

Comments on Proposed Amendment to Chapter VII of the Chicago Park District Code

Tim Smith, C3 Presents

On September 14 the Chicago Park District Board of Commissioners invited the public to respond to a new proposal involving large event permits. The proposal, as introduced, would require provisional park district board approval for events with attendance of more than 10,000 guests per day. We are now in the 45-day window for public comments.

As organizers of Lollapalooza and Sueños, Chicago's premier music festivals, both held in Grant Park, we would like to express our concerns regarding this proposal.

In 2022, new Community Engagement Guidelines were implemented by the park district which require us to submit a community engagement plan, hold public hearings, mail and/or canvas proximal residences and businesses, install notification in the park of the upcoming event, message setup times, street closures, establish community hotlines, post public notices, work to secure vendors and suppliers from the area, and submit any additional community impacts and benefits beyond these requirements. Historically our events have done a significant portion of the above on our own volition and/or at the request of aldermen.

Separately, with the City of Chicago, we work closely with aldermen in the area for our events, work with the Office of Emergency Management and Communications (OEMC), meeting more than 20 times in 2022, complete extensive special event requirements under the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE), ensure compliant licensing from the Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP), organize street closures and traffic planning with the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT), permit all temporary structures and electrical permits through the Department of Buildings (DOB), as well as separate permitting requirements for the Chicago Park District.

Meanwhile, we're also trying to contend with a new ordinance introduced at City Council on September 21 by Alderman Brendan Reilly, days after the park district's proposal, that includes the following provisions:

- Requires certain city departments to electronically notify aldermen in the ward or wards where the event is taking place of the application filing and make reasonable efforts to confirm receipt from aldermen
- Requires that a full event application be sent to aldermen for review

- Provide aldermen no less than 20 days to review and offer specific recommendations in writing
- Requires that the City Clerk be notified of applications and place them on the agenda for introduction at the next City Council meeting
- Requires being assigned to the appropriate committee
- Prohibits permits from being issued without feedback from aldermen or the expiration of a reasonable time period, whichever comes first
- Requires notification twice a year to the City Council's Committee on Special Events of all event permits that have been granted
- Allows permits to be issued only if City Council has approved them
- Requires events of more than 10,000 to promise to bear all costs of policing, clean up and restoration of public spaces; certain reimbursements to the city; and certain liability release of the city

We are happy to work with the park district and city government to serve the needs and wants of residents and neighbors of Grant Park. We are committed to being not only good neighbors, but accountable partners to Chicago residents. This is why we've made it our mission to contribute to the community. Just last year, we deepened our partnerships with Chicago pillars Ingenuity and After School Matters to make a \$2 million commitment to support arts education in Chicago Public Schools.

However, we are, frankly, confused as to why two taxing bodies — the park district and city government — would separately layer on duplicative requirements that would now include signoff by multiple public officials.

If both proposals passed, would we be required to get park district approval first and then City Council? How many days before the festivals would we be given to complete the requirements? Would we be required to hold multiple public hearings? What opportunities are included in the proposal to allow us to respond, adapt or appeal in the critical weeks leading up to our events?

Please consider how your partners for these events, such as C3, would be affected by different regulations from two separate taxing bodies that have separate staffs, separate public officials, separate law departments and communications staffs, and separate policy advisers and consultants.

We have worked hard to build strong relationships with the park district and the City. We adhere to all current regulations and oversight. We're not confident either proposal as introduced would be workable on its own, let alone both.

Thank you for your consideration,
C3 Presents
Lollapalooza & Sueños