

# Update - Extraordinary Neighborhood Events

Quality of Life, Arts and Culture  
October 20, 2025



**City of Dallas**

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# Overview



## Update on Extraordinary Neighborhood Events

- Background
- Operational Considerations
- Policy Considerations
- Next Steps



# Background



The Quality of Life, Arts & Culture (QOLAC) Committee requested a presentation to review existing policies and formulate a strategy for managing “Extraordinary Neighborhood Events” on April 21, 2025.

Convention & Event Services and Code Compliance staff briefed on current permitted Special Events in neighborhoods, Chapter 42A requirements for events in neighborhoods, other enforcement logistics, and current resource allocation.



# Operational Considerations



## Possible Code Enhancements:

- Explore land use amendments - PDD
- Excessive light as a nuisance - CCS
- Presumption of offensive noises - DPD
- Valet and Parking - TPW



# Land Use Amendments



- Consider expanding the existing Commercial Amusement (Inside and Outside) definitions to explicitly include venues that host private events, such as weddings, banquets, and receptions.
- Consider adding a prohibition against operation of a commercial event at a residence, either in the Single Family or the Accessory Use sections.
- PDD recommends considering providing direction to the code reform consultant to address this within the broader zoning code update.



# Excessive Light as a Nuisance



Consider adding prohibition against excessive illumination or other attractions that becomes a nuisance to Chapter 27.

## Excessive Illumination:

A property shall not use excessive illumination or other attractions in a manner that results in sustained public gathering, traffic congestion, or impeded emergency or homeowner access.

The determination of excessive illumination or other attractions shall be based on:

- Documented complaints from multiple property owners.
- Observations by city inspectors confirming sustained crowding or street congestion.
- Public safety concerns as determined by law enforcement or emergency responders.





# Excessive Light as a Nuisance



Consider adding a maximum footcandle threshold at a public right of way or adjacent property line for residential properties.

Excessive Illumination example:

A residential property shall not use, have, or maintain outdoor lighting that exceeds [0.3-0.5] footcandles measured at the property line at 5 feet above grade.

\* Proposed illumination limit range informed by a review of comparable outdoor lighting standards adopted in other Texas municipalities.



# Noise



## Violation:

- Ch. 30: Any loud and disturbing noise or vibration in the city that is offensive to the ordinary sensibilities of the inhabitants of the city.

## Developments:

- Creation of Code's Night-Time Entertainment Team to address noise related to public spaces pubs, clubs, and bars under Ch. 30-4, as well as certificate of occupancy, specific use permit (SUP), and land use violations.
- Amended Habitual Nuisance Property Ordinance to include noise as an eligible offense





# Noise



## Operational Considerations:

- Code Compliance's ability to enforce noise in public spaces and mechanical noise
- Inability to address noise violations via civil citations

## Department Action Items:

- Consideration of notice for chronic noise complaints (DPD)
- Prosecutorial training (CAO)

## Policy Considerations:

- Add mechanical loudspeaker or sound amplifier in residential areas during specific times as presumed offensive. (DPD)



# Valet and Parking



## Valet Operations

- Licensing requirement doesn't apply to the following:
  - Occasional valet parking service at a private residence or
  - In connection with a social or fund-raising activity
  - Operated on private property and no use of public right of way

## Parking Violations

- Dallas City Code permits towing for any Chapter 28 violation
- Does not apply to Parking on an Unapproved Surface violations

## City Thoroughfare Plan

- Restricts parking on major and minor arterial streets
- No ordinance to make this a violation



# Policy Considerations



## Policy considerations for Committee guidance:

- **Land Use Amendments:** Evaluate zoning provisions to clarify or restrict commercial event operations within residential areas.
- **Excessive Illumination:** Consider establishing measurable standards and enforcement authority for excessive light as a neighborhood nuisance.
- **Noise Standards:** Explore adding a presumption of offensiveness for amplified or mechanical noise in residential areas during defined hours.
- **Valet Operations:** Review valet regulations to determine whether additional restrictions are warranted for operations serving private residential events.
- **Parking Controls:** Assess the implications of establishing an ordinance to prohibit parking along major and minor arterial streets to improve safety and access.



# Next Steps



- Based on committee feedback, staff will collaborate with the City Attorney's Office to draft language for potential code amendments.
- Staff will brief the Committee on November 17, 2025, on recommended amendments.



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# Appendix



# Enforcement - Special Events



|                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Relevant Ordinance Section | 42A – Special Events                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Threshold for a violation  | <p>Operating a Special Event without a Special Event Permit.</p> <p><b>SPECIAL EVENT</b> means a temporary outdoor gathering, with an expected total attendance greater than 100, which involves one or more of the following on private or public property where otherwise prohibited by ordinance:</p> <p>(A) closing or restricting of a public street lane, alley, or sidewalk; (B) restricting access to public property; (C) sale of merchandise, food, alcohol, or other beverages where otherwise not permitted as a neighborhood market or by an annual Dallas Farmers Market farmers market permit; (D) erection of a tent larger than 399 square feet in area or erection of multiple tents with a cumulative area of over 399 square feet; (E) installation of a temporary stage, bandshell, outdoor projection technology, trailer, van, grandstand, bleachers, or portable toilets for public use; (F) use of city hall plaza; (G) a run, walk, ride, or special event parade; (H) placement of temporary no parking, directional, oversized, or identification signs or banners in connection with an event that are placed in or over a public right-of-way, or on private property where otherwise prohibited by ordinance; or (I) clean zone enforcement.</p> |
| Evidence needed            | Confirmation of a Special Event occurring via an inspection; confirmation that the event is not permitted.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Challenges                 | Expected/actual total of greater than 100 persons is sometimes difficult to allege.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |





# Enforcement – Parking on Unapproved Surfaces



|                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Relevant Ordinance Section</b> | 51A-4.301(d)(5) & (5.1) – Residential Parking Surfaces                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Threshold for a violation</b>  | <p>A motor vehicle parked on a surface other than concrete, asphalt, or other material approved by the Building Official.</p> <p>Violation can go to the owner of the vehicle or to the owner, occupant, or person in control of the property.</p> |
| <b>Evidence needed</b>            | Evidence of a motor vehicle parked on dirt, grass, or another unapproved surface.                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Challenges</b>                 | Code Compliance often gets requested to address extended or extensive parking on the street or on a sidewalk, which requires Transportation or Police.                                                                                             |



# Enforcement - Noise



|                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                               |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Relevant Ordinance Section</b> | 30-1 – Loud and Disturbing Noises                                                                                                                                                                          | 51A-6.102 – Noise Regulations                                                                                 |
| <b>Threshold for a violation</b>  | A person commits an offense if he or she makes or causes to be made any loud and disturbing noise or vibration in the city that is offensive to the ordinary sensibilities of the inhabitants of the city. | Each zoning district has a maximum daytime and nighttime decibel level.                                       |
| <b>Evidence needed</b>            | The person committing the noise and the evidence that it disturbs an inhabitant of the city.                                                                                                               | An 8-minute average decibel reading showing the property is over the threshold or 5dB over the ambient level. |
| <b>Challenges</b>                 | Addressing a noisy house event can be dangerous. Code would be required to obtain the ID of the person committing the noise.                                                                               | Safety of obtaining a reading adjacent to an event; obtaining the ID of the person creating the noise.        |



# Enforcement - Light Glare



|                                   |                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Relevant Ordinance Section</b> | 51A-6.104 – Light Glare                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Threshold for a violation</b>  | Light creating a nuisance by crossing a property line.                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Evidence needed</b>            | Visible observation by an inspector of a light crossing a property line.                                                                                                  |
| <b>Challenges</b>                 | Competing light sources; high-prevalence of light crossing property lines makes this largely a complaint-driven code, as light is usually a positive neighborhood aspect. |
| <b>Possible enhancement</b>       | Adding an “excessive illumination as a nuisance” code to chapter 27.                                                                                                      |



# Enforcement - Land Use Violation



|                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Relevant Ordinance Section</b> | 51A-1.104 – Certificate of Occupancy requirement                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Threshold for a violation</b>  | The owner/occupant of a residential house would be in violation if they are conducting a use that is different from single-family residential, such as Commercial Amusement.                                                                        |
| <b>Evidence needed</b>            | Evidence of Commercial Amusement. E.g., a visual observation of charging an entrance fee, online ticket sales, confirmation of entertainment or games of skill for a fee.                                                                           |
| <b>Challenges</b>                 | Ticket sales on new or private website may not be seen; confirmation of an entrance fee may not be possible; residence may be used as an event venue to host events that are free to attendees; holding owner responsible for renting the property. |

