

Attachment A

Events in Parks Policy

Events in Parks Policy

Purpose

This Policy provides a framework for the approval and management of outdoor temporary events in parks under the care and control of the City of Sydney Council (the City).

Scope

This Policy defines the key principles and assessment process that applies to all outdoor temporary events proposed in City Parks, as well as the specific approval process for such events determined by the City as 'High Impact'.

This Policy provides guidance and standards for event organisers to adhere to when seeking approvals and managing events in City Parks.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the City's Event Guidelines, which provide procedural details and guidance for event organisers to conduct compliant, and permissible outdoor events, along with the relevant laws, standards, policies, and procedures.

Definitions

Term	Meaning
City Parks	A public open space under the City's care and control that is designated by the City or State Government as a park or reserve. Parks and reserves may be on land owned by the City classified operational or community land, road reserves, Crown land, and third-party owned land where the City has tenure.
Event	A gathering of people, at a predetermined location, for a specific purpose, for a specified time, arranged by an Event Organiser, which can be free to attend or for paid entry. Examples include, but are not limited to, festivals, cultural ceremonies, and celebrations, live outdoor entertainment, industry related promotions and exhibitions, or temporary markets
Event Organiser	The entity responsible for the production and management of an event and listed as the approved party within an event approval, permit, licence agreement, or consent.
High impact event	An Event proposal determined by the City as having or likely to have a high impact on the applicable City Park based on it including one or more elements set out in Figure 1 of this Policy, or as otherwise determined by the City as having or likely to have a significant impact on the applicable City Park.
Plan of management	A plan that guides the use and management of community land prepared and adopted in accordance with the <i>Local Government Act</i>

Term	Meaning
	<p>1993 (NSW) and, where the land is Crown land, the <i>Crown Land Management Act 2016</i> (NSW).</p> <p>A plan may apply to one or more areas of community land, or a specific area of community land.</p>

Policy Statement

The City is dedicated to promoting cultural diversity, community engagement, economic vitality, and the sustainable activation of public spaces. Outdoor events in parks play a significant role in achieving these objectives, where they can adhere to the core principles of effective land use management, strike a balance between providing for event demand and the impact on the park, comply with the relevant Plans of Management and align with the City’s values.

The City recognises the importance outdoor events have on delivering its strategic objectives as part of its Community Strategic Plan and Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Policy.

Successful events in parks can promote:

- **Cultural enrichment:** enriching the cultural fabric of the City of Sydney by promoting cultural exchange and appreciation among its diverse communities.
- **Cultural diversity:** serving as platforms for local and international artists, musicians, performers, and artisans to exhibit their talents. This enhances the City’s cultural and artistic vibrancy while providing exposure to emerging and established talent and businesses.
- **Community cohesion:** bringing community members together, fostering social bonds, and creating a stronger sense of unity among residents.
- **Economic stimulus:** supporting local businesses, stimulating economic growth, increased foot traffic and enhancing the City's overall economic vitality.
- **Public space activation:** Parks can be transformed into vibrant, active spaces during events, making them more accessible and enjoyable for residents and visitors alike.
- **Tourism attraction:** drawing visitors to the City, stimulating economic growth, creating job opportunities, and enhancing the City’s reputation as a dynamic and culturally rich destination.

All events in City Parks must have the prior approval of the City.

City Values

The City will not approve events which conflict with its vision or values or that do not represent a positive benefit to its community in some way.

The City **will not approve** events that involve the following:

- Circuses involving the use of live animals.
- Non-experiential vehicle displays for advertising only purposes that do not benefit the community.
- The production, promotion or distribution of products, services or information that is likely to cause unreasonable offense or harm to the community.

- The unlawful discrimination, or encouragement of unlawful discriminatory behaviour, including discrimination based on race, religion or sex in employment, marketing, or advertising practices.
- The advertisement or promotion of fossil fuel use as the primary purpose.
- The sale or promotion of any prohibited items or services, such as fur and exotic animal skin products and feathers, other than where permitted under traditional First Nation cultural practices.

The City **will not approve** event proposals from Event Organisers that are considered to:

- Pollute land, air or water.
- Derive revenue from the extraction or sale of coal, oil, or gas.
- Destroy or waste non-recurring resources.
- Produce, promote or distribute products or services likely to be harmful to the community.
- Acquire land or commodities primarily for speculative gain.
- Create, encourage, or perpetuate militarism or engage in the manufacture of armaments.
- Entice people into financial over-commitment.
- Exploit people through the payment of below award wages or poor working conditions
- Unlawfully discriminate, or encourage unlawful discriminatory behaviour, including discrimination, based on race, religion or sex in employment, marketing, or advertising practices.
- Sell or promote any prohibited items or services, such as fur and exotic animal skin products and feathers, other than where is permitted under traditional First Nation cultural practices.
- Contribute to the inhibition of human rights generally.

Key Principles

Event Organisers must satisfy the following key principles for any proposed event, and demonstrate how each principle will be achieved as part of their application and event management plans, to the satisfaction of the City:

- **Asset Protection:** Event Organisers must implement asset and turf protection measures for events in parks and spaces where vehicles, infrastructure and/or event attendees pose an unreasonable risk of damage to the space, including during bump-in, event delivery and bump-out.
- **Contingency Planning:** Event Organisers must develop and implement comprehensive contingency plans. These plans must be sufficient to address potential issues, including the potential necessity for work stoppage, postponement, relocation, or cancellation, whether initiated by the Event Operator or the City, due to factors such as inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstances that may impact the event or the park.
- **Event Duration:** Event Organisers must minimise their use of the City Park to the least amount of time, including that required for bump-in, event delivery and bump-out. The City will consider the entire duration of an event, including possible post-

event remediation, such as re-turfing and establishment periods, when making its assessment of whether or not an event can proceed.

- **Park Access:** Event Organisers must maintain as much community access as reasonably practicable during the use of the City Park, with the event site only being obstructed due to safety protocols and/or legislative licensing requirements.
- **Event Infrastructure:** Event Organisers must minimise their use of infrastructure to as little as reasonably practicable and, where available, utilise existing structures or hardstand surfaces to reduce impact on the park.
- **Financial Capacity:** Event Organisers must demonstrate financial capacity for all aspects of the event, including having adequate budget and funding to cover all costs and liabilities such as City fees and charges, security bonds, and remediation costs resulting from event-related damage.

Assessment

On receipt of an event proposal from an Event Organiser, the City will assess the proposal against the City’s values, the key principles, and the following criteria:

Criteria	Objective
Alignment with Public Space Purpose	Proposals should align with the public interest and demand for a particular event type and associated use of the park space, enhancing its character, functionality, and with consideration to the possible wider demand for a particular event type and scale in the location proposed – Events should contribute positively to the community by providing value, enjoyment, and/or cultural enrichment.
Cultural and Heritage Connection	Proposals should respect and celebrate the cultural and heritage elements of the public space, preserving their significance – Council may recognise a historical or cultural connection to place for certain events. Events should provide a meaningful connection to the existing culture of the space or seek to harbour an emerging culture within the location.
Size and scale feasibility	Proposals should be of an appropriate size and scale for the park in which they are proposed. This includes feasibility assessments conducted about expected attendance numbers, access requirements for associated infrastructure and patrons, and the likely impact on the normal amenity of the space to be used for the event.
Environmental Impact and Asset Preservation	Proposals should have minimal environmental impact, with a focus on preserving the standards of the public space and its existing assets once the event has concluded, which can include, but not

Criteria	Objective
	limited to, its acoustic environment, vegetation, ecosystem, and existing infrastructure.
Infrastructure and Amenity Consideration	Proposals should show respect for existing amenities, infrastructure, and the visual aesthetics of the public space, avoiding damage or disruption. Temporary infrastructure and layout plans should be sensitive to the parks design and features and be appropriately ancillary to the primary purpose of the event.
Economic and Community Benefits	Proposals should seek to bring economic benefits to the local community, which may include increased visitors to local businesses, employment opportunities or increased profile of the local area. Proposals should offer activities that enrich the community.
Duration and Timing	Proposals should respect the general community use of the space and ensure the use of the park for an event is the minimum duration required to achieve the event operation, including safe bump-in and out activities. Operational timings must be reasonable and considerate to the space and its surroundings, including stakeholders.
Frequency and shoulder events	Proposals must be scheduled appropriately during a season to satisfy capacity analysis on the proposed park’s ability to reasonably hold the event activity, as well as a holistic consideration given for the park’s capacity to accommodate the proposed event within the existing calendar of events for the location. Shoulder bookings preceding and following the proposed event will be considered when reviewing proposals.
Alignment to legislation, land use plans and associated policies and guidelines	Proposals must align to existing Plans of Management for the use of the space proposed, comply with relevant legislation, and satisfy the requirements detailed in the City’s Event Guidelines and relevant policies and procedures.
Prior performance of Event Organiser	Proposals from Event Operators that have prior experience with successful and compliant events within the local government area or, ideally, the specific park being proposed will be favourably considered. Any prior compliance issues with an Event Organiser will be taken into account.

Where the City approves an event to occur in a City Park, the Event Organiser will be required to agree the terms and conditions imposed by the City and, in some cases, pay a security bond. Some event proposals will require public notification prior to approval, and for the Event Organiser to enter into a licence agreement with the City.

High Impact Events

All event proposals identified by the City as being ‘High Impact’ require public notification and endorsement by the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Lord Mayor as part of the

approval process. Following Chief Executive Officer endorsement, Event Organisers will be required to enter into a licence agreement with the City and pay a security bond.

Event Organisers should allow at least six months for the assessment and endorsement of any ‘High Impact’ Event proposal.

The table below details the general determinations of what constitutes a ‘High Impact’ Event proposal; however, the City may determine an Event proposal to be High Impact for other reasons, at its discretion.

Figure 1 – High Impact Event Category

Event category - High Impact
Events that include one or more of the following elements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High impact infrastructure or multiple structures that cumulatively increase the impact on turf or other surfaces, such as large performance stages, platforms, decks, tents, temporary buildings or any other structure(s) or number of structures that result in a high risk of damage being caused • Significant area of park utilised for the event, including back-of-house, waste areas, and so forth, that results in significant impact on the usual amenity of the space or high risks of distributed damages across a large area of a park • Heavy vehicle movements on turf areas and/or high frequency vehicle movements on turf areas required for the production or servicing of the event where ground protection cannot reasonably mitigate the risks of excessive damage • Positioning of infrastructure in areas of the park that require excessive vehicle movements to service and/or are in areas that pose increased risks of damage from environmental factors (such as areas of poor drainage, unsuitable topography, or ecologically sensitive areas) • Mass gathered events of high footfall that represent a high risk of compaction or damage to turfed or planted areas of the park that is outside of the reasonable scope of Council’s normal maintenance practices for a park • Duration and occupation of a park with infrastructure, vehicle movements or attendees that represents a real risk of cumulative damages being caused due to the period of use of the park

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the City’s Event Guidelines, which provide procedural details and guidance for what event applications must include for submissions, in order for event organisers to conduct compliant, and permissible outdoor events.

Responsibilities

The Venue Management department of the City of Sydney is responsible for the assessment and approval of all applicable events in parks and reserves.

Consultation

This Policy has been developed by Venue Management in consultation with City Greening & Leisure, Legal & Governance, and City Life.

References

Laws and Standards
• Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW)
• Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)
• Roads Act 2013 (NSW)
• State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008
• Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012
Policies and Procedures
• City of Sydney Park Plans of Management
• City of Sydney Event Guidelines
• City of Sydney Sustainable Event Guidelines
• City of Sydney Reducing Waste from Events and Services: Guidelines for Single-Use Items
• City of Sydney Inclusive and Accessible Event Guidelines
• City of Sydney Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050

Review period

This policy will be reviewed within five years of adoption.

Approval Status

The Council approved this policy on [DD MONTH YYYY].

Approval History

Stage	Date	Comment	TRIM Reference
Original Policy	XXXXX, 2024	Approved by Council	2023/562882
Commence Review Date	(Date, month, year – should be 9 months prior to the end of the next review period)		20XX/XXXXXX (Governance to populate)

Stage	Date	Comment	TRIM Reference
Approval Due Date	(Date, month, year of when the next review of the policy is due to be finalised/ approved)		

Ownership and approval

Responsibility	Role
Author	Filming & Outdoor Events Manager
Owner	Manager, Venue Management
Endorser	City of Sydney Executive
Approver	City of Sydney Council