

County of Sonoma
Winery Event Working Group
Summary of Key Issues and Policy Options
November 4, 2015

The Winery Event Working Group has identified a number of key issues that include:

- 1) business need for event and promotional activities;
- 2) neighborhood compatibility concerns;
- 3) potential impacts related to noise, traffic, dust and water supplies;
- 4) potential commercialization of agricultural lands; and
- 5) maintaining rural character.

Several policy options have been identified that are summarized below.

Minimum Site Area:

- A. No minimum site area requirements for events
- B. Establish a minimum lot size of 7 acres for events.
- C. Establish a minimum lot size of 10 acres for events consistent with Ag Preserve minimums
- D. Establish a minimum lot size of 20 acres for events consistent with the minimum lot size for new parcels in Land Intensive Agriculture (LIA) zone
- E. Require a minimum of 50% of a site be planted.

Setbacks:

- A. Establish a minimum setback of 1,000 feet for outdoor event areas involving amplified sound.
- B. Establish a minimum setback of 625 feet for outdoor event areas involving acoustical music.
- C. Establish a minimum setback of 450 feet for outdoor event areas with no outdoor music.
- D. Allow reduction of setback where existing terrain or structures attenuate the noise without the use of sound walls.
- E. No minimum setback requirements, establish on a case-by-case basis in the use permit process.
- F. Limit all outdoor events to acoustic music only.

Tasting Room:

- A. Limit of one on-site winery and tasting room per parcel.

- B. Limit the number of tasting rooms to two per site.
- C. Limit custom crush operations.
- D. Allow tasting rooms only when accessory to a winery.
- E. Allow tasting rooms only when there is a minimum 6 acres of vineyard on-site.
- F. Establish a maximum site area devoted to tasting room and visitor serving uses to ensure the use is incidental.
- G. Continue to allow stand-alone tasting rooms
- H. Allow custom crush with tasting for each winery/brand in one tasting room as long as all wine is processed on-site.

Visitor Hours:

- A. Establish operating hours on a case-by case basis through use permit
- B. Limit events to tasting room hours only (10 am to 5pm)
- C. Limit only outdoor events to tasting room hours
- D. Limit events to the standard condition of 10 am to 9 pm with clean up by 10 pm.

Food Service:

- A. Allow food and wine pairing during tasting room hours only.
- B. Limit the number of seats or area where food service is provided.
- C. Limit meals to permitted events only.
- D. Limit facilities to a caterer's kitchen with warming ovens but no stove top or hood.
- E. Prohibit other commercial kitchen appliances such as deep fat fryers, pizza ovens, ice cream makers, etc.

Promotional Activities:

- A. Define events by the number of persons based on parcel size
- B. Limit the number of events for each size threshold.
- C. Limit by type of event activity.
- D. Distinguish between indoors versus outdoors activities.
- E. Distinguish by whether fees are charged.

- F. Distinguish by whether the event involves outdoor amplified sound.
- G. Limit the number of industry-side event days by appellation.

Third party rentals:

- A. Prohibit rental of winery or tasting facilities to third parties.

Access:

- A. Require access from public roads or within ½ mile of a publicly maintained road for event activities.
- B. Require minimum pavement width of 18-feet for access roads.
- C. Establish a required minimum one-half mile distance between driveways serving sites conducting promotional events in concentrated areas.

Parking:

Require a parking plan for all event activities, including industry-wide to include:

- A. A parking attendant to be present at all times during events
- B. The use of dust control measures to keep dust generation to a minimum along access roads and to minimize the amount of dust leaving the site.
- D. Signs placed before each event directing visitors to parking areas and overflow areas.
- C. All event traffic queuing must be located on-site.

Monitoring and Enforcement:

- A. Require an on-site coordinator to address complaints regarding noise, parking or trespass and notice to neighbors of the 24/7 contact person.
- B. Require events to be calendared at the beginning of each year with an event coordinator, including industry-wide event permits.
- C. Require annual reports on event activities from the preceding year including number of events, number of attendees and hours.
- D. Establish an annual monitoring fee and conduct an audit of 15% of tasting room/event permits annually.
- E. Establish a process to randomly select use permits for annual audits.
- F. Employ code enforcement staff on evening and weekends