Cannabis Special Events

Ordinance – First Reading

City Council Meeting
March 24, 2026

CITY OF LONG BEACH



Timeline

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August 6, 2024

The City Council requested the Office of Cannabis Oversight and relevant departments to conduct a feasibility study on hosting cannabis special events within City limits, including types of appropriate venues, and report back with Council presentation in 60 days.

October 22, 2024

The City Council received a presentation from the Office of Cannabis Oversight providing an update on the cannabis special events feasibility study. This presentation included a summary of state regulations, examples of local regulations, community survey results, virtual roundtable discussions, potential public health impacts, policy considerations, and next steps.

Timeline

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January 23, 2025

The Office of Cannabis Oversight released a memorandum to the City Council with the full results of the feasibility study.

April 15, 2025

The City Council requested the City Attorney to prepare a draft ordinance to amend Chapter 5.92 and Chapter 8.68 of the LBMC to authorize cannabis special events, following the successful completion of the meet and confer process with impacted labor groups. This request stipulated that special event permits should be limited to 12 per year per individual, business entity, business owner, and event organizer or promoter and require an Equity Plan as determined by the Office of Cannabis Oversight and Special Events & Filming.

Timeline

CITY OF LONG BEACH

March 24, 2026

Recommendation to declare an ordinance amending Long Beach Municipal Code (LBMC) Section 5.92.030, Section 8.68.160, Section 8.68.170 and adding Division XIII to Chapter 5.92 (Adult Use Cannabis Business and Activities); all relating to the regulation of cannabis special events, read the first time, and laid over to the next regular meeting of the City Council for final reading; and,

Adopt a resolution setting twelve as the maximum number of cannabis special event permits that may be issued to each cannabis event organizer per year.

Meet & Confer



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Meet and Confer Process

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Obligation

- An ordinance to permit cannabis special events would have an impact on City employee working conditions.
- As a result, before any Ordinance updates can be considered and approved by the City Council, the City has an obligation to notice all impacted employee associations prior to approval and implementation of cannabis special events ordinance, in accordance with Section 3505 of the California Government Code. The City would be further required to meet promptly, and in good faith, upon the request of any employee association to discuss foreseeable impacts from a cannabis special events ordinance.

Meet and Confer Process

Completion

- **August 4, 2025 –** The City notified all impacted employee associations of its intent to authorize cannabis special events. International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers (IAM), Long Beach Management Association (LBMA), and Long Beach Police Officers Association (POA) required meetings to discuss their concerns.
- Concerns of potential exposure to cannabis smoke were addressed by delineating where staff would be physically located in proximity to any cannabis consumption area, as well as ensuring the proper personal protective equipment be available for all staff.
- **January 27, 2026 –** The matter was considered closed for all employee associations.

Proposed Ordinance & Resolution



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Proposed Ordinance

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Adding New Definitions to Section 5.92.030

- **Cannabis Special Event Organizer –** a person who authorized by the Department of Cannabis Control to hold a cannabis event in accordance with the California Code of Regulations, Title 4, Chapter 5.

- **Cannabis Special Event Vendor –** a “dispensary” or “retailer” licensed by the City who is authorized to sell “cannabis goods” at a cannabis special event.

Proposed Ordinance

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Adding Division XIII to Chapter 5.92

Permit & Application

- **Special Event Permit** is required if the event is to take place in, on or upon any City street, sidewalk, alley, park, way, pier, public place, public property or public right-of-way which is owned or controlled by the City.
- **Occasional Event Permit** is required if the event is to take place on private property.
- In addition to a local permit, the cannabis special event organizer must obtain a *Cannabis Event Organizer License* and *Temporary Cannabis Event License* from the Department of Cannabis Control.

Proposed Ordinance

CITY OF LONG BEACH

Adding Division XIII to Chapter 5.92

Compliance with Department of Cannabis Control Regulations

- Temporary cannabis events are defined as multi-day events, ranging from one to four days, where cannabis can be sold and consumed.
- Temporary cannabis events **may only be attended by persons 21 years of age or older.**
- Cannabis goods **may only be sold by a licensed cannabis retailer** at a temporary cannabis event.
- Temporary cannabis events may only be held at a county fair event, district agricultural association event, or **at another venue expressly approved by a local jurisdiction**.

Proposed Ordinance

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Potential Locations – Public Property

- In alignment with existing special event permit practices, staff does not recommend designating in the ordinance specific venues or sites for cannabis special events due to varying factors like event type and size.
- **Common special event venues include** the Queen Mary, Marina Green Park, Rainbow Lagoon, Shoreline Park, Long Beach Convention & Entertainment Center, and Long Beach Amphitheater (coming soon).
- Venue or site approval is not guaranteed and will be dependent on the cannabis special event organizer's ability to meet local and state regulations.

Note:

Smoking of cannabis goods cannot take place within 1,000 feet of a school, daycare center, or youth center while children are present, and where smoking tobacco is prohibited.

Proposed Ordinance

Potential Locations – Private Property

- Cannabis special events on private property shall apply for an occasional event permit and adhere to all requirements stipulated under Section 5.72.130 of the LBMC. This includes not disturbing the peace and quiet of the neighborhood.
- An **Occasional Event Permit (OEP)** is a one (1) day permit for Long Beach businesses without an annual entertainment permit **to have entertainment or live music on a business' private property**. An occasional event permit cannot be issued if the location is a private residence.
- Should any of the event affect public property (e.g., attendees lining up on sidewalk, impacts neighborhood parking, etc.), organizer must apply for Special Event permit.

Proposed Ordinance

CITY OF LONG BEACH

Adding Division XIII to Chapter 5.92

Equity Plan

The cannabis special event organizer shall submit an Equity Plan as part of their special event permit application. The plan must outline how the organizer will support verified equity applicants and equity businesses.

Support strategies may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Offer reduced event vendor fees, exhibitor fees, booth fees, or sponsor fees
- Display and sell cannabis products manufactured by verified equity businesses
- Allocate vendor spaces for licensed equity dispensaries (retailers)
- Provide mentorship opportunities during event day

Proposed Ordinance

CITY OF LONG BEACH

Adding Division XIII to Chapter 5.92

Local Retailer Requirements

- **All sales of cannabis goods at cannabis special events shall only be conducted by a cannabis retailer licensed in the City of Long Beach.**
- Cannabis retailers who participate as vendors must report all sales from the cannabis special event as part of their regular quarterly gross receipt reporting and remittance to the City.

Note:

The cannabis special event organizer could be an outside entity (not local to Long Beach), but the vendors selected to conduct sales of cannabis goods at the special event must have a cannabis retail license in Long Beach. This exclusivity is intended to help support local cannabis retailers through new businesses opportunities and expand their consumer base to customers who may not otherwise purchase their cannabis goods in Long Beach.

Proposed Ordinance

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Adding Division XIII to Chapter 5.92 and Modifying Chapter 8.68

Temporary Waiver of Smoking in Public Places

- For the duration of the event, a cannabis special event shall be exempt from the City's *Smoking in Public Places* ordinance (Chapter 8.68) which prohibits the smoking of tobacco, or any other weed or plant, in public places and places of employment.

- This temporary waiver to allowing smoking at cannabis special events is reflected in the proposed Division XIII to Chapter 5.92 as well as Section 8.68.160 and Section 8.68.170 of the LBMC.

Proposed Ordinance

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Adding Division XIII to Chapter 5.92

Promotion of Responsible Cannabis Consumption

- The cannabis special event organizer shall be responsible for promoting responsible cannabis consumption and **safe alternatives to driving, including ride-share options or designated drivers**.

- Printed signage shall be posted in areas with high visibility at the cannabis special event. In addition to onsite signage, digital promotion shall be advertised in advance of the cannabis special event.

Proposed Ordinance

CITY OF LONG BEACH

Adding Division XIII to Chapter 5.92

Number of Special Events Permits Per Year

- The City Council may adopt a resolution, at its discretion, to designate the maximum number of special events permits that may be issued to each cannabis special event organizer each year.
- The actual number of special events approved will depend on availability and event details and may not reach the maximum allowed number of permits.

Note:

Based on previous direction from the City Council, staff is proposing setting the maximum at twelve (12) by way of a companion resolution to tonight's first reading of the ordinance. This is intended to provide flexibility should the City Council decide in the future to increase or decrease the maximum number of permits per special event organizer per year.

Proposed Ordinance

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Adding Division XIII to Chapter 5.92

Enforcement

- **Require cannabis sales or consumption to cease**, at any time during the event, to protect public health or safety and safeguard compliance with applicable State and City laws and regulations.
- **Require the cannabis special event organizer to expel an event participant** if they are found selling cannabis, cannabis products, or cannabis-related accessories in a manner inconsistent with applicable State or City laws and regulations.

Note:

Cannabis special event organizers and vendors will be subject to enforcement and penalties listed under Chapter 5.60 and Chapter 5.92.

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Thank you!

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Deputy City Attorney