

**AN ORDINANCE  
TO BE ENTITLED**

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND DIVISION II, PART 3,  
PUBLIC SAFETY, CHAPTER 6, SPECIAL EVENTS, OF THE  
CODE OF THE CITY OF SAVANNAH TO PROVIDE FOR  
REGULATION OF MAJOR SPECIAL EVENTS; TO PROVIDE  
FOR EFFECTIVE DATES; TO REPEAL ALL ORDINANCES  
IN CONFLICT HEREWITH; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah, Georgia, in regular meeting of Council assembled and pursuant to the lawful authority thereof:

**SECTION 1:** That Article CC, Festivals, of Chapter 1, Business and Occupations, of Part 6, Licensing and Regulation, of Division II of the Code of the City of Savannah shall be deleted in its entirety and reserved for future use.

**SECTION 2:** That Chapter 6, Special Events, of Part 3, Public Safety, of Division II of the Code of the City of Savannah, Georgia shall be amended by adding Article B, Major Special Events, as follows:

ARTICLE B. – MAJOR SPECIAL EVENTS.

Sec. 6-6101. – Title of Article.

This Article shall be known as the Major Special Events Ordinance of 2025.

Sec. 6-6102. – Purpose.

(a) The purpose of this ordinance is to establish a comprehensive and structured framework for the application, planning, management, and execution of Major Special Events in the City of Savannah. These events typically are characterized by their significant scale and impact, necessitating a citywide approach to ensure their success while simultaneously ensuring preservation of order in the interests of public safety.

(b) This ordinance is intended to:

(1) Facilitate Advanced and Detailed Planning: Ensure a predictable and structured application process for Major Special Events; and incorporate extensive and intensive pre-event planning that includes detailed budgeting, risk assessments, and operational checklists.

(2) Manage Core Event Operations Effectively: Establish and implement an event-specific organizational structure based on the Incident Command System (“ICS”) to provide for clear delegation of responsibilities and efficient management across various functional areas impacted by the event.

(3) **Conduct Thorough Post-Event Review:** Implement procedures for post-event activities including reviews, audits, and after-action studies to enhance the planning and execution of future events.

(4) **Ensure Public Safety and Security:** Prioritize the safety and security of the public by planning for worse-case scenarios, including natural disasters, criminal activity, and potential threats, while balancing these concerns with the public's participation in and enjoyment of the event.

(5) **Promote Interagency Cooperation and Community Engagement:** Foster collaboration among various agencies and involve community organizations in the planning process, including coordination with law enforcement, emergency services, transportation authorities, and local businesses.

(6) **Maintain Essential City Services:** Allocate resources to ensure that areas of the city not directly involved in or impacted by the event continue to receive necessary services by effectively managing infrastructure and other city resources.

(7) **Establish Robust Communication Systems:** Develop comprehensive communication systems to facilitate routing coordination and address security-specific needs, ensuring effective dissemination of important safety and security information to all stakeholders.

#### Sec. 6-6103. – Definitions.

(a) *Designated Control Zone:* Refers to a specific zone or zones within the boundaries of a Major Special Event, delineated and governed by event-specific regulations proposed by the City Manager and adopted/authorized by the Mayor and Aldermen by resolution. Within such area(s), regulations may be imposed pertaining to ingress and egress, identification bands verifying eligibility to purchase and possess alcoholic beverages, enhanced restrictions and management of sound amplification devices, enhanced security protocols, and regulatory oversight of entertainment offerings.

(b) *Major Special Event:* Refers to an event of significant scale and impact, requiring a citywide approach for its effective and secure execution. Such events may include, but not be limited to, large cultural festivals, large political gatherings, major sporting events, or any large-scale assembly that commands substantial city resources and attention for its coordination and management. The City Manager is hereby vested with authority to recommend designation of an event as a Major Special Event, which shall be subject to authorization by the Mayor and Aldermen by resolution.

(c) *Special Event Permit:* Refers to the permit issued pursuant to the provisions of Article A of this Chapter.

Sec. 6-6104. – Designation of a Major Special Event.

Upon the recommendation of the City Manager, the Mayor and Aldermen are hereby empowered to formally recognize and designate Major Special Events within the City of Savannah, which shall occur by resolution delineating event-specific rules and regulations consistent with this Article governing each such designated event. Major Special Events may include, but are not limited to, the St. Patrick's Day parade and related events.

Sec. 6-6105. – Permit Required.

All Major Special Events must apply for and receive a Special Event Permit pursuant to Article A of this Chapter.

Sec. 6-6106. – Designation of an Event Manager.

(a) Authority to Designate a Third-Party Event Manager. The Mayor and Aldermen are hereby empowered, but not required, to designate a third party, non-profit, tax-exempt organization to organize and manage activities associated with and conducted within the designated boundaries of a Major Special Event. This designation may include authorization to collect and expend funds related to the event.

(b) Financial Management and Auditing Requirements.

(1) Audit and Reporting: Any entity designated as an Event Manager shall conduct a comprehensive audit, which shall be provided in written form to the City Manager within sixty calendar days of the conclusion of the Major Special Event. The audit shall include a full accounting of all revenues and expenditures associated with the event. The entity shall maintain and provide access to all supporting documentation and provide it the City Manager, or his/her designee, upon request.

(2) Wristband and Identification Sales Reporting: Where an entity has been designated as an Event Manager and authorized to collect fees from the sale of wristbands or other identification issued to denote an individual may lawfully possess or consume alcoholic beverages, the entity shall, within thirty calendar days following the conclusion of the event:

(A) Submit a detailed and written report of all sales to the City Manager, which shall be certified by a certified public accountant.

(B) The report shall include the total number of wristbands or identification items sold.

(C) Return all unsold wristbands or other identification items.

(D) Remit the predetermined fee for each wristband or identification item sold, including any unaccounted-for items.

(c) Insurance Requirements:

(1) Liability Insurance: A designated Event Manager shall obtain maintain special events liability insurance for all activities associated with the event, which shall provide a minimum single-limit coverage of \$2,000,0000.

(2) Certificate of Insurance: The Event Manager shall identify *The Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah* as a certificate holder, which certificate shall be obtained and provided to the City Manager no later than five days prior to the Major Special Event. The certificate should be in standard form and include a provision notifying the City within ten days of any termination of coverage.

Sec. 6-6107. – Designation and Management of a Control Zone.

(a) Upon recommendation of the City Manager, the Mayor and Aldermen are hereby vested with the authority to designate one or more Control Zones within the boundaries of a Major Special Event by resolution. Once designated, the City Manager shall be vested with comprehensive authority to implement and enforce regulations and controls necessary to ensure the safety, orderliness, and success of a Major Special Event.

(b) Such regulations and controls may include, but are not limited to:

(1) Access Control: The erection of fencing or barriers around each Control Zone with point of entry/exit gates intended to control and regulate access.

(2) Event Signage: The placement of readily apparent signage to delineate the boundaries of the Control Zone and to inform of pertinent restrictions.

(3) Identification Items: The issuance of wristbands or other forms of identification to qualified individuals, which qualifying considerations may include prohibitions on certain items deemed a threat to public safety.

(4) Alcoholic Beverage Consumption Identification: The issuance of wristbands or similar identifiers for individuals 21 years of age or older to authorize their ability to purchase and possess alcoholic beverages within the Control Zone. Fees may be imposed for such wristbands or similar identifiers, which shall be set prior to the start of the Major Special Event and shall be uniform. Establishments selling or serving

alcoholic beverages shall verify the age of individuals before service, wristband or similar identifier notwithstanding, and shall be prohibited from serving alcohol to noticeably intoxicated persons.

(5) **To Go Cup Zone:** The City Manager may expand or contract the zone established by the Alcoholic Beverage Ordinance commonly referred to as the “To Go Cup” zone.

(6) **Such Other Measures Deemed Necessary and Appropriate:** The City Manager may impose additional measures as may be necessary and appropriate to address the unique needs of each event, which shall be designed and implemented to serve the interests of public safety, enjoyment, and regulatory compliance.

**Sec. 6-6108. – Restrictions on Motor Coach Permits.**

(a) The city will not issue parking permits for motor coaches within the “To Go Cup” zone or any designated Control Zone during a Major Special Event. This ban is intended to facilitate effective traffic management and protect public safety.

(b) Exceptions apply to transportation service entities providing shuttle service. Such companies shall register and coordinate with city staff and shall submit detailed information identifying routes, pick up/drop off locations, and schedules.

**Sec. 6-6109. – Major Special Event Offenses.**

(a) **Private Port-a-Johns:** Private portable human waste receptacles (a/k/a Port-a-Johns) shall not be placed on any public right-of-way within the Major Special Event zone except those areas specifically designated by the City Manager for such placement. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, all streets, sidewalks, parks, and squares and further includes, but is not limited to, placement upon vehicles and/or trailers situated on or within the public right-of-way. Any person found to be in violation of this section shall be subject to a fine of \$500 per occurrence.

(b) **Private Property on Public Right-of-Way:** Placement of personal property on the right-of-way is prohibited before 6AM on any day of any event to which this ordinance applies unless otherwise authorized by the City Manager. Any person found to be in violations of this section shall be subject to a fine of \$100 per occurrence.

(c) **Illegal Dumping and Littering:** Any person found to be in violation of The City of Savannah’s Clean Community Ordinance, Section 4-2023, et seq., during a Major Special Event shall be subject to a fine of \$200 per occurrence.

**(d) Noise Ordinance Violation:** Any person found to be in violation of Section 9-2034, Noise prohibited, Section 9-2035, Specific activities prohibited, or Section 9-2036, Regulation of sound equipment and sound amplifying equipment, during a Major Special Event shall be subject to a fine of \$500 for the first violation, \$750 for the second violation, and \$1,000 for the third violation.

Sec. 6-6110. – Revocation.

The City of Savannah hereby retains the authority to revoke a Special Event Permit at any time if conditions arise, which, in the sole discretion of city officials, present an imminent or undue danger to the public, or if the Major Special Event fails to comply with the terms and conditions associated with the permit.

Sec. 6-6111. – Severability.

Should any section, provision, or clause of any part of this Article be declared invalid, void, or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, or if the provisions of any part of this Article as applied to a particular situation or set of circumstances be declared invalid, void, or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such declaration shall not be construed to affect portions of this Article not so declared. It is hereby declared as the intent of the city that this Article would have been adopted had any such invalid, void or unconstitutional portion not been included herein.

**SECTION 3:** All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

**SECTION 4:** The foregoing revisions shall become effective upon the Mayor affixing his signature hereto

ADOPTED AND APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

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Van R. Johnson II, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Mark Massey, Clerk of Council