



CITY OF CHILLIWACK

# EVENT TOOLKIT



[chilliwack.com/toolkit](http://chilliwack.com/toolkit)



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### How Big Should My Event Be?

Start out with a smaller event. Your event can always grow, but it can be difficult to shrink!

A good rule of thumb when planning a neighbourhood or community event is to use natural neighbourhood boundaries where possible. For example, if you're planning a street or cul-de-sac party, you'll need to invite everyone on that street.

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## WHY HOST AN EVENT OR BLOCK PARTY?

Because they're fun! Block parties and events boost a sense of belonging in your community, while encouraging residents to look after their neighbourhood. A more connected community increases safety and encourages crime prevention.

If you're looking for inspiration for your next block party or other event, visit [chilliwack.com/neighbourhoodgrants](http://chilliwack.com/neighbourhoodgrants) to see what others have done. If you have questions about hosting a block party or event, please contact our Community Coordinator at [recreationandculture@chilliwack.com](mailto:recreationandculture@chilliwack.com) or 604.793.2904.



## WHERE DO I START?

The idea behind a block party or event is to bring neighbours and communities together, so a good first step is to find one or two neighbours or likeminded friends to help you. They can help with invitations, as well as event setup and cleanup. Try to include as many interested people as possible in planning and organizing your event.

Read on for more getting started tips!



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## TYPES OF EVENTS

### Food-Based



- Barbeques
- Picnics
- Potlucks
- Catered event
- Ice cream social

### Seasonal Ideas



- Halloween costume contest
- Hot chocolate social
- Ugly sweater party
- Christmas carolling
- Easter egg hunt
- Christmas tree lighting
- Cinco de Mayo celebration

### Activity-Based



- Neighbourhood sports day
- Outdoor movie night
- Board game tournament
- Scavenger hunt
- Volleyball tournament
- “How to” workshops

These are just a few examples of events.

If you're unsure what would work best in your area, ask the people around you for suggestions! Don't be afraid to get creative and come up with something unique to your neighbourhood or community.



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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Can I host an event or activity in a strata complex or on First Nations' land?**

Yes, as long as you ask permission and the event is inclusive and invites nearby neighbours to participate. When applying for the grant, be sure to demonstrate how the event is inclusive to the surrounding neighbourhood.

### **Can I host an event or activity in a public park?**

Yes, events can utilize public space as long as the event is inclusive and people in the local neighbourhood are invited. Please note that as in any municipal and/or provincial parks, there cannot be any interruption to public access to or use of the park or trail.

### **How do I apply for a grant for my event or block party?**

Visit us online at [chilliwack.com/neighbourhoodgrants](http://chilliwack.com/neighbourhoodgrants) and fill out the online form.

### **Can youth apply for a grant?**

YEP, they can! They should check out our Youth Engagement Projects (YEP) grant. Visit [chilliwack.com/YEP](http://chilliwack.com/YEP) to learn more.

### **What is the max amount I can apply for?**

Under the Celebration and Activity Grant, you can apply for a maximum of \$1,000 in matching funds per event.

### **When will I know if my grant is approved?**

The Celebration and Activity Grants are usually approved within two weeks of applying.

### **Are block parties the same as neighbourhood parties?**

Yes. If you want to throw a party for your block, this is an activity that enriches your neighbourhood.

### **Is alcohol permitted at a neighbourhood event or block party? If so, do we need any type of permit or insurance?**

There are some restrictions that apply to serving alcohol in a public facility. The Recreation and Culture Department will work with you to ensure proper requirements are in place.

### **Can we block off our road in order to have our event take place on the street?**

Yes under most circumstances; the City will work with the applicant to allow for some street access restrictions although consideration of all those affected will be the priority.

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## 5 STEPS TO GET STARTED

### 1. Pick a Location

Where possible, we recommend using a public space to host your event. This increases the likelihood of shared responsibility for the event. Please note that if you intend to use the street, permits are required and the street must be officially blocked off. Permits are free to obtain and the Community Coordinator will assist you in the permitting process.



- **On a street**
  - o Good for large gatherings
  - o Must be on a quiet local road or cul-de-sac
  - o Permits required
- **In a park**
  - o Good for gatherings of all sizes
  - o Permits required
- **On private property**
  - o A lawn or large driveway party can work well
  - o Must demonstrate inclusivity
  - o Meet accessibility needs for all participants

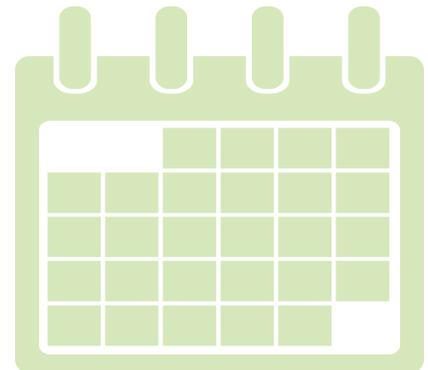
*Note: All events hosted with support from the Celebration and Activity Grant program must be inclusive of the surrounding neighbourhood.*

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### 2. Pick a Time and Date

It's only a party if your guests can make it! When you choose a time and date for your event, keep in mind the typical work schedule and whether or not school is in session.

Evenings, weekends, and holidays can all be good choices for a high turnout rate, as long as you give your guests enough notice!



#### Planning Tip

Keep in mind who lives in the neighbourhood when setting the hours for your event. If young children or seniors live near the event area, plan for the event to finish by 9 p.m.

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## 5 STEPS TO GET STARTED

### 3. Get Support

Find a few interested friends or neighbours to help you with the event. You'll need help with the planning stages, invitations, setting up, welcoming new people at the event and – just as importantly – cleaning up afterwards.



Consider asking community businesses (ex. grocery stores) for donations and your friends or neighbours if they have extra tables, chairs, tents or other setup materials.

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### 4. Plan Your Event

Once you have a time, date, location and team ready to go, it's time to figure out what kind of event you would like to host! If you're looking for inspiration, refer to Types of Events on page 4 for a few suggestions.

Whether you've decided to host a potluck, outdoor movie night, or something else altogether, there are a few important planning steps to remember. Check out the Event Planning Checklist on page 8 for help!

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### 5. Spread the Word!

With all the major details of your event decided, it's time to tell your neighbourhood or community! Be sure to let your guests know key event information, including the date, time, location and what to wear or bring if there is a theme. Here are a few ways to spread the word about your event:

- Deliver flyers to each home or post them in common spaces.
- Go door-to-door and invite your neighbours personally.
- Remind community members of the approaching event when you see them on the street or around town.
- Post signage near the space you're hosting your event prior to, and on the day of, the event.
- Some areas have private Facebook groups you can use to share event details.



# EVENT PLANNING CHECKLIST

Use this handy checklist as a guideline when you start planning your own event.

## Getting Started

- Organize team
- Assign tasks
- Date
- Time
- Location
- Budget

## 3 Weeks Before

- Apply for grant
- Seek donations
- Promotion/invitations
- Plan food
- Plan drinks
- Plan seating
- Plan tables

## 2 Weeks Before

- Party games
- Decorations
- Extra equipment

## 1 Week Before

- Send party reminders
- Confirm numbers for any party rentals/catering

## Accessibility Considerations

Anyone planning an event should plan to make their event accessible and inclusive. Ensuring accessibility allows your event to be inclusive for all community members who would like to attend without facing barriers to their equal participation.

Check out our **Accessibility Checklist** on page 9 for an overview of how to make your event accessible.

## Day of the Block Party

- Set up
- Prepare food/drinks
- Help run games
- Take pictures
- Post-event cleanup
- Have fun!



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# ACCESSIBILITY CHECKLIST

Use this handy checklist as a guideline when you start planning your own event.

## Planning

- Include people with disabilities in the planning process
- Schedule and advertise the event date well in advance

## Venue

- Entrances, exits and pathways are clear level and maneuverable
- Lighting is adjustable, venue acoustics are sufficient (no echoes), and there is adequate ventilation
- Accessible, inclusive, and family friendly washrooms are available

## Parking & Transport

- Ensure sufficient accessible parking is provided
- Have the event near accessible public transit routes
- Designate a drop-off and pick up-zone

## Event Setup

- All signage should be clearly marked and not pose any risks
- Consider ways to make seating and tables accessible.

## Presentations

- Presenters/speakers and organisers are versed in how to make presentations accessible

## Food and Drink

- Provide options for dietary restrictions
- Label all food and drink clearly
- Have straws available to support physical access needs

## Outreach and Invitations

- Send invitations in a variety of ways
- Learn how to make each avenue of communication accessible prior to outreach

## DURING YOUR EVENT

### Icebreakers

Here are a few icebreaker questions to help get the conversation started. For added fun, turn these questions into a bingo card or scavenger hunt!

- If you could visit any place in the world, where would you choose to go?
- What are your favourite hobbies?
- What is the greatest thing you've ever eaten?
- If you could have any super power, what would it be and why?
- What is one item you should really throw away, but probably never will?
- What is your favourite thing to do in the summer?

### Activities

Once you've broken the ice, keep the fun going with activities for everyone!

- Bean bag toss
- Sidewalk chalk
- Frisbee
- Relay races
- Tag and its many variations
- A magic show or musical performance

If a block party, consider establishing a bulletin board where people can share special interests! (i.e. babysitting needed/ offered, garage sales, walking groups).

## AFTER YOUR EVENT

### Cleanup

Make sure you leave the area as you found it. Having someone on your organizing team assigned to oversee cleanup is a great way to make sure it all gets done.

Consider inspiring the children who attend to help with a prize for whoever picks up the most garbage.

### Tell Us How It Went!

Share your event experience, feedback and photos with us by emailing your event report form to our Community Coordinator.

### On Instagram?

Tag us @thecityofchilliwack in photos of your event!



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## INVITE A COMMUNITY PROGRAM TO JOIN YOU

Depending on the size and purpose of your event, there are many amazing community programs that could make great additions. If you are interested in incorporating Block Watch into a block party, let our Community Coordinator know for assistance!



## ANY OTHER QUESTIONS?

Let us know! Please contact Leah Peden, City of Chilliwack Community Coordinator at [peden@chilliwack.com](mailto:peden@chilliwack.com) or 604.793.2749.

Note: We are always working towards providing more accessibility within our offerings. If you have any access needs or questions please contact us and we are happy to provide additional support.

