

**TEMECULA COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT  
AGENDA REPORT**

**TO:** General Manager/Board of Directors

**FROM:** Erica Russo, Interim Director of Community Services

**DATE:** September 14, 2021

**SUBJECT:** Consider Update Regarding Winter Events, Including Temecula Rod Run, Santa's Electric Light Parade, and Chilled in the Park and Provide General Direction Regarding the Same

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**PREPARED BY:** Dawn Adamiak, Community Services Manager

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Board of Directors receive an update regarding Winter events, including Temecula Rod Run, Santa's Electric Light Parade, and Chilled in the Park, and provide general direction regarding the same.

**BACKGROUND:** Signature special events have played a role in the traditions of Temecula residents and visitors throughout our 30+ year history. Over the past 18 months, staff have used their creativity to reimagine some of these events and bring new events to life. As events return to a more normal feel, Staff is prepared and excited to offer our signature special events presented "The Temecula Way."

From August 2<sup>nd</sup> through August 17<sup>th</sup>, Community Services Manager Dawn Adamiak and Assistant City Manager Kevin Hawkins met with the Mayor and Council Members one-on-one to discuss upcoming Winter Events. Included in each discussion were:

- Temecula Rod Run and the reduced parking for participants due to Old Town expanded (outdoor) dining
- Santa's Electric Light Parade and potential challenges with the Old Town location due to large crowds and reduced space resulting from Old Town expanded (outdoor) dining
- Chilled in the Park, a new event (conceptualized as "Fourth of July in December").

Great discussion and questions arose from each meeting, and each Council Member shared his or her comments, suggestions, and/or concerns. Based on this feedback, Staff recommends the following events and asks for direction on the location of the Santa's Electric Light Parade.

**Temecula Rod Run:** This annual, signature special event has seen its share of weather challenges over the years due to the March date coinciding with the rainy season. After the 2019 show and with Council support, staff decided to move the show to May in hopes of better weather. While the dates for 2020 had perfect weather, unfortunately we had to cancel due to the pandemic. As

the pandemic restrictions continued into the Spring of 2021 it was decided to move the Rod Run to November 5-6, 2021. However, with the very successful addition of Old Town expanded (outdoor) dining, parking has become more limited for the Rod Run. Creatively the Events Team has found parking for 440 cars. In 2019 we were able to accommodate 556 participants, so we are down 116 spaces. Staff have spoken with the local car clubs and all are excited to see the return of Southern California's Premier Car Show. The event will include the Friday Cruise Night from 5pm-8pm and the Saturday Show & Shine from 9am-4pm with an anticipated crowd of 60,000 over the two days. Each Council Member independently expressed support for this event.

**Santa's Electric Light Parade:** A magical yearly favorite is back as Santa's Electric Light Parade will once again travel through Temecula on Friday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> beginning at 7pm. In 2010 the light parade moved from Jefferson Avenue, where it had been since 1992, to Old Town Front Street. Since 2013 the parade has included the same staging/de-staging areas and parade route. Over the 11 years we have been in Old Town, we have watched the crowd expand by the thousands; with attendance now reaching close to 30,000 spectators. We have also seen a growth in school marching band participation, larger parade entries, and semi-truck type floats. In 2019 we added pedestrian fencing along the entire parade route as an added layer of safety for our spectators, participants, and staff. As the parade has grown, Old Town continues to evolve and grow as well. We have watched parking lots transform into businesses and sidewalks and parking stalls transform into Old Town expanded (outdoor) dining. With the growth in Old Town comes a loss of space for parade spectators and a narrowing of the parade route. Due to these new challenges and loss of space in Old Town, Staff presented two location recommendations (which included any safety concerns) during each briefing for discussion:

**Recommendation A:** Keep the parade route in Old Town as it's been since 2010. Due to space constraints, however, this recommendation changes the typical parade to a walking-only parade. This means there would be no motorized vehicles of any kind (with an exception for Riverside County Sheriff). It's anticipated there would be no floats, cars, or golf carts, but bikes, scooters, wagons would be allowed. This option could restrict some participants from entering if they cannot walk the entire length of the parade route.

**Recommendation B:** Move the parade back to Jefferson Avenue where it originally started. Staging area would remain the same, but the parade would now start at the corner of Jefferson and Del Rio and travel north on Jefferson and end at Overland with de-staging on Overland heading westbound. This option keeps the parade in the typical fashion with floats and motorized vehicles. The width of Jefferson Avenue is 71 feet, whereas Old Town Front Street is currently only 24 feet. This additional space creates a much larger safety buffer for spectators and parade entries.

During the one-on-one conversations, Council Members were divided over the preferred location for the Parade.

**Chilled in the Park:** As our past two Fourth of July celebrations had to be altered due to pandemic restrictions, it's a great time to introduce a new event for 2021 and celebrate like it's Fourth of

July in December. Join us at the Ronald Reagan Sports Park on Saturday, December 18<sup>th</sup> for an afternoon and evening of fun for the family. There will be live bands performing from the main stage, food vendors, a fun zone for kids and a 15-minute fireworks display to end the evening. Each Council Member independently expressed support for this event.

In conclusion, Staff recommends proceeding with the Rod Run and Chilled events as described above, and seeks direction from Council regarding the Santa's Electric Light Parade.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** Expenditures for these events have been allocated as part of the Fiscal Year 2021-22 Annual Operating Budget.

**ATTACHMENTS:** None