

# Reallocation of Cattle Drive Funding to Potential Other City Events

# Special Events Overview



# Special Events Overview

- Citywide festivals and concerts have two primary purposes:
  - Offer recreational and cultural opportunities for Lewisville residents
  - Create a draw for non-Lewisville residents to visit the city
- Events held in historic Old Town Lewisville have the additional purpose of establishing the Main & Mill Entertainment District as a viable destination for local and out-of-town traffic
- During the past 12 months, combined attendance at citywide special events in Lewisville has surpassed 57,000 people

# Annual Citywide Events

| JANUARY | FEBRUARY | MARCH                   | APRIL        |
|---------|----------|-------------------------|--------------|
|         |          | St. Paddy's Texas Style | ColorPalooza |

| MAY                                     | JUNE                                       | JULY                                         | AUGUST |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|--------|
| Fiesta Charra *<br>Sounds of Lewisville | Sounds of Lewisville<br>Juneteenth Concert | Red White & Lewisville<br>Freedom Festival * |        |

| SEPTEMBER                             | OCTOBER                                        | NOVEMBER | DECEMBER                |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------|
| Senior PBR Bull Bash*<br>Western Days | Little Monsters on Main<br>Homecoming Parade * |          | Old Town Holiday Stroll |

*\* City-supported, but not city-managed*

# Annual Citywide Events

| EVENT                             | Launched                                                               | 2025 Date(s) | 2025 Site         | 2025 Turnout | 2026 Date(s)   |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|----------------|
| St. Paddy's Texas Style           | 2022                                                                   | June 13      | WFP               | 2,593        | June 19        |
| ColorPalooza                      | 2015                                                                   | April 26     | Old Town District | 6,154        | April 25       |
| Fiesta Charra                     | 2018                                                                   | May 25       | Bill Weaver Arena | 2,917        | May 24         |
| Sounds of Lewisville (series)     | 1991                                                                   | May/June     | WFP               | 7,190        | May/June       |
| Sounds of Lewisville (Juneteenth) | 2022                                                                   | June 13      | WFP               | 537          | June 19        |
| Sounds of Red White & Lewisville  | 1991(ish)                                                              | July 1       | WFP/Old Town      | 7,211        | June 30/July 7 |
| Freedom Festival                  | <i>Conducted by Castle Hills Master Association with City support.</i> |              |                   |              |                |
| Let's Get Western/PRCA Rodeo      | 2025                                                                   | Sept. 18     | Bill Weaver Arena | 487          | Sept. 12       |
| Western Days                      | 1973 (2007)                                                            | Sept. 26-27  | Old Town District | 24,233       | Sept. 25-26    |
| Little Monsters on Main           | 2024                                                                   | Oct. 26      | WFP/Main Street   | 5,713        | Oct. 25        |
| Old Town Holiday Stroll*          | 2003 (ish)                                                             | Dec. 6-7     | WFP/Main Street   | 3,660**      | Dec. 5-6       |

\* Numbers are for the 2024 event

\*\* Event impacted by inclement weather

# Special Events Attendance

| EVENT                                   | 2021                | 2022         | 2023         | 2024         | 2025         |
|-----------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| St. Paddy's Texas Style                 | -                   | 2850         | 2200         | 236*         | 2593         |
| ColorPalooza                            | 3500                | 4500         | 5500         | 5040         | 6154         |
| Fiesta Charra                           | 1800                | 2400         | 2345         | 1947**       | 2917         |
| Sounds of Lewisville (series)           | 6938                | 4114         | 3708         | 6678         | 7190         |
| Sounds of Lewisville – Juneteenth       | -                   | 589          | 489          | 478          | 537          |
| Sounds of Red White & Lewisville        | 4000                | 4135         | 5500         | 5040         | 7211         |
| PBR Lewisville / Let's Get Western SPBR | 3300                | 2300         | 2200         | 2046         | 487***       |
| Western Days                            | 24290               | 27140        | 21063        | 27857        | 24233        |
| Little Monsters on Main                 | [new event in 2024] |              |              | 4745         | 5713         |
| Old Town Holiday Stroll                 | 5500                | 5638         | 5653         | 3660*        | ?            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                            | <b>49328</b>        | <b>53666</b> | <b>48658</b> | <b>57727</b> | <b>57035</b> |

\*impacted by weather

\*\*moved to WFP

\*\*\*replacement event in 2025

# Annual Events Budget

| EVENT                            | General Fund    | Hotel Fund         | Act. Fund        | Risk Fund       | Event Total        |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| St. Paddy's Texas Style          |                 | \$49,750           |                  |                 | \$49,750           |
| ColorPalooza                     |                 | \$161,500          |                  |                 | \$161,500          |
| Fiesta Charra                    | \$2,200         | \$65,550           |                  |                 | \$67,750           |
| Sounds of Lewisville (series)    | \$12,800        | \$79,250           |                  |                 | \$92,050           |
| Sounds of Red White & Lewisville | \$32,700        | \$2,500            |                  |                 | \$35,200           |
| Let's Get Western/PRCA Rodeo     |                 | \$70,550           |                  |                 | \$70,550           |
| Western Days                     | \$8,100         | \$453,996          | \$411,912        | \$19,000        | \$893,008          |
| Little Monsters on Main          |                 | \$52,600           |                  |                 | \$52,600           |
| Old Town Holiday Stroll          | \$2,125         | \$78,900           |                  |                 | \$81,025           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                     | <b>\$57,925</b> | <b>\$1,014,598</b> | <b>\$411,912</b> | <b>\$19,000</b> | <b>\$1,503,433</b> |

# Special Events Challenges

- There are certain challenges that are common to all current and proposed City-run special events.
  - Budget – Events are primarily funded through the Hotel Fund, which is a limited and potentially volatile source that also is used for arts support and tourism functions; true costs of events will be verified during the next two fiscal years with the new ERP software.
  - Staffing – Events, especially full festivals, have significant impacts on Police, Fire, Parks, Public Services, and other departments. As events have grown beyond the capacity of those departments to provide support, we have had to expand event budgets to allow the use of contract services.
  - Venues – Each venue has limits. Old Town has parking and traffic issues, has to co-exist with businesses; Lake Park has a single access point, is full on prime event weekends; Bill Weaver Arena has limited parking; Lake Avalon Park has limited parking, significant resident impact.
  - Changing attendee trends – younger residents don't appear to be going out as much as their older counterparts, and they aren't consuming alcohol, which can impact event revenues for some of our festivals, Western Days for example.
  - Weather – People stay home in heavy rain, severe storms, or excessive heat.
  - Competitive Market – North Texas has dozens of public festivals and concerts, many of which are established multi-day events that over-shadow our events.

# Special Events Opportunities



# Adding or retiring an event

- There are standards used when deciding whether to add, expand, or retire an event.
- Events have been retired because they lacked an audience (Fall Food & Fashion Fest), because the organizer changed its plans (KTA Jam Session), or because of budget cuts (Rocktober concert series).
- Events are considered for expansion when the audience is consistently strong and there is reason to believe that certain additions would boost audience appeal. For example, the Cattle Drive parade could be rebranded as a St. Paddy's Day Parade similar to Greenville Avenue in Dallas (and we could do something they can't ... drive longhorns).
- Events are added to fill a market niche not being filled elsewhere, such as St. Paddy's Texas Style that combined Texas Independence day celebrations with St. Patrick's Day events.
- Events or event activities are sometimes added at the request of community stakeholders, such as the Friday-night Juneteenth concert that has been added to the Sounds of Lewisville lineup per the Mayor's Commission.
- For all additions or expansions, key factors are whether there is budget money available, whether supporting departments can provide needed staff, and whether there is an identified opportunity to reach new audiences not already being served.

# Recent changes to City events

- Western Days: Bringing in Lucha Libre wrestling. The wrestlers have been a big hit and have been added to St. Paddy's Texas Style and Fiesta Charra.
- Western Days: Moving the Huffines and Bendt Stages to maximize the site plan and highlight Prairie House in the east and Ethel Jane's in the west.
- ColorPalooza: Increasing décor, interactive art, cultural pods (Chin, Korean, etc.).
- Moving Sounds of Lewisville to Tuesdays in May and June to get out in front of the summer heat. This was done in 2023 and has been met with positive response.
- Red White & Lewisville: Adding a drone show. Red White & Lewisville saw its highest attendance ever in 2025. Staff continues to monitor this activity.
- Juneteenth: Splitting off Juneteenth as a stand-alone event, separating it from Sounds of Lewisville.
- Little Monsters on Main: This event was added to the lineup in 2024 and has had two years of strong attendance and strong participation.
- PBR Lewisville ended this year due to the loss of support from PBR, and a new senior bull-riding event was added to replace it. Staff is still looking at ways to improve or grow that event.

# How to Apply Cattle Drive Parade Savings?

- In August, the City Council approved staff's recommendation to end the Cattle Drive Parade due to low attendance and participation. This created an ongoing savings of \$15,000 that the City Council applied to Western Days for FY 2024-25.
- Staff identified several options for future use of that \$15,000:
  - Continue applying it to Western Days, where production costs increase each year
  - Add a parade to St. Paddy's Texas Style
  - Increase City support of the current privately run Veteran's Day observance at the City Hall Veterans Memorial
  - Apply it to Sounds of Red White & Lewisville to help fund a transition to more debris-less fireworks and less drones (partial)
  - Attempt to draw another small-scale private event with a \$15,000 host fee
  - Attempt to add a two-day PRCA rodeo to the September bull-riding event, creating a three-day event (partial)
- Staff recommendation is to permanently allocate that \$15,000 to the Western Days budget.

# Discussion / Questions

