



## Special Use Permit Guidelines and Procedures

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**DEFINITION OF SPECIAL USE:** A gathering of 50 or more people on Metro Parks Tacoma property and/or includes one or more of the following:

Bounce house	Tent(s) (400' sq. ft. or larger)
Amplified Sound	Stage
Vendor booths (food, beverage, arts, crafts)	Generator
Public promotion of the organized use	Collection of money for admission/participation
Impact to traffic/park operations	Catered Uses with commercial bbqs

### **SPECIAL USE CATEGORIES:**

- Festivals/Concerts
- Walks/\*Runs/Cycling Uses
- Corporate Picnics/Uses
- Athletic Tournaments (permitted only at Verlo Playfield, Vassault, Stewart Heights, Portland Ave. Parks)
- Commercial Filming and/or Photography
- Free Speech/Demonstration
- Other – those Uses/activities that impact park operations or adversely impact normal park usage

### **Special Use Permit Application Fees**

- Applications are due no later than **(21) calendar days prior to** proposed use date  
Applications received after the 21 calendar day deadline will be **assessed a \$15 late fee** and may not be considered.
- Commercial special use permit application fee **\$250 – due with application**
- Non-profit special use permit application fee **\$150 – due with application**  
*Proof of non-profit status must be provided*
- Damage Deposit is **due no later than (14) calendar days prior to** proposed use date.  
SUPRC determines the damage deposit fee based on prior history, park location, time of year and use scope. Damage deposits range from \$250 to \$3,500.

### **Per Participant Fees for all walks/runs/cycling uses at Point Defiance Park, along Ruston Way, and Swan Creek Park**

- Commercial Use per participant fee \$2/per participant
- Non-profit Use per participant fee \$1/per participant
- Per participant fees are due no later than two weeks following the use date.

\*\*Users that require set-up the day before the actual permitted use date will be required to pay half of the permit application fee. MPT does not recommend equipment set-up the day and/or night prior to the use date due to safety and security concerns.

\*\*If a picnic shelter is taken out of inventory due to the issuance of a special use permit, the rental cost of the picnic shelter will be added to the special use permit application fee.

# Special Use Permit Application Process and Guidelines

## PROCESS

- Tacoma Municipal Codes and Metro Parks Tacoma Park Codes are applicable to all special uses.
- Applications are accepted up to one year in advance, and on a space available basis.
- Applications for special uses must be submitted to Metro Parks Tacoma no later than 21 calendar days prior to the special use date. **Applications received after this date will be assessed a \$15 late fee and may not be approved for the requested date and/or park.**
- Applications are processed on a first-come, first-served basis, with walk-in applications being processed first.
- Application fees are non-refundable.
- All permit applications will be reviewed by the Special Use Permit Review Committee (SUPRC). This Committee meets regularly to review permit applications and determines if the requested park can accommodate the permit request and what conditions the special use must adhere to in order to occur.
- Application requests cannot conflict with and/or interfere with current Metro Parks programs, activities or scheduled administrative use.
- Special Uses that impact public safety are required to field plan and secure Tacoma Police Department approval.
- The SUPRC reserves the right to suggest alternative sites should the requested park property not be suitable for the use, its participant capacity, set-up needs, parking, traffic, security, etc. If an alternative site cannot be agreed upon, the permit application will be denied.
- To hold the requested use space and date until reviewed and/or approved by the SUPRC, **the permit application fee is due at the time the application is submitted.** Accepting the application and fee in no way guarantees the use will be permitted, it only means the Use application will be reviewed for permit consideration by the SUPRC. Once the permit application is approved by the SUPRC (can take up to two weeks), the use organizer is responsible for submitting all required documents and fees by the required deadlines. Failure to submit supporting documentation and fees may result in the revocation of the special use permit application.
- Special use activities that occur on City of Tacoma property or in the street right of way are required to secure a special use permit from the **City of Tacoma** prior to a Metro Parks Tacoma special use permit being issued.
- Special Use activities that have a waterside component are required to secure a permit from the **U.S. Coast Guard** through the **City of Tacoma** prior to a Metro Parks Tacoma special use permit being issued. Copies of the permits are required to be submitted to MPT prior to a special use permit being issued.
- Special use activities that use tents, liquid propane gas, fireworks, (etc.) are required to secure permits from **Tacoma Fire Department**. Copies of the permits are required to be submitted to MPT prior to a special use permit being issued.
- Special Use activities that involve the serving and/or providing of food and/or beverage are required to secure permits from the **Tacoma -Pierce County Health Department**. Copies of the permits are required to be submitted to MPT prior to a special use permit being issued.

## GUIDELINES

- **Site Plan:** A detailed site plan for all public special uses is due at least 14 days prior to the Use.
- **Refundable Damage Deposit:** A damage deposit is used to offset the cost of damage/repair or excessive clean-up at the park and/or facility at which/in which the special Use was held. The damage deposit may also be used to offset the cost of Park labor to restore the park property to its pre-use condition. Damage deposits will be refunded after a complete site inspection is conducted. Damage deposits can be held for damage, excessive cleaning and/or if the balance of fees owed has not yet been paid in full. Damage deposits will also be held until all per participant fees are paid in full. Damage deposits can range from \$250 to \$3,500 and above, depending on the SUPRC's decision.

- **Per Participant Fees:** Participant fees are based on actual registration rosters provided by the organization. Failure to report accurate numbers/information may result in the denial of future permit applications. Per participant fees are collected for walks/runs at Point Defiance Park, Ruston Way, and Swan Creek Park. Per participant fees are due no later than two weeks following the use date.
- **Certificate of Insurance (COI):** A COI is required for special uses. The COI must provide insurance coverage with at least \$1,000,000 per occurrence from an insurance company acceptable to Metro Parks with coverages, forms, and limits approved by the Risk Manager. Metro Parks Tacoma must be named as additional insured, and have a copy of the insurance certificate **on file 14 days prior to the special use**, or the special use may be cancelled. Any deviation from this Policy must be approved by the MPT Risk Manager.
- **Security:** Metro Parks reserves the right to require security at any use (public or private) based on the activities, hours, location, and number of people involved in the use. Tacoma Police Department (TPD) works cooperatively with MPT when determining the security needs at each area of special use. TPD will determine whether off-duty police officers or private security officers are required at the location of special use. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to pay for all services rendered by TPD and/or private security firm providing services. Safety of participants, public and park assets are the overriding factor when determining security needs.
- **Additional Fees:** Should a special use permit negatively impact MPT revenue-generating facilities (specifically but not limited to Point Defiance Park, picnic shelters, etc.), additional fees will be assessed to recover those fees, ie: facility and picnic shelter rentals. The additional fees will be assessed based on the times the facilities and/or shelters are blocked out of inventory and based on normal published facility/picnic shelter rental rates.
- **Portable Toilets/Garbage Totes/Handwashing Stations:** The SUPRC may require portable toilets, hand-washing stations and garbage totes based on the estimated number of participants.

The Permit Review Committee will determine the required and proper number of portable toilets (standard and ADA units) and garbage totes that must be provided at the use site. MPT will place the equipment orders and bill the use organizer as part of the permitting fees. **Should the use organizer secure in-kind equipment donations and/or services, documentation verifying the donation(s), as well as the actual equipment order (including delivery and pick-up dates), must be submitted at least 7 days prior to the use.** Failure to pay said fees or arrange for in-kind equipment donations/services according to the deadlines may result in the revocation of the special use permit.

All special use applicants are required by Washington State law to incorporate recycling efforts into their activities of use. The City of Tacoma offers an Environmental Services Sponsorship Program to non-profit organizations that produce activity that protects, enhances or restores Tacoma's environment. Visit [www.cityoftacoma.org/essponsorship](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/essponsorship) for more information.

- **Use-Site Monitors:** May be required and the cost would be the responsibility of the special use applicant. On-site monitors monitor use set-up/tear down to ensure damage to park property does not occur and that all permit conditions are met.
- **Utilities:** Each park has unique features and amenities. Certain fees will be assessed when a special use requires access to water, restrooms, electricity, etc.
- **Site Visits:** The SUPRC may require site visits prior to the issuance of a special use permit.
- **Point Defiance Park and Ruston Way:** Permit application requests for Point Defiance Park and Ruston Way are subject to further review and/or conditions due to capacity issues and impacts to revenue-generating facilities. At Point Defiance Walks/Runs/Cycling uses must begin and end at Owen Beach – with the exception of Sound to Narrows and the Tacoma City Marathon. All walks/runs/cycling uses using Point Defiance and the 5-Mile Drive must complete the activity prior to the gates opening at 1pm – no exceptions – including Saturday and Sunday.
- Training runs at Point Defiance Park must adhere to the Owen Beach start/finish location, stay on pre-determined routes and take place between 6am-9am or a special use permit will be required, including the collection of permit fees. Tables, chairs, tents are not allowed to be set-up to support training runs.

- Prior to use set-up, MPT staff may conduct locates to ensure no underground utilities are compromised from the use set-up. This will be pre-arranged between MPT staff and use applicant.

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## GENERAL INFORMATION

### General Park Information

- All park sites officially close ½ hour after sunset. Special uses extending beyond the official park closure time must receive written permission as stated on the special use permit.

### Special Equipment, Use Permits and Rental Requirements

These requirements apply even if they do not fall under the scope of a Special use.

- Special equipment such as a bouncer/air jumper, a tent/canopy, fireworks, staging, risers, equipment that requires electricity may require additional permits and/or increased amounts of liability insurance. **Metro Parks does not allow dunk tanks.**
- Review the special use permit application and the information that is provided. Additional permits and/or fees may be assessed by the City of Tacoma.
- Metro Parks reserves the right to cancel the special use due to unforeseen circumstances. The applicant then has the opportunity to reschedule the use at no additional fee or receive a full refund. We **strongly encourage** you not to promote the use or produce marketing materials until the Permit Review Committee has approved the application request and a special use permit has been issued.

### Appeals Process

- A written appeal regarding the denial of a special use permit application must be in writing and delivered to the attention of the Director of Recreation and Community Services no later than 7 days prior to the proposed use date. Once this has been submitted, the Director will consult with staff to investigate why the permit application was denied and will gather a manager from Recreation and a manager from Business Operations to review the matter and make a decision based on factual information.

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## PARK POLICIES & GUIDELINES FOR USE

### Applicant Responsibilities

- Each individual in the group must obey all applicable Metro Parks, City, State and Federal rules, ordinances, laws and regulations. Failure to do so may result in your permit/contract being cancelled or terminated, and you and your party being asked to leave the premises and/or be subject to legal action.
- The applicant and/or designated representative must be on-site during the permitted use hours.
- Provide general clean-up of park property including the removal of all personal belongings and/or left-over food/garbage from the premises. Per the permit guidelines, the permitted use/park space must be restored to its pre-use condition or damage fees will be assessed.

The Permit Review Committee will determine the proper number of police officers, portable toilets (standard and ADA units) and garbage totes that must be provided at the use site. MPT will place the equipment orders or personnel services requests and bill the use organizer as part of the permitting fees. **Should the use organizer secure in-kind equipment donations and/or services, documentation verifying the donation(s), as well as the actual equipment order (including delivery and pick-up dates), must be submitted at least 7 days prior to the use.** Failure to pay said fees or arrange for in-kind equipment donations/services prior to the use may result in the revocation of the special use permit.

- Permit applicant is to become familiar with the park site, its amenities and overall condition.
- The SUPRC reserves the right to locate any use to another park property should the requested park property not be suitable for the use, its participant capacity, set-up needs, etc.

- **Tents & Canopies:** Tents and canopies are allowed at most parks. If tents and canopies are desired, they must be weighted down, and not staked. Digging and/or driving stakes into the ground is prohibited. Applicants are required to follow Tacoma Municipal Code as it relates to the temporary erection of tents/awnings/canopies. In some instances, permits are required by the Tacoma Fire Department. It is the responsibility of the applicant to secure the necessary City of Tacoma permits.
- **Signs & Banners:** Signs may be posted on temporary, sandwich board-type structures, or wire frames only. Balloons can be used as a marker, and may be tied with string to a fixed object; however they cannot obstruct the view of any road sign. Signs are not allowed to be taped, nailed, stapled or bungee corded to trees, buildings, light poles or road signs, and/or stakes driven into the ground, and/or the temporary marking (chalk, water-based paint) of any pavement or hard surface. Applicant is required to remove and properly dispose of all temporary signage/banners at the conclusion of the use.
- **Parking/Traffic:** Vehicle access and general parking at most park sites is limited. All group users are advised and encouraged to car pool to the use and/or shuttle their participants from an authorized pre-arranged location. Vehicular traffic is prohibited on park grass, unless pre-authorized by the Special Use Review Committee. Vehicular traffic must obey all traffic laws. Parking and traffic plans may be required as part of the permit application process and are subject to Tacoma Police Department approval. Failure to take necessary measures to manage parking/traffic may result in the denial of the permit application.
- **Alcohol:** Alcoholic beverages of any kind are not allowed in any open park space per use of Alcoholic Beverages in Park Facilities (Resolution 122-92), except in particular areas or facilities as may be expressly designated from time to time by the Board of Park Commissioners. Please ask MPT permit staff for a list of designated facilities. The Washington State Liquor Board issues special occasion licenses for bona fide non-profit organizations to sell spirits, beer, and wine by the individual serving for on-premises consumption at a specified date, time, and place. Please ask MPT staff for a complete list of frequently asked questions related to special occasion licenses or visit [www.liq.wa.gov](http://www.liq.wa.gov) for more information.
- **Smoking:** Smoking is prohibited on Metro Parks' property and in Metro Parks' facilities.
- **Food Vendors:** All food vendors must be self-contained and provide any and all items associated with the preparing, cooking, and selling of food items. This includes, but is not limited to cooking units, utensils, food prep area, hot and cold food/beverage storage, and those items necessary to meet health department codes. Utility hook-ups (electrical and water) are limited, and may not be available in all areas.
  - Each food vendor is responsible for the safe and proper removal of coals, grease, gray water and/or any debris associated with their food booth. Do not dump coals or grease in the park or in park trash cans.
  - All users serving food and beverages are required to have the appropriate health department permits. Failure to secure the necessary Health Department Permits may result in the denial and or shut-down of the use. Copies of health department permits are due to MPT no later than 5 calendar days prior to the use date.
- When any MPT employee or any police officer has probable cause to believe that a person has violated any rule of the Metropolitan Park District of Tacoma, any provision of the Tacoma Municipal Code, or any provision of the Revised Code of Washington while in a park, he or she may require that person to leave the park immediately. Any person who remains on park property after being required to leave by a Metropolitan Park District of Tacoma employee or by a police officer, or who returns to the park on the same calendar day, is guilty of criminal trespass and may be arrested and prosecuted under the Tacoma Municipal Code.
- Walks, Runs and Cycling uses: \*All walks, runs and Cycling uses that utilize the public right-of-way (streets), must obey all traffic laws, which includes participants using routes that go in the direction of standard vehicular traffic flow (unless exclusively approved by the Tacoma Police Department).
- Point Defiance Bowl area: Due to recent renovations and an extensive drainage system, only those uses produced by Metro Parks are permissible in this area.

Park Site	Use Type	Amenities Available	Parking	Misc. Information
Owen Beach at Point Defiance Park	Walk/Runs, Concerts and Festivals, Corporate Picnics	110 volt outlet (shelter & restroom) Water w/ hose bib Public Restrooms year round	208 stalls 4 handicap	Food concessions stand open during peak season.
Titlow Park	Concerts, Festivals, Corporate Picnics, Walks/Runs	(4) 110 volt outlets Potable water in restrooms Sink w/hose bib (shelter/south) Public Restrooms Spray ground – Peak Season	24 stalls 2 handicap overflow parking available on-street and at Titlow Pool parking lot (120 spaces)	Parking limited North lot during spray ground operation. Parking limited Lodge during summer day camp
Vassault Park	Walk/Runs, Concerts, Festivals, Corporate Picnics	(2) 110 volt outlets Potable water in building Non-potable water at several quick coupler locations Public Restrooms year round	92 parking stalls 2 handicap limited on-street parking	
Wright Park	Concerts, Festivals, small scale or pass through walks/runs	Two 110 volt outlets in zone A Two 110 volt outlets in zone B Water Public Restrooms year round	limited on-street parking	Parking very limited during spray ground/peak season
Wapato Park	Small-scale special Uses	110 volt outlet (shelter) Water Hose bib (Kiwanis) Public Restrooms	86 stalls limited parking during summer; limited on-street parking	
Peoples Park	Small scale special uses Concerts/Festivals	Electrical 110 volt outlet	Limited on-street parking	
Ruston Way Waterfront	Walks/Runs	Electrical Water Public Restrooms year round	Parking	Food concessions stand open during peak season.
Thea's Park	Walk/Runs, Concerts, Festivals, Corporate Picnics	Water via quick coupler only	24 stalls w/1 designated handicap	
Franklin Park	Small community Uses, small concerts/festivals, corporate picnics	Public Restrooms – Peak Season 110 volt outlet in Picnic Shelter Spray ground – Peak Season	Limited parking along street 25 angle and 2 ADA	Parking limited during spray ground operation. Playground program site
Verlo Playfield Park	Small community Uses	Public Restrooms	Limited parking	
Portland Avenue Park	Small to medium sized community Uses	Restrooms, shelter, sports fields	Limited parking	
Jefferson Park	Walks/Runs, Small concerts/festivals, corporate picnics	110 volt outlet on the North wall of field house Restrooms – Peak Season Spray ground – Peak Season	Street Parking Only	Perimeter parking limited during spray ground operation.
Kandle Park	Concerts, Festivals, small scale or pass through walks/runs	Potable water in building Non-potable water at several quick coupler locations Public Restrooms – year round Mini spray ground	Limited on-street parking 61 Main Lot/5 ADA/46 overflow grass lot South of main lot (summer only)	All parking is limited during pool operation hours
Old Town Park	Small-scale special uses	Hose bib (cabin) quick coupler non-potable water	Limited street parking – no designated parking	
Swan Creek Park	Walks/Runs/Bicycling events	Hose bib at community garden	20 stall lot/300+ cars possible with staffing	
Cummings Park	Walks/Runs	110 volt outlet on pier only (limited)	47 regular and 2 ADA	
Dickman Mill	Small-scale special	110 volt on light pole	No Parking	

Park	uses	Water (limited) Public Restrooms		
Jack Hyde	Walks/Runs, Small-scale special uses		13 regular and 2 ADA	
STAR Center Event Lawn	Concerts, Picnics, Corporate events, walks/runs	66,000 sq ft of lawn space 110 volt outlet Public Restrooms – Peak Season Spray ground – Peak Season	91 stalls total on Adams street (including 4 ADA) Large events can utilize parking on SERA Campus and SERA Athletic Complex	
South Park	Small community uses	Restrooms	Limited on street parking	
Stewart Heights Park	Walks/Runs, festivals, picnics	Restrooms	160 Parking Stalls	Parking limited during spray ground operation