



May 5, 2023

**TO:** Dominic Vaiana, Deputy Director, Excise and Licenses

**FROM:** Kenneth S. Brewer, Development and Planning Supervisor, Commercial Zoning

**SUBJECT:** Allowed Uses Under the Excise and Licenses Special Event Liquor Permit

This memo clarifies what primary use types under Denver Zoning Code and Former Chapter 59 allow for regular gatherings or other public events as a component of their current Zoning Use Permit. The primary use types mentioned in this memo are ones that would not require a separate zoning Special Event Permit for public gatherings or similar events. This clarification also provides guidance for **outdoor** special events and when those events are need a separate Temporary Special Event Zoning Permit.

A Temporary Special Event Zoning Permit is a temporary use permit for an event, festival, or gathering on a site or in a structure, where the current permitted primary use type does not authorize or typically include the activities associated with such events or gatherings. A Temporary Special Event Zoning Permit is required prior to the beginning date of the event. Each permit will state a beginning and an end date for the specific event.

A Temporary Special Event Zoning Permit is **not required** in the following circumstances:

- a. City Parks and Recreation Centers  
In a city park, recreation center, or other facility owned and operated by the Denver Parks and Recreation Department, the Denver Zoning Code delegates approval authority for all uses, permanent or temporary, to the Executive Director of Parks and Recreation. Events that occur at a Denver park, recreation facility, or other Parks and Recreation facility are applied for and approved by the Denver Parks and Recreation permitting office. Therefore, no Temporary Special Event Zoning Permit is required for events at these facilities.
- b. Denver International Airport  
At the Denver International Airport, the Denver Zoning Code delegates approval authority for all uses, permanent or temporary, to the Executive Director of Aviation. Events that occur at the Denver International Airport are applied for and approved by the Aviation Executive Director. Therefore, no Temporary Special Event Zoning Permit is required for events at the Airport or on other lands zoned "DIA".
- c. Arts and Venues Facilities  
Arts & Venues is responsible for operating City and County of Denver event facilities, including Red Rocks Park and Amphitheatre, the Denver Performing Arts Complex, Colorado Convention Center, Denver Coliseum, and McNichols Civic Center Building. Gatherings and events are allowed under their existing primary use zoning permit, and the permittee or other organizations using these facilities for special events and gatherings do not require a separate Temporary Special Event Zoning Permit. Also, outdoor uses are covered under this exception.

- d. State-Owned and Operated Facilities  
Events at a State-owned and operated facility, including state-owned universities and colleges and Denver Public School facilities
  
- e. Zoning Permits for Primary Uses that Already Allow for Special Event Activities  
Many commercial, civic, and institutional uses in the Denver Zoning Code and Former Chapter 59 allow for public gatherings and special events as an integral and expected part of their permitted primary use. A complete list of these primary use types is provided below.

**Note: any special event that is planned outside a completely-enclosed structure will require a Temporary Special Event Zoning Permit, regardless of the permitted primary use type, unless a use type below is indicated in the “Outdoor Allowed” column.**

Denver Zoning Code Land Use	Former Chapter 59 Land Use	Conventional Name of Use	Outdoor Allowed
Community Center	Community or senior or recreational facility	Community or senior center or recreational facility	X
Hospital	Hospital	Hospital	X
Eating and Drinking Establishment	Eating Place	Restaurants, brewpubs, coffee shops, bars, fast food outlets, snack bars, taverns	
Religious Assembly	Church, Religious Institution	Church, Religious Assembly,	
Club or Lodge	Club or Lodge	Club or Lodge, Fraternal Order	X
Arts, Recreation and Entertainment Services, Indoor	Recreation Services, Indoor Theater, Indoor Conference Center, Meeting Hall	Art Gallery, Amusement Center and Arcade, Billiard Parlor, Bowling Center; Ice Rink; Swimming Pool; Indoor tennis club and similar indoor sports clubs; Cinemas – movie theater; Theater and/or live performance space, Conference Center, Event Center, Sports and/or Entertainment Arena or Stadium	
Lodging Accommodations, All others	Hotel Motel	Hotel, Motel, Extended Stay Hotel, Motel	
Bed and Breakfast Lodging	Bed and Breakfast	Bed and Breakfast Inn	
Arts, Recreation and Entertainment Services, Outdoor	Recreation Services, Outdoor	Amusement/Special Interest Parks, Batting Cages, Go-Cart Raceway, Outdoor Ice Rinks, Miniature Golf Course, Private Golf Course	X

Denver Zoning Code Land Use	Former Chapter 59 Land Use	Conventional Name of Use	Outdoor Allowed
Sports and/or Entertainment Arena	Sports and/or Entertainment Facility	Sports Arena, Stadium, Entertainment Facility	X
Mortuary	Mortuary	Mortuary	
Cemetery	Cemetery	Cemetery	X
Library	Library	Library	
Museum	Museums, other Special Purpose Cultural Institutions	Museums	
City Park	Parks, public, open space, associated buildings	Public or Private Park	X
Elementary or Secondary School	School, elementary or secondary	Elementary or secondary school	
Vocational or Professional School	School, vocational or professional	Vocational or professional or trade school	
University or College	University or College	University and college as well as associated buildings and uses within the university or college campuses.	X
Public Safety Facility	Fire Station Police Station	Fire stations, police stations or other facilities that provide health and safety services to the general public.	

I hope this provides the clarification that your staff needs. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at any time.

c.c: Tina Axelrad, Zoning Administrator