



City of Watsonville
CALL FOR APPLICATIONS
Applications due March 6 at 5:00pm

Community Special Event Sponsorship Program
Fiscal Year 2026-2027

The City of Watsonville recognizes the value of partnering with other agencies and organizations in providing services that benefit the community and its residents. In an effort to provide support for organizations providing community special events, specific guidelines have been established for determining when City fees may be reduced or waived and when an event may be considered for sponsorship (see "[Community Special Event Sponsorship Program Policies](#)"). In order to request sponsorship or a reduction or waiver of fees, the attached application must be completed and submitted with the necessary documentation.

Timeline and Deadlines

The City shall issue an annual Call for Applications for the Program for special events occurring during the following fiscal year. The application and award announcement timeline is as follows:

February 3, 2026	Call for Applications Released
March 6, 2026 5:00 PM	Applications Due. Applications received after this deadline may be considered for sponsorship, if funds are available.
April 10, 2026	Awards Announced

Eligibility Requirements

- I. Events must:
 - a. Be sponsored by one or more not-for-profit organizations and non-profit entities that have a documented federal 501(c) (3) status or a similar non-profit status under state law.
 - b. Be free and open to the whole community
 - c. Take place within City limits
 - d. Be scheduled to take place between July 1, 2026 and June 30, 2027 and the exact date(s), time(s) and location(s) within Watsonville have been determined
 - e. Not be a private function
 - f. Not be organized by individuals or private enterprise or organized as a for-profit commercial venture
 - g. Not primarily be a fundraiser or charitable in nature
 - h. Not be financially dependent on receiving City of Watsonville support
 - i. Not serve a political purpose
- II. Sponsoring Organization must:

- a. Have no outstanding debt owed to the City
 - b. Not be a political party, lobby group or religious group
 - c. Be based inside the Watsonville city limits (unless the demonstrated benefits are primarily to the residents of Watsonville).
 - d. Meet all special event application processing deadlines
- III. Other Requirements
- a. Cannot be for retroactive funding
 - b. Projects or organizations who have not satisfactorily fulfilled their obligations following previous fee reductions, waivers or other event requirements will not be eligible for sponsorship
 - c. Event organizers must submit a Post Event Report to the City within 30 days following the event.

Event Selection

In evaluating the priority of the application, preference will be given to events that:

- a. Raise the profile of Watsonville through prominent acknowledgement of its support and assistance in event marketing materials and at the event itself.
- b. Have a high number of expected attendees.
- c. Address City Council priorities and adopted General Plan policies.
- d. Benefit the residents of Watsonville.
- e. Contain an educational component.
- f. Create revenue-generating opportunities for local businesses.
- g. Are reoccurring.
- h. Involve more than one Watsonville community group (in event organization and/or participation).
- i. Commit to tracking event attendance and vendor sales.

Fee Reductions and Waivers

Level of assistance available: Fee reductions and waivers are limited to the following amounts/percentages per event, based on the Tier that events fall under:

Tier	Fee Reduction/Waiver
Tier I	Maximum of 50% of City fees or \$10,000, whichever is higher
Tier II	Maximum of 50% of City fees or \$4,000, whichever is higher
Tier III	Maximum of 50% of City fees or \$1,500, whichever is higher
Tier IV	Maximum of 50% of City fees or \$750, whichever is higher

Visit www.watsonvillerec.gov for more information or to see the Community Special Event Sponsorship Program Policies.