

Lakewood Regional Parks
Special Events Approval Policy and Guidelines
Update 2017

This document serves as a supplement to the Lakewood Special Events Rules, Policy and Procedure. It is intended to provide guidelines for the evaluation and approval/denial of the wide variety of special events requested each year.

Lakewood Parks recognizes that special events can be a valid and appropriate use of parks and trails. At the same time, the parks have become increasingly popular over the past several years and have begun to experience capacity issues. These guidelines are intended to provide a balance between appropriate special event use, natural resource and facility protection and enhancement, and daily use of park facilities.

A special event is defined as an organized event having more than normal impact on park resources, facilities or visitors. For the purpose of this policy, events will be divided into the following categories:

1. Competitive events: running races, bicycle races, triathlons, etc.
2. Group area reservations: large groups using reservation picnic shelters or the group camping area.
3. Charity/Fund Raising Events: non-competitive events held with the express purpose of raising funds for a recognized non-profit organization.
4. Group events: A group event is defined as an event where more than 25 people are expected to attend, AND the event will not be taking place in a reservation area, or will be using significant area outside of a reservation site. Examples include baptisms, orienteering events and demonstrations.
5. Commercial use: Any non-competitive activity where a fee is charged to participants.
6. Filming/photography permits

Per Lakewood Municipal Code, any special event that is planned for a Lakewood Park must receive prior approval and a Special Event Permit from the park supervisor or special event coordinator. The following factors will be considered for each event request received:

1. Number of participants and proposed use area.
2. Possible impacts to park facilities, natural resources or the visiting public.
3. Conflicts with other events or established park uses (horse stables, water ski school, day camps, etc.).
4. Suitability of the event to existing park policies, allowed uses, and applicable laws and regulations.

5. Time of the year. Summer days can be exceptionally busy and events can create a more significant impact to other park users.

Each event category will also be subject to additional considerations as listed below.

1. Competitive/charity events:
 - a. New competitive events and charity walks will only be considered in the off-season (Sept-May), or on weekdays.
 - b. At Bear Creek Lake Park (BCLP) events involving the use of park roads, swim beach, marina, or campground on summer weekends will not be allowed. No permits will be issued for event or group use of the Big Soda Lake area, including the beach and marina, on summer weekends (see below). No new bicycle races will be approved on park roadways.
 - c. Events in good standing in 2016 will be given priority date choices for 2017. No new large events will be approved at this time. Small events scheduled for the off-season will be considered on a case-by-case basis. At BCLP, priority will be given to events that are able to be confined within the North Park area near the Coyote Crossing picnic area.
 - d. Events that limit/prevent the operation of park concession operations (horse stables, ski school, marina) will be required to compensate the concessionaire for lost business during the event. This compensation will be based on an average revenue calculation for the day and month the event takes place during.
 - e. Charity events will be evaluated in the same way as competitive events, with the exception of charity walks and bike rides that pass through parks with no staging or infrastructure.
2. Group area reservations will be handled under the Picnic and Reservation policies.
3. Group events:
 - a. A group of 25 or more people using a reservation shelter, that will also be using substantial areas of the park outside of the reservation area, will also need a Special Events permit and will be required to pay the applicable fees in addition to the reservation fee.
4. Commercial activities: Proposed commercial activities will be evaluated on an individual basis. No commercial use that competes with an existing park concession operation will be permitted. Typically, no more than one specific concession will be allowed to operate (e.g. only one provider of kayak lessons will be permitted during the summer months). Bicycle demos will be allowed at WF Hayden Park and BCLP. See Bicycle Demo Requirements policy.
5. Filming and photography permits will be evaluated based on the potential impacts to park resources and other users. No permits will be issued for filming outside of designated park hours. Film permits at BCLP will require US Army Corps of Engineers approval as well as a City permit.

6. Big Soda Lake (BCLP) commercial operations and group uses (day camps, lessons, baptisms, etc.):
 - a. Commercial operations that are direct competition for the Soda Lakes Marina will not be approved.
 - b. Permits for Big Soda Lake will be strictly limited to 1 group per weekday. Due to a long-standing partnership with the City, the Girl Scouts of America will receive first priority for day camp permits. All other groups will be evaluated on a first-come, first-served basis.
 - c. No group use permits will be issued for weekend days between Memorial Day and Labor Day.
 - d. Open water swimming events, or other events that require submersion in the lake (exercise classes, open water baptisms, etc.), will no longer be permitted with the exception of open water swim events coordinated by the City of Lakewood.

Other Guidelines:

- Parks will not be closed for special events. Events will not be permitted if they will run outside of park hours.
- Trail-based special events will not be allowed on William Frederick Hayden Park, with the exception of the City of Lakewood Trail Running Series.
- Events at BCLP requiring the closure of the swim beach, marina, campground, park roads or park concession operations during the summer will not be approved.
- Events requiring off trail use or intentional damage to natural resources will not be approved.
- Maximum event capacity for BCLP is 1000. Events in the Bear Creek Greenbelt will be limited to 200 participants unless the event is passing through the park and does not require parking or park facilities.
- Events involving activities that fall outside of regular park uses will require extra consideration and may not be approved.
- The park supervisor reserves the right to cancel an event permit in the event that weather or other factors have created conditions that will likely result in significant additional damage to park trails or facilities. A “rain date” reschedule may be offered if another date is available, but “rain dates” will not be held in advance.