



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Agenda Number:

Submitted on:
(COB Stamp)

Department Name: County Executive Office
Department No.: 012
Agenda Date: March 3, 2026
Placement: Administrative Agenda
Estimated Time:
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Director: Mona Miyasato, County Executive Officer
Contact: Clare Tobin, Legislative Analyst
SUBJECT: Outdoor Festival License for Spring Fest in Isla Vista

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence:

As to form: N/A

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Find that the application for an Outdoor Festival License for the Spring Fest in Isla Vista, to be held on April 4, 2026 and organized by the Isla Vista Community Services District, meets the requirements set forth in Article VI, Sec. 6-81 of the Santa Barbara County ordinance;
- b) Approve and authorize the Chair to execute the attached Outdoor Festival License for Spring Fest in Isla Vista, to be held on April 4, 2026 and organized by the Isla Vista Community Services District; and
- c) Find that the proposed actions are not a "project" under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5) and 15268, as they involve organizational and administrative activities of government that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes to the environment and since approval of a qualifying application for an outdoor festival license is a ministerial action.

Summary Text:

The Isla Vista Community Services District (IVCSD) is planning to host Spring Fest on April 4, 2026. The event is an outdoor festival, which requires a license from the County Executive Office (CEO) and

approval by the Board of Supervisors per County ordinance (Article VI), as it is anticipated to draw more than 5,000 attendees. IVCSO currently estimates 9,000 attendees. CEO staff have reviewed IVCSO's application with the appropriate departments and agencies and recommend approval and issuance of the license, contingent upon issuance of other necessary permits and meeting all requirements set forth by other departments and agencies.

Discussion:

Festival Description

IVCSO's Spring Fest is intended to be an event that is distributed over a large area of Isla Vista, roughly within the area bounded by Embarcadero del Mar, Embarcadero del Norte, and Pardall Road. It has planned multiple music stages and other event areas, with food provided by local restaurants. IVCSO describes the purpose of the event as follows:

The Isla Vista Community Services District (IVCSO) typically hosts the spring community festival each year (beginning in 2022), strategically scheduled during Deltopia. Our community festival aims to provide safe spaces during this weekend to celebrate local culture while promoting accessible harm reduction resources. By combining local art, entertainment, and safety resources, we encourage community engagement and promote public safety. This year, the IVCSO is facilitating the next evolution: a sanctioned, community-built, safety-driven community-wide effort. We aim to keep the vibrant spirit of Deltopia alive while reducing harm and strengthening partnerships between students, residents, local businesses, and service providers. Spring Fest is a multi-zone festival that centers music, art, and community while creating safer, more intentional spaces for celebration.

Deltopia is an unsanctioned event that typically occurs on Del Playa Drive during the first weekend of the spring quarter for the University of California Santa Barbara. It has historically attracted approximately 30,000 attendees. Past Deltopia gatherings have strained public safety resources and led to injuries and even deaths.

On January 27, 2026, the Board of Supervisors approved a change to the outdoor festival ordinance, prohibiting festivals in Isla Vista on the first weekend of the spring quarter for the University of California Santa Barbara, unless sponsored by a state or local public agency. Spring Fest will take place during this weekend, but it is sponsored by IVCSO. IVCSO aims to draw individuals to the organized Spring Fest as a safer alternative to Deltopia. The estimated attendance is 9,000 but the actual number is not known.

Outdoor Festival Licensing

The County Executive Office issues licenses for outdoor festivals. Licenses are required for festivals held on private or public property, in temporary settings, and hosting over 500 people (or over 250 people for events in Isla Vista). Staff review applications, solicit input from other departments and agencies, and issue licenses based on findings set by County ordinance (Article VI, Sec. 6-81). If staff anticipate that attendance will exceed 5,000, the Board of Supervisors must approve the application in a public hearing. Prior to the hearing, the Clerk of the Board provides notice of the hearing to all property owners within 500 feet of the event property boundary.

Article IV, Sec. 6-81 of the County ordinance provides that:

The administrative officer or the board of supervisors may grant a license for an outdoor festival if he or it finds:

(a) That the outdoor festival will be held at a location which complies with and meets all of the health, zoning, and fire and safety requirements and standards of the laws of the State of California and ordinances of this county applicable thereto.

(b) That all information required by this article is in the application and all documents required by this article have been filed.

(c) That the proposed outdoor festival will not, in any way jeopardize, adversely affect, endanger or otherwise constitute a menace to the public health, safety or general welfare, or be materially detrimental to the property of other persons located in the vicinity of such use. The administrative officer and the board of supervisors may find that a location is unsuitable even if in the proper zone if it does not meet the standards contained in this subsection.

(d) The applicant, his employees, agents or any person connected or associated with the applicant as partner, director, officer, stockholder, as defined in subsection (a) of section 6-74, associate or manager, has not knowingly made any false, misleading or fraudulent statement of material fact in the application for a license or in any document or record required to be filed with the administrative officer.

(e) The applicant has not had a similar type of license previously revoked for good cause within one year prior to the application, or if he has, he has not shown material changes in circumstances since such revocation.

The ordinance sets additional restrictions for events in Isla Vista, including:

1. On certain dates, events cannot take place unless they are sponsored by a state or local public agency.
2. Events cannot take place on property zoned or utilized for residential use.

Recommendation to the Board of Supervisors

Staff have reviewed the application and associated materials for Spring Fest submitted by IVCSO, and conferred with other departments and agencies. The application is included as Attachment A and lists the license requirements. These requirements include plans for security protection, drinking water supply, food supply, medical and first aid facilities, fire safety, emergency communications, sanitary facilities, parking, traffic control, clean-up and other items. Staff consulted the following departments and agencies: Planning and Development, Public Works, Sheriff's Office (Isla Vista Foot Patrol), Fire, Risk Management, Environmental Health Services, California Highway Patrol, and Isla Vista Recreation and Parks District.

Staff and the above departments and agencies provided feedback on the plan for Spring Fest. IVCSO has confirmed they will implement the plan improvements. Staff believe the Spring Fest plan meets all the requirements set out in the ordinance and recommend that the Board of Supervisors approve the license for an outdoor festival. A license would be contingent upon issuance of other necessary permits and meeting all requirements set forth by other departments and agencies.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

None

Special Instructions:

Send a copy of the minute order to ctobin@countyofsb.org.

Attachments:

Attachment A – Spring Fest Application

Attachment B – Spring Fest Map

Attachment C – Draft Outdoor Festival License for Spring Fest

Contact Information:

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