



## **REQUEST FOR ACTION**

### **Oktoberfest 2025 Presented by DBS Group - Community Festival**

**MEETING DATE:**

**August 11, 2025**

**ORIGINATING DEPT:**

**City Clerk**

**AGENDA SECTION:**

**Consent Agenda**

**PRESENTER:**

**Christiaan Cartwright**

### **Action Requested:**

Adopting a Resolution approving the special event permit application for the Oktoberfest 2025 Presented by DBS Group event and declaring the event a community festival.

### **Report Narrative:**

Oktoberfest in Rochester, Minnesota isn't just a nod to Bavarian tradition—it's a vibrant, inclusive celebration that brings together residents, businesses, and visitors in a shared experience of music, food, culture, and connection. Held for the first time ever in the heart of downtown, this event transforms 1st Ave SW into a bustling hub of activity, echoing the warmth and unity of a true community festival, and helps downtown businesses recover, to a degree, from the heavy downtown construction. Rochester's Oktoberfest is about connection. It is a place where neighbors meet, families play, and the city's cultural heartbeat is felt in every dance step and laugh. It is not just a party, it will hopefully be a new tradition that reflects Rochester's values of inclusivity, joy, and civic pride.

- **Local Engagement:** The festival is organized by local leaders and supported by the Rochester Downtown Alliance and Destination Medical Center, Experience Rochester, and MANY local business sponsors - who have made this event happen and it is showcasing strong community involvement.
- **Diverse Entertainment:** From polka bands like Craig Ebel and the DyVersaCo to Rochester's own Incognito party band, the music lineup reflects both regional talent and cultural variety.
- **Family-Friendly Fun:** With costume contests, stein-holding competitions, bobbing for apples, and performances by the SG Edelweiss Bavarian Dance Group, the event offers activities for all ages.
- **Support for Local Businesses:** Vendors are encouraged to offer authentic Oktoberfest fare, and the event boosts foot traffic for downtown shops and restaurants, again especially after summer construction.
- **Charitable Impact:** A separate Oktoberfest event at Haley Comfort Systems raises funds for suicide prevention, benefiting organizations like AFSP Minnesota and NAMI SE Minnesota—proving that community celebration can also be a force for good. Our proceeds, after expenses, will go to the House of Shields, a non-profit in good standing with the State of Minnesota.

DBS Group has applied for a special event permit for their Oktoberfest 2025 Community Festival. The event will occur on Saturday, September 27, 2025. The event set-up begins at 7:00 a.m., and the event itself will occur from 11:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m. Clean-up will end at 11:00 p.m. The event is occurring on 1st Ave SW, stretching from 2nd St SW to 4th St SW, as well as on 3rd St SW, from the alley behind the old City Hall to the 3rd St Ramp. The event is requesting a street closure of 1st Ave SW between 2nd St SW and just prior to 4th St SW, allowing access to the 3rd St ramp, as well as, the closure of 3rd St SW

between the alley behind the old City Hall to the alley between the Stabile building and the 3rd St ramp. Oktoberfest 2025 is requesting that the City Council waive the 85 decibel limit, with all sound terminating no later than 10:00 p.m.

City Code allows for these types of events if they are deemed a "Community Festival," defined as an event celebrating the people, history, food, culture, music, or events of the City of Rochester, as declared by resolution of the Common Council.

**Priorities & Foundational Principles:**

Quality Services for Quality Living  
Economic Vibrancy & Growth Management

**Policy Considerations & DEI Impact:**

In approving the issuance of licenses, the Council is participating as prescribed by City ordinances in the regulatory framework in place to ensure public safety, health and well-being through oversight of the activity by contractors and designated businesses within the city, as well as oversight of licenses issued relating to alcohol, gambling, and animals.

**Prior Legislative Actions & Community Engagement:**

No prior legislative actions.

**Fiscal & Resource Impact:**

Licensing activity is budgeted for under the City Clerk's Office main departmental budget. License application fees cover a portion of the cost of administering the licensing process.

**Alternative Action(s):**

No alternative actions are recommended at this time. Denial will result in the Oktoberfest 2025 Presented by DBS Group not being able to hold their event.

**Prepared By:**

Vorleak Sin

**Attachments:**

[Resolution - Oktoberfest 2025 - Presented by DBS Group](#)