

Special Events/Cultural Events

PJR-024

Purpose

This form is to be used for special events/cultural event applications to be held on private property. Special events held within County road rights-of-way require a permit from the Encroachment Section of the Permit and Resource Management Department (PRMD).

Definition

Special Events/ Cultural Events are defined in the Sonoma County Zoning Ordinance as periodic special events which attract a large gathering of people such as parades, concerts, festivals, races. They are allowed in the following zoning districts: AR, AS, C0, C1, C2, C3, DA, K, LC, LEA, LIA, M1, M2, M3, MP, PC, R1, R2, R3, RR, RRD, RRDWA, and TP.

A zoning permit is required for events that have any one or more of the following characteristics:

1. Live amplified music.
2. An admission fee.
3. More than one-day event or a one-day event beyond the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.
4. Overnight sleeping accommodations.
5. An event occurring more than once in a 30-day period.
6. Publicized to the public at large through printed advertisements, newspaper, radio or tv.
7. Sale of food or beverage.

The following are not Special Events/Cultural Events and therefore do not require a zoning permit:

1. Events conducted entirely within dedicated rights-of-way where encroachment/special event permits are obtained from the County or State.
2. Events entirely within a building for which all necessary County permits have been obtained and which allow the particular use.
3. Events at fairgrounds or outdoor spectator facilities where a use permit has already been obtained.

Required Application Materials

Applications for Special Event Permits must include the following items. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

1. Completed Zoning Permit Application (PJR-004) signed by the applicant and property owner.
2. Proposal Statement indicating the date(s); times; duration of the event(s); activities to be held; number of participants; music; food; security; crowd control measures; road closures; alcoholic beverages; location and number restroom facilities.
3. Indemnification agreement must be signed by each property owner.
4. Site Plan. Show the area of the event, existing/proposed structures, parking areas, restroom location(s), circulation and other pertinent information.
5. Agency Approvals. Signatures/approvals must be obtained from each of the agencies identified on the attached form. These approvals may be submitted with the application or prior to posting the zoning permit. Please note: other departments may have separate fees and/or permit requirements that may need to be paid or obtained prior to clearance being provided on the Special Events/Cultural Events-Agency Approvals form (PJR-025).
6. Assessor's Parcel Map. One 8 ½" x 11" copy of the current Assessor's Parcel Map with the project site highlighted. Maps may be obtained from the County Assessor's Office or Permit and Resource Management Department (PRMD).
7. Any other pertinent information necessary to provide a complete application and thorough evaluation of the event(s).

Procedure

1. Submit application material to the Zoning Cubicle at PRMD. Please submit application at least 12 weeks in advance of an event to allow adequate time for processing any appeal.
2. PRMD staff will place posters in the neighborhood where the event is to take place.
3. After posting, there is a 10-day appeal period during which neighbors or concerned citizens may file a written appeal with PRMD. The appellant must pay a fee to cover the cost of processing.
4. If no appeal is received by PRMD within 10 days of posting and all agencies have approved the event, the permit will be issued.
5. If an appeal is received, a public hearing will be set before the Board of Zoning Adjustments (BZA). PRMD will notify the applicant of the time and place of the hearing that has been scheduled. At the hearing, the appellant, the applicant and all interested persons will be allowed to speak and present evidence, including petitions of support or opposition. The decision of the BZA may be appealed to the Board of Supervisors within 12 days of the BZA action.
6. The Board of Supervisors hearing will be conducted in a similar manner as the BZA hearing. Appeals to the Board of Supervisors may take an additional six to eight weeks.

Filing Fee

See a current PRMD Project Review fee schedule.