



DIRECTION FOR CITY-HOSTED EVENTS

City Council - September 20, 2022

BACKGROUND

- City facilities closed in March 2020 due to the pandemic
- Severe economic recession in FY 2020-21
- City Council prioritized limited resources
- COVID-19 precautions/ rules, risk of viral spread
- Limited budget, limited staff capacity
- April 2021: City Council reviewed phase-in sequence
- Large-scale events scheduled among the last to reactivate
- Focus on smaller, simpler events in 2021-22
- Delta variant, Omicron variant
- June 2022: COVID-19 vaccines authorized for young children

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Staff seeks policy direction from City Council related to city-hosted community events for the following key considerations:

- City-hosted events based on holidays of religious origin. Provide policy direction regarding the City's role as a local government agency in hosting, organizing, and using public funds toward community events based on holidays of religious origin.
- Inclusion and belonging for all Menlo Park residents. Use public resources for events and experiences that are inclusive and foster a sense of belonging for all community members of every background, age, ability, income, religious belief or lack thereof, sexual orientation, and other lived experiences and characteristics that contribute to a vibrant and accepting community.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Staff seeks City Council's feedback on these considerations and any other elements that City Council desires to incorporate into City-hosted events.

- Leverage existing and new partnerships to deliver community events.
- Establish criteria for event partnerships, including roles and responsibilities, cost sharing, staff and financial support, event goals.
- Set clear guidelines for event sponsors, including criteria for sponsor recognitions and the process for evaluating sponsorship offers.
- Evaluate the cost-benefit of mass gatherings such as parades and festivals that carry increased risk and involve substantial investment of city resources in the form of staff capacity and financial outlay.
- Align event production with recent revisions to the special events ordinance, film permits ordinance, and parks and recreation ordinance.

2022					
Date (tentative)	Community event	Proposed location/s	Estimated staff time/effort*	Estimated City expenditures (not including staff costs)	Estimated number of attendees
Jul 13	Summer Concert #1	Fremont Park	low	\$5,500	280
Jul 20	Summer Concert #2	Fremont Park	low	\$5,500	180
Jul 27	Summer Concert #3	Fremont Park	low	\$5,500	150
Aug 3	Summer Concert #4	Fremont Park	low	\$5,500	230
Aug 10	Summer Concert #5	Fremont Park	low	\$5,500	250
Aug 17	Summer Concert #6	Fremont Park	low	\$5,500	500
Aug 19	Summer Concert #7	Belle Haven School Field	low	\$5,500	130
Aug 26	Summer Concert #8	Belle Haven School Field	low	\$5,500	110
Sep 24	Belle Haven resource fair	Belle Haven School Field	high	\$5,500	400
Oct 30	Halloween celebration	Flood Park (in partnership with San Mateo County Parks)	high	\$7,500	600
Nov TBD	Tree light installation	Fremont Park + Newbridge/Willow	low	\$55,000	-
Dec 2	Light up the Season event	Fremont Park	high	\$7,500	600
2023					
Jan 21	Winter movie	M-A Performing Arts Center	low	\$500	100
Feb 25	Winter movie	M-A Performing Arts Center	low	\$500	100
Feb 2023	Black History Month celebration	Burgess Park + Belle Haven School Field	medium	\$2,500	250
Feb TBD	Youth Poetry Contest	City Council Chambers	medium	\$500	200
Mar 25	Summer Camp resource fair	Burgess Park + Belle Haven School Field	medium	\$1,000	150
Apr 8	Egg Hunt	Flood Park (in partnership with San Mateo County Parks)	very high	\$7,500	800
May TBD	Youth Poster Exhibition	Main Library + Belle Haven Branch	medium	\$500	100
Jun 17	Juneteenth celebration	Belle Haven School Field	medium	\$3,000	250
July 4	Independence Day parade	Santa Cruz Ave	very high	\$7,500	1,000+
TBD	MPCC grand opening	MPCC + Kelly Park	very high	TBD	800
TOTAL FY 2022-23				\$143,000	

* Staff time to plan/execute events is estimated as follows: Low = 1-20 total hours staff time. Medium = 21-40 hours. High = 41-60 hours. Very high = 61+ hours.



RECOMMENDATION: LIGHT UP THE SEASON TREE LIGHTING

- Focus on inclusion for all Menlo Park residents of all faiths and belief systems, including residents who do not participate in organized religion.
- Continue the longstanding tradition of lighting trees at Fremont Park and the Willow/Newbridge intersection to signal the official start of the holiday shopping and celebratory season.
- Continue to organize and host a community event in Fremont Park to inaugurate the season and ceremonially illuminate the tree.
- Focus the Fremont Park event on encouraging residents to shop local to stimulate the local economy and aid small businesses' pandemic recovery.
- Add a new feature in the 2022 event program in which Menlo Park children from diverse faiths and belief systems share what the holiday season means to them and the many diverse ways Menlo Park families celebrate the season.



RECOMMENDATION: EGG HUNT

- Continue the longstanding tradition of inviting local children and families to the annual springtime activity of hunting for eggs.
- Focus this event on inclusion for all Menlo Park residents of all faiths and belief systems by incorporating elements of spring renewal holidays and celebrations in diverse cultures around the world, such as Passover, Holi, Ramadan, and vernal equinox.
- Partnership with San Mateo County Parks to host the 2023 Egg Hunt and the 2022 Halloween festival at Flood Park, to leverage its 21 acres of parkland, native Oak and Bay trees, festival-ready spaces and amenities, ample free parking, and its location in Menlo Park near the US-101 bicycle and pedestrian overcrossing.



THANK YOU