

**To:** Board of County Commissioners (BCC) and Planning Commission (PC)

**From:** Samantha Mott - Senior Planner  
Michael Whitley - Senior Planner  
Denise Ruybal - Special Events Coordinator  
Rebecca Everette - Community Development Director

**Date:** February 11, 2026

**Re:** Land Use Code Amendments - Article 7.0 Special Events

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The objective for this project is to comprehensively review and update Article 7 of the Land Use Code, Special Events, with the goal of completing the process in time for the 2027 special event season. The review includes:

- **APPLICABILITY** – When is a special event permit required?
- **EVENT TYPES** – How should the standards and process vary for different types of events?
- **PERMIT REQUIREMENTS** – What performance criteria and code requirements must be met to receive a permit?
- **LIMITATIONS AND PROHIBITIONS** – Are there any limitations on event activities, hours of operation, location, or types of events?
- **ACCOUNTABILITY** – how should permit conditions be enforced, and how should event organizers be held accountable?

**Current challenges of the Special Event regulations include:**

- “One size fits all” approach to special event permit requirements.
- Evolution in size, length and type of events.
- Code does not fully account for observed impacts.
- Lack of clear guidance for certain code provisions.
- Lack of enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance.

**Current Special Event regulations include:**

- A special event permit shall be required for any special event on property where it is anticipated that the overall attendance will exceed 40 persons.
- There shall be no more than three special events allowed on a property in a calendar year.
- The combined number of days that special events can occur on a property cannot exceed 30 days in any 12 month period.
- There shall be no more than one special event allowed on a property in a calendar month.

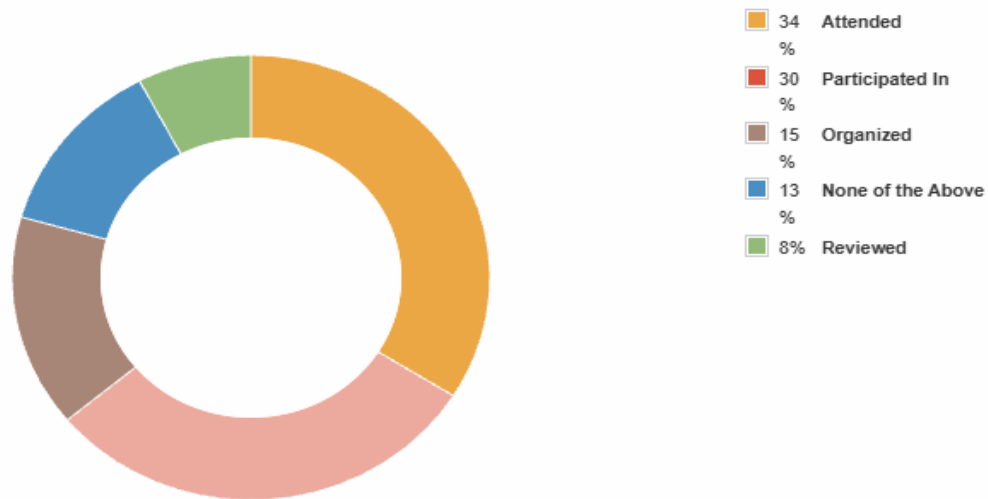
- Special Event Permits are not required for gatherings on property that has received and is subject to an existing land use approval that limits the number, type, and nature of gatherings to be held on the property (i.e., assembly uses).
- The regulations do not vary based on zoning, use, or size.

The first step in the process was to conduct surveys with community members, special event permit reviewers, and special event permit applicants. The survey was available for completion during the month of October 2025. Two hundred thirty-four (234) people responded to the survey. The survey was shared on Larimer County social media, posted on the Community Development and Special Event websites, and emails with the link to the survey were sent to special event reviewers, applicants, community members, and neighbors of special event locations.

**Survey Information:**

VIEWS	PARTICIPANTS	RESPONSES	COMMENTS
1,163	234	2,839	617

Have you ever organized, attended, participated in, or reviewed a permitted special event?



233 respondents

Topics addressed in the survey will be discussed one by one below. They will start with the survey question, followed by questions to consider, a summary of the survey comments, and ending with initial staff recommendations.

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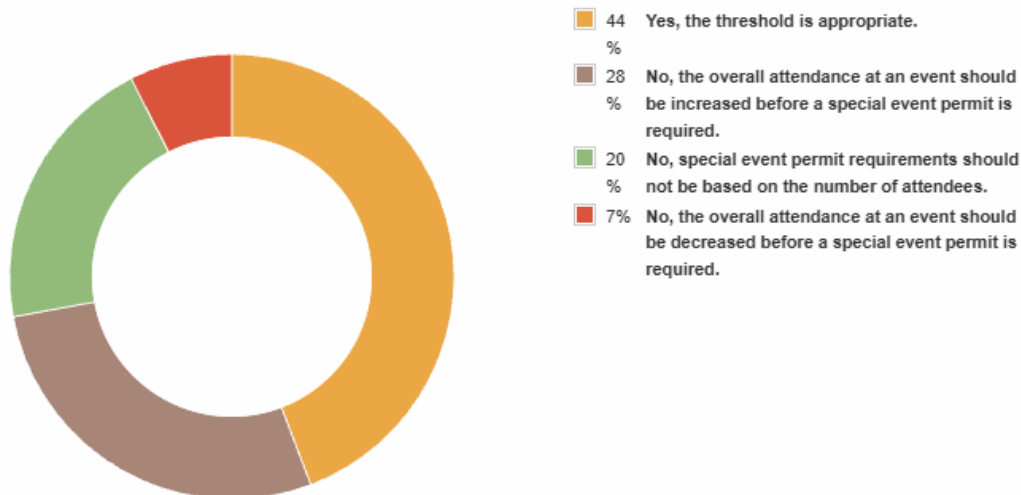
The areas of concern addressed in the survey are as follows:

**1. What threshold should be used to determine the need for a special event permit?**

**Questions for discussion:**

- Is the overall attendance of an event the best threshold to use?
- Should the threshold depend on the type of event?
- Should the location be considered?
- If overall attendance is the threshold used, what should that number be?
- Should the threshold used be different for events held on private property vs commercial property?

Currently, a special event permit is required for an event that will have a total overall attendance exceeding 40 people. Is this an appropriate number?



147 respondents

**Representative Sample of Summary of Survey Comments (See Attachment C for complete comments):**

- Need to consider that the higher number of attendees also brings a larger amount of traffic.
- Parking needs to be considered when determining this number
- The permit requirement should allow for adjustability based on other factors involved such as event, type and size of property. Location, etc.
- Size and location of the property should determine this
- Impact on the neighbors and adjacent area needs to be considered
- 25-100 people
- Need to consider staffing and support as to not impact those supporting an event i.e.: Law enforcement, emergency services, etc.
- Does this number include vendors, volunteers, etc. or just attendees?

**Initial Staff Recommendation:**

- Continue to use overall event attendance as the threshold for determining when a special event permit is required.
- Maintain the 40-person threshold for non-commercial properties but consider increasing the threshold for commercial properties.

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**2. What factors should influence when a special event permit is required?**

**Questions for discussion:**

- Which of these factors should we consider when determining if a Special Event Permit is required?

What factors should influence whether a special event permit should be required?

	1	2	3	4	5
Number of Attendees	17% 1	11% 2	11% 3	17% 4	43% 5
Type of Event	22% 1	9% 2	16% 3	20% 4	33% 5
Length of Event	13% 1	10% 2	20% 3	24% 4	33% 5
Type of property (For example, Residential, Commercial, etc.)	11% 1	4% 2	23% 3	22% 4	40% 5
Property Size	12% 1	16% 2	22% 3	19% 4	31% 5
Location of the property	12% 1	9% 2	23% 3	16% 4	40% 5
Other (please explain below)	47% 1	3% 2	22% 3	6% 4	22% 5

129 responses

**Representative Sample of Summary of Survey Comments (See Attachment C for complete comments):**

- All of the above should be factored in
- Day of the week should be considered

- Proximity to neighbors on private property or business should be considered (ingress/egress, noise, day & night--some people work nights & sleep days, children present, noise and traffic can just be obnoxious).
- Amplified sound should not be allowed
- Consider the location of the event
- Why is the County interfering with private land property owners and what they can do on their property?

**Initial Staff Recommendation:**

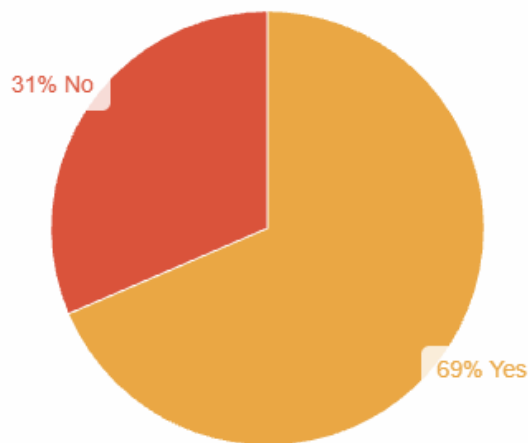
- Continue to use overall event attendance as the threshold for determining when a special event permit is required.
- Maintain the 40-person threshold for non-commercial properties but consider increasing the threshold for commercial properties.
- Consider adjusting requirements based on zoning, land use, property size or type of event.

***3. Should the number of events allowed on residential vs. commercial properties be different?***

**Questions for discussion:**

- What determines a commercial property? Approved use(s), current use(s), zoning?
- Should the location of the property be considered?
- How do we ensure a property owner remains in compliance with the LUC and doesn't use the property for an unapproved use, such as an event center?
- Should the size of the property be considered?
- Can properties with approval for assembly uses be allowed to apply for Special Event Permits?

Should there be a difference in the number of events allowed on commercial properties vs. residential properties?



124 respondents

**Representative Sample of Summary of Survey Comments (See Attachment C for complete comments):**

- Absolutely! Need to consider if a commercial property is located within a residential area
- Commercial properties should be allowed to host more events
- Fewer events on residential properties
- Events on commercial properties bring in more revenue to the county and city
- Doesn't zoning already regulate this?
- If there is a commercial property that rents out their space for special events, the number of events should be restricted by the hosting organization rather than the property.

**Initial Staff Recommendation:**

- Maintain the current limit of 30 total event days per year for all zoning districts and property types, but allow more flexibility in how those days are distributed throughout the year for commercial properties. Consider granting discretion to the Director to approve an alternative schedule of event days as long as it does not result in more than the allowable number of events or the total number of event days.

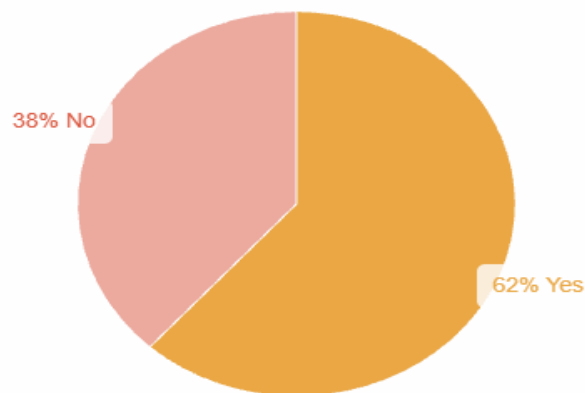
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**4. *Should the regulations be different depending upon the type of event, (weddings, family reunions, concerts, festivals)?***

**Questions for discussion**

- Should the size of the event be considered?
- Should the type of event be considered?
- Should the location of the event be considered?
- Should a permit be required for a personal event?
- What is the definition of a personal event?

Should there be specific regulations for different types of events (such as weddings, family reunions, political events, concerts/music festivals, etc.)?



120 respondents

**Representative Sample of Summary of Survey Comments (See Attachment C for complete comments):**

- Any event that is noisy, has large number of individuals, traffic, safety concerns or impacts residences within 1000 feet should have a VERY HIGH bar, IF IT IS to be allowed. If any neighbor within 1000 feet objects, it must be rejected. IF NOT, the semi-commercial, advertise on social media, make money off of poor Larimer County regulations, and reducing the life & value of properties within Larimer County will GROW. We need the ability to have our regulations up to date with 2025 realities.
- Family oriented events should not need a permit
- Security concerns need to be considered depending on the event
- Larimer County can't have a 'One Size Fits All'

**Initial Staff Recommendation:**

- Revise the definition of a “personal” event to allow more flexibility.
- Revise the definition of Special Event and update the exclusions from Special Event permitting requirements and when Special Events are not allowed. See above regarding community events.
- Consider different “tiered” requirements based on the size and type of event.

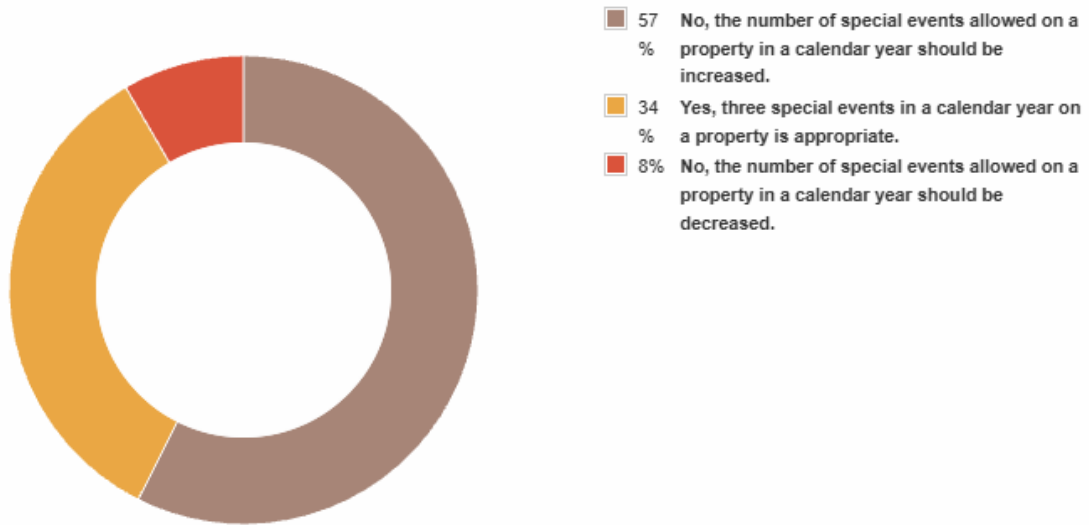
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***5. Should the number of special events allowed on private property per year be adjusted?***

**Questions for discussion:**

- What criteria should be used to determine the appropriate number of events allowed on a property?
- Should the use or zoning of property be considered (e.g., residential vs commercial)?
- Should indoor community events require a Special Event Permit when held on a public property or property owned by a community organization?
- Should an event not requiring a permit (e.g., fewer people than the size threshold) count toward the number of annual events held on a property?
- Should community events on public or community owned property be exempt? How should we define ‘community,’ and should it include homeowners association properties?

Currently, Larimer County allows three special events on a private property per calendar year. Is this an appropriate number?



**Representative Sample of Summary of Survey Comments (See Attachment C for complete comments):**

- In areas that have residential uses, special events disrupt the entire community and the peace of all neighbors with most saying three is fine.
- Why is there a limit at all?
- As many as needed or requested.
- It should be determined by the location, type of event, number of people, zoning and whether the property is residential or commercial.
- 5-12 is a reasonable number.

**Initial Staff Recommendation:**

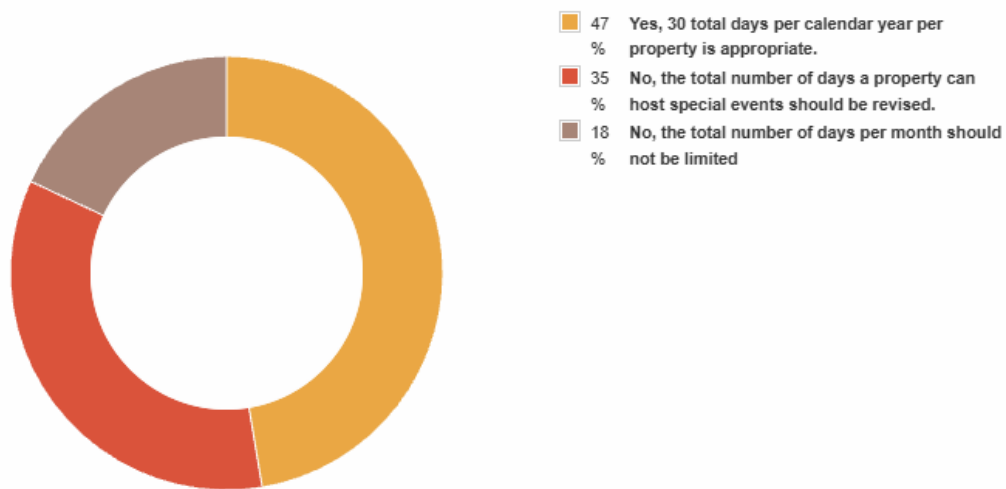
- Vary the number of events allowed per year based on the use and/or zoning of the property. Allow commercial properties/uses to have more events than residential or agricultural.
  - Exempt indoor community events on public or community owned property. Define 'community'.
  - Count only events that require a permit toward the total number of allowable events.
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6. *Should the number of days an event(s) can be held on a property annually be adjusted?*

**Questions for discussion:**

- Should the total number of days per calendar year a property can host special events(s) be changed from our current regulations?
- Should the number be different for events held on residential vs. commercial property?
- Should we consider the limit to be related to the calendar month or a rolling 30-day period?
- Do the days of an event need to be consecutive?

Events may occur over multiple days. Current regulations limit the cumulative number of days special events can be held on a property to 30 days in a calendar year. Is this an appropriate number?



133 respondents

**Representative Sample of Summary of Survey Comments (See Attachment C for complete comments):**

- The location of the event should be considered.
- What is considered a family event?
- Direct landowners to possible Land Use approvals to gain additional time and events.
- Residential vs. commercial properties. These should be different.
- 30 days a year is a business not a special event.
- Holiday themed events should be allowed for a longer period of time.

**Initial Staff Recommendation:**

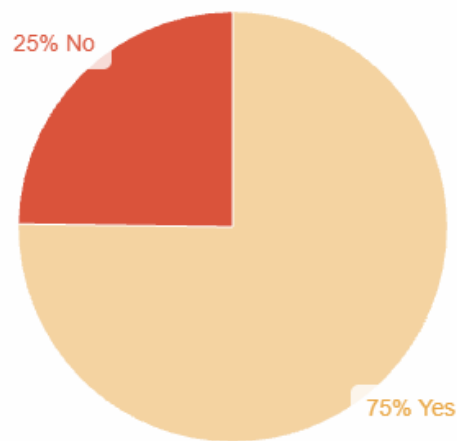
- Maintain the current limit of 30 total event days per year for all zoning districts and property types, but allow more flexibility in how those days are distributed throughout the year for commercial properties. Consider granting discretion to the Director to approve an alternative schedule of event days as long as it does not result in more than the allowable number of events or the total number of event days.

## 7. *Should special events allow overnight camping?*

### **Questions for discussion:**

- Should the type of event be considered?
- Should the event location be considered?
- Should the number of potential campers be considered?
- Is the type of camping be a consideration? (Tents, in cars, RV's.)

Some events, such as music festivals and cycling events occur over multiple days. Should overnight camping be allowed with a special event?



117 respondents

### **Representative Sample of Summary of Survey Comments (See Attachment C for complete comments):**

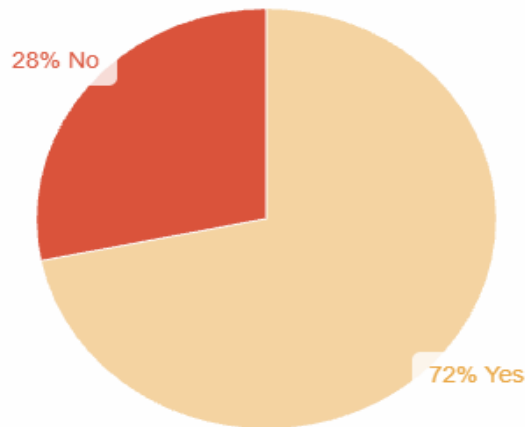
- When people stay over multiple days and stay 24/7, it is more disruptive in a residential area
- No camping in areas with residents
- Camping must be appropriate for the type or size of the property. There must be proper sanitation

### **Initial Staff Recommendation:**

- Continue to allow overnight camping, but develop more restrictive standards for when and where it would be allowed (e.g., near residential areas). If camping for an event is on a different property than the event, require that property to be included in the special event permit.
  - Consider establishing curfews for amplified sound and event activities past a certain time of night.
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**8. Should private membership groups (for example, organizations like the Elks Club, American Legion or similar) need to apply for special event permits?**

Should special event permits apply to all organizations, including private membership groups (for example, organizations like the Elks Club, American Legion, or similar)?



117 respondents

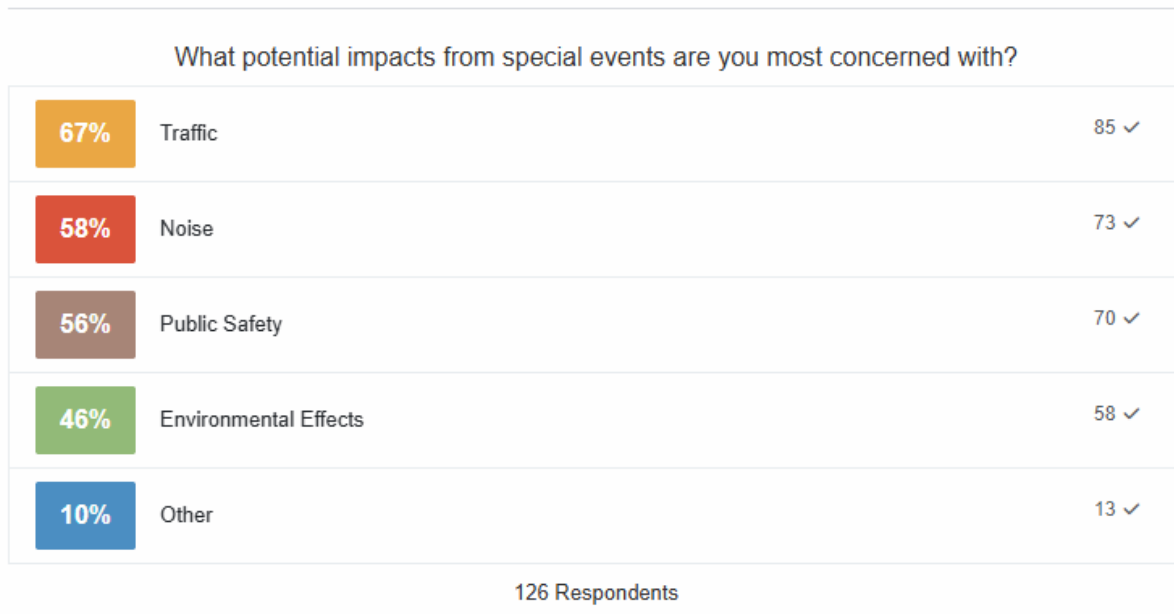
**Representative Sample of Summary of Survey Comments (See Attachment C for complete comments):**

- Why would we exempt some groups from needing a permit?
- Private membership groups should have to obtain a permit and potentially held to a higher standard
- This could be fee exempt; however, the event would need to follow all the applicable rules and regulations.
- Public safety and environmental protection

**Initial Staff Recommendation:**

- Consider exempting indoor events that are only for members of the club from Special Event Permit requirements.
  - Consider requiring a Special Event Permit for events that occur outdoors or when a 3rd party rents the facility for an event, if the building is not already a regularly established place of assembly.
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9. *What impacts are of greatest concern to community members?*



**Representative Sample of Summary of Survey Comments (See Attachment C for complete comments):**

- The impact to residential areas is enormous. Larimer County’s legal framework is well behind actions of unscrupulous individuals that advertise special events on social media, push the number of attendees, and define the event as ‘family-related’. One simple way to address this is to have a regulation inhibiting more than 2 or 3 events (over 25 individuals) and ANY location that is within 1000 feet of another residence.
- Focus on environmental effects
- Traffic, parking, alcohol and public safety are a huge concern.
- Litter and trespassing onto neighboring properties
- Residential vs. commercial
- Loud music really travels
- Many parts of Larimer County are beautiful because of the solitude and quiet. I think noise ordinances are more important than the number of events. We should also be informed on how events/noise/etc. can impact wildlife. CLEAN UP CREWS should be required with some means of fining parties who litter--I live on the bike trail and am astounded at how much trash ends up in my front yard after every race!
- Crowding on public trails that make others feel unwelcome to share the trail.
- Light pollution at night
- Please keep residential areas residential. Special events should be limited (or not allowed at all) in residential neighborhoods. The rights of the people who live in the surrounding neighborhood should outweigh the rights of those who want to hold special events in a residential setting.

### **Initial Staff Recommendation:**

- Consider all of these concerns in revising the review criteria for special event permits.
  - Consider curfews on event activities (e.g., amplified music or sound) after a specific time of night for outdoor events.
  - Consider requiring post-event documentation that demonstrates compliance with all conditions of the permit, including the total number of attendees, noise, lighting, parking, site clean-up, and any issues that arose.
  - Consider creating a penalty structure for documented violations of permit conditions.
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### **Next Steps:**

- February/March - Follow up with Board of County Commissioners for additional guidance as needed
  - March-May - draft new Land Use Code language and conduct public outreach
  - June - BCC/PC work session to review draft code language
  - July/August - PC and BCC hearings to consider adoption of revised code
  - September-December - update handouts, webpage, online system, and communication to event organizers
  - January 1, 2027 – new regulations would take effect
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Attachment A - Article 7.0 Special Event Permits - Land Use Code

Attachment B - Special Event Regulations Comparison - Other Jurisdictions

Attachment C – Full Survey Results