

Temporary Use and Special Event Report

August 28, 2025



King County

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II. Proviso Text

Ordinance 19861, Section 87, Dept. of Local Services Permitting Division, P1¹

P1 PROVIDED THAT:

Of this appropriation, \$250,000 shall not be expended or encumbered until the executive transmits a temporary use and special event report. The temporary use and special event report shall include, but not be limited to:

- A. A description of the current regulations for temporary uses, including special events and other types of temporary uses;
- B. A description of temporary use permits applied for and issued between 2014 and 2024, including:
 - 1. Categories of special events and temporary uses permitted through the temporary use permit process; whether the special event or temporary use is associated with a residential or nonresidential use; and whether the special event or temporary use is in the urban area, rural area, or in natural resource lands;
 - 2. Average number of days the temporary use permit allowed the special event or temporary use each year; and
 - 3. Whether the days of the special event or temporary use is continuous throughout the week, or only on certain days of the week, or certain seasons of the year;
- C. A description of the code enforcement complaints arising from sites to which temporary use permits have been issued between 2014 and 2024, including:
 - 1. The location of the complaint and whether it is in the urban area, rural area, or natural resource lands;
 - 2. Whether a violation was found on the site;
 - 3. The type of the violation;
 - 4. The resolution of the violation, if there was a resolution;
- D. An evaluation of the impacts of temporary uses on neighboring properties, roadways, and the environment, by the categories described in subsection B. of this proviso, and recommendations on how to mitigate or eliminate any negative impacts informed by the description of the code enforcement complaints in subsection C. of this proviso;
- E. A description of how temporary special events and permanent event center uses that are regulated in King County in the Rural Area and Natural Resource Lands are regulated in other Washington counties, and an evaluation of whether those regulations could be adopted by King County;
- F. An evaluation of whether, by category to be identified in response to subsection B.1. of this proviso, temporary uses should be required to be treated as a permanent use that should be required to obtain a conditional or special use permit rather than a temporary use permit;
- G. An evaluation of existing exemptions from temporary use permits;
- H. A definition of a special event, a temporary use, and an event center;
- I. Recommendations for any code changes to address the evaluation required by this proviso, including whether there should be differing requirements in the urban area, rural area, or natural resource lands; and

¹ Ordinance 19861 [\[LINK\]](#)

- J. Recommended technical assistance documents, checklists, or other information that would aid a resident in applying for a temporary use permit.

The executive should electronically file the report required by this proviso no later than September 1, 2025, with the clerk of the council, who shall retain an electronic copy and provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers, the council chief of staff, and the lead staff for the local services and land use committee or its successor.

III. Executive Summary

This report is provided in response to a Proviso included in Ordinance 19861 requiring an evaluation of temporary uses and special events. Temporary use permits (TUPs) provide limited and conditional approval for activities in unincorporated King County that are not allowed on a permanent basis by land use regulations. These are uses that would otherwise be considered incompatible in a specific zone and therefore would not be permitted but could be compatible for a brief period. As defined in King County Code (KCC) 21A.06.1275, a TUP is a “permit to allow a use of limited duration and/or frequency, or to allow multiple related events over a specified period.”

The Department of Local Services Permitting Division (Permitting) reviews and issues TUPs. Based on the type of activity proposed, Permitting will require that the applicant adhere to specific conditions for operation and implement measures to mitigate impacts on the surrounding community as a condition of approval. In addition to a TUP, a special event permit, which covers life safety requirements for events, may be required based on event size or the use of temporary structures. Special events include music festivals, neighborhood block parties, parades, and street fairs. TUP applications are typically for business-related activities in rural areas, the most common of which are wedding and event venues.

Washington’s Growth Management Act (GMA) directs counties and cities to coordinate and plan for anticipated growth with consideration of sustainable economic development at appropriate urban and rural service levels, environmental protections, along with health, safety, and high quality of life for residents. GMA regulations, which include mandates to protect rural and resource lands, inform Multicounty Planning Policies (MPPs) that coordinate GMA implementation and planned growth for the Puget Sound region. King County collaborates with all jurisdictions within the County to create Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs), which in turn inform King County Comprehensive Plan (KCCP) policies. The County’s development regulations are required by the GMA to align with the KCCP’s policies. Protection of rural character, natural resources, open spaces, and the natural environment is a core element of the MPPs, CPPs, and KCCP. Temporary uses must be compatible with the Rural Area and on Natural Resource Lands and function with rural services.

Currently, activities permitted by TUPs may occur up to 60 days per year, with no limitations on the number of concurrent days. TUPs are valid for 365 days once issued and may be renewed up to four times, for a total of five years. A TUP is an administrative decision made by Permitting that requires a public notice process and the decision is appealable to the King County Hearing Examiner. TUP applications are evaluated for compliance with the KCC, KCCP, and decision criteria that include compatibility with adjacent uses, parking and traffic control, and impacts to resource zones. Most TUPs also need a special event permit that is required when there are more than 50 attendees or temporary structures are proposed. Other permits may also be required, depending on the specifics of the activity. If a TUP is authorized for 30 or more days, additional requirements for permanent parking and surface water management are triggered.

Between 2014 and 2024, Permitting received 235 TUP applications (resulting in 114 issued TUPs) and 201 special event permit applications. There are currently 31 active TUPs, including both new permits and renewals. Common applications for TUPs include wedding or special event venues and expansions of existing Conditional Use Permits (CUPs). Duration of temporary uses varies widely, with some lasting a few days while others occur every weekend during the summer (e.g., wedding and event venues). On average, a temporary use or special events permit is issued for about 40 days in a year.

During this same time period, Permitting received 105 complaints related to temporary use activities. Complaints fall into one of three categories: (1) activities occurring on a property *without* an approved TUP; (2) activities occurring on a property with a TUP, which may be about activities allowed under the TUP, and (3) issues on a property with a TUP that are unrelated to the TUP. Since 2022, most complaints have been in the first category. When Permitting engages with property owners to bring them into compliance, these complaints are typically resolved with the issuance of a TUP. For complaints about activities on a property with a TUP, Permitting will contact the applicant and remind them of the permit conditions, which is usually sufficient to resolve the issue. Complaints are referred to Code Enforcement in cases where the applicant is non-responsive or there are imminent life safety concerns.

The most common impacts of temporary uses on neighboring properties, roadways, and the environment are related to traffic and noise. With the current allowance of up to 60 days per year and no regulations on the frequency of the temporary use or event, impacts could occur every weekend for several months. To address these issues, Permitting recommends changing the frequency and duration allowances for TUPs and imposing additional conditions to ensure impacts are limited.

A review of regulations related to special events and permanent event center uses in rural areas and natural resource lands for Clark, Pierce, Skagit, Snohomish, Spokane, and Thurston counties found that all counties allowed temporary events and special uses that were otherwise not allowed by code. Only Pierce County had regulations related to permanent event facilities, specifically for outdoor events. Spokane and Thurston counties have specific regulations that facilitate agritourism, such as wedding venues and farm festivals. Skagit and Clark counties are currently reviewing their regulations to determine what changes to make to support agritourism.

A variety of temporary uses are exempt from requiring a permit depending on zone, frequency, and location. Some are seasonal, such as Christmas tree lots in commercial, office, and industrial zones that do not exceed 30 calendar days. If a use does not exceed two days per calendar year, or if a community event is held in a park not exceeding seven days per calendar year, a TUP is not required. The most common concern regarding TUP exemptions is the lack of limitations on the size of a permit-exempt event in Rural Area (RA), Agriculture (A), and Industrial (I) zones.

Based on Permitting staff feedback, community feedback, and the requirement to align regulations with MPPs, CPPs, and KCCP requirements, the following changes to TUP regulations are identified:

- Reduce the maximum number of days allowed per year from 60 to 29 or fewer to avoid triggering compliance with stormwater and drainage, impervious surface, permanent parking access, parking lot lighting, and landscaping standards which occur after 30 days.
- Limit the frequency and duration of temporary uses to ensure events do not occur consistently every weekend or non-stop for consecutive months.
- Scale size and occupancy of temporary use based upon building occupancy, site area, traffic access, and environmental considerations, and compliance requirements with building setbacks.
- Limit the number of attendees and employees for exempt uses (i.e., no TUP required).
- Require temporary sanitary facilities, potable water, vehicle parking, emergency vehicle access, traffic control, accessibility for persons with disabilities, and noise compliance to help reduce impacts.

- Add requirements to ensure compliance with MPPs, CPPs, and KCCP requirements for consistency with rural character and protection of natural resource lands and the environment.

This report relies on previous work done for the 2024 Comprehensive Plan update process, subject matter expert input, community feedback, and existing available public resources. Notably, due to resource and data limitations, some information called for by the Proviso is not included. Specifically, a more detailed analysis of TUPs is not included in this report. This is because DLS's permit information is not available in a database that can be queried. The electronic permitting system provides only the number of permit applications received, reviewed, and issued. Gathering additional contextual attributes related to TUPs and special event permits requires additional resources to retrieve, review, and report on each permit over the 10-year period to provide the information and analysis required by the Proviso. Similarly, code enforcement records, which are tied to properties rather than permit applications, require individual sorting and review of discrete enforcement records to determine whether a complaint was due to a TUP.

IV. Background

Department Overview

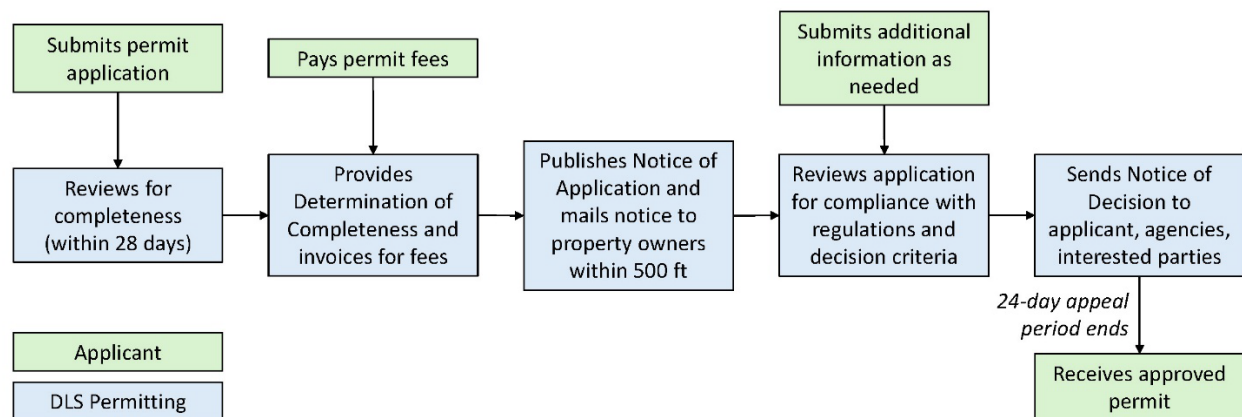
King County Department of Local Services (DLS) promotes the well-being of residents and communities in unincorporated King County (UKC) by seeking to understand their needs and delivering responsive government services. This includes maintaining roads and bridges, issuing permits, managing land use planning, and providing several programs to unincorporated areas such as participatory budgeting, community needs lists, and subarea planning which intend to provide residents, businesses, and visitors with safe, healthy, and high-quality lifestyles. The King County Comprehensive Plan (KCCP) guides the development of the King County Code (KCC) which allows DLS Permitting Division (Permitting) to provide land use planning services and development permitting review to the residents of rural and urban unincorporated King County in a safe, legal, and consistent manner. Permitting services include building and land use permit review, including temporary use and special event permits.

Temporary Use Permit Overview

Temporary use permits (TUPs) provide limited and conditional approval for activities in a zone² that are not normally allowed. As defined in KCC 21A.06.1275, a TUP is a “permit to allow a use of limited duration and/or frequency, or to allow multiple related events over a specified period.” Applications for TUPs are primarily for business-related activities in rural areas.³ The most commonly requested temporary use in UKC is for wedding or event venues.

TUP applications are received, reviewed, and approved by Permitting. Depending on the complexity of a proposal, the TUP review and decision process generally takes six months to a year if no appeal is filed or substantial additional information is required. Figure 1 below illustrates the TUP review process.

Figure 1. TUP application review process



² Zoning determines what types of activities and buildings may be permitted on a property, and zoning designations are implemented in accordance with the KCCP and KCC.

³ “Rural areas” in this report includes both the Rural Area and on Natural Resource Lands as regulated by the Growth Management Act and the King County Comprehensive Plan.

Permit review begins with a “Notice of Application” being mailed to property owners within 500 feet of the subject property, published in the newspaper, added to the County’s webpage, and posted on the subject property in a visible location.

TUP applications are reviewed based on the information provided in the application package, the King County Zoning Code, KCCP, relevant development standards (e.g. building code, critical areas, clearing and grading), public comment, special studies, and on-site inspections. If additional information is needed during the review process, Permitting staff will send the applicant a request for information. Based on the type of activity proposed, Permitting will require that the applicant adhere to specific conditions for operation and implement measures to mitigate impacts on the surrounding community as a condition of approval. Thus, a use that would normally be considered incompatible in a specific zone and would therefore not be permitted, may be considered compatible for a limited amount of time.

At the conclusion of the TUP review process, Permitting issues a written Notice of Decision which is sent to the applicant, public agencies of interest, and all public commenters. Once a decision has been issued, a 24-day appeal period is initiated. Appeals must be submitted to Permitting in writing, with all applicable fees paid in full, before the end of the appeal period. TUPs are most commonly appealed by neighboring property owners who are concerned about potential impacts of the temporary use. If no appeal is filed, the permit decision becomes final once the appeal period ends.

TUPs differ from conditional use permits (CUP) in that a CUP allows the permanent use of a property that is not allowed by right but can be made compatible with additional project and site-specific conditions. An applicant with an approved CUP may seek a TUP to allow a limited expansion of an activity already permitted under a CUP. For example, a church with a CUP that restricts the occupancy size for their regular service may seek a TUP to increase its allowed occupancy size for a special event, such as a “Trunk or Treat” party.

In addition to a TUP, a special event permit, which covers life safety requirements for a public or private event, may be required based on event size or the use of temporary structures. Examples of a special event are a music festival, neighborhood block party, parade, and street fair. Special event permits are reviewed and authorized by Permitting. Permitting also provides code enforcement for temporary uses and special events in the unincorporated areas of King County.

Historical Context

King County began regulating temporary uses through a required permit in 1993 (Ordinance 10870). Since temporary use regulations were first adopted, KCC chapter 21A.32 has subsequently been updated to change the uses that require a TUP, permit exemption standards, and the duration and frequency of an authorized temporary use. The applicable code sections for a TUP are in Table 1 below.

Table 1. KCC sections applicable to TUPs

KCC Section	Updates
21A.32.100 – Uses requiring permits	2014 (Ordinance 17841), 2019 (Ordinance 19030)
21A.32.110 – Exemptions to permit requirement	1997 (Ordinance 12893), 2019 (Ordinance 19030), 2021 (Ordinance 19276)
21A.32.120 – Duration and Frequency	2003 (Ordinance 14781), 2005 (Ordinance 15170), 2010 (Ordinance 16950), 2011 (Ordinance 17191), 2014 (Ordinance 17841), 2019 (Ordinance 19030)
KCC 21A.32.130 – Parking	No updates since adoption in 1993
KCC 21A.32.140 – Traffic control	No updates since adoption in 1993
Section KCC 21A.44.020 – Decision criteria	No updates since adoption in 1993

King County began reviewing the effectiveness of its temporary use and special event permitting regulations and code enforcement mechanisms with the Winery, Brewery, and Distillery (WBD) Ordinance 19940.⁴ Most recently, Ordinance 19940, passed by the Council in May 2025, updated specific standards and regulations for temporary use permits issued to WBD.

Current Context

Temporary uses can bring economic opportunities to rural areas when temporary uses like weddings and concerts draw large numbers of people who may patronize surrounding businesses (e.g., lodging, restaurants) in the vicinity. Rural communities benefit from temporary uses or events like Christmas tree farms, farm festivals, and farmers markets by providing employment and business growth opportunities and local services that may not otherwise be available to rural residents.

Although it may seem counterintuitive for the County to authorize a use that has been deemed incompatible in a zone or conflicts with policy, some uses may be appropriate on a temporary basis if impacts can be minimized and mitigated. Depending on the temporary use and its location, mitigation may include limiting the number of days, the days of the week, and hours of operation. In addition, the size of an event may be limited, and parking management and traffic control measures may be required. In the case of special event mitigation, temporary “no parking” signage or other such measures may be required to ensure clear and safe fire department access, and parking attendants may be utilized to ensure parking is conducted as permitted.

The issuance of TUPs and special event permits in rural areas has been a divisive and controversial topic with residents, community organizations, environmental activists, and local Indian Tribes. Permitting receives substantial public comment in opposition to TUPs, and TUPs are appealed at a greater frequency than any other development permit. According to Permitting staff, approximately 15 percent of all TUP approvals are appealed, most typically by nearby property owners who are concerned about excessive noise, traffic control, adverse impacts to the environment, frequency of events, and incompatibility with rural character and residential uses.

Currently, Permitting can authorize a TUP for up to 60 days per year. This often results in a temporary use or special event occurring every weekend throughout the year or several consecutive months. Many

⁴ Ordinance 19940: [\[LINK\]](#)

TUP requests received by Permitting are for wedding and event venues that operate most weekends throughout the year. Those who have filed appeals against approved TUPs have argued that this allowance is not an accurate representation of a temporary use and that the approved temporary use disrupts the rural character and services that residents within the rural areas expect and depend on.

Policy and Regulation Overview

Washington’s Growth Management Act (GMA) directs counties and cities to coordinate and plan for anticipated growth with consideration of sustainable economic development at appropriate urban and rural service levels, environmental protections, along with health, safety, and high quality of life for residents.⁵ GMA regulations, which include mandates to protect rural and resource lands, inform Multicounty Planning Policies (MPPs) that coordinate GMA implementation and planned growth for the Puget Sound region. King County coordinates with Pierce, Snohomish, and Kitsap counties to identify trends and establish a Regional Growth Strategy and implement policies beneficial to the region.

Furthermore, King County collaborates with all jurisdictions within the County to create Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) that “create a shared framework for growth management planning,”⁶ as required by the GMA. The CPPs, in turn, inform development of KCCP’s policies. The County’s development regulations are required by the GMA to align with the KCCP’s policies, including but not limited to, growth targets, economic opportunities at appropriate sizes and scales, and rural and natural lands protection.

Temporary use allowances in rural areas throughout UKC are guided and regulated in consideration of several KCCP policies, MPPs, and CPPs (see Appendix A for an excerpt of key policies). Protection of rural character, natural resources, open spaces, and the natural environment is a common thread throughout these policies. Temporary uses must not interfere with productivity of natural resource lands nor the protection of such resources. Uses on rural lands must protect and enhance rural character and be limited to those that are appropriate for a rural location. Therefore, the size and scale, along with frequency and duration of a temporary use must be compatible with the Rural Area and on Natural Resource Lands and function with rural services (including but not limited to roadways, local amenities, and structures).

Temporary uses are supported by the KCCP in rural areas in the context of supporting economic success of natural resource-based industries, providing recreational and tourism opportunities, reusing significant historic resources, and limited to uses that require a rural location. The challenge the County continues to face is balancing the benefits of temporary use allowances in rural areas and regulating such allowances in a manner that avoids and minimizes impacts to neighboring properties, the environment, and local infrastructure.

Report Methodology

Permitting staff held a series of working meetings with permit reviewers with expertise in reviewing temporary uses as part of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan update process. Subject matter experts (SMEs) represented Permitting, Prosecuting Attorney’s Office (PAO), and Regional Planning. The working meetings identified several issues and inconsistencies within the temporary use standards and regulations; potential conflicts with KCCP goals; challenges present for enforcement of current

⁵ RCW 36.70A: [\[LINK\]](#)

⁶ Countywide Planning Policies: [\[LINK\]](#)

regulations, and consistent community concerns. This report relies on work previously done during the 2024 Comprehensive Plan update process, SME input, community feedback, and existing available public resources.

This report relies on previous work done for the 2024 Comprehensive Plan update process, subject matter expert input, community feedback, and existing available public resources. Notably, due to resource and data limitations, some information called for by the Proviso is not included. Specifically, a more detailed analysis of TUPs is not included in this report. This is because DLS's permit information is not available in a database that can be queried. The electronic permitting system provides only the number of permit applications received, reviewed, and issued. Gathering additional contextual attributes related to TUPs and special event permits requires additional resources to retrieve, review, and report on each permit over the 10-year period to provide the information and analysis required by the Proviso. Similarly, code enforcement records, which are tied to properties rather than permit applications, require individual sorting and review of discrete enforcement records to determine whether a complaint was due to a TUP.

Accordingly, DLS staff have gathered representative data, informed by SME input, that illustrate the common challenges encountered by the department in the issuance and enforcement of TUPs.

Contributors:

- Product Line Managers, DLS Permitting Division: provided historical perspective on code requirements and the permit process, as well as practical challenges with permitting in TUP review process.
- Fire Marshal, DLS Permitting Division: provided historic context and current conditions perspective on code requirements, the permit process, and challenges with the special event permit review process.
- Code Enforcement Section, DLS Permitting Division: provided feedback and historical context for code enforcement procedures and previous efforts at process improvement.
- King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, Civil Division: provided explanation of legal requirements for TUPs and special event permit processes and reviewed proposed amendments for practicality and legal sufficiency.

Data Source:

- DLS Permitting Division Accela database.

King County Code:

- KCC 20.20.020 – Classifications of land use decision processes.
- KCC 21A.12.120.A – Off street parking construction standards.
- KCC 21A.18.120 – Off-street parking and internal access roads and driveways – standards.
- KCC 21A.32.100 – Temporary use permits – uses requiring permits.
- KCC 21A.32.110 – Temporary use permits – exemptions to permit requirement.
- KCC 21A.32.120 – Temporary use permits – duration and frequency.
- KCC 21A.32.130 – Temporary use permits – parking.
- KCC 21A.32.140 – Temporary use permits – traffic control.
- KCC 21A.44.020 – Decision criteria.

V. Report Requirements

The following information is organized as described in the Proviso.

A. Description of the current regulations for temporary uses, including special events and other types of temporary uses

Applicants seek a TUP to establish a use for a temporary period in a zone in which that use is not otherwise allowed. Table 2 below is a summary of key TUP provisions.

Table 2. Summary of key TUP provisions

Provision	KCC Section	Description
Duration	21A.32.120 ⁷	May be permitted up to 60 days per year.
Effective Date	21A.32.120	365 days from the date of issuance.
Renewals	21A.32.120	<ul style="list-style-type: none">May be renewed up to four times (total of five years).Requests must be received in writing and accompanied by all applicable permit fees at least 70 days prior to the TUP expiration date.
Public Notice	20.20.020 ⁸ 21A.32.120	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Required for both new applications and renewals.New: "Notice of Application" is mailed to property owners within 500 feet of the subject property, published in the newspaper, added to the County's webpage, and posted on the subject property in a visible location.Renewal: After request is received and fees are paid, notice of renewal is mailed informing property owners within 500 feet of the subject property of the requested renewal and opportunity for comment.
Appeals	20.20.020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">New applications are Type 2 land use decision appealable to the King County Hearing Examiner.Renewals are a Type 1 land use decision and not appealable.
Parking	21A.18.120 ⁹ 21A.32.130	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Parking and access for temporary use are required.If duration is 30 or more days per year, applicant must comply with hard surfacing requirements and King County drainage standards.¹⁰
Traffic Control	21A.32.140	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Traffic control and attendants may be required.
Termination	21A.32.120	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Date when the temporary use must be terminated and removed is specified through the permit conditions.

A TUP is approved only if the applicant can demonstrate compliance with the following decision criteria:

- The proposed temporary use will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare;
- The proposed temporary use is compatible with existing land uses in the immediate vicinity in terms of noise and hours of operation;

⁷ KCC 21A.32: [\[LINK\]](#)

⁸ KCC 20.20: [\[LINK\]](#)

⁹ KCC 21A.18: [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁰ King County Surface Water Design Manual (SWDM): [\[LINK\]](#)

- The proposed temporary use, if located in a resource zone, will not be materially detrimental to the use of the land for resource purposes and will provide adequate off-site parking if necessary to protect against soil compaction;
- Adequate public off-street parking and traffic control for the exclusive use of the proposed temporary use can be provided in a safe manner, and
- The proposed temporary use is not otherwise permitted in the zone in which it is proposed.¹¹

In addition to a TUP, a special event permit may be required for temporary uses that include the following:¹²

- Temporary tents or membrane structures more than 400 square feet in size or an aggregate area of multiple tents of 700 square feet;
- Where occupancy of the event is expected to be 50 or more persons;
- Temporary heating of enclosed space(s);
- Temporary cooking facilities and food trucks;
- Amusement rides and inflatable structures/rides;
- Temporary stages, bleachers, or other structures, or
- Temporary electrical and power sources.

Many temporary uses have other use-specific and site-specific development standards that must be met. The applicant must demonstrate that the proposal complies with related codes, including noise, traffic control, off-street parking, critical areas, septic, food handling, and life-safety standards. Some events may also require a building permit if the event includes construction of a temporary structure, such as a stage or bleachers, that is greater than 120 square feet or is intended to be used for the gathering together of 10 or more persons. KCC currently allows temporary structures for up to six months. This may be extended for more than six months if the special event permit is renewed.

Permitting staff estimate that most TUPs also require a special event permit, triggered by having more than 50 attendees or the use of temporary structures. When separate permits are required for building or site improvements related to a temporary use or special event, those permits must be obtained prior to submitting a TUP or special event permit application.

Other permits that may be required include:

- Seattle-King County Public Health approval for sewer, wells, and food service uses. A Public Health permit is most commonly needed in conjunction with a TUP.
- Critical Areas Alteration Exceptions if the use is on land designated as a critical area and proposed to be within a critical area or associated buffer.
- King County Water and Land Resources Division approval for drainage adjustments.
- King County Water and Land Resources Division approval of flood permit if in a flood hazard area.
- King County Department of Natural Resources Historic Preservation Program approval if use is on land or within a structure with historic preservation status.
- King County Roads approval for road variances related to traffic control and access for TUP.

¹¹ KCC 21A.44: [\[LINK\]](#)

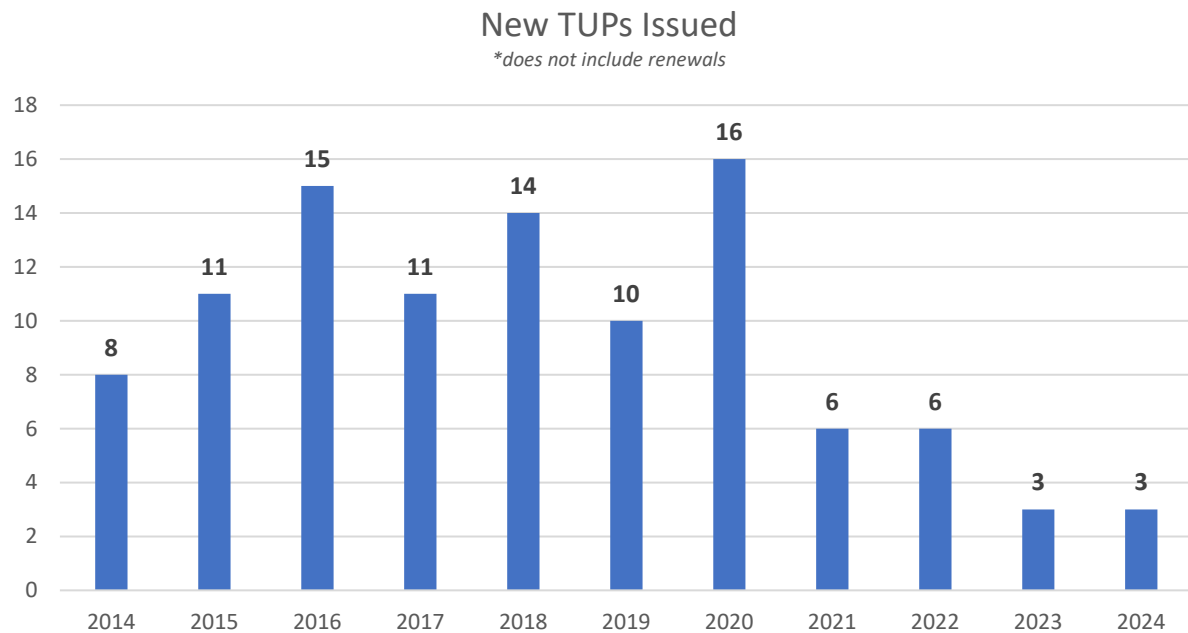
¹² International Fire Code (IFC) 2021 edition; Section 3103, 3105, and 3106: [\[LINK\]](#)

B. Description of temporary use permits applied for and issued between 2014 and 2024

1. Categories of special events and temporary uses permitted through the temporary use permit process; whether the special event or temporary use is associated with a residential or nonresidential use; and whether the special event or temporary use is in the urban area, rural area, or in natural resource lands
2. Average number of days the temporary use permit allowed the special event or temporary use each year
3. Whether the days of the special event or temporary use is continuous throughout the week, or only on certain days of the week, or certain seasons of the year

Between 2014 and 2024, DLS received 235 TUP applications and 201 special event permit applications. Special event permit applications may be received in conjunction with a TUP or separately. Figure 2 illustrates the number of new TUPs issued.

Figure 2. Number of new TUPs issued, 2014-2024



Key points to highlight about this data:

- Of the TUP applications submitted, Permitting issued 114 new TUPs, not including renewals.
- Not all applications result in an approved TUP or special event permit because applicants withdraw applications or do not respond to Permitting staff requests for additional information, applicants are unable to obtain required permits from other agencies, or the permit application expires.
- While only three new TUPs were issued in 2024, there are currently 31 active TUPs because of previously issued permits that have been renewed.

- TUPs are frequently renewed for the allowed four years and applicants will often submit applications for the same use once the maximum number of renewals is reached. In some cases, the allowed uses under some existing TUPs have been in place for several years to decades.
- New TUP applications have declined over time, possibly due to impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and/or additional parking requirements for temporary uses in effect for 30 or more days.

Table 3. Categories and frequency of temporary uses

Category	Estimated No. of TUPs (2014-2024)	Typical Frequency	Notes
Wedding or special event venue	~75-85	Every weekend during summer, up to maximum of 60 days	Most common temporary use
Expansion of CUPs	~10	Variable – may be for standalone events that are several consecutive days or a few weekends per month	
One-off uses	<10	Extremely variable	Special requests for unique uses
Homeless encampments	13	Variable	Applications have declined in recent years; regulated under KCC Chapter 21A.45 ¹³

Table 3 presents categories of TUPs, estimated numbers, and their relative frequency. The TUP application process does not formalize specific categories; therefore, the categories listed are based on typical application types that Permitting receives. Most TUPs are for wedding venues; these businesses will also often hold other types of events like corporate retreats, live music, and birthday and anniversary celebrations. Some properties with an existing CUP will seek a TUP for special events. For example, one TUP was for an expanded overnight camping area for two race events. The raceway site itself has a CUP, and the two temporary expanded camping areas required a TUP.

Permitting sometimes receives applications for singular uses that are very different from typical TUPs. For example, Permitting received an application for space rocket testing in a former mining site. Finally, TUPs may be issued for a homeless encampment or a temporary microshelter village where allowed by code. Permitting staff reviewed the 31 active TUPs and found none that were related to holding special events in urban unincorporated areas. The vast majority of permits reviewed by staff were outside of the urban growth area (rural area and natural resource lands). Homeless encampments are the primary use for TUPs in urban unincorporated areas, and these are subject to a different process than other TUPs (e.g., applications do not require public notice).

Permitting staff estimate that, on average, a temporary use or special events permit is issued for about 40 days in a year. This number has decreased in recent years, which could be attributed to the parking

¹³ KCC 21A.45: [\[LINK\]](#)

requirements that are triggered at 30 days and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on event venues. Permitting staff estimate that of the 30 currently active TUPs, 10 percent occur for fewer than 20 days, 45 percent occur for 20 to 30 days, and 45 percent occur for 30 to 60 days.

Although TUPs can be authorized for any day of the week, weekend and any season of the year, Permitting staff estimate that more than 50 percent of uses and special events occur on the weekends and in the summer season. This aligns with permit data, which revealed that wedding and event venues are the most requested temporary uses, and these types of events typically occur on weekends during the summer. There are other temporary uses, like pumpkin patches, farm festivals, and other seasonal uses that occur for fewer days and with less frequency than wedding and event venues. More detailed analysis of permit data would be needed to verify these estimates.

Table 4. Sites with Currently Active TUPs (2020 - 2025)

Approximate Location	Temporary Use Description
Event venue by Carnation	Up to 60 days of non-agricultural events/non-agricultural training uses per year on existing commercial agriculture site.
Event venue by Ellisville	Use of 3920 sf SFR to host weddings, corporate meetings, reunions, and other similar types of events with up to 200 attendees. Location is 10 acres and parking access on adjacent parcel.
Event venue by Enumclaw	Host wedding and events.
Event venue by Enumclaw	45 to 50 events per year, including weddings, milestone parties, and corporate meetings and events between June and October.
Event venue by Enumclaw	Up to 35 private events in backyard of property from June 1 st to September 30 each year.
Event venue by Green River	Wedding venue.
Event venue by Kangley	60 events per calendar year.
Event venue by Kent	30 events per calendar year.
Event venue by Sammamish	Use of first acre of property for special occasions, specializing in weddings and receptions.
Event venue by Snoqualmie	Host up to 60 outdoor/indoor private events with up to 100 guests from July to October.
Event venue by Snoqualmie	Up to 30 wedding events per calendar year on RA-5 Parcel, May through September.

Permitting staff identified 11 sites with “active TUPs.” Of the 11 sites identified, most of them carry multiple TUPs, thereby accounting for the 31 currently active TUPs. Each of the active TUPs for the sites identified in Table 4 are renewals of previously issued permits.

C. Description of the code enforcement complaints arising from sites to which temporary use permits have been issued between 2014 and 2024

1. The location of the complaint and whether it is in the urban area, rural area, or natural resource lands
2. Whether a violation was found on the site
3. The type of the violation
4. The resolution of the violation, if there was a resolution

Compiling code enforcement and complaint data related to TUPs requires staffing resources to retrieve, review, and report on each permit and code enforcement record. Records of complaints are tied to the parcel, not permits that are issued for that parcel, so it may be not be clear whether a complaint is related to a TUP or to non-TUP code violations. Many TUP complaints include complaints about other types of violations, such as nuisance (including noise), building, zoning and/or critical area violations. The Accela permit database does not provide for ready separation of TUP-related content in these mixed-violation cases.

In addition to reviewing comments and workflow in the Accela permit database, there is a separate database of files with permit- and case-related documents that need to be reviewed for content substantively related to the TUP complaint. Files in the permit and code enforcement case-related databases include e-mails, site plans, building plans, references to ordinances, etc.

Given the limits to how the Accela permit database is structured, and the necessity of reviewing multiple documents within the separate permit- and case-related databases for each TUP complaint, detailed information about the locations, types and resolution of complaints cannot be provided with current resources. Instead, DLS provides the following analysis of enforcement cases related to one TUP follows in the discussion below as an example of a how a TUP complaint is reviewed.

There are three categories of complaints received about properties related to TUPs:

- 1) Complaints received about event activities taking place on a property *without* a TUP;
- 2) Complaints regarding event activities on property that has a TUP, and
- 3) Complaints regarding other issues on a property with a TUP that are unrelated to the TUP.

DLS received 105 complaints associated with temporary use activities on properties from 2014 to 2024. Most complaints are in the first category, related to properties that are holding temporary events that would require a permit, but have not yet obtained a TUP. Since 2022, there have been 22 complaints relating to TUP activities, and 19 were related to event activities held on a property conducting those activities *without* a TUP. In these instances, Permitting staff will send a notice to the property owner that includes the TUP requirements and work with them to come into compliance. The majority of these complaints are resolved upon issuance of the permit.

The second category of complaints are with properties that have an approved TUP. Most of these complaints are about noise and parking issues at events and may be about activities allowed under the TUP. The complaints often come to Permitting staff informally through emails or at community events. It can be challenging to verify the complaints because they typically come to Permitting staff after the event has concluded.

Permitting staff record the complaints and contact the permit applicant to remind them that noncompliance could result in revocation of their TUP and impact future renewals or new TUPs. Generally, this communication is sufficient to resolve the issue. Typically, noncompliance with TUP conditions does not involve Code Enforcement. In rare instances where the owner is non-responsive or the complaint involves imminent life safety concerns, Permitting staff refer the complaint to Code Enforcement.

TUPs require compliance with the noise code (KCC Chapter 12.86¹⁴), but Permitting is not responsible for enforcement of nuisance noise. When Permitting staff receive a complaint about nuisance noise related to a property with a TUP, it is referred to the King County Sheriff's Office (KSCO).¹⁵ Permitting staff do not track the status of complaints that are addressed by the KSCO, but assume that nuisance noise enforcement is a low priority and occurs rarely.

The last category are complaints that are associated with a property that has a TUP, but the complaint itself is separate from activities under the TUP. In one instance, a parcel that was issued a TUP for a pumpkin patch received a code enforcement complaint about abandoned vehicles. The abandoned vehicles likely do not have any relation to the TUP and therefore, would not be considered a code violation of the TUP.

For all categories of TUP complaints, if there is an unresolved clearing and grading code violation, KCC 16.82.130.A¹⁶ prohibits the acceptance or granting of any development permit until the clearing and grading violation has been resolved to the director's satisfaction – unless the permit relates to and is necessary for correction of the clearing and grading violation. This prohibition applies to TUPs, regardless of whether the clearing and grading violation relates to activity under the TUP.

Sample Analysis of One TUP and Associated Permits and Cases

As an example, a parcel outside of Auburn that has had a TUP as a wedding venue. The site has applied for one TUP, and it has been renewed twice. There are five related code enforcement cases for the site. There are also five related special events permits and pre-application reviews for work done without a required permit.¹⁷

The wedding venue was authorized to conduct up to 30 wedding events per year, subject to compliance with code requirements and conditions of the TUP. The Renewal Conditions Letter specified the conditions for the TUP and renewal, including that:

- Portable temporary restrooms/sanitation facilities are to be removed from the site at the conclusion of the TUP season each year;

¹⁴ KCC 12.86: [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁵ King County Noise Complaints: [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁶ KCC 16.82: [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁷ Permitting has a policy that every property owner (or person responsible for code compliance) who has a documented code violation of doing work without a required permit must apply for (and pay for) a pre-application review and meeting to provide an opportunity for Permitting staff to review the facts of the case provided by the Code Enforcement Officer and determine what types of permits the property owner needs to apply for.

- Permanent signage for the wedding venue is not allowed by the TUP or the zoning code in the rural area for non-residential uses;
- The permanent installation of a brick and sand walkway to be used for the seasonal wedding venue is not allowed;
- To comply with the TUP lighting condition prohibiting “bright flood lights” and the limitation to use “general purpose lights only,” low watt bulbs should be used, typically 60-watts or less;
- It is the applicant’s responsibility to secure final permitting for a pending event tent, and work with the Permitting’s Code Enforcement Office to resolve any outstanding code violations;
- It is the applicant’s responsibility to comply with the current mandated state COVID-19 Pandemic guidelines as may be applicable.

Multiple code enforcement complaints relating to the property have been received by the County. The first complaint initially involved construction of two-story accessory buildings within property-line setbacks and without permits. Subsequent complaints included pouring of concrete by a stream, clearing of a parking area without permit, scheduling and holding wedding events without a TUP, and installation of a permanent sign for temporary wedding events. The owner failed to follow up on the mandatory pre-application requirements and obtain the required permits. A Notice and Order specifying the multiple code violations and deadlines was issued and recorded on the property record; a request for appeal was not submitted until after the appeal deadline, so there was no hearing. Civil penalties were issued and a lien for the penalties placed on the property. The enforcement case remains open and active today. The venue remains open and active as well.

The options for enforcement action on the wedding event venue include issuance of a new Notice and Order for repeat/continuing code violations (and additional civil penalties), or abatement action on the existing case which could include the County remediating the critical area violation and placing a lien for the remediation costs on the property. Since the department has issued a TUP and renewed it twice, a court is not likely to grant an injunction against continued operation of the wedding event venue at this location. Higher-priority cases involving more serious life safety or environmental violations take priority over this code enforcement case at this time, given limited code enforcement staffing and their current severe backlog of existing cases.

The time required for review of the Accela database and the separate multiple code enforcement case and permit files for this summary and analysis was 6.5 hours. Conducting this level of analysis for the full list of complaints associated with TUPs was not feasible given staff capacity constraints.

D. An evaluation of the impacts of temporary uses on neighboring properties, roadways, and the environment, by the categories described in subsection B. of this Proviso, and recommendations on how to mitigate or eliminate any negative impacts informed by the description of the code enforcement complaints in subsection C. of this Proviso

According to SMEs, the most common impacts of temporary uses on neighboring properties, roadways, and the environment are related to traffic and noise. More detailed analysis on the impacts of temporary uses and complaints cannot be provided at this time due to the lack of additional resources.

Currently, TUPs require applicants to adequately provide for parking and traffic control. To further address some of these negative impacts, Permitting staff recommend changes to the frequency and duration allowance for a temporary use to better reflect the intended nature of a “temporary” use.

Additional conditions on temporary uses could ensure impacts are appropriately considered and limited. This could include limits on number of guests, guidelines of scale based upon building occupancy, site area, emergency vehicle access, environmental considerations, noise compliance, and compliance requirements with building setbacks.

Specifically, Permitting staff recommend reducing the maximum number of days a temporary use could be permitted from 60 days to 29 or fewer days in a 365-day period. This recommendation is intended to align with existing parking requirements¹⁸ for hard surfacing for any parking area used 30 or more days. If a temporary use or event occurs more than 30 days, as currently allowed, requirements for permanent improvements are triggered, including stormwater and drainage, impervious surface, parking lot standards for lighting, and landscaping. The scope of these permanent improvements and their impacts to the land, roadways, and environment are inconsistent with the intended temporary nature of these uses.

These recommendations respond to public input that the current allowed 60 days in a 365-day period results in activities that are not temporary in practice. Under current regulations, these uses may occur every weekend throughout the year, or every day in certain seasons. Limiting the frequency and duration allowances, combined with limiting the number of days of allowed use would better reflect the intent that these activities are exceptions rather than expectations.

In addition, Permitting staff recommend improving code alignment with policy requirements in the MPPs, CPPs, and KCCP to ensure consistency with rural character and protection of natural resource lands and the environment, which could further help to reduce impacts.

E. A description of how temporary special events and permanent event center uses that are regulated in King County in the Rural Area and Natural Resource Lands are regulated in other Washington counties, and an evaluation of whether those regulations could be adopted by King County

The following is a high-level description of regulations related to special events and permanent event center uses in rural areas and natural resource lands from selected counties with similar conditions to King County (i.e., rural and resource lands in the proximity of one or more major populations centers): Clark, Pierce, Skagit, Snohomish, Spokane, and Thurston.

All six counties have either a temporary or special use permit for structures or activities that are not otherwise allowed by code. Clark County requires a special event permit only if an event impacts the public right-of-way. In agricultural lands, tasting rooms and event facilities associated with a winery are permitted by right, while standalone event facilities are limited to less than 5,000 square feet and are permitted as a conditional use. Rural districts may only have tasting rooms and event facilities associated with a winery by right; no other event facilities are permitted. Outdoor music festivals with 500 or more people may be permitted as a temporary use in agricultural and rural resource lands and are issued for a single time up to five days. Notice to all properties within 300 feet of the subject property is required and the decision may be appealed to the Clark County Hearing Examiner.

¹⁸ KCC 21A.18.120: [\[LINK\]](#)

Pierce County temporarily permits a variety of activities in rural and natural resource lands, including community festivals, produce and flower sales, and camping and recreational uses. Such uses are limited to a specified number of days, and a parcel may have up to three temporary uses permitted in a calendar year. Events for 150 people or more are subject to more permit requirements, such as limits on amplified sound, and may not be permitted for more than 90 days per year. Outdoor music festivals with 1,000 or more people have additional requirements, including a requirement that the permit be approved by the Pierce County Sheriff and the permit applicant must pass a background check. These events cannot be within 500 yards of schools, churches, or residences and the permit is valid for only one day.

Of the counties included in this evaluation, Pierce was the only jurisdiction that had adopted regulations related to permanent event facilities. These are limited to outdoor events that occur primarily between sunrise and sunset (unless otherwise specified) and require buffering to mitigate noise, lighting, parking, and other impacts. There are associated parking and landscaping requirements and limited use of amplified sound. Such facilities are not allowed in resource lands. In rural residential zones, they are limited to 30,000 square feet or smaller; they may be larger than 30,000 square feet in rural centers.

In Skagit County, on agricultural lands uses such as U-pick sales to the public, farm or horticulture viewing, and activities associated with tourism that promote local agriculture are permitted by right as accessory uses. Temporary events related to agricultural production require an administrative special use permit and may not occur on more than 25 days per calendar year. Parking for such events must be contained entirely on the subject property and are not allowed to create a “detrimental” level of impacts on surrounding areas. Similarly, on rural resource lands accessory agriculture uses, and farm-based businesses are permitted by right. Temporary events may be permitted with an administrative special use permit, with the same restrictions described previously, but without the requirement that the event be related to agriculture production.

Snohomish County’s temporary use permits are approved by the building official and thus are primarily focused on temporary structures. Events may be approved on public or private property with either 50 or more people or temporary tents or structures via a special event permit that is valid for the duration of the event. Specific to rural areas and natural resource lands, Snohomish County permits facilities specifically for hosting weddings in rural (Rural Resource Transition 10-acre (RRT-10)) and Rural 5-acre (R-5)) and agriculture (Agriculture 10-acre (A-10)) zones. Public events such as weddings (“Public Events/Assemblies on Farmland”) are permitted solely in the A-10 zone and are limited to occurring twice a year. Existing structures must be used for these events.

Spokane and Thurston counties have adopted regulations to directly support agritourism, which is generally defined as agriculturally based operations or activities intended to bring visitors to an active farm or ranch (e.g., farm festivals, barn wedding venues, and small-scale breweries, wineries, and distilleries). Spokane County permits social events, such as weddings, as an accessory use in its Small Tract Agricultural zone up to six months a year (May to October), with a maximum of 25 events per season and no more than 200 guests. Permits are renewable annually and require that the subject property retain its agricultural identity and capacity as agricultural land. Seasonal harvest festivities may also be permitted in this zone, but concerts and other large-scale events are prohibited. These uses are not permitted in rural zones.

Thurston County adopted an Agritourism Overlay District (AOD) in 2012 (most recently amended in 2024) to facilitate the growth of agritourism on Long Term Agriculture lands in the southern portion of the county by clarifying and expanding the types of activities that are allowed. Within the AOD, properties rented or used for personal social events (e.g., weddings) up to 21 days per year are permit exempt. If any event will last two or more days and is expected to have over 200 people, notice is required to be provided to all adjacent neighbors bordering the subject property.

Skagit and Clark counties have recently initiated efforts to evaluate their respective policies and codes to support the economic vitality of their agricultural lands. In 2021, Skagit County conducted an agritourism situation assessment¹⁹ to understand what agritourism means to the agricultural community, residents and other stakeholders and evaluate how agritourism aligns with Skagit County's Comprehensive Plan and the GMA. This was followed by a report²⁰ in 2022 describing policy options the County could explore, and County staff prepared recommended code changes for consideration²¹ by the Board of County Commissioners. No changes to the code have been adopted yet; since January 2024, the County has had a moratorium on accepting new permit applications for events on agricultural lands that was most recently extended an additional six months from July 2025, pending adoption of the agritourism code updates and the Washington Supreme Court's decision on *King County v. Friends of Sammamish Valley*.

Last year, Clark County began exploring potential code changes with the establishment of a Rural Event Center Task Force, with a particular focus on whether to allow properties in rural residential zones to operate event centers without also operating as a winery. This work is ongoing.

More detailed analysis and additional resources would likely be necessary to determine if any of these regulations are appropriate for adoption by King County.

F. An evaluation of whether, by category to be identified in response to subsection B.1. of this Proviso, temporary uses should be required to be treated as a permanent use that should be required to obtain a conditional or special use permit rather than a temporary use permit

More detailed information related to specific temporary uses that should be required to be treated as a permanent use is not included in this report due to limited resources. Compiling detailed attributes related to TUPs and special event permits requires resources to retrieve, review, and report on each permit over the 10-year period. Without this information, it is not clear if some uses that are currently permitted as temporary would be more appropriately regulated as a permanent use.

G. An evaluation of existing exemptions from temporary use permits;

TUP exemption requirements are found in KCC 21A.32.110.²² A variety of uses are exempt from requiring a TUP depending on zone, frequency, and location. For example, Christmas tree lots are allowed in commercial, office, and industrial zones if they do not exceed 30 calendar days. Carnivals and

¹⁹ Skagit County Agritourism Situation Assessment: [\[LINK\]](#)

²⁰ Skagit County Policy Concepts: [\[LINK\]](#)

²¹ Skagit County Planning & Development Services Staff Report re: Amendments to Skagit County Code 14.04 Definitions and 14.16 Zoning dated July 6, 2023: [\[LINK\]](#)

²² KCC 21A.32: [\[LINK\]](#)

community festivals that are limited to 14 calendar days qualify for an exemption. In addition, if a use does not exceed two days per calendar year, or if a community event is held in a park not exceeding seven days per calendar year, a TUP is not required.

Permitting staff note that the most common concern regarding TUP exemptions is the lack of limitations on the size of an event that has an exemption status in Rural Area (RA), Agriculture (A), and Industrial (I) zones. For example, if a community event qualifies for a TUP exemption, the event is not required to comply with a maximum number of attendees. This could allow for a short-term temporary event with an unlimited number of attendees with no obligation to comply with TUP regulations. However, a special event permit is required for uses or events that are exempt from TUP requirements if the event exceeds 50 attendees.

The concern of unlimited attendees at events with an exemption status from TUP regulations could be addressed by setting a limit of 200 attendees at exempt events in RA, A, and I zones. In all other zones, a limit of 500 attendees for events exempt from the TUP requirements may be appropriate. Uses and events which qualify for an exemption from TUP regulations must still comply with KCC Title 16 (Building and Construction) and KCC Title 17 (Fire Code).

H. A definition of a special event, a temporary use, and an event center;

Currently, the KCC does not include separate definitions for special event, temporary use, or event center. The differentiation of proposed temporary uses and special events are currently determined through the criteria in KCC 21A.32.100. Continued analysis and review are needed if definitions of these terms are determined to be necessary.

I. Recommendations for any code changes to address the evaluation required by this Proviso, including whether there should be differing requirements in the urban area, rural area, or natural resource lands;

Changes that sought to balance Code requirements, community desires, and Permitting procedural needs were proposed as part of the proposed 2024 KCCP update. The proposed changes were intended to: (1) better align the allowances for TUPs and the objectives for the rural and resource zones, where most temporary uses and special events occur and (2) provide clarity, predictability, and consistency for applicants, permit reviewers, and code enforcement staff. This update to TUP regulations aligned with KCCP policies that protect and enhance the Rural Area and on Natural Resource Lands while still allowing for economic opportunities. These were ultimately not included with the adopted 2024 KCCP.

Key recommended changes include:

- Reduce the maximum number of days allowed per year from 60 to 29 or fewer. This change would avoid triggering compliance with stormwater and drainage, impervious surface, permanent parking access, parking lot lighting, and landscaping standards which occur after 30 days. Uses that occur 30 or more days require compliance with parking regulations in KCC 21A.18.120. If the impervious surface square footage required for parking exceeds 2,000 square feet, King County Surface Water Design Manual mandates drainage review and approval.²³

²³ King County Surface Water Design Manual: [\[LINK\]](#)

- Limit the frequency and duration of temporary uses to ensure events do not occur consistently every weekend or non-stop for consecutive months. For example, temporary uses could be limited such that they would not exceed:
 - Three days in any week;
 - Four days in any month;
 - Six months in consecutive or non-consecutive months.
- If the total duration of the proposed temporary use is no more than 10 days in a 365-day period, Permitting staff recommend that the Department consider authorizing up to 10 days to occur consecutively.
- Limit number of guests for any temporary use to a standard number (e.g. 250) and scale the size of an allowed temporary use based upon building occupancy, site area, traffic access, and environmental considerations, and compliance requirements with building setbacks.
- Limit the number of attendees and employees for exempt uses (i.e., no TUP required) that occur two days out of the year to no more than 200 per day if in the RA, A, and I zones. Exempt uses in all other zones could be limited to 500 per day. This change manages the scale of an exempt temporary use or event to better suit the particular zone and reduce impacts from uses exempt from TUPs.
- Require temporary sanitary facilities, potable water, vehicle parking, emergency vehicle access, traffic control, accessibility for persons with disabilities, and noise compliance to help reduce impacts.
- Add requirements to ensure compliance with MPPs, CPPs, and KCCP requirements for consistency with rural character and protection of natural resource lands and the environment.

These recommendations respond to public input that allowing a temporary use for 60 days enables uses to occur every day throughout a season, or every weekend throughout a year, calling into question whether it should still be considered temporary. Furthermore, at 30 days, many of the types of “temporary” uses would require permanent improvements to the site, such as parking areas. Installing permanent improvements for a temporary use is counter to the intent of the TUP.

If the County adopts changes to the TUP code, both new TUP applications and renewal requests for existing TUPs would be subject to the updated regulations. If an applicant’s current TUP is authorized for more than 29 days, it would not be able to renew the TUP for the same number of days if the County adopts changes that reduce the maximum number of days to 29 or fewer. This may have negative effects on businesses that have come to rely on a longer duration of operating days. Recommended limits on temporary uses and events frequency may also require existing permitted temporary uses and events to reduce the number of operating days. Continued review of the potential effects of these recommendations on businesses with existing TUPs is still being conducted and discussed.

Additionally, Permitting staff found that the TUP code enabled situations that may be counter to policy requirements for the Rural Area and Natural Resources Lands. For example, R-324 limits nonresidential uses to certain activities that may provide products and services for nearby Rural Area residents and support natural resource-based industries. These uses should also be sited, sized, and landscaped to complement rural character. Some ongoing temporary use permits are no longer consistent with these policies. Permitting staff intend for the recommendations to improve consistency between code and policies.

A draft proposed Ordinance to reflect these recommendations is currently in development. Should the King County Council provide feedback on the Executive’s recommendations in this report, a proposed Ordinance can be transmitted to Council for consideration following State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) review and a public review draft and comment period.

J. Recommended technical assistance documents, checklists, or other information that would aid a resident in applying for a temporary use permit.

Currently, King County provides applicant assistance in applying for a TUP and special event permits through topic-specific webpages and material on the King County website. This material includes educational brochures and permit documentation checklists. The recommendation is to update all of the existing technical support material to align with any adopted changes to the TUP and special event permitting process resulting from the forthcoming proposed ordinance.

Support sources currently available include:

- King County webpage²⁴
- Temporary Use Permits Information Sheet²⁵
- Special Event Permit Information Sheet²⁶

VI. Conclusion

King County has regulated TUPs for 32 years. These regulations intend to allow uses otherwise prohibited in specific zones to occur for a temporary period with criteria designed to enhance compatibility and mitigate impacts to neighboring properties, roadways, and the environment. Temporary uses can help support the economic vitality of rural areas, but also can create negative impacts to the surrounding area that need to be mitigated.

The topic of temporary use allowances in the Rural Area and Natural Resource Lands potentially conflicting with KCCP policies regarding rural character and preservation of natural resources has been a consistent thread in public comment received from residents, community organizations, environmental activists, and local Tribes. It is commonly reported that some of these allowances create more noise and traffic than others that may alter or hinder the character of rural areas.

This report recommends updating TUP regulations to reduce negative impacts of temporary uses and to ensure that such uses and activities are truly temporary in nature. Further analysis and public engagement are needed to determine which best practices to incorporate, and the standards needed to enact those best practices. Best practices and standards identified in this process need to be consistent with the GMA, MPPs, CPPs, and KCCP and serve the interests of residents of UKC.

VII. Appendix

A. Relevant Policies

²⁴ Permit forms, application materials, and resources - Building and land use - King County, Washington: [\[LINK\]](#)

²⁵ Temporary Use Permit Info & Checklist: [\[LINK\]](#)

²⁶ Fire Permit - Special Event Permit & Site Plan Template: [\[LINK\]](#)

Appendix A: Relevant Policies

The following is an excerpt of key MPP, CPP, and KCCP policies relevant to temporary uses and special events. This is not a comprehensive list, and additional policies may be applicable

Rural lands

KCCP references

- R-201 King County's land use regulations and development standards shall protect and enhance the following attributes associated with rural character and the Rural Area:
- The natural environment, particularly as evidenced by the health of wildlife and fisheries (especially salmon and trout), aquifers used for potable water, surface water bodies including Puget Sound and natural drainage systems and their riparian areas;
 - Commercial and noncommercial farming, forestry, fisheries, mining, home occupations, and home industries;
 - Historic resources, historical character, and continuity important to local communities, as well as archaeological and cultural sites important to Indian tribes;
 - Community small-town atmosphere, safety, and locally owned small businesses;
 - Economically and fiscally healthy Rural Towns and Rural Neighborhood Commercial Centers with clearly defined identities compatible with adjacent rural, agricultural, forestry, and mining uses;
 - Regionally significant parks, trails, and open space for all King County residents;
 - A variety of low-density housing choices compatible with adjacent farming, forestry, and mining, and not needing urban facilities and services;
 - Traditional rural land uses of a size and scale that blend with historical rural development; and
 - Rural uses that do not primarily serve the urban area.
- R-301 King County shall use all appropriate tools at its disposal to limit growth in the Rural Area and Natural Resource Lands, such as land use designations, development regulations, level of service standards, and incentives, to:
- Retain a low growth rate;
 - Comply with the State Growth Management Act;
 - Prevent sprawl, the conversion of rural land, and the overburdening of rural services;
 - Reduce the need for capital expenditures for rural roads;
 - Maintain rural character;
 - Protect the environment; and
 - Reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- R-319 King County shall continue to support the rural development standards that have been established to protect the natural environment by addressing seasonal clearing limits, impervious surface limits, and resource-based practices. Stormwater management practices should be implemented that emphasize preservation of natural drainage systems and protection of water quality and natural hydrology of surface waters and groundwater. Rural development standards should also, where feasible, incorporate and encourage low impact design principles for managing stormwater on-site by minimizing impervious surfaces, preserving on-site hydrology, retaining native vegetation and forest

- cover, capturing and reusing rainwater, controlling pollution at the source, and protecting groundwater. King County shall take care that requirements for on-site stormwater management complement requirements for on-site wastewater management.
- R-323 Nonresidential uses in the Rural Area shall be consistent with the other applicable policies in this chapter and limited to those that:
- Provide convenient local products and services for nearby residents;
 - Require location in a Rural Area;
 - Support the economic vitality of natural resource-based industries;
 - Provide adaptive reuse of significant historic resources;
 - Provide recreational or tourism opportunities that are compatible with the surrounding Rural Area;
 - Provide or support infrastructure for nearby residents; or
 - In Rural Towns and on industrial-zoned properties, involve commercial or manufacturing-related development.
- R-324 Nonresidential uses in the Rural Area shall be sited, sized, and landscaped to complement rural character, prevent impacts to the environment, and function with rural services, including on-site wastewater disposal.
- R-706 Land uses, utilities, and transportation facilities within and adjacent to designated Agricultural and Forest Production Districts and designated Mineral Resource Sites shall be sited and designed to ensure compatibility with resource management.
- R-797 King County should prevent or minimize conflicts with mineral extraction when planning land uses adjacent to designated Mineral Resource Sites and Potential Surface Mineral Resource Sites. Subarea plans or area zoning and land use studies may indicate areas where Mining is an inappropriate land use designation. Designated Mineral Resource Sites and Potential Surface Mineral Resource Sites and Nonconforming Mineral Resource Sites should be shown on the Mineral Resources Map to notify nearby property owners and residents of existing and prospective mineral extraction activities.

MPP references

MPP-Ec-23

Support economic activity in rural and natural resource areas at a size and scale that is compatible with the long-term integrity and productivity of these lands.

MPP-DP-43

Ensure that resource lands and their related economic activities are not adversely impacted by development on adjacent non-resource lands.

CPP references

- DP-1 Designate all lands within King County as one of the following. In each of these designations, critical areas may exist and these are to be conserved through regulations, incentives, and programs.

- a) Urban land within the Urban Growth Area, where new growth is focused and accommodated;
- b) Rural land, where farming, forestry, and other resource uses are protected, and very low-density residential uses and small-scale non-residential uses are allowed; or
- c) Natural Resource land, where permanent regionally significant agricultural, forestry, and mining lands are preserved.

DP-47 Limit growth in the Rural Area to prevent sprawl and the overburdening of rural services, minimize the need for new rural infrastructure, maintain rural character, and protect open spaces and the natural environment. To limit growth pressure in the Rural Area, locate services in Cities in the Rural Area and cities that border the rural area.

DP-50 Establish rural development standards and strategies to ensure all development protects the natural environment, including farmlands and forest lands, by using seasonal and maximum clearing limits for vegetation, limits on the amount of impervious surface, surface water management standards that preserve natural drainage systems, water quality and groundwater recharge, and best management practices for resource-based activities.

DP-59 Prevent incompatible land uses adjacent to designated Natural Resource Lands to avoid interference with their continued use for the production of agricultural, mining, or forest products.

Resource lands – General

KCCP references

- R-706 Land uses, utilities, and transportation facilities within and adjacent to designated Agricultural and Forest Production Districts and designated Mineral Resource Sites shall be sited and designed to ensure compatibility with resource management.
- R-710 King County shall work cooperatively with Indian tribes, cities, other public agencies, private utilities, resource managers, landowners, and residents to conserve Natural Resource Lands for long-term productivity and environmental protection in a consistent and predictable manner.

MPP references

MPP-Ec-23

Support economic activity in rural and natural resource areas at a size and scale that is compatible with the long term integrity and productivity of these lands.

MPP-DP-41

Establish best management practices that protect the long-term integrity of the natural environment, adjacent land uses, and the long-term productivity of resource lands.

MPP-DP-42

Support the sustainability of designated resource lands. Do not convert these lands to other uses.

CPP references

- DP-1 Designate all lands within King County as one of the following. In each of these designations, critical areas may exist and these are to be conserved through regulations, incentives, and programs.
- a) Urban land within the Urban Growth Area, where new growth is focused and accommodated;
 - b) Rural land, where farming, forestry, and other resource uses are protected, and very low-density residential uses and small-scale non-residential uses are allowed; or
 - c) Natural Resource land, where permanent regionally significant agricultural, forestry, and mining lands are preserved.
- DP-55 Conserve commercial agricultural and forestry resource lands primarily for their long-term productive resource value and for the open space, scenic views, wildlife habitat, and critical area protection they provide. Limit the subdivision of land so that parcels remain large enough for commercial resource production.
- EN-32 Protect and restore natural resources such as forests, farmland, wetlands, estuaries, and the urban tree canopy, which sequester and store carbon.

Resource lands - Forestry

KCCP references

- R-721 King County is committed to maintaining working forestland in the Forest Production District, and shall continue to collaborate with public and private forest managers and other partners to promote and encourage long-term forest productivity, reduce uses and activities that conflict with resource uses, and recognize forestland values.
- R-723 Structures within the Forest Production District should be sited to maintain the productivity of the district. Site plan requirements should limit impervious surface, provide for fire control, protect domestic water supply, and prevent conflicts with forest management.
- R-728 Public and private forest owners are encouraged to provide for recreational, educational, and cultural uses, when compatible with forest protection.
- R-736 King County shall take steps to plan for and reduce wildfire risk in the wildland-urban interface in unincorporated King County including wildfire risk assessment and planning, amending codes to align with best practices for wildfire risk reduction, and public education.

Resource lands - Agriculture

KCCP references

- R-742 King County shall continue to implement the objectives of the Farmland Preservation Program. Protection of property purchased under the Farmland Preservation Program shall be a high priority when balancing conflicting interests such as locating transportation, active recreation, utility facilities, or other uses that could have an adverse impact on farm operations.

- R-748 Agriculture shall remain the predominant land use in any Agricultural Production District. Permanent new construction within districts shall be sited to prevent conflicts with commercial farming or other agricultural uses, and nonagricultural uses shall be limited. New development shall not disrupt agriculture operations and shall have a scale compatible with an active farming district.
- R-750 King County, through implementation of projects and programs, shall ensure sufficient land within Agricultural Production Districts remains available to support long-term viability of commercial agriculture and that its programmatic and project actions support the maintenance or improvement of drainage and other agricultural support infrastructure. To the maximum extent feasible, King County should tailor measures to protect threatened or endangered species to support continued operation of working farms within the Agricultural Production Districts and should strive for outcomes consistent with goals King County may establish for optimal area of productive agricultural lands within the Agricultural Production Districts.
- R-758 Active recreation facilities should not be located within Agricultural Production Districts. When new parks, natural areas, or trails are planned for areas within or adjacent to Agricultural Production Districts, King County should work with farmers to minimize impacts to farmland and agricultural operations.
- R-775 King County shall provide incentives, educational programs, and other methods to encourage agricultural practices and technological improvements that maintain water quality, protect public health, protect fish and wildlife habitat, protect historic resources, maintain flood conveyance and storage, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, control noxious weeds, prevent erosion of valuable agricultural soils, and increase soil water holding capacity while maintaining the functions needed for agricultural production.
- R-782 In addition to enhancing the Farmland Preservation Program, the County should develop more innovative solutions and incentives to keep agricultural land affordable and profitable for active farming.