



Agenda

City of Charlevoix City Council Regular Meeting

Monday, October 20, 2025 - 5:00 PM

Council Chambers, 210 State Street, Charlevoix, MI

- 1. Roll Call**
- 2. Discussion Items**
 - A. Event Policy
Mark Heydlauff, City Manager
- 3. Public Comment**
- 4. Adjourn**

Persons with disabilities who need an accommodation to fully participate in these meetings should contact the City Clerk's Office at 231-547-3250 or by email clerk@charlevoixmi.gov. A 24-hour notice may be needed for certain accommodations. An attempt will be made to grant all reasonable accommodations requests.

Charlevoix City Council

Discussion Items

Title: Event Policy

Date: October 20, 2025

Presented By: Mark Heydlauff, City Manager

Background:

Attached, you'll find a revised events policy draft based on the discussions you held earlier this month.

Additional feedback received:

- One resident called me and suggested we use temporary mobi-mats (the blue mats placed on the beaches and parks for beach access) to aid those with disabilities as they navigate East Park during vendor driven events like Apple Fest and the art and craft shows. The resident believed this would be a great way to ensure everyone from those in a wheelchair to those who use a cane to better access the activities.
- A business noted a concern that activities in the street by an adjacent business reduced their visibility and access. Managing conflicts between businesses gets more difficult when more activities are permitted in otherwise public spaces like the street. The needs of one business during a special event may conflict and be counter to the needs of other businesses during the same event.

Yet to be addressed are the following topics:

- Fees- Currently transient vendors are charged seasonally both generally and for the Farmer's Market and these range from \$130 to \$680. The Farmer's Market has limited spaces occasionally available for one-day drop-ins and those are charged at \$40 per day. Council should consider how it wants to address fees and other cost recovery options.
- Quiet Weekends- We have previously enshrined in policy that the weekend closest to Independence Day is intended to be off-limits for events. Council might establish more weekends like this to better spread the impact and frequency of permitted events.

Recommendation:

Attachments:

1. Special Event Policy-2025 Draft



City of Charlevoix Special Event Policy

Purpose

Charlevoix parks, open spaces, alleys, walkways, streets, and recreation areas exist, primarily, for the benefit and enjoyment of the residents who live in this City. These resources were built by the taxpayers of this City, the generosity of donors, and resources of the State of Michigan to bring positive outdoor experiences to connect with the recreational assets, commerce, and natural beauty of our community. Special events should be limited in number, organized in form, and compatible with the community. Special events, when planned on public property, should supplement the enjoyment of our community rather than supplant the free enjoyment of public space. This policy is intended to regulate time, manner, and place of events but not the content of an event.

Recognition of Events of Historic and Cultural Significance to Charlevoix

As Charlevoix has grown and evolved over the years, there are special events that have come to be synonymous with Charlevoix and serve as local markers of the seasons; these events also serve as regional and national draws for visitors.

Charlevoix Venetian Festival

The Venetian Festival's eight day run in late July is Charlevoix's oldest and most well-known special event. It exists for the purpose of drawing families and friends together and celebrating summer life in Charlevoix and the surrounding area. Having begun in 1930, this event has a lasting impact on the character of summer life in Charlevoix. The festival is assumed to always occur the third full week of July and this event shall have scheduling precedent.

Charlevoix Waterfront Art Fair

Begun in 1958, this one-day festival is consistently ranked among America's best art shows. The Waterfront Art Fair is sponsored by the Charlevoix Council for the Arts who uses the proceeds derived from the annual show to support the arts in our community. Waterfront Art Fair is held the second full weekend of August and it shall have scheduling priority over all other events and activities.

Charlevoix's Apple Fest

Founded in 1978 as a collaboration with area apple vendors and downtown merchants, the Apple Festival is operated by the Charlevoix Area Chamber of Commerce and is viewed by many as the "end of the season" in Charlevoix. Combining crafters, apple vendors, and local food booths, the festival is the prime fall attraction in downtown Charlevoix utilizing East Park, Bridge Park and other portions of the downtown. Apple Festival is held the second full weekend of October and shall have scheduling precedent above all others in downtown.

Definition of events

Major Events

Major events are those events intended to raise money, sell products, or otherwise engage in commercial activity within a city park, public space or street. This may include events where a fee is charged to patrons for entry, where a special liquor license or extended liquor service is requested, or for events where, in the opinion of City staff, unique public service requirements are requested for the management of traffic, pedestrians, fireworks, or other special circumstances. The City Council shall establish a fee scale for these events based on location, type of activity and time of year.

Small Events

Small events are those events where commercial activity or fundraising is included in the event but done so at a small scale. Events of this type may occur in parks, public spaces or streets but shall be limited in scope. Events may require low-level public service requirements but not, in the opinion of City staff, to a significant extent. The City Council **shall** establish a fee scale for these events based on location, type of activity, and time of year.

Community Events

Community events are unique in that they include any event sponsored and fully managed by the City of Charlevoix or one of its entities. Community events may also include events sponsored by Charlevoix Public Schools or other community entities for which the event exists as a broad gathering for members of the community for which fundraising or commerce is not the intent and for which entry is open to all persons regardless of affiliation. Community events shall expressly include the Charlevoix Farmers Market(s) operated by the City; summer concert or entertainment series operated by the Charlevoix DDA; Charlevoix High School homecoming festivities; and holiday-themed events (including the Easter Egg Hunt and the Holiday Tree Lighting). Most community events shall be exempt from special event fees but costs to the City for these events shall not exceed \$500 per event (excepting the cost for performers, technicians, and costs specifically budgeted for the creation of these events)

Event Spaces and Restrictions

All public spaces, parks, and areas of the City are unique and carry with them certain characteristics making them more or less fitting for a variety of activities. Small private events like weddings, memorials, graduation parties, receptions or other similar events may be permitted by staff in addition to those rules outlined below. Small private events like these should have minimal impact on a public space and allow for the free enjoyment of the public space by non-participants congruently with the small, private event. Exempt events shall always have precedent over small private events. Any kind of event and gathering must still comply with the mass gathering permit regulations elsewhere stipulated.

City Council and City staff may place limitations on the size, scope, and manner of an event as indicated. Permission to hold an event is limited to the space and agreed standards for the event between the City and the event organizer.

East Park

East Park is the crown jewel of Charlevoix's public spaces. Its unique design connects the marina, downtown, and merchants together. It is anchored by the Odmark Performance Pavilion to the south and the marina office and trout pond at the north end. The undulating landscape of the park creates

unique opportunities and challenges for using the space for different activities. All event requests for East Park will require City Council approval.

Bridge Park

Bridge Park consists of the open space roof above 103-111 Bridge Park Drive and the park area along the Pine River Channel between the ferry dock and US 31. It is suitable for small events and some smaller major events. Due to the park being situated on a roof, there are restrictions on the weight of vehicles and tent usage. All event requests for Bridge Park will require City Council approval.

Bridge Park Use Restrictions

Peak Season

From Friday preceding Memorial Day through Labor Day, the Council may permit up to two major events in Bridge Park in addition to community events. Event planners shall pay the per-space parking fee as Council may from time to time establish for all spaces requested to be closed (excluding community events). Aside from Community events, no events may be held on the weekend closest to Independence Day.

Fall Season

From the Tuesday following Labor Day through October 31, major events may be planned with Council approval. Event planners shall pay the per-space parking fee as Council may from time to time establish for all spaces requested to be closed (excluding community events).

Off-peak Season

Dependent on weather and snow conditions, events may be held in Bridge Park from November 1 through to the Friday before Memorial Day.

Ferry Beach Park

Ferry Beach Park is a large community park with ample shoreline on Lake Charlevoix including amenities like the beach, swimming pier, and pavilions. There is ample parking and shaded areas for recreation.

Ferry Beach Park Use Restrictions

In-season

From May 1 through October 31, the City Council may permit up to two major events plus exempt and community events. Small events and community events shall be permitted by staff on a space available basis; Venetian Festival shall have scheduling priority based on long-term dates.

Off-season

Event use from November 1 through April 30 is impacted based on snowfall and seasonal conditions. While events may be planned, there is no expectation of parking being available in the park. Services are limited based on weather.

Michigan Beach

Michigan Beach is Charlevoix's premiere public beach on Lake Michigan. It is defined as the parking lot behind the DNR station on to the west inclusive of the playground, pavilion, beach, and parking areas to the Water Treatment Plant but below the bluff.

Michigan Beach Use Restrictions

Council may permit one major event at Michigan Beach each year between Memorial Day and Labor Day. Small events and community events shall be permitted by staff on a space available basis.

Depot Beach Park

Depot Beach is centered around the historic train depot and features a pavilion and beach on Lake Charlevoix. Council may permit one major event there each year.. Small events may be permitted by staff on a space available basis.

Lake Michigan Beach Park

This natural park located along Park Avenue features walking areas and some parking. Aside from the parking areas, which may support other events, events centered in the park are only permitted on a case by case basis (excluding pedestrian races which may utilize the area).

Water Tower Park and Hoffman Park

These are small neighborhood parks along Park Avenue and the Pine River Channel. Neither is suitable for major events and small events may be permitted by staff on a space available basis.

Veterans Park

This is a small park downtown adjacent to East Park. Aside from Community events, there are no events permitted in this park aside from remembrances and patriotic memorials

Other Public Spaces

Sometimes events or activities may be held in parking lots, alleys or similar spaces. Residents may also wish to have a block party to gather neighbors together. Peak Season shall be defined as the Friday before Memorial Day to Labor Day; Fall Season is the Tuesday following Labor Day through October 31 and off-peak season is November 1 through the Thursday before Memorial Day. Straight-forward requests may be approved by staff or forwarded to City Council for review as staff may feel appropriate.

Mt. McSaubia Recreation Area

The Mt. McSaubia Recreation Area is primarily intended for the operation of winter sports activities including skiing, snowboarding, ice skating and snowshoeing along with summer day camp and disc golf. Some community events are held here but primarily the area is intended for the free enjoyment of the public. Major and small events will be considered on a case by case basis to the extent they are compatible with routine operations; such events shall require approval from City Council unless no City services are needed and the event does not demonstrably impact open public enjoyment

Event Approval Requirements

Event organizers must obtain City approval at least **90 days in advance** of the event. Proposals must include:

- Event date(s), time(s), expected attendance
- Requested City services

Organizers must also provide:

- An **All Hazards Mitigation Plan** that addresses potential disruptions such as severe weather, medical emergencies, utility failures, and security incidents. This should include:
 - Evacuation and shelter procedures
 - Emergency communication methods
 - Coordination with first responders
 - Contingency plans for power, sanitation, and traffic
- Detailed plans for **City review and approval** covering:
 - Set-up and clean-up
 - Space closures
 - Security
 - Restrooms
 - Parking (for vendors and attendees)
 - Communication of event impacts to relevant neighborhoods (when required)

Fees and Expenses

The City Council will set fees for the use of certain spaces dependent on the kinds of activities planned and the season in which they will occur. In addition to usage fees which cover costs for staff time, maintenance, and supplies for the activity, Council may impose actual fees for expense including but not limited to: traffic control devices and personnel; public services; and any other specialized costs pertaining directly to the event. Council may direct a deposit be made to the City at the time of application approval based on a staff estimate of costs and/or the prior experience of costs for the event.

Solid Waste and Recycling

Events tend to create waste. Event holders are responsible for developing a solid waste and recycling plan for each event and delineating responsibility for the collection and disposal of waste. This plan should outline how the event organizers will manage solid waste, what steps will be used to encourage the use of recyclable material, and how waste will be collected and removed from the site. It is the goal of the City of Charlevoix to continually reduce the stream of unrecycled waste in the community; event organizers should work with vendors to use materials that can be recycled.

Senior Citizens and Inclusion for those with Disabilities

The City of Charlevoix desires to be a community accessible and welcoming of persons of all ages and abilities. To this end, organizers of special events shall provide a statement of their efforts to include senior citizens in the special event and discuss steps taken to ensure those with disabilities can freely enjoy the event.

Specific Rules and Procedures

The City Manager is authorized by City Council to develop or have developed other specific rules and regulations to apply to all events consistent with this policy. These additional rules and regulations may include but not be limited to: permits; procedures; insurance requirements; live music and noise rules; parking; and other such topics leading to orderly events.

Pedestrian races/running groups

The City shall create two designated routes suitable for road races and fun runs; these routes shall be designed so that it minimizes conflict with higher traveled roads and eliminates the need for special traffic control. Organizers wishing to hold this kind of event shall utilize these routes at their own risk. No routes shall cross US 31 or M66 except with the direct permission of City Council and MDOT.

Reporting and Assessment

Event organizers shall annually report their reasonable estimated return on the City's investment into their event by tracking such data points as: visitor counts; specific local economic impact; funds donated or spent in the City; and other such information as may be relevant. Additionally, event organizers should indicate the steps taken to reduce non-recycled waste, the efforts made to include persons with disabilities, and efforts to minimize traffic and parking congestion.

City staff are directed to track costs associated with all major special events and report the excess or deficiency of fees compared with the City's cost to support such events.

City Council shall review and modify this policy as needed each year in November based on the reporting, assessment, and feedback received.

Breach and Revocation

An event organizer who fails to adhere to the rules set forth for their event or who fails to fully reimburse the City for expenses as stipulated by this policy may face revocation of their right to organize an event under this policy. Announcing an event without prior written authorization may also be grounds for revocation.

Cancellation and Modification

The City shall always reserve the right to cancel and/or modify any approved event if event organizers fail to follow any of the above requirements and/or for health and safety reasons weather or other conditions may change. The City shall always take steps to preserve the health, safety, and security of the community above any consideration for a planned event or activity.