

CITY OF CHICO

ENTERTAINMENT ZONE MANAGEMENT PLAN AND ADMINISTRATIVE RULES

Downtown Chico Entertainment Zone Meriam Park Entertainment Zone

Administered by: City Manager's Office

In Coordination With: Chico Police Department, Public Works O&M Department, California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control, participating businesses, Chico Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Chico Business Association (DCBA), and Meriam Park.

Effective Date: September 24, 2026

Last Updated: August 19, 2026

1. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The City of Chico has established Entertainment Zones in Downtown Chico and Meriam Park pursuant to Senate Bill 969 and Chapter 5.45 of the Chico Municipal Code.

The Entertainment Zones allow persons 21 years of age or older to purchase alcoholic beverages from participating businesses licensed by the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control ("ABC") and consume those beverages within designated public streets, sidewalks, alleys, and public rights-of-way within the boundaries of the applicable Entertainment Zone.

The purpose of this Entertainment Zone Management Plan ("Management Plan") is to establish administrative procedures and operating standards for safe, responsible, consistent, and effective operation of Chico's Entertainment Zones.

The City's objectives for the Entertainment Zone program are to:

- Support local retailers, restaurants, breweries, wineries, bars, and other businesses;
- Encourage pedestrian activity and circulation within participating commercial districts;
- Create an enjoyable and engaging experience that encourages residents and visitors to spend additional time exploring Chico businesses;
- Support community events and activation of public spaces;
- Enhance Downtown Chico and Meriam Park as vibrant commercial and community destinations;
- Provide clear and understandable rules for patrons and participating businesses;

- Maintain appropriate safeguards for public health, safety, and welfare; and
- Establish procedures that allow the City to evaluate and adjust program operations as experience is gained.

The Entertainment Zone program is intended to be one component of the City's broader efforts to support vibrant commercial districts and brick-and-mortar businesses. The objective is to activate the districts by providing additional mechanisms to promote activity, visitation, and overall commerce.

2. LEGAL AUTHORITY

The Entertainment Zone program is authorized by California Senate Bill 969.

The City of Chico Entertainment Zones are established and governed by Chapter 5.45 of the Chico Municipal Code and City of Chico Ordinance 2623.

This Management Plan implements the administrative provisions of Chapter 5.45 and Ordinance 2623. Nothing in this Management Plan authorizes activity prohibited by state law, ABC regulation or license condition, the Chico Municipal Code, or any other applicable law.

3. ENTERTAINMENT ZONES

The City has established two Entertainment Zones.

3.1 Downtown Chico Entertainment Zone

The Downtown Chico Entertainment Zone consists of the public streets, sidewalks, alleys, and public rights-of-way located within the boundaries identified on the Downtown Entertainment Zone Map adopted by the City Council.

The official map is attached to this Management Plan as **Exhibit A**.

3.2 Meriam Park Entertainment Zone

The Meriam Park Entertainment Zone consists of the public streets, sidewalks, alleys, and public rights-of-way located within the boundaries identified on the Meriam Park Entertainment Zone Map adopted by the City Council.

The official map is attached to this Management Plan as **Exhibit B**.

3.3 Separate Zones

For purposes of alcoholic beverage possession and consumption, the Downtown Chico Entertainment Zone and Meriam Park Entertainment Zone are separate Entertainment Zones. An alcoholic beverage purchased for consumption within one Entertainment Zone may not be transported to or consumed within the other Entertainment Zone. Alcoholic

beverages must be consumed or discarded within the boundaries of the Entertainment Zone from which they were purchased.

4. DAYS AND HOURS OF OPERATION

Both Entertainment Zones are authorized to operate:

Days: Seven days per week

Hours: 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Entertainment Zone privileges begin at 10:00 a.m. and end at 10:00 p.m.

At 10:00 p.m., possession and consumption of open alcoholic beverages on public streets, sidewalks, alleys, and public rights-of-way pursuant to the Entertainment Zone program must cease.

Participating Licensees shall discontinue issuing alcoholic beverages intended for Entertainment Zone consumption sufficiently in advance of 10:00 p.m. to facilitate compliance with the closing time.

The Entertainment Zones operate independently of special events and do not require a special event to be activated.

A special event occurring within an Entertainment Zone remains subject to all applicable City permits, ABC requirements, street closure requirements, conditions of approval, and other laws. A special event permit does not supersede this Management Plan unless specifically authorized by the City and permitted by law.

5. ENTERTAINMENT ZONE ADMINISTRATION

5.1 Entertainment Zone Administrator

The City Manager, or designee, shall serve as the City's Entertainment Zone Administrator and shall be responsible for administration of the Entertainment Zone program. In this instance the City Manager has designated the Assistant City Manager to administer the Entertainment Zones.

The Administrator may coordinate with:

- Chico Police Department;
- Public Works O&M Department;
- City Attorney's Office;
- California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control;
- Downtown Chico Business Association;
- Chico Chamber of Commerce;
- Meriam Park representatives;

- Participating Licensees;
- Retail businesses and property owners; and
- Other agencies or organizations as necessary.

5.2 Administrative Authority

Consistent with Chapter 5.45, the City Manager or designee may establish administrative procedures necessary to implement the Entertainment Zone program, including procedures relating to:

- Approved containers;
- Age-verification markers;
- Participating business identification;
- Signage;
- Educational materials;
- Program monitoring;
- Complaint procedures;
- Special events;
- Coordination with law enforcement and ABC; and
- Other operational matters consistent with the Chico Municipal Code and state law.

Administrative procedures may be modified as operational experience is gained, provided that modifications remain consistent with Chapter 5.45 and applicable state law.

6. PARTICIPATING LICENSEES

Participation in the Entertainment Zone program is voluntary. A business wishing to sell alcoholic beverages for consumption within an Entertainment Zone must satisfy all applicable state and local requirements.

6.1 Eligibility

A Participating Licensee must:

1. Hold a valid ABC license to sell alcohol;
2. Have its licensed premises located within the boundaries of the applicable Entertainment Zone;
3. Be authorized under state law and the conditions of its ABC license to exercise Entertainment Zone privileges;
4. Submit the required annual notice of intent to participate to ABC;
5. Submit the required notice of intent to participate to the City of Chico;
6. Comply with Chapter 5.45 of the Chico Municipal Code;

7. Comply with this Management Plan and applicable City administrative procedures; and
8. Remain in good standing with applicable City and state requirements.

A business is not required to participate merely because it is located within an Entertainment Zone. Retail stores wishing to participate that are not licensed to sell alcohol, can do so by allowing alcoholic beverages in their stores in the approved wristband and container.

6.2 ABC Notification

Each participating alcoholic sales licensee is responsible for submitting notice of intent or other documentation required by ABC before exercising Entertainment Zone privileges.

Participating licensees are responsible for renewing or resubmitting required ABC notifications annually or as otherwise required by ABC.

A link to the ABC notification page can be found under the business portal section of the City's Entertainment Zone webpage: www.chicoca.gov/entertainmentzone

A direct link to the ABC notification page:

<https://www.abc.ca.gov/licensing/entertainment-zone-participation/entertainment-zone-participation-notification/>

6.3 City Notification

Each Participating Licensee shall submit a notice of intent to the City of Chico prior to exercising Entertainment Zone privileges. City notification allows the City to maintain an accurate list of Participating Licensees, coordinate program administration, and provide participating businesses with current program information, materials, and updates. The City of Chico notification form can be found under the business portal section of the City's Entertainment Zone webpage: www.chicoca.gov/entertainmentzone.

6.4 Participating Business Identification

The City will maintain and publish a list or map of approved Participating Licensees. Participating licensees and retail businesses shall display the participating business sign supplied by the City of Chico.

7. PARTICIPATING LICENSEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Each Participating Licensee is responsible for complying with state alcoholic beverage laws, its ABC license and conditions, the Chico Municipal Code, and this Management Plan.

Before allowing an alcoholic beverage to leave its licensed premises for consumption within an Entertainment Zone, a Participating Licensee shall:

1. Verify that the patron is at least 21 years of age using valid government-issued identification;
2. Provide or verify the City-approved Age-Verification wrist band with providing business that issued the wrist band name on the wrist band.
3. Serve the beverage only in a City-approved Entertainment Zone container;
4. Ensure the beverage is authorized by the license held by the business;
5. Ensure the transaction occurs during authorized Entertainment Zone hours;
6. Require the patron to exit directly from the licensed premises into the applicable Entertainment Zone as required by state law; and
7. Take reasonable measures to inform the patron that the beverage must remain within the Entertainment Zone and may not be taken beyond its boundaries.
8. Inform patrons that alcoholic beverages purchased from another Participating Licensee may not be brought onto the licensed premises and must be consumed or discarded before entry.

Nothing in the Entertainment Zone program modifies a licensee's obligations under current California alcoholic beverage laws.

8. AGE VERIFICATION

All persons possessing or consuming an alcoholic beverage within an Entertainment Zone must be at least 21 years of age and must display a City-approved Age-Verification wrist band.

8.1 Verification

Before issuing an age-verification marker, a Participating Licensee shall inspect valid government-issued identification and reasonably determine that the patron is 21 years of age or older. A new age verification marker shall be supplied by each participating licensee once age verification is confirmed. An age verification marker from another participating business shall be removed before a new age verification marker is applied.

The City's Age-Verification Marker does not replace a licensee's obligation to verify age when required by law or appropriate under responsible beverage-service practices.

8.2 Approved Marker

The approved age verification marker shall consist of a Kelly Green colored Tyvek wristband. Wristbands can be purchased at the following link: [3/4" Solid Color Tyvek® Wristbands | Wristband Resources](#). Each participating ABC licensed business shall order their own wristbands through this website: [3/4" Solid Color Tyvek® Wristbands | Wristband Resources](#) and shall customize the wristbands with their business name, wristband customization is available at no extra cost.

The City may periodically change the color, design, date designation, security feature, or other characteristics of the marker to discourage transfer, counterfeiting, or unauthorized reuse.

9. APPROVED ENTERTAINMENT ZONE CONTAINERS

All alcoholic beverages leaving a Participating Licensee for consumption within an Entertainment Zone must be served in a City-approved container.

9.1 Container Standards

Approved containers shall:

- Be non-glass;
- Be non-metal;
- Be readily identifiable as an Entertainment Zone container;
- Be a clear plastic 16oz. cup
- Include a color sticker the same as the wrist band;
- Comply with applicable state law and ABC requirements; and

The City approved 16oz clear plastic cup can be purchased at the following link: [AMHIL ENTERPRISES PLASTIC CUPS CLEAR 16 OZ - US Foods CHEF'STORE](#). A circle shaped green sticker shall be placed on each container, stickers can be purchased at the following link: [Amazon.com : 8000 Pack, 3/4" Round Dot Stickers Circle Labels - Green : Office Products](#). Each participating ABC licensed business shall order their own containers and their own stickers.

9.2 Standardization

To improve recognition by patrons, businesses, and law enforcement, Participating Licensees shall use only containers approved by the City for Entertainment Zone consumption.

Businesses may continue using their ordinary glassware or other lawful containers for beverages consumed entirely within their licensed premises.

10. ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

The following alcoholic beverages may be consumed within Chico Entertainment Zones when sold by an appropriately licensed Participating Licensee:

- Beer;
- Wine;
- Distilled spirits; and
- Mixed drinks.

The type of beverage that an individual Participating Licensee may sell is determined by that business's ABC license and applicable state law.

All alcoholic beverages consumed pursuant to the Entertainment Zone program must be purchased from a Participating Licensee located within the same Entertainment Zone.

Alcohol purchased outside an Entertainment Zone may not be brought into the Entertainment Zone for consumption.

11. PATRON RULES

A patron possessing or consuming an alcoholic beverage within an Entertainment Zone shall:

1. Be 21 years of age or older;
2. Possess and display the City-approved Age-Verification Marker (wrist band);
3. Use only an approved Entertainment Zone container;
4. Consume only alcohol purchased from a participating licensee within that same Entertainment Zone;
5. Remain within the designated Entertainment Zone boundaries while possessing an open alcoholic beverage;
6. Comply with all lawful directions from Chico Police Department, City staff, and other authorized officials; and
7. Dispose of the beverage before leaving the Entertainment Zone.

Patrons may not:

- Bring outside alcohol into an Entertainment Zone for consumption;
- Carry an open alcoholic beverage beyond the Entertainment Zone boundary;
- Possess alcohol in a glass or metal container within the Entertainment Zone;
- Provide alcohol to a person under 21;
- Consume alcohol within an Entertainment Zone outside authorized hours;
- Possess an alcoholic beverage without the required Age-Verification Marker; or
- Engage in conduct otherwise prohibited by federal, state, or local law.

The Entertainment Zone does not suspend laws relating to public intoxication, disorderly conduct, driving under the influence, furnishing alcohol to minors, or other unlawful conduct. Any non-compliance of these rules or associated laws are grounds for revocation of participation by the patron or business found to be non-compliant.

12. NON-ALCOHOL-SERVING BUSINESSES AND RETAILERS

A retail or service business located within an Entertainment Zone is not required to participate in the program. Nothing in the Entertainment Zone ordinance requires a private business to allow patrons carrying alcoholic beverages to enter its premises.

However, if a business chooses to participate in the Entertainment Zone, they shall display the standard participating business sign or decal somewhere near the main entrance of their store. Alcoholic beverages will be allowed in their premises as long as they remain in the City approved container and patrons display the City approved wrist band.

13. ENTERTAINMENT ZONE BOUNDARY SIGNAGE

The City shall maintain visible signage at appropriate locations around the perimeter of each Entertainment Zone. Boundary signage shall clearly communicate that alcoholic beverages may not be carried beyond the Entertainment Zone.

Signage may include:

CITY OF CHICO ENTERTAINMENT ZONE

No Alcoholic Beverages Beyond This Point

Additional signs, sidewalk markings, decals, banners, or other visual indicators may be utilized where appropriate.

14. PUBLIC SAFETY AND ENFORCEMENT

The Chico Police Department is authorized to enforce Chapter 5.45 and all other applicable laws within the Entertainment Zones. Nothing in the establishment of an Entertainment Zone restricts the authority of Chico Police Department or any other law enforcement agency.

Enforcement may include education, warnings, requiring disposal of alcoholic beverages, directing persons to leave the Entertainment Zone, citations, arrests, referrals to ABC, or other enforcement authorized by law.

Particular enforcement attention may be given to:

- Underage possession or consumption;
- Furnishing alcohol to minors;
- Alcohol brought into the zone from outside sources;
- Alcohol leaving zone boundaries;
- Glass or metal alcohol containers;
- Public intoxication;

- Disorderly conduct;
- Alcohol consumption outside permitted hours;
- Unlawful alcohol sales;
- Counterfeit or transferred Age-Verification Markers; and
- Violations by Participating Licensees.
- Or other activities as determined by the Chico Police Department to be illegal.

The City Manager's Office and Chico Police Department may periodically evaluate enforcement patterns and modify administrative procedures where appropriate.

15. SPECIAL EVENTS

Entertainment Zones may operate concurrently with City-permitted special events.

The existence of an Entertainment Zone does not eliminate or modify the requirement to obtain any special event permit, street closure permit, ABC authorization, or other approval otherwise required by law. Specifically, the Entertainment Zone does not expressly mean each special event may have alcohol. The opposite is true, each event needs to obtain their own permits to serve or include alcohol.

Special event organizers remain responsible for compliance with all conditions of their permits.

When a special event occurs within an Entertainment Zone, the City may establish event-specific requirements relating to:

- Entertainment Zone boundaries;
- Temporary fencing or barriers;
- Street closures;
- Insurance;
- Liability;
- Security;
- Alcohol service;
- Signage;
- Solid waste and recycling management;
- Emergency access;
- Crowd management;
- Hours; and
- Coordination with participating businesses.
- Or another requirement the City deems necessary for the specific event proposed.

Where an event specific condition is more restrictive than this Management Plan, the more restrictive requirement shall apply during the event to the extent permitted by law.

Nothing in this Section authorizes temporary modification of the permanent boundaries of either Entertainment Zone. Event-specific requirements relating to Entertainment Zone boundaries are limited to operational adjustments within the existing permanent boundaries of the applicable Entertainment Zone, such as temporary fencing, barriers, or designated access points. Any modification to the permanent boundaries of an Entertainment Zone requires adoption of an ordinance by the City Council consistent with Section 5.45.030(C) of the Chico Municipal Code and the law enforcement consultation requirements of Business and Professions Code Section 25692.

16. SOLID WASTE AND RECYCLING MANAGEMENT

Participating Licensees are encouraged to provide adequate waste and recycling receptacles within their businesses.

The City and participating commercial districts may evaluate the placement of public waste and recycling receptacles based on program use and make necessary adjustments.

Entertainment Zone containers should be disposed of in appropriate receptacles and shall not be intentionally discarded on streets, sidewalks, landscaping, parking areas, or other public spaces.

17. COMPLAINTS AND INCIDENT REPORTING

The City Manager's Office shall serve as the primary administrative contact for non-emergency Entertainment Zone concerns. Emergency situations and crimes in progress should be reported through appropriate emergency communication channels such as dialing 911. Non-emergency and general feedback can be submitted to Citymanager@chicoca.gov.

18. PARTICIPATING LICENSEE COMPLIANCE

The City may contact a Participating Licensee when staff or Chico Police Department identifies apparent noncompliance with this Management Plan or Chapter 5.45.

Depending upon the nature and severity of the conduct, the City may:

- Provide education or technical assistance;
- Issue a warning;
- Request corrective action;
- Refer the matter to Chico Police Department;
- Refer the matter to ABC; or
- Exercise any other remedy available under the Chico Municipal Code or applicable law.
- Revoke the approval to participate in the program.

Noncompliance with any provision of this Management Plan or Chapter 5.45 may result in suspension or revocation of a business's authorization to participate in the Entertainment Zone program. Suspension or revocation of participation is in addition to, and not in lieu of, any other remedy available to the City.

Administrative enforcement procedures, including notice, hearing, and appeal rights, shall be governed by Chapter 1.15 of the Chico Municipal Code.

Violations involving an ABC license or state alcoholic beverage laws may be referred to ABC for investigation and potential disciplinary action.

Nothing in this Management Plan limits the City's enforcement authority under Chapter 5.45 or other provisions of the Chico Municipal Code.

19. TEMPORARY OPERATIONAL MODIFICATIONS

The City Manager or designee may implement temporary administrative measures consistent with Chapter 5.45 when reasonably necessary to address an immediate operational or public safety concern.

Such measures may include temporary changes to administrative procedures involving signage, containers, Age-Verification Markers, public education, or other matters delegated to the City Manager under Chapter 5.45.

Any modification to Entertainment Zone boundaries, days or hours of operation, or other matters that Chapter 5.45 reserves to the City Council shall be made only through the process required by the Chico Municipal Code and applicable state law.

20. PROGRAM MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND ANNUAL REVIEW

20.1 Program Monitoring

The City Manager's Office, in coordination with Chico Police Department and other departments as appropriate, shall monitor the operation of the Entertainment Zones.

To the extent reasonably available, information considered may include:

- Police calls for service;
- Alcohol-related incidents;
- Arrests and citations;
- Reports involving minors;
- DUI-related information where a meaningful relationship to the Entertainment Zone can be identified;

- Complaints received by the City;
- Litter and maintenance impacts;
- Code enforcement activity;
- ABC enforcement or compliance information;
- Number of Participating Licensees;
- Business participation rates;
- Retailer and restaurant feedback;
- Patron and community feedback;
- Special event activity;
- Pedestrian activity;
- Available sales or economic activity information; and
- Other indicators determined useful by the City.

Where practical, the City should establish baseline information so that conditions before and after implementation can be meaningfully compared.

The purpose of program monitoring is not only to identify problems but also to determine whether the Entertainment Zones are accomplishing their intended economic development and placemaking objectives.

20.2 Program Review

The City shall review the operation of each Entertainment Zone no less than once per year following adoption, in accordance with Chico Municipal Code Chapter 5.45. The review shall evaluate whether each Entertainment Zone is being operated in a manner that protects the health and safety of the public, and will be conducted in consultation with the Chico Police Department.

The City may also solicit information from ABC, Participating Licensees, retailers, business organizations, property owners, residents, event organizers, and other stakeholders.

The annual review may evaluate:

1. Public safety impacts;
2. Compliance with Entertainment Zone regulations;
3. Business participation;
4. Community complaints;
5. Operational challenges;
6. Effectiveness of signage, containers, and age-verification procedures;
7. Economic and commercial activity where measurable;

8. Program benefits;
9. Recommended operational modifications; and
10. Whether continuation or modification of either Entertainment Zone is appropriate.

Any report produced as part of the review shall be made available to ABC upon request.

22. MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW AND AMENDMENT

This Management Plan is intended to be an operational document and may be reviewed and updated periodically as the City gains experience administering the Entertainment Zone program.

23. CONTACT INFORMATION

Erik Gustafson, Assistant City Manager
City Manager's Office
(530)896-7210
Email: citymanager@chicoca.gov
Website: www.chicoca.gov/entertainmentzone

For non-emergency law enforcement matters, contact the Chico Police Department at:
(530)897-4900

For emergency law enforcement matters, please dial 911.

EXHIBIT A

Downtown Chico Entertainment Zone Map

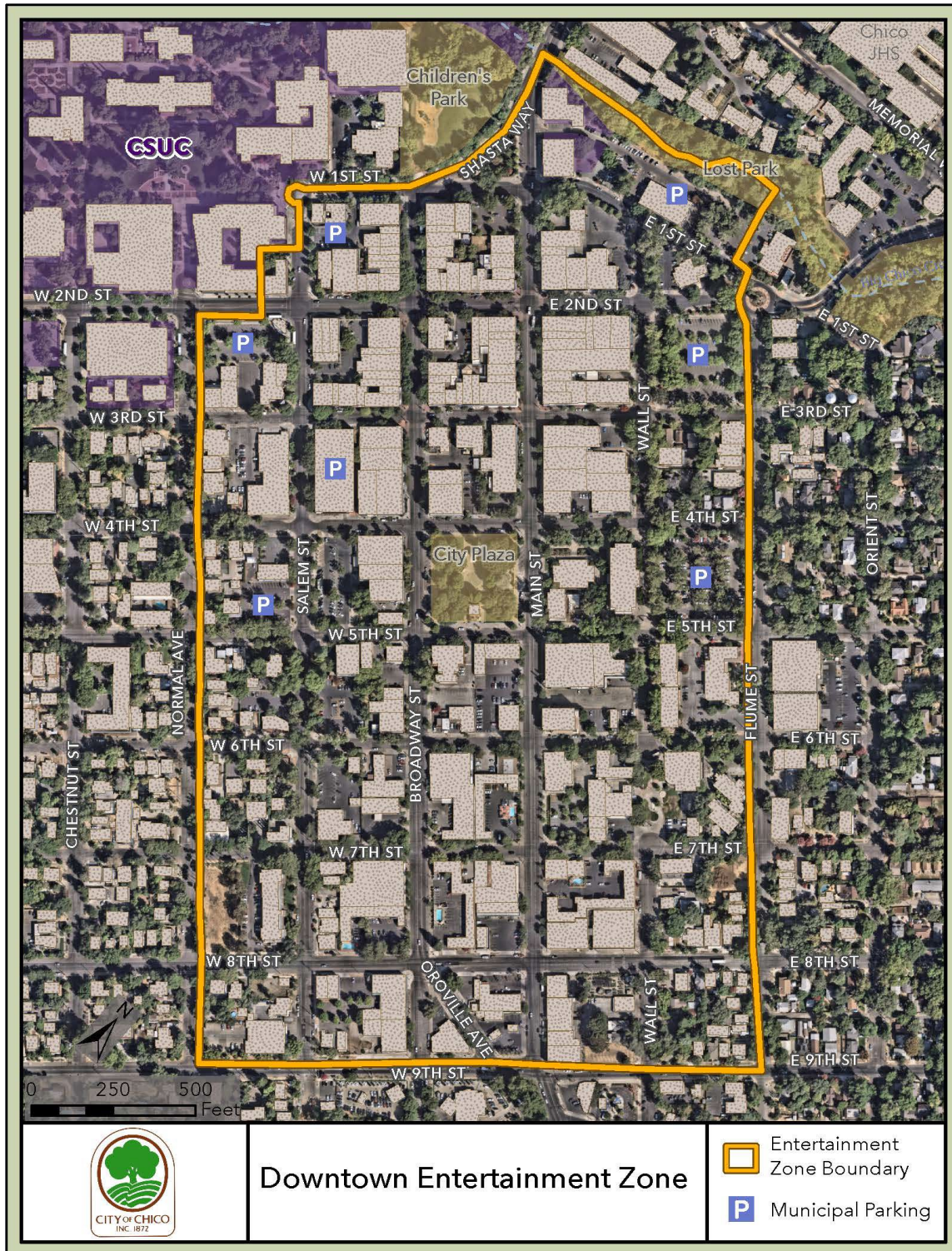


EXHIBIT B

Meriam Park Entertainment Zone Map

