

## STAFF REPORT

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**Date:** June 11, 2025

**To:** Mayor and City Council

**Through:** Jackie Bryant, City Manager

**Subject:** Staff Report (For Possible Action): Approval of Special Event Sponsorship Allocation to Ninja Run; Earth Day; Biggest Little Half Marathon; Dark Corner Haunt 2024; The Reno-Tahoe Odyssey Relay Run Adventure; 2025 GBCFC Annual Seedling Sale; Reno River Festival; 2025 Reno Gamble; Mariachi & Folklore Festival; Leprechaun Race; Artown; Sierra Nevada Honey and Lavender Festival; Dancing in the Streets; 2025 Silver State Championships; Boneyard Blast; Hot August Nights; Journal Jog; Milk & Honey Fest; Fiesta on Wells; Reno Pride; Dirty Wookie Run; Dinner on the Bridge; Rock Reno Half Marathon; Offbeat Music Festival; Great Pumpkin Festival; Decompression; Riverside Farmers Market; Wobble Before You Gobble; Holiday Lights Festival; Desert Moon Festival; Dancing on the River; Food Truck Fridays; Dia de los Muertos; Reno Antique Faire; Off the Rails; Rollin' Reno; Italian Fest; Biggest Little Latin Fest; Biggest Little Wing Fest; Dark Corner Haunt 2025; Relay for Life; Cosmic Hearts Sound Bath; Reno Ecstatic Dance; Community is Medicine; Reno King of the Hill Swim Meet in amount not to exceed \$299,000. (Room Tax)

**From:** Rachel Macintyre, Activation Coordinator

**Department:** City Manager's Office

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**Summary:**

Staff is requesting approval of 10 sponsorship allocations for special events for FY 24/25 and 35 sponsorship allocations for special events for FY 25/26 from budgeted room tax funds based upon recommendations of the Staff Review Committee, in an amount not to exceed \$299,000. A Staff Review Committee was assembled due to a lack of appointed members to the Special Event Sponsorship Committee (SESC) resulting in an inability to establish a quorum and the city-wide pause on certain committees and commissions including the SESC. The staff review committee included staff from Special Events, Economic Development, Community Relationships, Parks and Recreation, and Policy and Strategy, and utilized the same scoring criteria as previously established by the SESC. Staff recommendations for sponsorship allocations to include: Ninja Run; Earth Day; Biggest Little Half Marathon; Dark Corner Haunt 2024; The Reno-Tahoe

Odyssey Relay Run Adventure; 2025 GBCFC Annual Seedling Sale; Reno River Festival; 2025 Reno Gamble; Mariachi & Folklore Festival; Leprechaun Race; Artown; Sierra Nevada Honey and Lavender Festival; Dancing in the Streets; 2025 Silver State Championships; Boneyard Blast; Hot August Nights; Journal Jog; Milk & Honey Fest; Fiesta on Wells; Reno Pride; Dirty Wookie Run; Dinner on the Bridge; Rock Reno Half Marathon; Offbeat Music Festival; Great Pumpkin Festival; Decompression; Riverside Farmers Market; Wobble Before You Gobble; Holiday Lights Festival; Desert Moon Festival; Dancing on the River; Food Truck Fridays; Dia de los Muertos; Reno Antique Faire; Off the Rails; Rollin' Reno; Italian Fest; Biggest Little Latin Fest; Biggest Little Wing Fest; Dark Corner Haunt 2025; Relay for Life; Cosmic Hearts Sound Bath; Reno Ecstatic Dance; Community is Medicine; Reno King of the Hill Swim Meet.

<b>Consent Review</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
1. Is this item an annual or standard item that comes before Council for regular approval?	<b>X</b>	
2. Is this item an agreement required based on an item previously approved by Council?	<b>X</b>	
3. Is this item included in the current budget approved and adopted by Council?	<b>X</b>	
<b>Other Considerations</b>		
What percent of the total City budget does this item represent?	<b>&lt;1%</b>	

### **Alignment with Strategic Plan:**

Economic and Community Development

### **Previous Council Action:**

January 15, 2014 - Resolution No. 7931 – Council adopted Resolution for the revised Special Events Sponsorship Policy

April 12, 2023 - Council directed Staff to modify Special Events Sponsorship Committee funding process including an update to the sponsorship committee membership and the steps required for sponsorship approval by Council previously outlined in resolution 7931 in January of 2014

July 23, 2023 - Council approved Special Event Sponsorship Committee recommendation allocating \$190,000 for FY23 to 23 special events

August 14, 2023 – Council approved Special Event Sponsorship Committee recommendation allocating \$128,793 for FY23 to 28 special events

December 18, 2023 – Council approved Special Event Sponsorship Committee recommendation allocating \$25,442.96 for FY23 to nine (9) special events

April 24, 2024 – Council approved Special Event Sponsorship Committee recommendation allocation \$151,458.22 for FY24/25 to 42 special events.

**Background:**

Transient Lodging Taxes are a widely used tool by municipal governments to increase revenue, reduce reliance on property taxes, and encourage tourism in a way that is minimally impactful on residents. A central component of the City of Reno Room Tax Fund is the activation of the urban core, particularly through special events sponsorship. Special events activate downtown corridors by increasing foot traffic, creating a sense of community, highlighting unique features of the area, generating revenue, and encouraging investment.

Council has allocated \$200,000 in room tax funds annually for special event sponsorship. Applications for sponsorship are accepted twice per year, and all special events with no outstanding City service costs from a previous special event are eligible to apply. These sponsorship funds are not cash services and are only eligible to be used to offset City service costs (park rentals, staff costs, street closures, etc.) from the final special event bill due to the City.

In April 2023, Council amended the process for recommending and approving allocation of special event sponsorship funds.

Based on direction from Council, the Special Events Sponsorship Committee (SESC) approved a scoring criteria to include additional weight for priority plazas (City Plaza, Locomotion Plaza, and West Street Plaza) or the Downtown Core, as well as additional ranking points for new or cultural events. The Staff Review Committee utilized these same previously approved criteria for the review of all applications received. The review period includes events occurring from the second half of FY24/25 (January 2025-June 2025) through the first half of FY 25/26 (July 2025-December 2025). A total of 45 applications were received, and all applications are recommended below for some level of sponsorship.

**Discussion:**

The Staff Review Committee reviewed 45 applications for events occurring in the second half of FY24/25 (January 2025-June 2025) through the first half of FY 25/26 (July 2025-December 2025). All applications received are recommended below for some level of sponsorship.

Dark Corner Haunt; haunted house experience in Downtown Reno; October 2024  
\$1,400.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Earth Day; an Earth Day celebration at Idlewild Park; April 19th, 2025  
\$4,050.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

The Reno Tahoe Odyssey Relay Run Adventure; a relay race from Reno to Tahoe; May 30th-31st, 2025

\$1,900.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Biggest Little Half Marathon; a half marathon in Reno NV; April 26th, 2025

\$10,000.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

2025 Seedling Sale; seedling sale hosted by Great Basin Co-Op; May 31st, 2025

\$750.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

13th Annual Leprechaun Race; a running race hosted by Reno Running Company; March 16th, 2025

\$1,900.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Reno River Festival; a multi-day river festival at Idlewild Park; May 28th-June 1st, 2025

\$8,000.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

8th Annual Ryan Volker and Rose Scarpa Memorial Scholarship 5K Ninja Run; April 13th, 2025

\$500.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

RENO Gamble Age Group Open; a swim meet hosted by Reno Aquatics; June 20th-22nd

\$2,000.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Mariachi & Folklore Festival; a cultural celebration host by Latino Arte; May 24th, 2025

\$1,100.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Dancing on the River; a monthly cumbia bachata social at City Plaza; May 2025-August 2025

\$2,310.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Pride; a Pride parade a celebration hosted in Midtown; September 6th, 2025

\$25,000.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

2025 Silver State Championship; a championship swim meet hosted by Northern Nevada Aquatics; July 11th-13th, 2025

\$2,000.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Food Truck Fridays; a weekly food truck event for the community; June 2025-August 2025

\$10,000.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Boneyard Blast; a multi-day softball event hosted by Liquid Blue Events; July 11th-13th, 2025

\$2,500.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Fiesta on Wells; a cultural celebration hosted by Latino Arte; September 21st, 2025

\$3,000.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

54th Annual Journal Jog 8k Run/Walk; Reno's longest running foot race; August 24th, 2025

\$2,200.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Dia de los Muertos; a cultural celebration hosted in Downtown Reno; October 31st-November 2nd

\$7,000.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Dancing in the Streets; a Midtown community celebration and neighborhood-wide block party; July 12th, 2025

\$10,855.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Reno Antique Faire; a monthly vintage and antique faire in Downtown Reno; June 2025-October 2025 \$7,800.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

OffBeat Music Festival; a music festival in the Brewery District presented by OffBeat Music & Arts Festival; October 2nd-4th, 2025 \$10,500.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by

the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Dirty Wookie 10k; a family friendly run along the Truckee River; October 26th, 2025  
\$4,000.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Rock Reno Half Marathon; half marathon running race hosted by Reno Running Company; October 5th, 2025 \$3,000.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Off the Rails; a monthly outdoor summer concert series presented by OffBeat Music & Arts Festival in Downtown Reno; June 2025-August 2025 \$4,220.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Riverside Farmers Market; a weekly community farmers Market at Idlewild Park; All Year July 2025-June 2026 \$3,840.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Sierra Nevada Honey and Lavender Festival; a celebration of all thing's community, lavender and honey at Idlewild Park; July 13th, 2025  
\$6,000.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Rollin Reno; a free community roller skating activation in Downtown Reno open Wednesdays-Sundays; June 2025-August 2025 \$10,000.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

43rd Annual Great Italian Festival; a food celebration in Downtown Reno hosted by The ROW; October 11th-12th, 2025 \$10,00.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

2nd Annual Biggest Little Latin Fest; a cultural celebration in Downtown Reno hosted by The ROW; September 12th-13th, 2025 \$10,000.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Biggest Little City Wing Fest; a chicken wing festival hosted in Downtown Reno by The ROW; July 25-26, 2025  
\$10,000.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Dinner on the Bridge; a fundraiser for Sierra Arts Foundation; October 4th, 2025  
\$1,200.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

4th Annual Milk and Honey Festival; a cultural celebration at McKinley Arts Center; September 7th, 2025  
\$1,800.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Artown; a month-long arts & culture celebration with a special installation in Downtown Reno; July 1st-31st, 2025  
\$1,500.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Desert Moon Music Festival; a multi-day electronic music festival in Downtown Reno; September 25th-27th, 2025  
\$5,600.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Holiday Lights Festival; a Multi-Day holiday festival spanning over three weekends in Downtown Reno; November 21st-December 6th, 2025  
\$18,000.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Great Pumpkin Festival; a multi-day fall pumpkin celebration at Idlewild Park; October 4th-11th, 2025  
\$5,000.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Hot August Nights; a week-long celebration of classic cars & rock and roll throughout Downtown Reno; August 5th-11th, 2025  
\$25,000.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Dark Corner Haunt; a month long immersive haunted house experience in Downtown Reno; October 2025  
\$1,200.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Relay for Life; a community event hosted by the American Cancer Society; August 16th, 2025

\$460.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Cosmic Hearts Sound Bath; a monthly community wellness event at McKinley Arts Center; January 2025-December 2025

\$3,250.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Decompression; a post Burning Man Celebration in the Brewery District; October 11th, 2025

\$10,500.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Community is Medicine; a free celebration of the arts at Paradise Park showcasing BIPOC, Women of Color, and BIPOC with Disabilities artists; July 19th, 2025

\$365.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Reno Ecstatic Dance; a monthly dance and wellness event at Idlewild Park; January 2025-December 2025.

\$3,900.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Reno King of the Hill Swim Meet; a swim meet hosted by Reno Aquatics October 2025

\$2,000.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

Wobble Before You Gobble; a community Thanksgiving Day fun run; November 27th, 2025

\$5,000.00 of in-kind services has been recommended by the City of Reno Staff Review Committee of the Reno City Council.

### **Financial Implications:**

Funds are available from the FY 24/25 (\$99,000.00) and FY 25/26 (\$200,000.00) Special Events Program budget to accommodate the special event sponsorships recommended in this staff report.

### **Legal Implications:**

Reno Municipal Code (RMC) sec. 5.13.080(b) allows for Council to enter into sponsorship agreements with event organizers to provide city services (equipment or personnel), park facility rental fees for special events.



**Recommendation:**

Staff recommends Council approve 10 special event sponsorship for FY 24/25 and 35 special event sponsorship for FY 25/26 funds in a total amount not to exceed \$299,000.00 (Room Tax), and: authorize the Mayor to sign a Sponsorship Agreement with each of the recommended recipients for every special event in a total amount not to exceed \$299,000.00.

**Proposed Motion:**

I move to approve staff recommendations.

**Attachments:**

Special Event Sponsorship Applications