



RECOMMENDATION TO THE STATE OF MINNESOTA FOR THE SAFE REOPENING OF OUTDOOR FESTIVALS

*Submitted by the Minnesota Festivals & Events Association
in collaboration with the
Minnesota Events Coalition*

Date: March 11, 2021

WHO WE ARE:

For over 30 years, the Minnesota Festivals and Events Association (MNFEA) has been dedicated to supporting the local professionals who plan festivals and events, representing festivals from all corners of the state such as Twin Cities Pride, Aquatennial, Stone Arch Bridge Festival, Basilica Block Party, Mankato Pride Festival, Dan Patch Days Savage, Quad Area Chamber, Lake Bemidji Dragon Boat Festival, Leech Lake Area Chamber of Commerce, Rochester Downtown Alliance, Dennison Days and other events across the state. It is a simple mission with a large impact for not only the 200+ member businesses across our state and region, but also the communities that are brought together by festivals and the economies that these gatherings bolster. Producing festivals involves complicated logistics; something our community does better than anyone else. With keeping public health top of mind, we are confident that operating within the guidelines proposed within this document will be able to create safe events that will benefit our communities, our economy and our great state at large.

WHY IT IS IMPERATIVE TO REOPEN OUTDOOR FESTIVALS & EVENTS:

Nearly all of the outdoor festivals in Minnesota were cancelled or used an alternative delivery method in 2020 and currently into 2021. Many of these events are now in an extremely precarious position and unsure if they will have a future beyond the pandemic. A festival going dark for two years is not only devastating to the brand and their ability to pay their bills; many will not be able to survive another year without increased capacity for their in-person gatherings in 2021. Outside of safeguarding the future of Minnesota festivals, the contribution to the reanimation of our cities and the ability to be a continued important revenue generator for our state is paramount. Festivals and events generate local economic impact for local restaurants, retail shops, hotels, food vendors, musicians, artisans, all of which need our help as well. Data confirms that outdoor events are the safest way to gather and with detailed COVID-19 safety plans and operating standards in place, we can create healthy gatherings that celebrate our heritage and our humanity.

MNFEA STRATEGY:

The approach used when developing this proposal is the goal of safely increasing capacity based on using square footage, an outdoor mask requirement, suggested standards for restrooms, food and beverage areas, merchandise vendors and stages. Every festival and event will be required to provide their safety plan that would include all of these proposed protocols along with additional information on how the producers will protect the health of the public.

OUR PROPOSAL

This document is intended to leave room for the vast variety of outdoor festivals and serve as a guideline for each producer to create their own COVID-19 Safety Plan that implements protocols for their event.

WHERE WE ARE

According to Executive Order 21-07: Outdoor Venues may be open: Occupant capacity must be limited to no greater than 25% of normal occupant capacity, not to exceed 250 patrons for the entire venue (refer to the “Managing Occupant Capacity of Venues” section below for more information about occupant capacity). Outdoor Venues may not be divided into multiple compartments, sections, or similar areas that result in greater than 250 patrons for the entire venue.

OUR PROPOSAL (see diagrams in appendix)

Property Definition: A Street, Park System or Outdoor Recreational Property

1) Outdoor Events Capacity Built on Square Footage: 15 square feet per person proposed (6 square feet International Fire Code) and Space use for attendees based on open space after equipment/barriers in place

2) COVID-19 Safety Plan Five Point Checklist:

- ✓ Hand washing/sanitizing stations located in strategic locations, such as bathrooms, food service areas
- ✓ Mask required in all areas
- ✓ Social distancing infrastructure built into the festival grounds (see diagrams in appendix)
- ✓ Designed ingress and egress throughout the site including entrance, exit, merchandise, food & beverage tents, etc. (see diagrams in appendix)
- ✓ Communications: Signage, “Know Before You Go” and Health Screening Symptom Check sent pre-event (see diagrams in appendix)

3) Sales Tax Exemption for 2021 & 2022

4) Grant Program to Cover Infrastructure Needed to Meet New Guidelines

5) Permit Fees Waived for 2021 & 2022

6) This guidance is proposed for outdoor festivals to use while we remain under COVID-19 restrictions and when the restrictions are lifted we would propose that the 15 square feet per person is changed back to the requirements prior to the pandemic.

IN CONCLUSION

We recognize that we represent a wide variety of festival activities including parades, fireworks, markets, stage performances, vendors and more. The intention of this proposal is focused on increasing capacity for outdoor festivals and events so we can use that information during what is typically a yearlong planning process to hopefully make our events viable for 2021. If we cannot increase capacity it is certain that many of our festivals will not be able to come back from the devastating blow that has been dealt to our industry during the pandemic. Our events have the benefit of being outdoors, the space to make it work within the guidelines, and dedicated operations staff solely focused on crowd management and traffic flow. Every community across the entire state has a beloved festival that they look forward to each and every season and they rely on high-capacity crowds to pay the bills.

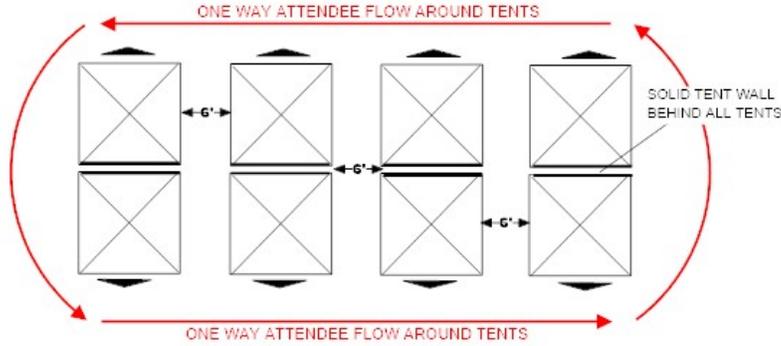
Lastly, MNFEA is committed to being a resource for organizations statewide as they create safety plans that work within the guidelines to host events with increased capacities in 2021.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

APPENDIX: DIAGRAMS FOR TENTS, RESTROOMS, STAGE, INGRESS & EGRESS

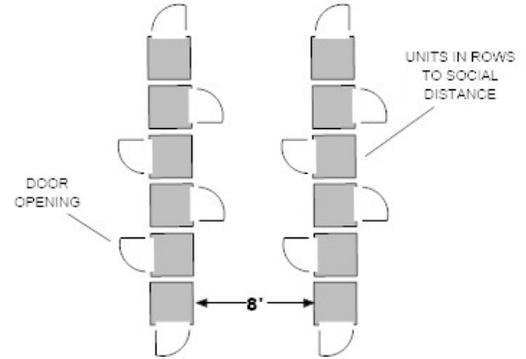
SOCIALLY DISTANCED MERCH VENDOR TENTS

TENTS BACK-TO-BACK WITH SOLID WALLS SEPARATING THEM. ATTENDEES FLOW IN CIRCULAR MOTION AROUND TENTS TO AVOID FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTION



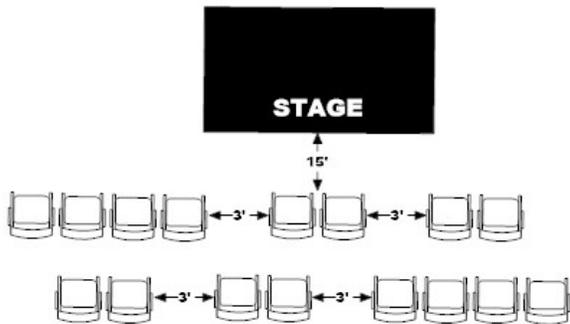
SOCIALLY DISTANCED PORTABLE RESTROOMS

UNITS POSITIONED SO DOORS FACE OPPOSITE DIRECTION OF UNITS NEXT TO THEM TO REDUCE FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTION. ROWS OF UNITS PLACED MINIMUM OF 8' APART WHEN POSSIBLE. ALL UNITS REGULARLY CLEANED WITH CDC-APPROVED DISINFECTANT



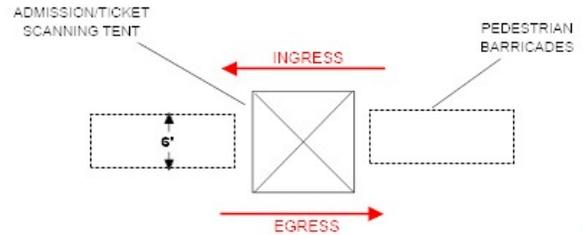
SOCIALLY DISTANCED, OUTDOOR CONCERT SEATING

STAGE POSITIONED A MINIMUM OF 15' FROM FIRST ROW OF SEATS. CHAIRS GROUPED IN PAIRS OR GROUPS OF FOUR FOR THOSE OF SAME HOUSEHOLD. SET MINIMUM OF 3' APART (MN STATE COVID GUIDELINES FOR SEATING IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS)



SOCIALLY DISTANCED INGRESS/EGRESS

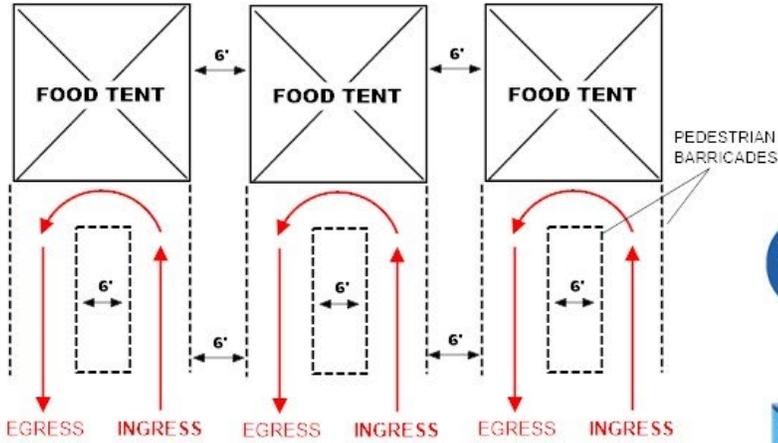
WHEN POSSIBLE, INGRESS AND EGRESS OCCUR AT OPPOSITE SIDES OF EVENT. WHEN SIDE-BY-SIDE (AS SHOWN BELOW), SEPARATE BY HARD BARRIERS TO MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCE



APPENDIX: FOOD & BEVERAGE SERVICE AREAS

SOCIALLY DISTANCED FOOD VENDOR LINES

TENTS SPACED MINIMUM 6' APART (20' IF COOKING IN TENT) WITH ENTRANCE/EXIT LINES CLEARLY MARKED AS SHOWN BELOW.



COVID 'STAY SAFE' SIGNAGE

SIGNAGE REMINDING ATTENDEES TO WEAR MASKS, WASH HANDS REGULARLY AND SOCIALLY DISTANCE SHOULD BE PROMINENTLY DISPLAYED AT ALL ENTRY POINTS AND IN HIGH TRAFFIC AREAS WITHIN THE EVENT.



APPENDIX: ECONOMIC IMPACT OF LIVE EVENTS & FESTIVALS IN MINNESOTA

** Submitted by Live Events Coalition of MN & Twin Cities Pride*

SAMPLING OF OUR INDUSTRY'S ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE:

- Nearly \$17.2 billion in direct spending is created by Live Events of all types
- The Arts and Cultural events sector alone provides \$10 billion in economic impact
- Every dollar spent on a corporate meeting or conference returns \$1.93 to our economy
- MN has 58 companies on the Russell 3000 list, including 10 on the Fortune 250 that host hundreds of major conferences and events in MN worth 100's of millions of dollars each year that are all currently on hold
 - UnitedHealth Group
 - Target
 - Best Buy
 - 3M
 - Medtronic
 - US Bank
 - General Mills
 - CH Robinson Worldwide
 - Ecolab
 - Ameriprise
- Largest 10 events in the Twin Cities alone inject nearly \$1.1 billion every year
- Weddings are a \$916 million industry in our state
- MN is the host of many art and music festivals including the nationally known Uptown Art Fair and the Duluth Bayfront Blues Festival
 - These festivals result in over \$2.2 billion of spending impact to not just our cities but our small towns too

In 2019, the following major events took place in MN:

- NCAA Final 4 Men's Basketball Tournament
 - 91,000 visitors
 - \$143 million in economic impact
- XGames
 - approx. 94,000 visitors
 - \$42.1 million in economic impact
- Uptown Art Fair:
 - 375,000 visitors
 - \$2.1 million of art sold
- MN State Fair
 - 2 million visitors
 - \$268 million in economic impact (2018 stats)

TWIN CITIES PRIDE ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY: Estimates by University of Minnesota Extension

Total Direct Effect:

In total, there was an estimated \$7.96 million of spending related to the Twin Cities Pride Celebration in 2018 (Table 8). Of this, an estimated \$5.2 million was on-site and \$2.8 million off-site. In total, an estimated 560 people were employed because of the event. This includes an estimated 525 vendor employees. Table 8: Direct Effect of Twin Cities Pride Celebration, 2018

| Spending Category | Residents | Visitors | Organization | Total | Employment |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|------------|
| On-Site | \$2,650,825 | \$2,516,475 | \$5,167,300 | | 525 |
| Off-Site | \$1,150,608 | \$1,092,292 | \$548,860 | \$2,791,760 | 35 |
| Total | \$3,801,433 | \$3,608,767 | \$548,860 | \$7,959,060 | 560 |

Total Economic Contribution:

In 2018, the Twin Cities Pride Celebration generated an estimated \$13.4 million of economic activity in Hennepin County (Table 9). Of this total, \$5.9 million was new money drawn into the economy due to visitors. Local residents also expressed their support for the event, creating \$6.2 million of economic activity. Table 9: Total Economic Contribution of Twin Cities Pride Celebration, 2018, Measured in Output

| Spending Category | Direct | Indirect | Induced | Total |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| Residents | \$3,801,400 | \$1,148,300 | \$1,209,600 | \$6,159,300 |
| Visitors | \$3,608,800 | \$1,090,100 | \$1,148,300 | \$5,847,200 |
| Organization | \$548,910 | \$750,200 | \$46,200 | \$1,345,310 |
| Total | \$7,959,110 | \$2,988,600 | \$2,404,100 | \$13,351,810 |

Employment Contribution:

In addition, the Twin Cities Pride Celebration supported an estimated 612 jobs in Hennepin County. This includes 280 jobs supported by visitors and 310 by residents. In the economic impact model used for this analysis, one job is one job, regardless if it is full-time, part-time, or seasonal. Vendors had an estimated 525 employees at the celebration. These are jobs supported by the celebration, but the same workers likely also have regular employment with the vendor and/or work at other festivals and events. Table 10: Total Economic Contribution of Twin Cities Pride Celebration, 2018, Measured in Employment

| Spending Category | Direct | Indirect | Induced | Total |
|-------------------|--------|----------|---------|-------|
| Residents | 290 | 10 | 10 | 310 |
| Visitors | 260 | 10 | 10 | 280 |
| Organization | 10 | 10 | 2 | 22 |
| Total | 560 | 30 | 22 | 612 |