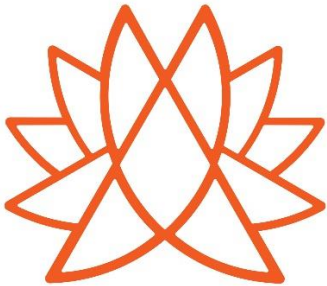


BLOCK PARTY & STREET PLAY GUIDELINES



White City



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WHAT IS A BLOCK PARTY?

A block party is a community gathering that takes place on a residential street or block. It typically involves neighbors and residents of a particular area coming together to socialize, celebrate, and build a sense of community. Block parties are often organized by residents themselves or by community organizations.

During a block party, the street or a designated area can be temporarily closed to traffic to create a safe space for people to mingle and participate in various activities. The specific activities can vary depending on the location and the preferences of the organizers and attendees.

The overall atmosphere of a block party is one of celebration, camaraderie, and unity. It encourages residents to connect with one another, foster a sense of belonging, and promote a safer and more tightly knit community.

WHAT IS STREET PLAY?

Street Play is a temporary closure of a residential street or section of a street to create a safe and supervised space for children and families to engage in play and recreational activities. The concept of Street Play aims to provide a car-free environment where children can play freely and neighbors can socialize.

During a Street Play event, traffic is redirected or temporarily prohibited from entering the designated area, usually with the permission and support of local authorities. This allows children to use the street as an extension of their play space, promoting physical activity, social interaction, and community engagement. Street plays typically have designated hours of operation, often on weekends or during holidays, to ensure minimal disruption to regular traffic flow.

The specific activities and features of Street Play can vary depending on the organizers, community preferences, and available resources. However, some common elements of Street Plays include:

- **Play equipment:** Street plays may provide a variety of play equipment and games such as jump ropes, hula hoops, balls, chalk for drawing on the pavement, and other age-appropriate toys. These materials encourage active play and creativity among children.
- **Supervision and safety:** Street plays are typically supervised by volunteers or organizers who ensure the safety of participants. They may set up barriers or signs to prevent vehicle access, monitor activities, and provide guidance to ensure a safe and inclusive environment.
- **Community involvement:** Street plays often encourage community involvement and participation. Local residents may take turns organizing and supervising the event, fostering a sense of ownership and shared responsibility within the neighborhood.
- **Social interaction:** Street plays provide an opportunity for neighbors to interact and socialize. Families and community members can come together, chat, and build connections while their children engage in play.
- **Special events and programming:** Some Street Plays organize additional activities and programming to enhance the experience. This could include face painting, arts and crafts stations, live performances, storytelling sessions, or organized sports games.

The primary goal of Street Play is to create a safe, car-free environment where children can engage in active play, socialize, and develop a sense of community. It promotes physical activity, encourages social connections among neighbors, and fosters a stronger sense of belonging within the neighborhood.

Block Parties & Street Play are gatherings for residents living on the same street or neighbourhood. The Town of White City supports both Block Parties and Street Play through permitting and grants.

BENEFITS

There are lots of benefits to hosting a Block Party or Street Play – first and foremost meeting your neighbours! Here are six additional benefits of throwing a neighbourhood block party: [6 Reasons You Need a Neighborhood Block Party – Project Bold Life](#)

1. **Fosters a strong and safe community.** Knowing the members of the neighbourhood beyond their names and addresses makes it natural for members to look after each other's safety. This helps promote a stronger, safer, and more personal community.
2. **Strengthens and reinforces social bonds.** Social cohesion improves with frequent interactions. A more personal interface allows members to discover the interests and hobbies that they share with the other members of the group.
3. **Can start a trend and create a tradition.** Oftentimes, communal activities just need a little nudge to start. Before you know it, other families in the neighbourhood are taking turns throwing block parties. The events can become annual staples families look forward to attending.
4. **Provides support to newcomers.** New neighbours need support to adjust to the new environment. Block parties are the perfect opportunity for newcomers to meet the members of the community.
5. **Builds trust.** Throwing a block party gives neighbours more incentive to trust each other. Events like this can be a good venue for neighbours to share recipes, tips, and other valuable information. This is because a fun and relaxed atmosphere primes people to be more willing in letting others in.
6. **Encourages fun and happiness.** One can be creative when planning block parties. It could be as simple as grilling and dining al fresco, or more elaborate with themes or competitions. But one thing is for sure, block parties are downright fun.



PLANNING YOUR BLOCK PARTY OR STREET PLAY

The idea of a Block Party or Street Play is to bring neighbours together and allow the use of space within the neighbourhood that is not typically used for celebration or play.

TYPES OF GATHERINGS

Decide which type of gathering will work best for you and your neighbours. Whichever type you choose, keep it simple!

BLOCK SOCIAL

A gathering of 10 to 30 neighbours living in the same area coming together on someone's property (driveway, living room, garage, yard, condo building, etc.). Block socials do not involve road closures.

SINGLE-STREET BLOCK PARTY

A gathering of 25 to 75 neighbours from the same street or cul-de-sac. This involves closing the road in front of their homes.

NEIGHBOURHOOD-WIDE BLOCK PARTY

A gathering of 50 to 200 neighbours from the same area coming together on their street and extending an invitation to residents of the neighbourhood or building.

STREET PLAY

A gathering of neighbours from the same area to increase play opportunities and connection on a residential street by closing it off to vehicle traffic. Remember shouting "CAR!" in the middle of a street hockey game? Hosting Street Play means that adults and children can play safely together. The size of the gathering will depend on the types of play activities created.

Organizers wishing to host their gathering on a roadway will need to complete a Block Party /Street Play Application.

LOCATION

Neighbour gatherings can take place in a variety of locations. Where you decide to hold your Block Party will determine your next steps:

PRIVATE PROPERTY

- Host a gathering in a neighbour's driveway, yard, garage, house or a condo complex
- Suitable for smaller gatherings i.e. Block Social
- Does not require to complete a Block Party/Street Play Application

STREET OR ALLEY

- Gatherings must be on a residential road or cul-de-sac with a lower traffic volume
- Suitable for larger gatherings of 25 to 200 residents
- Partial street closures are discouraged unless it is a single-street block party.

NOTE: LARGER-SCALE EVENTS INVOLVING MULTIPLE STREETS (TWO OR MORE BLOCKS) OR NON-RESIDENTIAL ROADS WILL NOT BE APPROVED. ALSO, LARGE GATHERINGS OVER 200 WILL NOT BE APPROVED.

TIMING

Be neighbourly – consider access, noise, music, use of lighting, etc. when organizing activities for your neighbour gathering, especially into the evening hours.

Temporary road closures can take place between 9 a.m. and 11 p.m. We recommend winding down by 10 p.m. in consideration of others in the neighbourhood or on your block.

Block Parties and Street Play can be held year-round. A residential block can be closed once every 3 months. The Town of White City celebrates yearlong recreation and encourages outdoor events spanning the entire year! Consider having a recurring event in winter, spring, summer, and fall.

NEIGHBOUR SUPPORT

Reach out to your neighbours to gauge interest and ask for their input. This can be done through door-to-door conversations, by email, by letter or online survey. If the gathering involves a road closure, neighbours directly impacted must be contacted with 75% providing support.

The organizer must be a resident of the block where the gathering will be held. Non-profit organizations or registered charities may apply for a temporary road closure only if they partner with a resident to organize the gathering.

The Block Party and Street Play programs are not intended for public events including concerts or fundraisers or use by businesses.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

INSURANCE

Activities taking place exclusively on private property are generally considered to be covered by the homeowner or renter insurance policy.

The Town requires organizers to obtain \$2 million in General Liability insurance to respond to any bodily injury and/or property damages to the third party for activities occurring on the Town roadway. The Town requires evidence of insurance before the permit is approved.

The Town recommends contacting your home insurance provider or other insured organization for an "event policy" if the organizer does not wish to use their home insurance policy another insurance

provider that is easy and convenient is SUMAAssure/Aon Partnership which is an instant risk coverage that can be handled all online. [Login \(instantriskcoverage.com\)](http://login.instantriskcoverage.com)

Town of White City will not handle insurance questions related to coverage. We are not the insurance providers.

Examples of high-risk events taking place on a roadway can include:

- Inflatables such as bouncy castles*
- Stages*
- Involvement in any high-risk recreational activities which may have a potential for an injury and/or property damage
- Multi-street Block Parties or Street Play where attendance is harder to control
- Use of portable swimming pools
- Fire pits on roads are not allowed
- Serving of alcohol - Alcohol consumption is not permitted on Town roads and public property

*** May require additional permits.**

EQUIPMENT

Equipment is not necessary when hosting a neighbour's gathering, but it can be helpful. We encourage hosts to ask their neighbours and community what they might be able to contribute. Find out which neighbour might bring a table, music, yard games, etc.



TRAFFIC CONTROL

To host a gathering on a roadway, you must obtain a Block Party or Street Play Permit that grants you access to the space requested. Application for the appropriate permit happens automatically through the Block Party/Street Play Application.

- Block Parties will be considered only on residential roadways; which is defined as local streets predominantly located in residential subdivisions and providing access to privately owned residential lots with private houses for single-family residences. Residential roads do not have offices only **private houses**.
- Block Party / Street Play applications must be submitted at least 14 days before your gathering date to process your road closure permit. If your application is approved, temporary road closure permits are no charge.
- Although signatures are not required at this time, you will be asked to confirm on the application that you have consulted with all neighbours impacted by the gathering and potential road closures and 75% of them support this.
- If Street Barricades are required to block off the street, the barricades will be dropped off by Public Works, either the day before or on the day of the block party or Street Play at one of the ends of the street/crescent. Once the block party or Street Play is over, the barricades should be placed back where they were originally found, and the Public Works department will pick them up in a day or two. There is no cost for this basic service. Organizers will also be responsible for storing and ensuring these materials are kept in good condition during the period they are in their possession.
- The organizer is responsible for setting up the traffic control materials before the gathering and removing all materials off the street when the gathering ends.
- If an emergency takes place during a gathering, site volunteers will need to ensure traffic barricades are removed at all access points to allow emergency vehicles to enter.
- If a resident is not participating in the gathering, site volunteers will need to ensure traffic barricades are removed at all access points to allow them to enter and exit their property.

BUILDING CONNECTIONS

Here are ways you can build connections at your gathering. For any activity you choose, consider how activities bring neighbours together and include everyone.

1. Create a warm welcome - Assign greeters to introduce neighbours to each other. At the point of entry, have greeters ready to say "Glad you're here" and provide information regarding activities, food, etc.
2. Name Tags - Provide a way to identify who has come to the party, where they live and even something about their interests.
3. Map your block, building floor, cul-de-sac or neighbourhood:
 - Use a plastic tablecloth and a felt pen to draw a map of your block, building floor or cul-de-sac.
 - Ask neighbours to indicate where they live. Lead the way by writing your information first!
 - Also, ask neighbours if they would like to be a part of a shared contact list for the sole purpose of building supportive connections over time and for safety in the neighbourhood.
 - Later share the contact list or 'block white pages' with those who agreed to provide their contact information.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The Town is offering an additional resource to help your Block Party or Street Play be successful:

Town Website – The Town website has a Business Directory that is updated frequently, reach out to the local businesses, and see if they can get involved in elevating your Block Party and or Street Play. You never know what resource can be available to you without asking [Town of White City - Business Directory](#).

Financial Support – The Town can provide financial support to help cover the costs of food, insurance, and other expenses. Your Block Party or Street Play may be eligible for up to \$200 in funding every 3 months. All requests shall be assessed based on availability of the requested resources, potential financial impact on the town, contribution to the well-being of members of the community and the overall community.

Requests for financial support can be made on the Block Party and Street Play Application. The amount the town can contribute will be communicated to you when/if your application is approved.



PLANNING CHECKLIST

6 WEEKS PRIOR

- Build a Team - Find a few like-minded neighbours and/or property manager who supports a Block Party/Street Play and is willing to help organize.
- Pick a Date - Weekends are popular with many people, but a weekday evening may also make sense for your neighbours. Gatherings that go through an application process will need to provide an alternate date.
- Pick a Time - Consider the needs of families in your neighbourhood. It is a good idea to end your event by 10 p.m.
- Pick a Location - Online, private property, street, or alley
- Seek Neighbour Support - contact ALL of the neighbours directly impacted by a potential street closure to seek their approval. (Signatures are not required at this time, but you must be able to demonstrate that you checked in with each neighbour. We suggest creating a list of your neighbour's names, addresses, and contact numbers/emails so that you can keep in touch about the gathering).

5 WEEKS PRIOR

- Request a Certificate of Insurance through home insurance or another insurance provider.
- Plan Activities - Remember to keep it simple! Avoid the urge to over plan and be sure to allow for some unstructured activity.

2 WEEKS PRIOR

- Complete the Block Party/Street Play Application

1 WEEK PRIOR

- Send confirmation of gathering details/reminder

BLOCK PARTY OR STREET PLAY DAY!

Set-Up - Set up is simple and can include some or all of the following:

- Put supplies and/or equipment in place.
- Welcome table.
- Block Party signs.
- Lawn chairs - encourage neighbours to bring their own
- Garbage bags - only needed if there is a craft or food.
- Games and/or equipment - can be provided or participants can bring their own.
- Traffic control signs and cones - if your event involves a road closure, move signs and cones into position at the appropriate time, according to the plan provided with your permit. Perform a visual inspection of the roadway to ensure any safety hazards (broken glass, construction debris, etc.) have been safely removed. Remember when setting up tables and chairs that emergency vehicles may need quick access. Display or have your permit available, if requested.
- Food and Drink - Alcohol consumption is not permitted on Town roads and public property.
- Welcome Participants - Encourage neighbours to wear a name tag to help with introductions.
- Have FUN!! - Get to know your neighbours.
- Plan your Next Gathering - Talk about what you might like to do together in the future!
- Clean-up - End at the designated time.
 - Ask neighbours to help clean up.
 - Remove any garbage and tidy up the area.
 - **Take-down traffic barriers.**

After the Event

- Follow up with your neighbours
Sample Questions:
 1. Did you meet any new neighbours at the Block Party?
 2. What did you enjoy most about the Block Party?
 3. Would your household like to gather again?
- Return traffic signs and cones

READY TO PLAN A NEIGHBOUR GATHERING?

STEP 1: DETERMINE THE SIZE AND TYPE OF GATHERING

Block Social

A gathering of 10 to 30 neighbours living in the same area coming together on someone's property (driveway, living room, garage, yard, condo building, etc.). Block socials do not involve road closures.

Single-Street Block Party

A gathering of 25 to 75 neighbours from the same street, cul-de-sac or floor in a building. This involves closing the road in front of their homes.

Neighbourhood-Wide Block Party

A gathering of 50 to 200 neighbours from the same area coming together on their street and extending an invitation to residents of the neighbourhood or building.

Street Play

A gathering of neighbours from the same area to increase play opportunities and connection on a residential street by closing it off to vehicle traffic. Remember shouting "CAR!" in the middle of a street hockey game? Hosting Street Play means that adults and children can play safely together. The size of the gathering will depend on the types of play activities created.

NOTE: LARGER-SCALE EVENTS INVOLVING MULTIPLE STREETS (TWO OR MORE BLOCKS) OR NON-RESIDENTIAL ROADS WHICH INCLUDES OFFICES, FACTORIES, SHOPS WILL NOT BE APPROVED.

STEP 2: PICK A LOCATION

On Private Property

Host a Block Social in a neighbour's driveway, yard, garage or condo complex. No Town permit is required for private property.

On a Street or Alley

To host a gathering on a roadway, you must first obtain a Block Party Application.

STEP 3: DECIDE ON THE TIMING OF YOUR GATHERING

- Pick a Date & Time - Consider what may work best for your neighbours.
- Temporary road closures can take place between 9 am and 10 pm. We recommend winding down by 10 pm.
- Block Parties and Street Plays can be held year-round.
- A residential block can be closed once per season.

STEP 4: PLAN ACTIVITIES WITH YOUR NEIGHBORS

- Reach out to your neighbours to gauge interest, seek permission for a temporary street closure, if applicable, and ask for their input.
- Consider ways to highlight the gifts of your neighbours, celebrate neighbourhood life and build connections.

STEP 5: SUBMIT AN APPLICATION FORM

- If your gathering involves a road closure, you must submit a Block Party Application Form 14 days before your gathering date, to process your temporary road closure permit.
- Applying for a temporary road closure permit does not imply that your Block Party is approved or that your proposed location or date is confirmed.
- If your request is approved, temporary road closure permits are free and you may confirm details with your neighbours

Before holding a block party or street play, be sure to fill out the application form and provide the necessary insurance information outlined earlier in the guidelines:

1. Block Party & Street Play Application
2. Proof of insurance

Applications need to be submitted at least 14 days in advance of your event to receive formal approval.