



TOWN OF BEDFORD SPECIAL EVENTS POLICY

Approved by Town Council

September 12, 2023

I. PURPOSE

The Town of Bedford (hereinafter the “Town”) seeks to regulate the use of streets, sidewalks, and greenways in the Town for all organized special events, with the purpose of protecting the health and public safety of citizens, and limiting the inconvenience to residents, businesses, and places of worship and learning. Furthermore, the Town desires to establish a straightforward and accountable process for event organizers and enable public agencies to manage these events in a cost-effective and coordinated way.

II. ELIGIBILITY/APPLICABILITY

Special Event Permits are required for all events when any portion of the event occurs on or in a Town of Bedford public street, plaza, park, trail, greenway, or sidewalk and not held entirely within a Bedford County Park or on privately maintained property or roads.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Special Events:** Organized activity occurring for a limited or fixed duration and presented to a live audience that utilizes, impedes, or has impact on Town of Bedford property or right-of-way for entertainment, commercial, cultural, recreational, educational, or social purposes. Examples of special events are general events, road races and parades, and neighborhood events.
- B. General Events:** Organized activity that has a stationary footprint in an identifiable location for a specific duration of time, often involving amplified noise, food, beverage, merchandise, and/or other forms of entertainment. Examples include festivals, performances, rallies, markets, parties, tournaments, and other similar events.
- C. Road Races and Parades:** Organized activity involving running, biking, walking, or other means of transportation, involving three or more participants and utilizing

a fixed course that involves the use or obstruction of Town street right-of-ways, sidewalks, and/or greenways.

- D. Neighborhood Events: Organized small-scale activity that closes an individual block or a small number of blocks on a local-service residential street. These small-scale gatherings are initiated by and are intended to attract only local residents who live on or in close proximity to the street(s) being closed. They are not intended for the general public.

IV. ADMINISTRATION

- A. The Public Works Director or his/her designee shall serve as the Town's designated agent with regard to administration and enforcement of this policy and also as a liaison between Town departments, event producers, and members of the community as he/she oversees organized events through the coordination of enterprise wide functions. All special event productions within the Town require the issuance of a permit. The Public Works Director will be the primary point of contact for all events covered in this policy and will review each event for compliance with this policy. The Town Council shall either approve an event permit or may place conditions upon, reschedule, relocate, or deny any requested event that does not meet the requirements of this policy.
- B. The Public Works Director will consult with representatives from the following Town administrative departments: Police, Fire, and Planning and Community Development as well as the Town Attorney and/or any other agency or organization necessary to the coordination of the specific event(s).

V. APPLICATION AND PERMITTING PROCESS

- A. The Town will establish an event application that will outline the process, deadlines, application materials, notification requirements, and the additional information necessary to allow event organizers to submit proposed events for approval. This will allow a more predictable timeframe for approval, with the additional goal of allowing agencies to effectively anticipate the impact of an event and plan accordingly.
- B. Submittal Timeframe. Event applications must be submitted according to the deadlines for each specific event type as outlined below and will be accepted no more than one year prior to the date of the event. Submission of an application does not guarantee the issuance of a permit. Applications are not considered submitted until the application fee has been received. In the event that an activity can be classified as more than one type of event, the organizer will be required to pay whichever application and permit fee is determined to be the most appropriate by the Public Works Director.

1. Road Races and Parades. Applications must be received at least 60 days prior to the proposed date of the event. Processing and approving a race, parade, or walk route is a complex process that requires coordination with numerous Town departments and other entities. The Town does not guarantee that any event application will be reviewed if it is submitted after the deadline. Road races that include events of more than one distance shall only be required to pay the fee(s) for the longest distance.
 2. General Events. Applications for general events with more than 1,000 people must be received at least 90 days prior to the proposed date of the event. Applications for general events with 1,000 people or less must be received at least 60 days prior to the proposed date of the event. The Town does not guarantee that any event application will be reviewed if it is submitted after the deadline.
 3. Neighborhood Events. Applications for neighborhood events must be received at least 30 days prior to the proposed date of the event. It is recommended that organizers apply at least 45 days prior to the event date if the neighborhood event might require special permitting for the use of tents, amusement structures, fireworks, etc. The Town does not guarantee that any event application will be reviewed if it is submitted after the deadline.
- C. Application Fee. An application fee of \$50 shall be due when the application is submitted. Applications will not be reviewed until the application fee is received. Upon payment of the fee, the application will be routed through the various departments for review and approval. Payment of the application fee is nonrefundable and does not guarantee event approval. However, event organizers will have the option to modify dates and locations at no additional cost if they are denied approval due to a scheduling conflict.
- D. Permit Fee. The permit fee will be calculated by the Public Works Director and be assessed at a minimum rate of 20% of the Town's projected costs related to the event (this minimum rate will be increased to 25% for events coinciding with any officially recognized Town holiday). Upon recommendation of approval of the event by the Public Works Director, the associated permit fee will be required before a permit is considered by Town Council or issued. All requirements for the issuance of a permit, including payment of the permit fee, must be completed prior to consideration of the application by Town Council. If a permit is denied by Council, the applicant will receive a full refund of the permit fee. Permit fees will be fully reimbursed if an event is cancelled at least 15 days prior to the event date. There is no reimbursement of permit fees if an event is cancelled within 15 days of the event date. Fees may be transferable towards future event applications/permits if an event is cancelled due to inclement weather or other emergency situations, which will be determined at the discretion of the Town.

- E. Display of Permit. The event organizer shall be responsible for maintaining and producing the permit upon request by any Town official throughout the duration of the event.
- F. Extraordinary Costs. The Town reserves the right to recover from the event organizer any extraordinary costs in conjunction with the event for such things as on-site structure repair, trash pickup, and/or damage to Town-owned property during the event. Such cost shall be determined on a case by case basis and shall be in addition to any applicable fees charged in conjunction with the event. All bills for such costs must be paid within 15 days of receipt.
- G. Clean-up. Event organizers are responsible for making arrangements for litter and debris clean-up of the entire event area and restoring the site to its original condition. All litter should be disposed of off-site. Clean-up activities must take place within the specified time determined by the Town. The specified time will be communicated to the applicant during the review process and will be appropriate to the conclusion and location of the event. Any clean-up and/or repair costs incurred by the Town, or if necessary, contractor's fees incurred by the Town due to the applicant's failure to clean and restore the site following the event will be borne by the applicant. Additionally, it is the responsibility of the applicant to clean, clear, repair, or pay to repair damage to surrounding properties resulting from the event's attendees.
- H. Reservation of Dates. Reservation of dates for special events shall be in the sole discretion of the Public Works Director. The Public Works Director shall consider whether the special event is an annual recurring event, the date the special event application was filed, the number of participants, and whether the event has historically enhanced the quality of life within the community and fostered economic benefit.
- I. Priority of Scheduling. Determining first priority for date reservations is as follows:
 1. Town sponsored events
 2. Recurring events
 3. New events
- J. Notification Policy. In order to keep citizens, businesses, and other establishments fully informed of events that will potentially impact them, the Town requires organizers to follow a notification procedure to be determined by the Public Works Director. All costs related to notification requirements shall be borne by the event organizer. Failure to comply with these requirements will affect an event organizer's ability to host future events within the Town.

VI. USE OF TOWN FACILITIES

- A. Permission to use Town facilities in conjunction with this policy will be granted on a “first-come, first-served” basis under the provisions of the Town’s Facility Use Policy.
- B. Where instances occur in which more than one party requests use of a particular facility on a particular date and time, resolution of the scheduling conflict shall occur based on the following considerations and ranks of priority (with “1” representing the position of highest priority):
 - 1. Programs or services that are performed for the benefit of Town citizens;
 - 2. Programs or services provided by Bedford County Public Schools that benefit students and their families in the attendance zones designated to serve the Town of Bedford;
 - 3. Programs or services provided by Bedford County Public Schools generally;
 - 4. Programs or services provided by Bedford County Department of Parks and Recreation that benefit Town citizens;
 - 5. Programs or services provided by Bedford County Department of Parks and Recreation generally;
 - 6. All other requests for use of facilities.
- C. Programs or services provided by Bedford County Department of Parks and Recreation are defined as activities for which that particular department charges and receives a fee administered through its applicable operating policy and procedure. Programs or services offered by private providers shall not be given priority consideration as being provided by Bedford County Department of Parks and Recreation (under the provisions listed above as part of Section B), regardless of their endorsement status by the Bedford County Department of Parks and Recreation.

VII. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

- A. Approved events will be recorded on an official calendar maintained by the Public Works Director or his/her designee. This calendar shall be published on the official Town of Bedford web site, although the Town offers no guarantee or warranty regarding the timeliness or accuracy of the published content.
- B. No group may consider the Town’s facilities to be its permanent meeting place.
- C. An authorized representative or agent of the group must be designated as part of any application for a reservation.
- D. The group’s authorized representative or agent must take responsibility for and be physically present at the event to ensure that policies are being appropriately observed.
- E. The group’s authorized representative or agent will be held liable for any damage and the condition of the facility after its use.

- F. Groups or individuals shall be required to provide proof of general liability insurance coverage for the proposed activity and/or event before a permit is considered by Town Council or issued.
- G. Public access (including ingress and egress) shall be preserved to Town owned facilities that are not otherwise reserved under the provisions of this policy in all circumstances.
- H. The Town reserves the right to recover its costs incurred in conjunction with any event held within a Town-owned facility or public right-of-way.
- I. No reservation of any Town-owned facility shall be guaranteed for any event or activity of less than two (2) hours in duration.
- J. If a transfer of key access is necessary for an event or activity, a security deposit will be required. In addition, the key(s) shall be checked out from the Public Works Department on the last business day prior to the date of the event or activity and returned within twenty-four (24) hours after the conclusion of the event or activity. Late return of key(s) shall result in forfeiture of the security deposit.
- K. The Town of Bedford will be identified as a title sponsor (or the highest corresponding level of sponsorship designation) of all road races and general events as defined by this policy.

VIII. GUIDELINES

In order to support special events in a cost effective manner with public staff, protect the interests of community members who are regular users of streets, sidewalks, greenways, and/or public property from undue inconvenience, and to support events that are positive for the health, recreation, and well-being of participants and for the economic benefit of the Town, the following criteria shall be considered by the approving entities in the reservation process:

- A. While there is no cap on the number of special event permits that may be issued, Town Council has the discretion to disallow any event if it will create an undue burden upon a particular geographic area, the Town as a whole, or the reasonable conduct of Town operations.
- B. Events using the same or similar routes and/or including the same geographic area (and particularly involving heavily used thoroughfares) should be discouraged from being scheduled on the same day, subsequent days, or on subsequent weekends within the year absent compelling circumstances to the contrary.
- C. Events requested to take place in certain high-impact areas are subject to additional limitations as determined at the discretion of the Town.
- D. Town Council has the discretion to disallow any event that is not in the best interests of the Town of Bedford. This can include events that have unfavorable reviews from other communities.

- E. In the event of natural or civil disasters, the Town reserves the right to cancel all outstanding permits within Town limits. Should evacuation of a street, neighborhood, or other designated area be deemed necessary by Fire, Police, or other emergency authorities then all outstanding permits are null and void. Permits will be reinstated as soon as possible after a state of emergency proclamation has been lifted.
- F. The Town reserves the right to change, modify, update, or waive provisions of this policy where necessary for the public's health, safety, or welfare.
- G. The Town reserves the right to cancel permits and/or take further restrictive action where necessary to assure adherence to this policy.