



Planning Commission Agenda

Note: Anyone wishing to speak at any Planning Commission meeting is encouraged to do so. If you wish to speak, please rise and, after you have been recognized by the Chair, give your name and complete address for the record. You will then be allowed to speak. Please note the public testimony may be limited by the Chair.

SEPTEMBER 23, 2023

STUDY SESSION

AGENDA

I. CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 p.m., Civic Center Council Chambers, 1175 E. Main Street

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

III. PUBLIC FORUM

Note: To speak to an agenda item in person you must fill out a speaker request form at the meeting and will then be recognized by the Chair to provide your public testimony. Written testimony can be submitted in advance or in person at the meeting. If you wish to discuss an agenda item electronically, please contact PC-publictestimony@ashland.or.us by September 23, 2025 to register to participate via Zoom. If you are interested in watching the meeting via Zoom, please utilize the following link:

<https://zoom.us/j/99132620238?pwd=LlyHH50aMC6KgZJRvrRb3Zta7jTdUZ.1>

IV. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Special Event Permits

V. ADJOURNMENT:

Next Meeting Date: October 14, 2025

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please email planning@ashland.or.us. Notification 72 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to the meeting (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title 1).



Memo

DATE: September 23, 2025
TO: Planning Commissioners
FROM: Derek Severson, *Planning Supervisor*
RE: Proposed Special Event Permit Code Changes

Background

Staff are looking at ways to streamline special event permitting. Currently, event permitting includes short-term events regulated through land use regulations in [AMC 18.2.2.030.H](#) including short-term food truck events, street closures/block party permits regulated through the Public Works Department, use of the Plaza regulated through the City Manager's Office, as well as special events like festivals, parades, races, etc. These permits may be treated differently in the code, and under current processes are taken in by the regulating department and routed to other departments depending on the specific details of the proposal. A permit may require review by Planning, Public Works, Building, Parks, Police and Fire and may also be referred to obtain a business license and register to pay Food & Beverage Tax in conjunction with permitting.

At the August 27th Planning Commission study session, Deputy City Manager Jordan Rooklyn presented a proposal to create a more streamlined permitting process, which would involve internal procedural changes alongside supporting modifications to the Ashland Municipal Code and the Land Use Ordinance.

At the September 23rd Planning Commission study session, Deputy City Manager Jordan Rooklyn will present the specific code changes, and request feedback from the Planning Commission with regard to the Land Use Ordinance. Final code amendments will come back before the Planning Commission at a public hearing to yield a formal recommendation to the City Council.

Proposed Code Changes

Attached to this memo is a draft of code changes specific to special event permitting. These changes include:

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

51 Winburn Way
Ashland, Oregon 97520
ashland.or.us

Tel: 541.488.5305
Fax: 541.552.2050
TTY: 800.735.2900

- Establishing a new chapter under Title 2 Administration, 2.69 Special Events, which outlines the permitting process for special events and its exceptions.
- Modifying [AMC 18.2.2.030\(H\)](#), [AMC 18.2.3.145\(F\)](#), and [AMC 13.03](#) to refer to Chapter 2.69 Special Events.

Feedback Questions

- **Is it appropriate to allow Food Trucks within the public right-of-way through a Special Event permit?** *Food Truck regulations adopted in 2023 regulate Food Trucks operating on private property but do not speak to regulation of their operations within public rights-of-way.*
- **Is it appropriate to allow Food Trucks in the downtown area (C-1-D) specific to a Special Event?** *As presently regulated, [AMC 18.2.3.145.C](#) requires a Conditional Use Permit to operate a food truck in the C-1-D district.*
- **The proposed language caps special events at no more than once per month, and no more than five (5) times per year. Do you have any concerns with this limitation?** *Current code language in [AMC 18.2.2.030.H.1](#) limits short term events to one 72-hour event per year, with Food Truck-only events allowed once per month under [AMC 18.2.2.030.H.2](#).*

Attachments

Proposed Language for Chapter 2.69 Special Events

Proposed Modifications for AMC 18.2.2.030(H), AMC 18.2.3.145(F), and AMC 13.03

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

51 Winburn Way
Ashland, Oregon 97520
ashland.or.us

Tel: 541.488.5305
Fax: 541.552.2050
TTY: 800.735.2900

[New Chapter]

2.69 Special Events

2.69.010 Purpose

The purpose and intent of this chapter is to recognize a special public need for special events as it relates to economic development and tourism, and to establish the parameters necessary to protect and promote a safe environment on public property and public rights-of-way.

2.69.020 Definitions

- “Special Event” is any activity that occurs upon private or public property that will affect the ordinary use of public property, public streets, rights-of-way, or sidewalks, or will require the City to incur extraordinary costs for personnel and/or materials and services. Special events include, but are not limited to, fairs, festivals, parades, outdoor concerts, races, block parties, and sales events outside the normal sales area of a business.

2.69.100 Permits

No person or organization shall establish, maintain, or operate a special event within the city unless a special event permit is obtained from the city.

The City Manager, upon application on a form prescribed by the City Manager’s office, shall issue a special event permit to a person when the City Manager or their designee finds, with input from affected departments, that the event will not:

- (a) Unreasonably obstruct vehicular and pedestrian traffic; or
- (b) Create an unreasonable hazard to person or property; or
- (c) Create a noise disturbance, breach of peace, or any other violation of a provision of this code; or
- (d) Contravene city, county, or state law, including, but not limited to, restrictions of the use of streets by trucks and other vehicles or certain classes or weights unless the Public Works Department in writing has waived those restrictions for the purposes of the application.

Parks. The City Manager, or their designee, may, subject to Ashland Park and Recreation Commission rules and regulations for park use, grant a special permit to allow the use of dedicated park lands and recreational facilities for the purpose of conducting concerts, lectures, athletic events, show, craft, and art fairs, and other special events or uses as are considered compatible with normal park and recreation activities.

Other Publicly Owned Property. The City Manager, or their designee, may, subject to applicable administrative rules governing use of city property, grant a special permit to allow the short-term use of publicly owned properties other than park lands and recreational facilities.

Private Property. The City Manager, or their designee, may grant a special permit to allow the short-term temporary use of privately owned properties for events that affect or impact the City, surrounding public or private property, or which may involve non-typical use of the property. Such events should not occur more than once per month, and no more than five (5) times per year.

Permit Conditions. Applications for a special event permit shall be submitted not less than ninety (90) days prior to the proposed event. The City may accept applications less than ninety (90) days prior to the event, at the sole discretion of the City. If the City accepts an application less than ninety (90) days before the scheduled event, the applicant waives all time periods and appeal rights referenced in this chapter.

Permits may be denied, revoked or may include the following conditions:

- (a) Conditions applying to dates, hours, and/or noise levels of operation;
- (b) Duration of activity, subject to revocation without prior notice;
- (c) An approved traffic control plan and proper traffic markings in place;
- (d) Obligation to perform any and all damage repairs of the area occupied, post bonds, deposit cash, and/or reimburse the City for any costs incurred for damage repairs, as determined by City Manager per applicable administrative rules governing use of city property;
- (e) Provision of written assurance that the City will be held harmless for any liability that is solely attributable to the permittee's conduct;
- (f) Any other conditions considered necessary by the City Manager to be in the public interest.

The City Manager shall collect fees for the use of City property as established in the most recent fees schedule approved by resolution of the City Council. Payment of such fees shall be a condition of issuing a permit under this section.

- (a) The fees shall bear a reasonable relationship to the costs incurred by the City to make the property available for the use authorized by the permit, including costs incurred for additional City personnel in excess of the costs for the ordinary and usual use of the property;
- (b) Non-residents may be charged a higher fee than city residents;

- (c) Some or all costs may be waived in which in-kind funding has been approved by the City Council. Any amounts incurred over those approved by the City Council will be the responsibility of the applicant.

Such a permit should not be used where a lease is appropriate or if the event is part of a normal business, program, or activity. Only the City Council may authorize a lease. Events within normal business, program, or activity are reviewed through the business license review process. Permits issued by the City Manager for use of public-right-of-way shall not exceed a term of seventy-two (72) hours and the City Manager should avoid any unreasonable interference with access rights of property owners and tenants.

Revocation and Appeals. The Council may review a permit granted by the City Manager and may revoke the permit if it finds that the permit is not in the public interest. A person whose application for a permit is denied may appeal the denial in writing to the City Council no later than ten (10) days after notice of denial. Upon receipt of the applicant's written appeal, the Council shall set the hearing at its next regular meeting and give notice of the date, time, and place of same to the applicant. At the hearing, the applicant shall appear if the matter is to be heard. The Council after hearing may grant or deny a permit on such terms and conditions it deems proper.

Except as stated herein as per the permit, this does not regulate other permits available through other chapters of the Ashland Code.

2.69.200 Exceptions to special event permit requirement.

No special event permit is required for the events below, provided the event does not impede public right-of-way:

- First Friday Art Walk (May – October). This event is only to occur in commercial areas on the first Friday of each month between May through October to promote art, music, and local businesses.
- Bi-Annual Sidewalk Celebration (April - October). This event is only to occur in commercial areas twice a year, once in the spring and once in the fall, on dates approved by the City Manager or their designee, to promote local businesses downtown.

[Modified Sections]

18.2.2.030 Allowed Uses

- Temporary Uses. Temporary uses require a conditional use permit under chapter 18.5.4, except as follows:
 - ~~Short Term~~ **Special Events. An event that has received a special event permit pursuant to chapter 2.69.** The Staff Advisor may approve through ministerial review short-term temporary uses occurring once in a calendar year and lasting not more than 72 hours including set-up and take-down.
 - ~~Short-Term Food Truck Event.~~ Staff Advisor may approve through ministerial review the short-term temporary operations of a food truck occurring not more than once per month and lasting not more than 72 hours including set-up and take-down. In addition to the short-term food truck event permit, food truck vendors shall obtain a business license, register for and pay applicable food and beverage tax, and receive any requisite inspections from Building and Fire Departments and the Jackson County Environmental Public Health Department. Short-term food truck events are not permitted in residential zones.
 - Garage Sales. ...

18.2.3.145 Food Trucks and Food Carts

- F. Short-term operation of a food truck or food cart outside of the parameters of subsections A and B above may be permitted as a short-term event pursuant to **Chapter 2.69** section 18.2.2.030.H.2.
-

13.03 Sidewalk, ~~Special Event~~ and Publication Box Regulation

The purpose and intent of this chapter is to protect and promote a safe environment within the public rights-of-way of the City of Ashland, specifically on City sidewalks. The purpose of this chapter is to recognize a special public need for sidewalk dining as it relates to economic development and tourism in Ashland. Similarly, ~~this chapter recognizes the need for City-sponsored special commercial sales events to promote tourism and economic development.~~ Finally, this chapter recognizes the special public need for publication boxes to guarantee the free exchange of information. Notwithstanding this public need, the placement of objects on the public right-of-way requires adequate regulation to ensure its primary purposes, which include:

Uninhibited pedestrian access on sidewalks

Access entering and exiting vehicles parked in the right-of-way

Maintenance of utilities within the right-of-way

Emergency service access to persons both within the right-of-way and on private property

It is also the intent of this chapter to recognize the importance of the aesthetic quality of the public rights-of-way by providing minimum standards to maintain a positive visual streetscape for the City of Ashland that promotes the enjoyable use of the right-of-way for all of its intended and legal purposes. This is achieved through the following:

Materials and Construction Standards

Maintenance and Safety Standards

Placement, Clearance and Spacing Requirements

Procedures for Abatement / Removal

13.03.025 Limited Applicability to Designated Zones

Permits and agreements for occupancy or encroachment of the sidewalk permit area are available only if the property is located in one of the following zoning districts: C-1-D (Commercial Downtown), C-1 (Commercial), or E-1 (Employment). Only lawful use is permitted. Lawful use means only the limited uses and activities identified herein (sidewalk dining and special event) and consistent with and in compliance with all other applicable laws, including City land use regulations and controls, and all other applicable Federal, State, County and City regulations. All other sidewalks outside the above designated zones are not available for sidewalk usage by permit or concession, other than exempt activities and uses, [functional items], or interim uses specifically provided for herein.

13.03.030 Exempt Activities: City Seasonal Event Usage

~~Notwithstanding any provision contrary in this chapter, the City Council may, at its discretion and upon such conditions as it deems appropriate, grant permission to adjacent owners and occupants by special permit for free use of the sidewalk permit areas in the commercial zones of the City for designated seasonal events. Such seasonal events shall be designed and structured to fulfill a special public need to promote tourism and economic development. Such seasonal event permits shall be initially limited to three (3)~~

~~days the week before the Memorial Day weekend and three (3) days the week after Labor Day weekend and shall require a sponsor to provide insurance. The City Manager is delegated authority to grant permits for the above-referenced three-day events. Additional seasonal event days may be established by resolution of the City Council.~~

13.03.110 Sidewalk Café, Special Event and Publication Boxes

DRAFT