



41 Perimeter Center East, Suite 250
 Dunwoody, Georgia 30346
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dunwoodyga.gov

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Kimberly Greer, Assistant to the City Manager
Date: September 22, 2014
Subject: **Discussion of Event Fees**

ITEM DESCRIPTION

Staff requests Mayor and City Council's consideration of updating event fees to better align with the cost of administering and providing service to events.

BACKGROUND

Staff has researched and examined event-related fees in surrounding jurisdictions. Although the fees vary by city, each of the cities surveyed either have significantly higher application fees, significantly higher permit fees, or both.

Dunwoody's comparatively low fee structure has made Dunwoody an attractive venue for both local and regional event producers. Although special events are desirable for their activation of our parks and streets, an overabundance of events can be detrimental.

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Events	31	29	41	43	72	37
Assemblages	11	10	2	1	2	0
TOTAL	42	39	43	44	74	37

Of Dunwoody's 72 special events in 2013, 20 of them were 5K road races which require greater police participation than most stationary events. All but six of the 74 total events occurred between March and October further compounding the demand for city facilities and services.

Having events every weekend, limits the availability of park facilities for casual, residential use and increases the demand for support services which in turn competes with the daily operational responsibilities of those called to prepare and staff events.

USAGE SNAPSHOT

In 2013, the pavilion and/or event field in Brook Run Park was rented every Saturday from April to October with the exception of April 6th, April 13th, and September 10th. In 2014, the rental areas in Brook Run Park have been rented every Saturday from April with the exception of September 22nd. The full rental calendar is available [online](#) as a Google calendar.

In discussing with cities across the Atlanta area, Dunwoody's experience with the proliferation of events is not unique. Cities including Marietta, Suwanee, Decatur, and Roswell, have all worked strategically to create a sustainable balance of events.

The two most commonly found approaches to creating a sustainable balance of events are limiting the number of allowed events and aligning event fees with the true cost of providing

services such as the time, labor, and other costs associated with the review, preparation, and staffing. Of the cities that have worked to create a sustainable balance of events, each first opted to adjust their fee to closer align with the cost of administering and supporting the events.

DISCUSSION

The following chart details a comparison of event fees for several surrounding cities.

Jurisdiction	Application	Event Permit	Deposit/Bond
Atlanta	\$50-\$100	\$100	\$100
Decatur	\$50	\$200-\$500	\$200-\$500
Dunwoody (current)	\$25 - \$50 + \$10/add. day	\$0	\$400-\$600*
Marietta	\$15	\$500-\$5,000	\$150
Roswell	\$50-\$150	\$2,000-\$4,000	variable
Sandy Springs	\$100-\$250	\$0	\$500
Suwanee	\$25-\$250	\$300-\$2,750	\$300-\$1,000
Dunwoody (proposed)	\$25-\$50	\$250-\$500	\$400-\$600

*Dunwoody's current damage deposit only applies to pavilion rentals

A notable difference between Dunwoody's current event fee structure and that of the surrounding cities is a differentiation of event types. Presently the only fee differentiation Dunwoody has is that the application fee for public assemblages is \$25 and a special event application fee is \$50 plus \$10/additional day for multi-day events.

Neighboring cities have expanded this concept to recognize the different level of support to administer and support events based on the factors of the event. For example, Suwanee and Decatur both have different permit fees based on expected event attendance. Roswell and Marietta both differentiate "low-impact" and "high-impact" race events based on the race route (and requisite use of staff and equipment to support the route).

Our neighboring cities have also adopted either damage deposits or sanitation bonds for all events. Some have chosen to tier the deposit or bond based on the size of the event. Although Dunwoody presently has a damage deposits for events renting park pavilions ranging from \$400-\$600 (based on event size), we do not have a damage deposit for events that do not rent pavilions but still occur on city property.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends updating our event fees to recognize the different levels of support necessary to administer and staff events. Given Dunwoody's events, staff recommends dividing events into two categories, "low impact events" and "high impact events."



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Low Impact	High Impact
Projected attendance less than 300 persons	Projected attendance 300 or more persons
No public safety staff support required	Required public safety staff support
No street or lane closures	Street or lane closures
No alcohol service or sale	Alcohol service or sale
No fireworks or pyrotechnics	Fireworks or pyrotechnics

Staff recommends having differing application fees, permit fees, and damage deposits based on the impact of the event. Events with any of the characteristics of a high impact event would pay the fees for high impact event. Staff recommends that all public assemblages be considered "low impact" for application fees and exempted from the event permit fees.

Staff believes these suggested fees strike an appropriate balance between compensating the City for cost of providing staff time, labor, and associated with utilizing City property without being inappropriately high or out of line with neighboring cities. Council may choose to further increase or decrease the proposed fees.

Staff has worked with legal counsel to prepare a Resolution for the adoption of updated fees.

**STATE OF GEORGIA
CITY OF DUNWOODY**

RESOLUTION 2014-09-XX

**A RESOLUTION REVISING FEES FOR SPECIAL EVENTS AND PUBLIC
ASSEMBLAGES**

- WHEREAS,** the Charter of the City of Dunwoody authorizes the City to provide for the general health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the City; and
- WHEREAS,** the City of Dunwoody's Special Event Ordinance, Chapter 26, Article VIII of the Code of Ordinances, regulates events including special events and public assemblages; and
- WHEREAS,** the City of Dunwoody's Special Event Ordinance aims to deter and limit special events and public assemblages from occurring within the City that would cause a public nuisance and pose a threat to public health, safety, and welfare; and
- WHEREAS,** the City of Dunwoody recognizes that the characteristics of events impact the time, expense of issuing event permits; and
- WHEREAS,** the City of Dunwoody considers "Low Impact" events to have characteristics of a projected attendance of less than 300 persons, not require public safety staff support, not propose street or lane closures, not propose alcohol service or sale, and not propose fireworks or pyrotechnics; and
- WHEREAS,** the City of Dunwoody considers "High Impact" events to have characteristics of a projected attendance of 300 or more persons, require public safety staff support, propose street or lane closures, propose alcohol service or sale, or propose fireworks or pyrotechnics; and
- WHEREAS,** the City of Dunwoody considers events meeting any of the characteristics of a "High Impact" to be a "High Impact" event where in order to be considered a "Low Impact" event the event must meet all the criteria of the "Low Impact" event description; and
- WHEREAS,** pursuant to the Special Event Ordinance, the City Council desires to update the fees for the time, expense and limitations on the public use of property, rights of way or facilities that events and public assemblages may cause.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council for the City of Dunwoody, while in session on September 22, 2014, that the following fees are hereby revised as follows:

- (a) Event Application Fee: \$50/application
- (b) Public Assemblage Application Fee: \$25/application
- (c) Event Permit Fee: \$250/"Low Impact" Event
- (d) Event Permit Fee: \$500/"High Impact" Event
- (e) Public Assemblage Permit Fee: \$0
- (f) Event Damage Deposit: \$400/"Low Impact" Event
- (g) Event Damage Deposit: \$600/"High Impact" Event

SO RESOLVED AND EFFECTIVE, this the 22nd day of September, 2014.

#J.4.

**STATE OF GEORGIA
CITY OF DUNWOODY**

RESOLUTION 2014-09-XX

Approved:

Michael G. Davis, Mayor

Attest:

Sharon Lowery, City Clerk

Seal