advertising is not required.

# Request Process - 2019 Policy



- **Mass Gathering Events**
  - Available to for-profits and non-profits
  - Submit Proposal to City Management
  - Considered on a case-by-case basis
  - Up to 30% funding of budget (in-kind included)
- **Community Events**
  - Available to non-profits
  - Recurring community event
  - Up to 30% funding of budget (in-kind included)
  - Arts and Cultural application annual process



# Request Process - 2025 Policy



- ~~Mass Gathering Arts and Public~~ **Events (HOT)**
  - Available to for-profits and non-profits
  - ~~Submit Proposal to City Management~~ On-line annual process
  - ~~Considered on a case-by-case basis~~ Annual competitive process
  - Up to **50%** funding of ~~budget~~ actual expenses (no in-kind)
- **Arts, Cultural, Classic and Community Events (GF)**
  - Available to non-profits
  - Recurring community event/program
  - Up to ~~30%~~ **50%** funding of ~~budget~~ actual expenses (no in-kind)
  - Arts, Cultural and **Public Events** application annual process

# 2025 Grant Application Process



## Annual process

- Window opens once per year in July/August for all grant types.  
(exception: new impactful event grant and historical grant)

## New online grants portal

- Applicants can apply, review their submissions, and follow their grant's progress online in our new grant management software.

## Mandatory Workshops

- Inform applicants of process changes
- Special Events staff in attendance to answer permit questions

# 2025 Grant Funding Categories



## Public Event Grants

- **Signature Event Grant** – HOT and General fund
  - Exclusive San Marcos event
  - Attendance of 5,000 or more; at least 50% visitors
  - Proven successful event for three consecutive years
- **Classic Event Grant** – General fund
  - Recurring community event with limited artistic qualities
- **Impactful Event Grant** – HOT fund
  - Exclusive San Marcos event
  - Attendance of 5,000 or more; at least 50% visitors

# 2025 Grant Funding Categories continued



## Arts and Cultural Grants

- **Tourism Grant** – Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) fund
  - Projects with artistic and cultural value visitors and residents
- **Community Grant** - General fund
  - Projects with artistic and cultural value but may not attract overnight visitors
- **Spark Grant** - HOT fund
  - Projects with artistic and cultural value visitors and residents for newer applicants with smaller funding needs

## Historic and Heritage Grant

- New funding program - HOT fund



# Next steps

- Briefing at August 20 Council Work Session
- Adopt policy at September 3, 2024, City Council meeting
- New policy effective for the FY2025 budget year



# Council Direction

- Consensus to move forward with new Arts and Public Events policy?

# Questions and Discussion