



Block Party and Play Street Current Guidelines Neighbourhood Services, Citizen Services

Edmonton

Last updated September 2021

Hosting a Neighbourhood Block Party or Play Street

A Neighbourhood **Block Party** is an opportunity for neighbours to promote social interaction between neighbours of all ages. It creates an opportunity to get together, meet each other, have fun and work together on a common activity.

A Neighbourhood **Play Street** brings neighbours together and allows use of a space within the neighbourhood not naturally inviting for celebration or play. Play Streets allow neighbours to play together in residential streets closed off to vehicle traffic.

The key here is that events are aimed at residents living in the same street or neighbourhood. The Block Party and Play Streets program is not intended for public events including concerts or fundraisers or by businesses.

The City supports both Block Party and Play Street events through planning, operational and permitting support. As we continue to adjust to the City's COVID-19 public health response protocols, it has been necessary for some changes to be made to our guidelines for these types of neighbourhood events. **This document provides an update to guidance for both Play Streets and Block Parties and should be referred to in place of the Play Streets Manual and Block Party Kit.**

All current [Alberta Health Services public health measures](#) and relevant [guidance documents](#) must be followed when planning and hosting a Block Party or Play Street. **As circumstances evolve, Parkland Licences, Block Party and Play Street Events may be suspended or cancelled in accordance with Alberta Health Enhanced Relaunch Status and / or City of Edmonton directives.**

TYPES OF EVENTS

Residential Block Party or Play Street - When you and your neighbours from the same street get together and close the street in front of your homes. Organizers should contact their home insurance provider to discuss liability coverage as required. Your insurance provider may charge an additional fee to cover liability associated with a Residential Block Party or Play Street.

Community Block Party or Play Street - When your neighbours and the 'Community at Large' are invited to the event in your street. Community at Large is not the same as the general public, but should be linked to your neighbourhood either by proximity or interest. All organizers must provide a minimum of \$2 million in liability coverage. Community Leagues and other organizations shall request a Certificate of Insurance for the event from their insurance broker, which must name the City of Edmonton as 'Additional Insured'. Homeowners must also make a similar request to their insurance broker, requesting the City of Edmonton be named as 'Additional Insured'. Your insurance broker will advise any fees or additional coverage required to meet minimum requirements.

Roadway License Civic Events - A Civic Events Roadway License is required for events that take place on roadways

or sidewalks that are open to the public. Some examples include: parades, processions, street festivals, runs/walks, and sporting events. When on roadways, additional civic support such as road closures, Edmonton Transit Service bus detours, Edmonton Police Service traffic support, or other civic services may be required. The Civic Events and Festivals section will work directly with you to facilitate that support and tailor it to your event needs. To get started please submit a **Civic Event Application** for review by a Festival & Events Liaison. Your assigned Festivals and Events Liaison will link you to all related civic services and guide you through the licensing process. You must first obtain a Roadway License that grants you access to the space required. There is no cost for the Roadway License itself; however there may be costs related to the civic services required to support your event delivery. Cost estimates will be provided prior to your event. After your event, the City of Edmonton will issue an invoice for the actual work completed on a cost-recovery basis. You will receive an invoice six to eight weeks after the date of the event.

Please note: this document only deals with **Residential or Community or Block Party/Play Street Events**. [Click here](#) for more information about Roadway Licenses through Civic Events. Please be aware that if you apply for Block/Party Play Street and it is determined that your event requires a Roadway License through Civic Events, your application will be forwarded to the Civic Events team.

GETTING STARTED

- It's a good idea to find one or two neighbours to help with the event. Engaging neighbours can help make the event a success.
- Select a date, time and location for your event.
- Weekends are popular with many people, but a weekday evening may also make sense for your neighbours. You may also wish to have an alternate date in case of bad weather.
- Consider the needs of families in your neighbourhood, it is a good idea to end your event by 9 p.m.
- You can choose an alley, street, cul de sac for the event. All locations require a permit because they are on public land.
- Locations that work best for Play Streets are residential roads that tend to have low traffic volume. Any streets with transit routes should be avoided. Choose a single block so that intersections are minimally impacted. Cul-de-sacs are great options. A block where residents may access their property via an alley with limited front driveways is best.
- You can also host a 'Block Social' on your own property without requiring a permit for this type of event. A Block Social is a small gathering of people living in the same area with the purpose of socializing and getting to know one another.
- All neighbours participating in any events must follow all [current Alberta Health Service guidance](#) and should be aware of existing [public health measures](#).

PLANNING YOUR EVENT - TIMING

- **3-4 weeks** before the planned event you must contact all of the neighbours directly impacted by the 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 event.
- **2-3 weeks** before the event you must submit your Block Party/Play Street application to Neighbourhood Services. You will be required to include information about your event including types of activities and anticipated number of attendees. Your event must comply with current AHS guidance for COVID-19. Your

event application will be forwarded to Parks and Roads to request a road closure permit.

- Take every opportunity to communicate about the event with your neighbours prior to the event, including sending out reminders.

CITY OF EDMONTON PERMITS

- A road closure permit is required and the application form to be submitted can be found [here](#) . If you have questions about the application process please email blockpartyplaystreet@edmonton.ca
- Permits are free and must be submitted at least 14 days prior to the first event.
- Submission of your application does not guarantee your event will be approved.
- Although signatures are not required, you will be asked to confirm that you have notified all neighbours impacted about the event and potential road closures.
- If applying for a Community Block Party or Play Street, a Certificate of Insurance must be provided if requested as part of your completed application. A minimum of \$2 million in liability coverage is required. Community Leagues and other insured organizations can request a Certificate of Insurance for the Block Party or Play Street, which must name the City of Edmonton as 'Additional Insured'.
- Alcohol consumption is not permitted on city roads or public property.

ACTIVITIES DURING THE EVENT

- The purpose of these events is to create social connections and strengthen neighbouring ties.
- Neighbours participating in any activities must follow all [current Alberta Health Service guidance](#) and should be aware of existing [public health measures](#).
 - Residential Block Parties and Play Streets are considered outdoor private social gatherings. Therefore, two hundred (200) persons or less may gather on an outdoor public street or private place.
 - Community Block Parties and Play Streets are considered public events that are fully outdoors (excluding washrooms). Therefore, there are no capacity restrictions.
 - For all Residential and Community Block Parties and Play Streets, a physical distance of two metres must be maintained from any other person who is not part of the person's cohort. Exception: An adult or youth is not required to maintain two metres physical distance while participating in an outdoor physical activity or performance activity (For example, if performing their talent at a Block Party or when playing an activity like soccer at a Play Street).
- Encourage your neighbours to pitch in to the activities by bringing their own supplies to contribute to the success of the event. i.e. chairs or blankets, help with set-up and clean-up.
- You may choose to play music from your own phone and portable speakers or sound system, just be mindful of the volume and appropriateness of music at all times. A limited amount of equipment may be available from Neighbourhood Services for your event (i.e. fire barrels, hockey sticks, broomball, etc). Please indicate on your application form if you would like more information.
- For Play Streets, encourage neighbours to add or contribute their own play items and consider appropriate health and safety recommendations . Children should be supervised by a responsible adult at all times.
- Get creative! Find new ways of connecting and playing that include all-ages, abilities and are culturally sensitive for every participant.

SET UP & CLEAN UP

- Notify attendees of the steps being taken to prevent the risk of transmission, and the importance of their roles in these measures.
 - COVID-19 signage could be posted in highly visible locations: "[Help prevent the spread](#)" posters are available. When possible, provide necessary information in languages that are preferred by attendees.
- You may want to include a small table with hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes available. Encourage everyone attending to also bring their own.
- Anyone who is feeling unwell should not attend the event. Anyone with COVID symptoms who is not feeling well should contact Alberta Health Services or go online to the AHS [website](#) and register for an appointment.
- A sign-in sheet could be in place to keep a record of attendance at your event and can be used for follow-up post-event.
- Encourage everyone to wear a name tag to help with introductions.
- Portable fire barrels are allowed, provided there are no current fire restrictions in place prohibiting this. Please refer to guidelines on our [webpage](#) for safe use of fire barrels.
- As the organizer, help to introduce your neighbours to one another to help everyone feel welcome.
- Provide garbage cans if you feel this is necessary for your activities.
- Ask neighbours to clean up after themselves and ensure that any garbage is removed. It is advisable to wear gloves when cleaning up and to use proper hand hygiene.

TRAFFIC CONTROL

- The City will create a basic traffic plan in the lead up to the event which will be included with the permit once your event is approved. The traffic plan will help you to understand where you need to set up the traffic control on your street before your event.
- A-frame signage and traffic cones will be provided this year to event organizers for traffic control. There is no cost for this basic service.
- Event organizers must be able to pick up and return A-frames and cones for their event. They 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 event and removing all materials off the street at the conclusion of the event. A-frames and cones should be set up using resources on our [webpage](#).
- If during your event an emergency takes place, site volunteers will need to ensure traffic barricades are removed at all access points to allow emergency vehicles to enter.

POST EVENT

- We encourage you to collect feedback from neighbours who attended the event. You may also want to contact those who did not attend to ask them why they chose not to come. Remember to be sensitive as not everyone may feel comfortable attending this type of event or may simply choose not to attend.
- You can collect feedback at the end of your event or as people leave by asking a few questions, a post-event survey that you email to your neighbours or by phoning your neighbours to collect their views.
- Feedback will also help you in planning future events!
- Neighbourhood Services at the City of Edmonton would like to hear from you about your event and will

contact you after your event to complete a simple online form about your event.

FINAL REMINDERS

As circumstances evolve, Parkland Licences, Block Party and Play Street Events may be **suspended or cancelled** in accordance with Alberta Health Enhanced Relaunch Status and / or City of Edmonton directives.

- The Block Party and Play Streets program is **not** intended for public events including concerts or fundraisers or by businesses. Events should be aimed at neighbours or residents living in the same street or community.
- Event organizers are responsible for ensuring event plans are in compliance with current Alberta Health Services Guidelines for activities during the COVID-19 pandemic. Organizers must follow all current Alberta Health Services COVID-19 Information: [Guidance documents](#).
- Neighbourhood Services may require additional event safety protocol information and event organizers may be responsible for obtaining additional approval from Alberta Health Services.
- Neighbourhood Services may restrict specific types of events at their discretion and/or in accordance with Alberta Health Services advice.
- Neighbours should observe security precautions by keeping all doors locked and equipment in sight.
- Loud music is prohibited.
- You may wish to post signs the day before the event to remind residents to remove cars for the street closure.
- Remember to let neighbours know that emergency vehicles may need quick access during the event.

QUESTIONS

For more information contact: blockpartyplaystreet@edmonton.ca

COVID-19 RESOURCES

[City of Edmonton Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Website](#)

[Alberta's COVID-19 Response](#)

[COVID 19 Information - Guidance documents](#)

[COVID 19 Information - Stronger Public Health Measures](#)

[COVID-19: Help prevent the spread information posters](#)

BLOCK PARTY & PLAY STREET RESOURCES - please visit our [webpage](#) for a full list of resources.
