

PROPOSED PIEDMONT PARK EVENTS POLICIES

Executive Summary

In the summer of 1994, a historic effort was underway to draft a new Master Plan for Piedmont Park. The city departments of Planning and Parks & Recreation, the Piedmont Park Advisory Committee, the Piedmont Park Conservancy, and the design firm of EDC Pickering spent months drafting the plan, which was adopted by the Mayor and City Council in December of 1995.

The Master Plan called for the formation of a Special Events Advisory Committee “to address the complex issues of special events in Piedmont Park”, with the stated goal of preserving some events in the park, while achieving its primary goal of renewing the green space. These proposed policies are believed to be fair, impartial, and legally defensible. The key points of these proposed policies are:

1. Events are required to use turf-protection techniques.
2. Large events are restricted during the prime growing months.
3. Large events are rotated among the large grassy park areas.
4. Large-scale vending is restricted to the *Structured Program Area* of the park. In other areas of the park, creative small-scale vending is encouraged, for example, pushcarts and vendors on foot.
5. New documents, which are proposed as additions to the Master Plan, expand on the policies in the existing **Outdoor Festivals Ordinance**.
 - A. The **Piedmont Park Permit Policy** is designed to be used by the Special Events Coordinator when scheduling events.
 - B. The **Piedmont Park Event Sponsor Manual** sets forth the rules which event organizers must follow. It also contains:
 - New **Fees and Bonding** requirements for events in Piedmont Park
 - An **Event Application** specifically for events In Piedmont Park.
6. Events are required to improve:
 - A. Public transportation and traffic planning
 - B. Planning and location of event objects
 - C. Setup and breakdown
 - D. Prevention of damage
 - E. Cleanup
 - F. Vehicle and parking issues.
7. The largest events are required to advertise public transportation.
8. Bonding requirements are added for events in Piedmont Park. A Restoration Fee is instituted, in addition to the regular Permit Fee.

9. With the preceding measures in place, the moratorium on new large events can be lifted and the maximum number per year raised to 9.
10. While large events are accommodated, smaller events are specifically encouraged.

PIEDMONT PARK PERMITS POLICY

SECTION 1 – GOAL

In accordance with the Piedmont Park Master plan, approved by the Mayor and City Council of Atlanta, the goal of this events permitting policy is to promote Piedmont Park as a healthy green space and a peaceful nature experience, while maintaining cultural and sporting events in the following manner:

- spreading out their frequency
- diversifying their appeal
- lessening their environmental impact
- rotating the use of green space
- lessening their impact on other park users
- lessening their impact on the surrounding neighborhoods
- preserving some quiet time in the park.

SECTION 2 – ADMINISTRATION

This document is intended for use by the city’s Chief of Staff and Special Events Coordinator, who permit all events in Atlanta (refer to **City of Atlanta Outdoor Festival Ordinance**). This policy sets forth additional requirements for events in Piedmont Park and becomes part of the Piedmont Park Master Plan.

SECTION 3 - PARK ILLUSTRATION #1

Illustration #1 (taken from the Master Plan, page 26), indicates how park usage is to be separated by location.

SECTION 4 – DEFINITIONS

Part 1 - Common Terms. In this document, the following terms are used for consistency:

“*Event*” (also known as “*Special Event*” or “*Outdoor Festival*”); for the purposes of this policy, the term “event” is used to describe any type of gathering, festival, sporting or cultural activity with certain characteristics that affect the park, other park users, and/or surrounding neighborhoods. The size of an event shall be determined by the Special Events Coordinator, based on:

- the anticipated number of participants and spectators for the duration of the event OR
- the historical number attending the same or similar event in the past.

Note: The total count of people expected over the duration of an entire event (for example, a two-day event) is used to determine the size.

1. A “*Large*” event in Piedmont Park is any Class A, B, C or D event, as defined in the Outdoor Festivals Ordinance.
2. A “*Small*” event in Piedmont Park is any Class E event which has the following qualities:
 - Includes 100 to 2,000 people OR
 - includes amplified sound.

3. A “*Non-Event*” in this document is any scheduled or unscheduled gathering which has the following qualities:
 - includes 1 to 100 people AND
 - does not include tents or other large objects on turf AND
 - does not include amplified sound.

Note: Non-events are still subject to the city laws and rules governing large and small events, relating to safety, trash disposal, maintenance of park property, charcoal grilling, etc.

Examples of Non-events:

- Regular sporting events on the ball fields
- Small picnics with no tents and no amplified sound
- Small gatherings in the visitor’s Center or other center.

Part 2-Special Terms. The following terms, taken from the Master Plan, are *italicized* when used in this document:

1. The “*Structured Program Area*” (area C in the illustration) is the portion of the park intended for gatherings and structured activities. This area includes:
 - the Oval (ball fields)
 - the bath house
 - the turf and paved surfaces between the Oval and the bath house
 - the picnic shelters and grill
 - the steps and raised hard surface often called the “poets’/musicians’ plaza”.
2. The “*Unstructured Program Area*” (area A in the illustration) is the portion of the park intended for unstructured uses, both active and passive. This area includes:
 - the Tenth Street Meadow
 - Oak Hill
 - the two newly acquired properties (formerly Halpern and West)
3. The “*Passive Use Areas*” (area B in the Illustration) are the portions of the park intended for strictly passive uses. These include:
 - the Front Lawn
 - the Lake and lake edge
 - the Wildflower Meadow
 - the North Woods

SECTION 5 - EVENT SELECTION

1. All prospective Piedmont Park events shall be evaluated by the Chief of Staff in conjunction with the city’s Special Events Coordinator. The city’s existing Outdoor Festivals Ordinance charges these officials with permitting events in a fair and impartial manner, taking into account:
 - effect on the environment
 - public health and safety

- inconvenience to the public
 - benefits to the community
 - history, if any, of event applicants
 - city budget and manpower considerations.
2. **Section 6 - Event Restrictions** imposes limits on the number and frequency of events in Piedmont Park, limits which are not addressed in the existing ordinance.
 3. If two or more event applications are received requesting Piedmont Park for the same time period, and neither event is evaluated higher or lower based on the policies in the ordinance, the event for that time period shall be decided by using a content-neutral selection system.

SECTION 6 - EVENT RESTRICTIONS

Part 1 - Number of Events Permitted. To prevent overuse of Piedmont Park, events in the park shall be controlled as to their:

1. Impact
 2. Duration
 3. Frequency
 4. Location
1. **Impact.** To protect the park during the prime growing seasons from the effects of large events, a maximum of nine large events per year shall be permitted, as follows:
 - A. **April and October:** No more than one large event shall be permitted in these months.
 - B. **May through September:** No more than one large event every three weeks shall be permitted in these months.
 - C. **November through March:** No large events shall be permitted in these months.
 2. **Duration.** To preserve the park and to limit disruption to the surrounding neighborhoods:
 - A. **Days:** An event shall last a maximum of three days, not including setup and breakdown. The preferred length for most events is one or two days. See “Large Event” and “Small Event” in Section 4 - Definitions.
 - B. **Time:** An event shall last a maximum of 12 hours in a single day. The preferred length for most events is 8 hours.
 3. **Frequency.** To limit neighborhood disruption and to allow some *non-event* days in the park on the weekends:
 - A. **Total Days:** No more than 3 days of large and small events shall be permitted in any week.
 - B. **Weekends:** No more than half of the Saturdays and Sundays in any month shall be permitted for large and small events.
 4. **Location.** To spread out the impact of events on areas of the park and to reserve some park spaces for activities by non-event park users:

- A. **Rotation:** Large events shall be rotated sequentially among Oak Hill and the Tenth Street Meadow, when those areas are available and healthy (see B - **Exclusions**). For example: if a festival is held on Oak Hill, then the next large event shall be held at the Tenth Street Meadow.
- B. **Exclusions:** The parks department may exclude a park area from being permitted for an event whenever drainage, grounds maintenance or other needs prevail. At the discretion of the parks department, the Oval may be used for an event when conditions allow.
- C. **Areas Utilized:** Each event permit will be only for the park area(s) deemed necessary for the size and purpose of the event.

Part 2 - Vending Restrictions. Recognizing the need to control commercial activity in the park, three tiers of vending are defined. Large-scale vending equipment is confined to the *Structured Program Area*.

Note: Refer to the **Event Sponsor Manual** for details on vending restrictions.

Part 3 - Turf Protection. Events are required to use extensive turf-protection techniques, including synthetic turf cover and/or platforms.

Note: Refer to the **Event Sponsor Manual** for details on turf protection.

SECTION 7 - EVENT PROCEDURES AND DOCUMENTS

Part 1 - Permit Applications, Fees and Bonding. All events shall be permitted and bonded in advance, using requirements in the **Event Sponsor Manual**.

Part 2 - Rules And Regulation. All events in Piedmont Park shall adhere to the policies contained in the Event Sponsor Manual.

Part 3 - Adherence to Other City Policies. All events in Piedmont Park shall adhere to existing city policies including:

1. **Alcohol Requirements:** Refer to **Alcoholic Beverage License**, included in the Outdoor Festivals Ordinance.
2. **Food Requirements:** Refer to **Fulton County Board of Health Regulations**, included in the Outdoor Festivals Ordinance.
3. **Street Closings:** Refer to the Outdoor Festivals Ordinance for requirements.
4. **Other Existing Policies:** Events in Piedmont Park shall adhere to all policies in the Outdoor Festivals Ordinance, which are not specifically addressed here.

SECTION 8 - LONG-TERM POLICIES RELATED TO EVENTS

Part 1 - Future Amphitheatre. These policies shall go into effect with the proposed amphitheatre:

1. Create an event-compatible area of the park:
 - A. As described on page 23 of the Master Plan, construct a 2,000-seat amphitheatre at the site of the existing swimming pool, when the pool can be replaced.
 - B. Convert the bath house into a cultural center with light concessions.

- C. To accommodate concessions for large events, improve electricity (underground) to the *Structured Program Area*.
2. Require small events to use the amphitheatre for all staged activities.
3. Encourage large events to use the amphitheatre for portions of the events.
4. Permit new small events at the amphitheatre, with the goals of:
 - staggering their frequency throughout the year
 - utilizing weekdays and weekday evenings, which are under-used
 - appealing to a diverse populace
 - providing cultural experiences, which are not currently available in a park setting.

Part 2 - Policies Regarding Other Enhancements.

1. No new concrete, asphalt, gravel or other similar surfaces shall be added to the park for event usage.
2. No permanent stages or other structures for events shall be erected other than the proposed amphitheatre. Temporary stages are allowed on Oak Hill, the Tenth Street Meadow or the Oval only during events.
3. No electrical wiring shall be constructed for event usage outside of the *Structured Program Area*. Exceptions:
 - A. This restriction does not affect new wiring for park lighting.
 - B. For event rotation, an area for an event stage is needed in the Meadow, facing away from residential areas. New wiring is allowed for this stage area.

Part 3 - Future Transportation Improvements.

1. The drop-off zone proposed by the Master Plan for Piedmont Avenue should be implemented, if feasible, by the Traffic Department.
2. The number of bicycle racks should be increased to encourage bicycling as alternate transportation.
3. The park should be linked to existing and proposed bicycle routes and paths, including Freedom Park and the Rails to Trails program.

PIEDMONT PARK EVENT SPONSOR MANUAL

SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

This document is intended for use by event organizers and sponsors. It supplements the City of Atlanta **Outdoor Festivals Ordinance** with additional regulations for events held in Piedmont Park and becomes part of the Piedmont Park Master Plan.

SECTION 2 – DEFINITIONS

The following terms are *italicized* when referred to in this document:

1. An “***Event Object***” is anything placed in the park specifically for an event, including:
 - a tent or booth
 - a stage or platform
 - a portable toilet
 - a piece of equipment
 - a food, drink or vending setup
 - a pushcart or other portable object
 - a statue or artwork
 - an attraction of any kind
2. “***Professional Turf Cover***” is a nylon mesh or other synthetic specifically designed to be rolled onto natural turf in stadiums, parks, etc. This is the only material that highly protects turf during events. It is sold by several manufacturers. Professional turf cover is usually manufactured in 15-foot-wide rolls, and can be cut in lengths up to 200 feet. It is very durable, reusable for 10 years or more, easy to roll out and simple to store. This material could be shared by multiple events. At the time this material was researched, cost estimates were about \$1 per square foot for a 60,000 square foot order, but prices are subject to change.
3. “***Platform***” is a temporary wooden, metal or other surface erected as a stage or as the flooring to a tent or booth. Platforms must be at least six inches above a natural surface, and must conform to the requirements of the City of Atlanta Bureau of Buildings (refer to the Outdoor Festivals Ordinance).

SECTION 3 - PARK ILLUSTRATION #2

Illustration #2 shows an enlargement of the *Structured Program Area* of the park.

SECTION 4 - PERMITS, FEES AND BONDS

1. Permits: The **Piedmont Park Permit Application** document shall be used for all events in Piedmont Park.

Fees and Bonding: Permit fees and bonds are shown in the table below. Note that these fees and bonds are not proposed for all city events, only Piedmont Park events.

- A. **Attendance** is the expected total number of people over the duration of an event: this number should take into account multi-day events.
- B. **Extra Personnel Hours** is a category taken unchanged from the existing Outdoor Festivals ordinance.
- C. **Festival Class** is a category taken unchanged from the existing Outdoor Festivals Ordinance.
- D. **The Application Fee** is a fee the city charges for handling an event application.
- E. **The Permit Fee** goes into the General Fund to compensate for city expenses. The amounts shown are taken unchanged from the existing Outdoor Festivals Ordinance.
- F. **The Performance/Damage/Sanitation Bond** replaces the Sanitation Deposit Fee in the existing Outdoor Festivals Ordinance. This is a monetary deposit paid as collateral to ensure that the event proceeds as agreed to. The parks department, in conjunction with the Special Events Coordinator, shall evaluate each event’s performance. If the city finds violations or damage from an event, all or part of the bond will be deposited into the existing Piedmont Park Trust Account Those funds will be dispersed from the trust account to repair or dean the park, when applicable. If there are no violations or damage from an event, the bond will be returned in full.
- G. **The Restoration Fee** (new) shall be charged to each event in addition to the permit Fee. It is not refundable. The amount shown represents an average of 10 cents per attendee. This money is deposited in existing **Piedmont Park Trust Account** for the restoration of Piedmont Park. The Parks Department shall oversee the use of these funds for park restoration.

TABLE 1. FEES AND BONDS

Attendance	Extra Personnel Hours	Festival Class	Application Fee	Permit Fee	Restoration Fee	Performance/ Damage/ Sanitation Bond
50,000+	100-300	A	\$50	\$6,000	\$5,000	\$10,000
20,000-50,000	50-100	B	\$50	\$2,000	\$3,500	\$7,000
10,000-20,000	25-50	C	\$50	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$3,000
2,000-10,000	3-25	D	\$50	\$500	\$600	\$1200
100-2,000	3	E	\$50	\$75	\$125	\$250

SECTION 5 - EVENT REQUIREMENTS The following policies shall be followed for all park events. Failure to comply shall result in forfeiture of all or part of the performance bond.

1. **Program Areas.** Illustration #2 depicts the *Structured Program Area*. (Refer to the **Piedmont Park Permit Policy** for definitions of all Program Areas.) Following are the policies regarding the location of *event objects*:

- A. Large-scale vending shall be located in the *Structured Program Area*. The *Structured Program Area*, not including the ball fields, measures approximately 109,00 square feet. It contains about equal amounts of hardscape and turf. The number of objects this area can accommodate depends on the size and purpose of each object. The hardscape should be utilized first. Then, large objects should be placed on the turf near one of the many roadways criss-crossing this area, so that patrons can line up on the hardscape. Turf protection must be used under each object, so as not to crush the grass.
- B. When any *event object* is on natural turf anywhere in the park, the turf must be protected in accordance with item **4 - Turf Protection**.
- C. Additional vending objects, attractions and tents may be placed in the parking lots, when available.
- D. Additional vending objects, attractions and tents may be placed on Tenth Street, subject to approved street closing.
- E. The following non-vending *event objects* may be located on the turf in the *Unstructured Program Area* if done in accordance with item **4 - Turf Protection**:
 - 1) art objects
 - 2) temporary stage and sound equipment
 - 3) first aid, safety and “cooldown” booths, tents and water stations
 - 4) up to 10 sponsor tents or booths.
- F. Small tents and booths (maximum size of 10 feet deep) may be placed on the Lake Road. These objects:
 - 1) must be dispersed on the road, with no more than 50 feet of tents/booths for every 100-foot length of roadway
 - 2) must not require electrical wiring
 - 3) may not be objects which would generate long lines of people, such as food and drink vendors
 - 4) must utilize hardscape or turf protection for any items which are on side or behind the tent or booth rather than inside.

2. **Vending.**

- A. Vending (the sale of any food or non-food items) in Piedmont Park shall take place:
 - 1) only in conjunction with a permitted event AND
 - 2) for a maximum of 3 days.
- B. Exceptions to Item A are:
 - 1) concessions at the Tennis Center
 - 2) Conservancy sales and concessions at the Visitors Center and proposed centers
 - 3) everyday pushcart vendors permitted by the city.
- C. Three tiers of vending are encouraged for events:
 - 1) large food and non-food vendors (trucks, booths, tents, etc.)
 - 2) pushcarts
 - 3) vendors on foot.
- D. Large vending setups shall be located only in the *Structured Program Area*.
- E. Pushcarts are allowed on interior roads and hardscape anywhere in the park.
- F. Vendors on foot are allowed anywhere in the park.
- G. The number, location and design of vending setups must be approved by the Special Events Coordinator

3. **Setup And Breakdown.** To protect the park, minimize inconvenience to other park users, and reduce motor vehicle intrusion in the park:
 - A. Setup shall begin no sooner than 48 hours before the start of the event, except for Class A events. Class A (50,000 or more) events shall have a maximum of 4 days to setup.
 - B. Breakdown shall be completed no later than 24 hours after the end of the event, except for Class A events. Class A events shall have a maximum of 48 to breakdown.
 - C. Setup vehicles may be driven and parked on interior roads only during the setup and breakdown periods.
 - D. Setup vehicles shall not be driven onto or parked directly on natural turf. The event may provide *professional turf cover* in order to temporarily travel and park on natural turf during setup and breakdown, subject to the weight limits in item 4 – **Turf Protection**.

4. **Turf Protection.** To protect the natural turf during both an event and the event setup, the following policies shall be followed:
 - A. An *event object* shall be placed on:
 - 1) an existing hard surface in the *Structured Program Area* OR
 - 2) a parking lot (when available) OR
 - 3) an exterior road, if a street closing has been approved OR
 - 4) a six-inch or higher *platform* over natural turf OR
 - 5) professional turf cover over natural turf.
 - B. *Professional turf covers* required over any natural turf where heavy foot traffic is expected. Another surface, such as a plywood walkway, may be placed on top of the turf cover, as this will not damage the grass underneath.
 - C. *Professional turf cover* is not required on natural turf where a crowd sits for a performance.
 - D. An *event object* placed on *professional turf cover* shall not exceed 200 lb. per square foot, which is the average industry weight limit for that product.
 - E. *Professional turf cover* shall be placed before the setup of the object and remain until the end of the event.
 - F. No *event object* shall be placed over exposed tree roots, plants or flowers, even with a *platform* or *professional turf cover*.

5. **Transportation.** The existing Outdoor Festivals Ordinance requires large events to submit a traffic plan. Following are additional requirements for Piedmont Park events.
 - A. All Piedmont Park events shall be free of motor vehicles and parking on interior roads, except during setup and breakdown periods.
 - B. Only event organizers, setup personnel, performers, artists and the disabled shall park in the Tennis Center and Visitors Center parking lots (when available).
 - C. All events which advertise shall advertise mass transit as the preferred mode of transportation in all their advertisements.
 - D. All events which advertise shall also identify and advertise nearby private parking available during the time of the event.
 - E. All Class A and B events (20,000 or more), shall provide a ‘bike parking’ area as part of the transportation plan.

- F. All Class A events shall contact MARTA 90 days in advance of the event to request free shuttle bus service from the Arts Center Station to the park. An exception is made for any event which blocks off the streets between the Arts Center Station and the park. MARTA needs to know the date(s) of the event and the expected number of attendants.
 - G. Events shall adhere to provisions of the Outdoor Festivals Ordinance regarding restricting car access on certain neighborhood streets.
6. **Amplified Sound.** Recognizing the need for times of tranquility in the park and the surrounding neighborhoods:
- A. Amplified sound shall not be allowed unless it was permitted in advance.
 - B. Amplified sound shall not exceed the city's legal decibel level.
 - C. Amplified sound shall not be allowed between 10 p.m. and 10 a.m.
 - D. Speakers for amplified sound shall be faced away from residential areas.
7. **Activities Not Allowed.** No event is allowed to:
- A. Close the park to the public or charge a fee for entry to any area of the park which is normally public.
 - B. Grill at a location other than the picnic shelter grill.
 - C. Dig up or destroy turf or remove any plant.
 - D. Cover any natural surface with sand, shells, straw, etc. (park maintenance may apply these substances for non-event purposes).
 - E. Dump any food, fuel, grease, residue or substance other than small amounts of water or ice.
 - F. Use the *Passive Use Area* for *event objects* or event patrons.