

City of Alameda

Special Events Permit Grant

Pilot Program Guidelines

For Events Taking Place July 2026 - June 2027

Overview and Goals

Special events play a vital role in the City of Alameda's (City) community and economy. The Special Events Permit Grant Program (SEPGP) offers financial and technical assistance to help high profile special events in the City meet their special event permit requirements. Grant awards are in the form of no-cost City services or reimbursement for specific costs associated with City permitting requirements (see Eligible Award Categories for more information).

Eligible events include festivals, parades, and community celebrations that require street closures and/or overtime or specialty support or services from the Police Department, Fire Department, Public Works Department or other City departments. When funds are available and as approved, SEPGP awards will be made once a year through a competitive application and review process. The program goals aim to foster successful high-impact community events that:

1. Enhance economic development;
2. Encourage inclusive community engagement; and
3. Promote a diverse range of arts and cultural experiences.

Award amounts may vary per event per year. Award amounts may be less than the amount requested and any awards are subject to availability of funding. **The maximum grant amount per event is \$20,000.**

Eligible Award Categories

The SEPGP provides financial and technical support specifically for costs associated with City permitting requirements and the special event permit process, including public safety, environmental stewardship, and the use of City services.

Eligible categories may include **City Services, Fees and Technical Assistance** (e.g. police services, inspections, permit fees etc.) or **External Costs** (services or equipment which the City does not provide but are required by the permitting process, such as traffic control planning or sign rental). The following categories are eligible for grant award:

- **City Services, Fees, and Technical Assistance**
 - Staff time to process and review the permit
 - Additional technical assistance on traffic control or security plan, if needed
 - Police security, towing, standby paramedic presence, and other forms of Alameda Police Department (APD) or Alameda Fire Department (AFD) assistance, as needed
 - Event inspection costs and standby fees
 - Costs associated with meeting Zero Waste and Clean Water requirements
 - Any other specialized technical assistance on the permitting process or actual event
- **External Costs** (aka services or equipment which the City does not provide)

- Development of a traffic control plan
- Traffic control and no parking signs
- Private Security, if needed
- Fiber-based compostable foodware
- Reusable foodware services
- Event “greening” services, such as bin monitoring, waste sorting, etc., to ensure that all materials are separated correctly
- Waste containers and removal services
- Liquid waste disposal tank services
- Any necessary storm drain protection measures
- **Ineligible costs** include, but are not limited to:
 - Port-a-potties and/or handwashing stations
 - Event Insurance
 - Event permit fees from other jurisdictions (County, State etc.)
 - Goods which will be sold at the event (e.g. commemorative glassware)

SEPGP grantees will receive an award letter detailing the specific City Services, Fees and Technical Assistance and External Costs included in their grant. For City Services, Fees and Technical Assistance, the City will provide the awarded services and/or assistance at no cost to the awardee and manage payment for these costs internally. The event producer will not pay for the cost of City services, fees or assistance out-of-pocket.

External Costs will be funded on a reimbursement basis, which means the event producer must pay for the cost of these goods or services up-front, and then submit to the City for reimbursement after the event. Reimbursement will require invoice, proof of payment (such as receipts or cancelled checks) and (in some cases) proof of use of the items. For example, reimbursement of fiber-based compostable foodware may require images of that foodware in use at the event.

The amount of available funding may vary per year depending on available resources. Past grant awards are not an assurance of future awards. The City may terminate the program at any time due to unforeseen circumstances. No part of the grant shall be used to promote or inhibit religion nor for any political advocacy.

Event Eligibility

To be considered for SEPGP, the event and the event organizer must meet **ALL** of the following eligibility criteria. Applications will be rejected if **ANY** of the following criteria is not met:

- **Event Criteria**
 - Event takes place between July 1, 2026 and June 30, 2027 in the City of Alameda;
 - Event must support at least two of the SEPGP program goals;
 - Event must include a street closure and/or require the use of City services or materials on the days of the event, especially overtime or specialty work from Police, Fire, Public Works, or other Departments;
 - Event is not intended to convey a religious message nor advocate a political position;
 - Event must be on public property (includes public parks and city-owned property at Alameda Point);
 - Event must require a special event permit.
- **Event Organizer (Organization) Criteria**

- Event organizer must have a valid City of Alameda business license and provide a W-9 form;
- At the discretion of City staff, organizers of previous events meeting any of the following factors may be disqualified from eligibility:
 - Did not adhere to all special event permitting conditions, or
 - Did not fulfill all event obligations, or
 - Resulted in an adverse impact in the community, such as the receipt of significant complaints from residents or businesses.

Application Timeline

January 12, 2026: Grant application period opens

February 27, 2026: Grant application window closes

Week of April 6, 2026: Grant awards announced

July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027: Events must take place in this timeframe, extensions are not allowed

Note: We highly **recommend submitting your application as early as possible** in the application window, so that staff can assist with any questions or missing elements. **Late and/or incomplete applications will not be eligible for funding.**

SEPGP Grant Process: Step by Step

1. Review Program Guidelines and Application

The SEPGP Guidelines and Application provide an overview of the grant program, including eligibility, evaluation criteria, and other guidelines.

2. Complete and submit the application form, and attach the following items:

- A **draft map indicating which streets/public rights-of-way you plan to close**, if a street or public-right-of-way closure is part of the event.
- **Written vendor estimates for any eligible outside services or materials** (aka External Costs) you plan to use.
 - Please include an itemized list of these materials and services and the associated funding requested, using the template included in the application.

Note: We highly **recommend submitting your application as early as possible** in the application window, so that staff can assist with any questions or missing elements. **Late and/or incomplete applications will not be eligible for funding.**

3. Submit the completed application and attachments electronically to agehrke@alamedaca.gov by February 27, 2026. Late and/or incomplete applications will not be eligible for funding.

4. Eligibility and Potential Award Amount Determination

Staff will conduct an initial review of applications to ensure all events are eligible, and to estimate the amount of the potential award, based on the scale, nature, and needs of the event. Complete applications are required to make these determinations. As noted, **incomplete applications will not be eligible for funding.**

5. Committee Review

A decision committee consisting of City staff will review all eligible applications.

6. Grant Awards Announced

If you are awarded a grant, you must sign an acceptance form agreeing to hold the event consistent with the description and details listed in your application and the Special Event Grant Program guidelines, and in compliance with all City of Alameda rules, regulations and permit conditions.

7. Secure Special Event Permit, and – if applicable – License Agreement

A Special Event permit must be secured from the City of Alameda. More information about Special Event permits, including applications, [can be found here](#). If your event is planned for public property at Alameda Point, you must also obtain a License Agreement from the City. Please see the [Alameda Point License Agreement](#) guidelines for more information.

Note: Award of a SEPGP grant does not operate as or guarantee issuance of a Special Event permit and/or License agreement. These must be applied for separately and issued prior to the event. Events that do not secure a permit or (if applicable) a license agreement will not receive any award funding.

8. Hold Event and Submit for Reimbursement

After the event is completed, please submit for reimbursement of any external costs awarded, providing copies of receipts, cancelled checks, or other proof-of-payment documentation. Awarded costs that are internal to the City will be reimbursed internally – applicants will not need to pay and then request reimbursement.

Application Submission Process

Please submit an electronic copy of your application to agehrke@alamedaca.gov.

Evaluation Criteria

SEPGP Applications will be evaluated according to the following criteria, in the context of the applicant's overall goals and the purpose and goals of the SEPGP:

- **Event Narrative and Significance - 50% (Section 4 of application)**
 - Clarity of the event's nature, structure and vision and how well the event relates to the applicant's mission, purpose and goals.
 - How well the event components demonstrate support of SEPGP program goals:
 - Enhance economic development;
 - Encourage inclusive community engagement; and
 - Promote a diverse range of arts and cultural experiences.
 - Direct community benefit provided through fundraising, volunteer drives, services, and/or other potential benefits.
- **Organizational Capabilities and Event Execution – 50% (Section 5 of application)**
 - Extent of diversified financial support and in-kind contributions and/or volunteer resources used to leverage the City's grant funding;
 - Ability and experience in producing a well-planned and safe event;
 - Depth of managerial and organizational capacity.

Priority Events

The Downtown Alameda Business Association (DABA), the West Alameda Business Association (WABA), and the City of Alameda (City) will have priority for grant funding for up to three events per year per organization. This reflects the economic importance of drawing local and regional foot traffic to Alameda's downtowns, as well as the long-running informal support the business associations have

received from the City for their flagship events.

If DABA or WABA do not have three events planned, they may allocate their grant priority to a community event held within or adjacent to their district.

In order to receive award funding, DABA, WABA and the City must submit an application as part of the general grant cycle for each of their events. DABA and WABA applications will be subject to the evaluation criteria included herein and must receive an overall score of at least 7 points (as determined by City staff) for funding consideration.

Rating System

When evaluating each criterion, members of the decision committee will use the following 10-point scale, which is then translated to the appropriate weight for each criterion. An application must receive an overall score of at least 7 points for funding consideration.

- **Exceptionally Responsive (9 –10 points)**
 - Considerably exceeds expectations;
 - Demonstrates historical proof that performance is or will be outstanding;
 - Strongly merits funding.
- **Very Responsive (7 - 8 points)**
 - Meets and somewhat exceeds expectations;
 - Criterion is successfully fulfilled, and performance is above the norm;
 - Merits funding.
- **Basically Responsive (5 - 6 points)**
 - Meets the generally accepted standards of the criterion;
 - Needs improvement in order to merit any funding.
- **Minimally Responsive (3 - 4 points)**
 - Weak response to the criterion;
 - Does not demonstrate that performance meets generally accepted standards;
 - Does not merit funding.
- **Unresponsive (0 – 2 points)**
 - Fails to meet the criterion;
 - Does not merit funding.

Final Report

SEPGP grantees must submit a Final Report for the event on a City-provided form (to include a post-event evaluation, attendance and final budget) no later than 90 days after the event is held. Grantees must be current on filing required reports before they can receive grant funding.

Acknowledging City Support

Grant recipients must acknowledge the City's financial support in all appropriate materials and media. The acknowledgement should read, "Supported in part by the City of Alameda" or similar language, unless the City is a part of a list of supporters. In the latter case, the acknowledgement may say simply City of Alameda. Grantees must display the City's logo whenever other sponsor logos are displayed.

Public Nature of Application Materials

Applications submitted for SEPGP become the property of the City of Alameda and shall be

regarded as public records, subject to the California Public Records Act. Any information included in the application, including email addresses, may become public, if requested.

Event Cancellation or Substantial Changes

Event Cancellation

If an event which has been awarded funding is cancelled, the grant will be revoked and all funds received, including internal City costs incurred, must be paid back to the City within 30 days of notification.

Substantial Changes

- If the event is substantially changed from the original proposed activities (as determined by the City Manager or their designee), the grant may be revoked and, if revoked, all funds received, including internal City costs incurred, may be required to be paid back to the City within 30 days of notification.
- If the event is substantially changed from the original proposed activities and requires a greater level of services, materials or assistance then determined in the original application, additional charges may apply.

Exceptions may be made, at the discretion of the City Manager or their designee, for cancellation or changes due to a force majeure event.

Unused grant funding cannot be carried forward to future events. All funding must be used in the designated fiscal year.

Contact

For questions regarding the Special Event Permit Grant Program, contact agehrke@alamedaca.gov.