



# Special Event Guidebook



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Building & Safety Department  
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome .....	3
Site Reservations .....	3
Application & Deadlines .....	4
Confirmation .....	5
Application Denials .....	5
Communication .....	5
Fees .....	6
Set-up & Breakdown .....	7
Rain Day Policy.....	7
Cancellation Policy.....	7
Mandatory Meetings .....	7
Permits & Compliance .....	8
Accessibility Requirements .....	10
Alcoholic Beverages .....	10
Amplified Music & Sound .....	10
Vehicles .....	11
Signage.....	11
Media .....	11
Clean-up .....	11
Miscellaneous .....	12
City Services with Cost Association .....	13



Thank you for considering a National City location for your upcoming public event. Our City hosts many annual events in National City including parades, carnivals, and events sponsored by non-profit organizations. We welcome new and returning events alike.

This guidebook will walk you through our special event permitting process and provide information, rules and regulations important in planning your event. Please read this over carefully since it gets updated periodically and may be different than what you've received in the past.

Included at the end of this guidebook is the special event application. Please complete and return this application in person, by mail, or by fax. Our contact information is at the top of the application. Remember to make a copy of the application for your records and keep the guidebook since you are required to know the information in it.

Our staff looks forward to working with you on creating a successful event!

## **SITE RESERVATIONS**

You or your group may choose to use a park on an unreserved, "drop-in" basis without making a reservation and without getting a permit from the City. It is your right to use a public park for lawful purposes. If you choose this option, there are no requirements to pay fees, provide insurance or meet any other requirements discussed in this guidebook. You should be aware, however, that "drop-in" use may not be right for your event. On the day of your event, you may find that the area you intended to use has been reserved or another group has arrived before you and is using the site. Without a reservation, you do not have the right to interfere with these uses. If they have reserved the area, they have the right to ask you and your group to leave. If they are also "dropping in," you would have to work with them or around them to hold your own "drop-in" event or you could look for another open location.

By using a park on a "drop-in" basis, you do not have a right to exclude others from the area you are using since "drop-in" does not give you exclusive use of the area. It is important to understand that, as a "drop-in" user, nothing would necessarily give you the right to set up tables and chairs or a booth or a stage or sound or other equipment because such things can easily have the effect of precluding other people from an allowed use of the affected area of the park. If your event is planning on having a stage or using booths or similar fixtures, you must obtain a permit.

Whether or not you have a permit, you and your event participants are required to follow state and local laws, and other applicable park use regulations.

## APPLICATION AND DEADLINES

Any event that takes place in a park or on a street under the jurisdiction of the City of National City and is open to the general public is considered a “public special event.” Special events must submit a Special Events Application in order to obtain the required permit for the park or street being used. Examples of public special events include festivals, fairs, concerts, parades, and rallies, mass participation sports such as walks or runs, and commercial spectator sports such as large-scale soccer tournaments.

The application is the first step in the process. Please be as detailed as possible on the application so the City’s Building & Safety Department can get an accurate picture of your event since fees and requirements are based on what’s listed on the application. Feel free to provide any additional information that’s specific to your event but might not be asked on the application.

Applicants should make extra effort to ensure that dates and times specified on the application are correct. Applications may be filed **one year** in advance. Based on our experience, we recommend that you apply no later than:

- 4 months** prior for **Large** events (approximately 1,000 people or more)
- 3 months** prior for **Medium** events (approximately 300 - 1,000 people)
- 2 months** prior for **Small** events (approximately 300 people or less)

Keep in mind the “people factor” is only one measure of an event’s size. Other factors, such as the scale of set-up, whether multiple set-up days are needed or if you have special requests; may also determine whether an event is considered small, medium or large. The Building & Safety Department may decline an application if there is insufficient time to properly prepare the event in a manner consistent with the needs of public health and safety.

Priority is given to returning events. These events must re-apply within one month after their event to reserve the facility or park area. If the date is not re-applied for, it may be opened up to new events.

Significant changes that are made to a returning event will require City Council approval. Additionally, a city councilmember or staff member may request that an event go back before the full Council body for additional approvals as deemed necessary.

Lastly, if you wish to reserve a park facility or an area of the park on short notice, possibly because you wish to use the facility for a rally or other time-sensitive event and you desire exclusive use of your area or facility, you may certainly do so provided the facility or park area you want to use has not already been reserved. City staff will work with you to the extent we are able to do so and some of the dated deadlines can be altered in order to make the arrangements needed for your event. Please keep in mind that some event elements cannot be accommodated on short notice. Generally, scheduling conflicts and difficulties arise only for an event which involves the extensive set-up of facilities (such as a stage, a sound system or things of that nature) or where there is too little time available prior to the event to properly plan for the necessary set-up and the other arrangements.

## **CONFIRMATION**

Once we receive the application, it will be reviewed by various City departments and they may contact you for further information. Please do not advertise or issue printed materials for your event until you have received a written confirmation from the Building & Safety Director or his/her designee.

### **VERBAL DISCUSSIONS OR TENTATIVE HOLDS BY OTHER STAFF WILL NOT CONFIRM YOUR RESERVATION.**

Once the review is completed and all questions are answered, a confirmation packet will be sent to you. This packet contains a letter outlining your fees and payment schedule, a permit and addendum listing the requisite conditions of use for your event and a checklist showing the required supplemental permits and provisions. Dates and times for mandatory pre-event, walkthrough or post-event meetings will also be given in this packet. The Building & Safety Department will make every effort to send out your confirmation packet approximately **1 month** after your completed application is received.

## **APPLICATION DENIALS**

Event permit requests may be denied or revoked for the following reasons:

1. A scheduling conflict where more than one group desires to reserve and use the same park or park facility at the same or nearly the same time and the adequate and safe coordination of the two events is not reasonably possible.
2. An event is proposing to conduct an activity which is not allowed by law or regulation in that particular park or park facility.
3. The event proposes to use temporary facilities and equipment and there is insufficient planning time to set up and properly inspect such facilities and equipment in a manner which is consistent with the needs of public health and safety.
4. The location is not appropriate for the event due to the heavy general public use of that particular location on the state or federal holiday weekend being requested.
5. The applicant fails to comply with reservation requirements or pay fees and deposits in a timely fashion.
6. The application is incomplete.

Under some circumstances, rather than denying an application, the City may request the applicant to modify or relocate their event or their plans and the City may impose permit conditions on the permit in order to reflect such modifications.

## **COMMUNICATION**

The applicant is the person legally responsible for the event. Usually the applicant is the coordinator of the event, but in some cases, that may not be true. Please be sure to list

your coordinator's name, address and contact numbers if this is the case, as staff can only work with one designated person (usually the applicant). This person will be responsible for providing all the required items and for understanding all communication up until the event day. If you have a planning committee, please make sure to designate one person that communicates with the City's Building & Safety Department.

If you need to meet with Building & Safety staff, we encourage you to schedule a meeting by calling (619) 336-4210.

## **FEES & DEPOSITS**

Fees are based on several factors, including size of the event, the scope of your set-up, the degree of impact to the park, the number of event days, if setup or breakdown days are needed, and the amount of City support required. Fees usually consist of:

- Permit Application Fee – There is a non-refundable permit application fee of \$345 due at time of application. See attached Fee Schedule on page(s) 13-14.
- Security Deposit – A \$500 deposit is due within 10 business days after application approval. This deposit is refundable within one month after the event if all park rules were followed, the site was left undamaged, no extra cleaning was required, and any requirements for Non-Profits were fulfilled.
- City Service Fees – See attached Fee Schedule on page(s) 13-14

We accept payment by cash, check or money order. **Fees may be quoted but not confirmed until the application is reviewed.** When your confirmation packet is sent out, your fees and the payment schedule will be included. All fees associated with the event must be paid at least 2 weeks prior to your event.

## **BREAKDOWN DAYS**

Any additional time beyond an organization's authorized breakdown time will forfeit its deposit in accordance with the City's current rate structure.

## **RAIN DAY POLICY**

Since most special events require months of pre-planning, we expect that prior consideration will have been given to the time of year chosen or that your event will occur "rain or shine." However, if rain is predicted and you decide to cancel within 5 days prior to your event, no monetary refund will be given but we will work with you to re-schedule your event to another available date.

Monetary refunds will not be refunded on incurred expenses.

## CANCELLATION POLICY

If you cancel your event completely, the Building & Safety Department may withhold all or part of your Security Deposit, and you may jeopardize future use of City facilities. The \$345.00 application fee is non-refundable.

## MANDATORY MEETINGS

Your confirmation letter will state times and dates of mandatory meetings.

Large and first-time events *may* be required to have a “**pre-event**” meeting, which is scheduled prior to the City Council hearing. The goal of this meeting is to provide information to any and all City departments involved or impacted by your event.

All events are required to have an “**event site operational meeting**.” Walkthroughs are scheduled approximately 2 weeks prior to the event date and a final site map must be presented at this time. This walkthrough event may not be mandatory if City officials consider the “pre-event” meeting to be adequate.

First-time events that expect to be recurring events may also be required to attend a “**post-event**” meeting, generally held within **2 – 4 weeks** after the event. This is a time to discuss any problems or ideas for the next year, while items are still fresh in everyone’s mind.

The Public Works Department will invite representatives from other City departments to these meetings if they are involved or affected by your event. It is very important that you make the designated times, as several people are usually scheduled for these meetings. If you cannot make the designated times, please call in advance to reschedule.

## PERMITS AND COMPLIANCE ITEMS

Your confirmation letter will list any supplemental permits and provisions that will be required. These permits and “compliance” items must be received no later than **2 weeks prior to your event** before issuance of your special event use permit.

Certificate of Insurance – All public events reserving a City park site or City facility are required to provide a Certificate of Insurance for a minimum of \$1,000,000 per occurrence of commercial general and automobile liability, naming the City of National City as additional insured. A copy of the “additional insured endorsement” should be provided prior to the event. Liability coverage amount may be increased if higher risk activities are associated with your event.

All certificates must specify the name of the organization, the name of your event, the event date(s) including set-up and breakdown days and be forwarded to the Building & Safety Department no later than 2 weeks prior to the event. Please note that the

organization on the application must match the insured listed on the Certificate of Insurance. When this is not the case, verification will be required from the named insured listed on the insurance certificate indicating that the applicant and/or event organizer is authorized to make the reservation, sign all permit/contracts and documents related to the reservation and commit to all contract requirements on behalf of that insured.

Additionally, vendors providing activities with greater liability concerns, such as climbing walls and inflatable bounce houses will also be required to provide certificates of insurance for a minimum of \$1,000,000 commercial liability and automobile liability, naming the City of National City as additional insured.

There may be instances where specialized insurance coverage is required due to the nature of the event or services provided (i.e. liquor liability, professional liability). Please contact the City Risk Manager at (619) 336-4220.

**County Environmental Health Permit** – If you plan to prepare, sell or serve food and/or beverages to the public, a temporary food facility permit will be required. This permit is required whether you are serving food prepared onsite, food already pre-packaged, or just food and beverage considered to be “low risk” (i.e., bottled water, packaged cookies, cakes, etc.). The application to get a temporary food facility permit can be obtained through the County of San Diego Environmental Health Department (a.k.a. “County Health”) at (619) 338-2363.

**Fire Permit** – If you are planning to use heat lamps, tiki torches, propane or butane tanks, a tent larger than 20’x10’ (200 sq. ft) or a canopy larger than 20’x20’ (400 sq. ft.), you will need to obtain a fire permit. Tents and canopies shall be treated with a flame-retardant and labeled as such. Please see the attached City Fee Schedule on page xxx. The permit may be obtained through the National City Fire Department at (619) 336-4550.

**Firework Permit** – A fireworks permit must be obtained from the National City Fire Department at (619) 336-4550. Please see attached City Fee Schedule on page xxx. The permit must be obtained at least 10 days prior to the event. The Fire Department has absolute authority, control and decisions over all fireworks and/or pyrotechnic displays. An inspection from the Fire Department must be obtained prior to ignition of any fireworks.

**One Day National City Business License** – A National City Business License is required if monies are solicited; admittance is charged; or if vendors are selling food, beverages, merchandise or providing services (i.e., a vendor selling massages after an organized run or vendors used to coordinate the event, i.e., party planners), you must obtain a business license. Each separate vendor must have a separate business license.

Vendors currently licensed by the City may operate on their existing license. Vendors with a non-profit registration will not be charged for a business license.

A list of all participating vendors, with their address, phone number and current National City business license number is to be submitted to the Finance Department 10 business days prior to the event for verification of business license numbers.



**Site Map** – All events are **required** to provide an event site map. First-time events are required to submit a rough site plan with their application in order for our Building & Safety Department to set fees and requirements correctly. Your site map should be as detailed as possible and list any and all equipment that will be brought on site (i.e., stage, tents, canopies, generators, tables, kid activities, dumpsters, portable toilets, etc.). Please label items on your site map, along with approximate dimensions. Keep in mind the Fire Department requires a 20' clearance lane throughout your event for access by emergency vehicles.

Returning events should provide a final site map at the scheduled event site walkthrough meeting. Requests to make notable changes and/or additions to the site map after the walkthrough meeting may not be honored. Change requests are not accepted 10 days prior to the event date.

**Trash Containers** – Trash boxes or containers must be placed throughout the event site and emptied throughout the day. Events with 300 or more people may be required to provide at least one “trash” dumpster. These trash containers and dumpsters are provided at the expense of the event. The Public Works Department will work with you to figure out the appropriate number of receptacles and whether dumpsters are needed.

**Recycling Contract** – A State of California mandate requires our City to divert 50% of its waste from being dumped in our landfills. To help us achieve this goal, you must do your part to ensure recyclables generated by your event (plastic, cardboard, glass and aluminum) are properly recycled. All events are required to provide recycling container boxes next to each trash container. A “recycling” dumpster may also be required if cardboard and other recyclables generated from food and beverages are a large part of your event. These recycling containers and dumpsters are provided at the expense of the event. For more information or assistance with recycling issues, please contact EDCO Disposal Corporation, Community Relations, at (619) 287-5696, extension 4213.

**Portable Toilets** – Depending on the size of your event, you may be required to provide regular and handicap accessible toilets with secondary containment at the rate of one for every 300 people, with 10% of the toilets being handicap accessible. These portable toilets are provided at the expense of the event. Please keep in mind that permanent bathrooms on site are not factored in when determining the number of restrooms needed. Permanent restrooms are intended for the normal activity of the park and are not opened early to accommodate special events.

**Overnight Security Guard Contract** – Anytime set-up stays up overnight, a professional security guard will be required. A copy of the security company contract showing the hours of service and the point of contact and telephone number of the contract security company must be submitted no later than 10 business days prior to your event as proof of compliance.

**Neighborhood Notifications** – Events are required to mail written notices to residents and/or businesses affected by the event. The notice will include the name of the event, name and phone number of the company/organization producing the event, the dates and times of the event (including set-up and breakdown) and a detailed description of how the residents and/or businesses may be affected, such as by street closures, “no parking” signs being posted, music at the event, etc.

A list of addresses for residents and/or businesses can be obtained from the Building & Safety Department at 619/336-4210. Mail-ready notifications should be submitted to the Building & Safety Department at least 2 weeks prior to the event or the event will be subject to cancellation.

***Other compliance items not listed above*** – Additional compliance items, such as a sound monitor contract, professional cleaning contract, etc. may be required upon review of your ***original application or if elements are added to your event thereafter.***

***National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Compliance (NPDES)*** -Any person engaged in activities, which will or may result in pollutants entering the city storm water conveyance system shall undertake all measures to reduce such pollutants to the maximum extent practicable (MEP). Best Management Practices (BMP) must be implemented. Please contact Barbara Tipton in the Engineering Dept. at (619) 336.4583 prior to your event.

#### **ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

It is the event's responsibility to comply with all City, County and State and Federal accessibility requirements, including the Americans with Disability Act (ADA). The ADA mandates equal access to facilities, services, and programs with persons with a disability as well as ensuring them comprehensive civil rights protection.

#### **ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AND SMOKE FREE PARKS & RECREATIONAL AREAS**

The consumption or possession of open alcoholic containers is prohibited in parks and adjacent public places. *NCMC 10.30.030*

Tobacco and tobacco-related products are prohibited within the premises of any city park, playground, golf course, or recreation facility. *NCMC 10.52.010*

#### **AMPLIFIED SOUND & MUSIC**

Only selected sites are allowed to have amplified sound and/or music. Please keep in mind if you receive complaints, the Police may require you to turn the volume down or off. Some events may be required to provide a "sound monitor" to ensure that sound decibels are kept within the levels set forth in the City's noise ordinance. *NCMC 12.18.060; 12.18.080; 12.18.090*

## VEHICLES

The Public Works Department prohibits vehicles on park turf due to their negative impact on the parkland. Because we know it's difficult for events to set-up or breakdown without this access, exceptions to this policy may be granted by the Public Works Director or designated representative and will only be considered for public events. To request permission to drive inside a park, a Vehicle Access Request Form (in the application section) must be completed and submitted with your application. Access into a park must be limited to vehicles deemed essential to the set-up or breakdown of the event, such as vehicles unloading/loading equipment or supplies or vehicles related to the event (i.e., display vehicles).

Those events that are granted permission must sign contact agreement, outlining driving conditions within a park and must designate a vehicle monitor to oversee this operation. Authorized vehicles will receive either a temporary parking pass or a loading/unloading pass. These passes must be displayed on the dashboard of the vehicle. Those vehicles found inside a park without a pass will be cited, fined, or towed and this may affect the refunding of your security deposit. Future event permit consideration will be jeopardized if vehicles do not comply with the driving conditions or excessively abuse the policy.

Vehicles are only allowed on city parkland for setup and breakdown only!

## SIGNAGE

The City of National City has a temporary sign ordinance that must be followed by all special events wanting to post event identification signs. A copy will be given to you upon request.

► Banners – For City sponsored or City co-sponsored events, promotional banners may be installed by City staff up to 30 days prior to the event on the existing poles at the following designated locations only: (a) 1800 block of National City Boulevard; (b) 3100 block of National City Boulevard. See Fee Schedule for installation costs.

The banners must adhere to the City's size specifications.

- Must be 4 ft wide x 34 ft, 6 inches in length.
- Banner must be perforated over at least 10% of area to reduce wind resistance.
- Material used shall be a minimum of 13 ounce canvas and shall be double-stitched for reinforcement at each corner. A 3/8-inch diameter brass grommet shall be sewn into each corner of panel/
- A 3/8 inch to 1/2 inch diameter, plastic-coated, steel-wire cable shall be hemmed in along the top and bottom of the panel. A minimum one-inch diameter eye loop secured with a suitable crimp shall be formed at the ends of the cable.
- The overall length of the cables shall be 35 feet, 6 inches.

## **MEDIA**

Some events arrange for media coverage. It is important that organizers find out in advance if the media will have any special needs and convey that information to the Building & Safety Department. If media set-up is large, they may be required to submit for their own permit at no cost. Media set-up should be included on your site map.

## **CLEAN-UP**

A cleaning crew, staffed with your organization's personnel or volunteers, is required to clean during and at the end of each day of an event. Depending on the size and impact of your event, you may be required to hire a professional cleaning company to do the cleaning and/or have streets, sidewalks or parking lots power-washed after your event. If power-washing is required, City guidelines mandate that you use a company with a water collection system so the wastewater does not go into storm drains.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

- Barbecues: Plywood must be placed underneath barbecues and grills, whether they're on turf or asphalt. All coals and ashes must be taken away at the end of the event and not left in on-site trash containers.
- Generators: If you plan to use a generator for inflatable bouncers, food, lighting/sound equipment, etc. plywood must be placed underneath the generator in order to prevent scorching of the grass.
- Park Equipment: Existing equipment in the park (tables, benches, barbecues, etc.) must stay in their permanent locations. Please plan all set up around the existing equipment.

**Please keep this guidebook for future reference and complete the Special Event Application**