




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



Edmonton

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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 community. 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 move through the City's relaunch phase, 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 available.**

The maximum number of individuals permitted at outdoor social gatherings is currently 100, including attendees, staff and volunteers. For social gatherings with friends and acquaintances outside of a family cohort, keeping 2 metres apart is a requirement. Wearing a non-medical face mask can be a secondary protection measure and should be used where 2 metre physical distancing cannot be maintained. Food or other objects should not be passed from person to person, including containers, plates and utensils. Although outdoor gatherings have less risk for transmission than indoor gatherings, outdoor events still pose a risk. Anyone feeling even minor symptoms after a social gathering should go for testing. To do this, people can go online to the AHS [website](#) or call 811 and register for an appointment.

TYPES OF EVENTS

Residential Block Party or Play Street - When you and your neighbours get together and close the street in front of your homes. Your Homeowner's Insurance covers any liability you may have with your event.

Community Block Party or Play Street - When your neighbours and the 'Community at Large' is 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. Organizers must provide a minimum of \$2 million in liability coverage. Community Leagues and other organizations can request a Certificate of Insurance for the event, which

must name the City of Edmonton as 'Additional Insured'. Homeowners can make a similar request from their homeowner's policy, however there would likely be a fee involved.

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 required 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 Services advice relating to outdoor events](#). Current advice allows up to 100 people to meet outside with adequate physical distancing in place (2 metres apart for those not in your family or cohort).

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 event 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 currently AHS guidance for COVID-19. This 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. An organizer can make a request from their homeowners' policy for this level of coverage, however there may be a fee involved. 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 how we normally do this has changed in our current context. Alberta Health Services advice must always be followed.
- Under current Alberta Health Services guidelines, food and beverages should not be served potluck or family-style. No communal or sharing of food or drinks are allowed between households.
- Please encourage your neighbours to bring their own picnic where everyone provides their own meal. Food and drinks are not to be shared, including utensils and communal drinks containers.
- Encourage your neighbours to bring their own chairs or blankets to sit on to reduce unnecessary contact and post event 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. Singing should not be encouraged at this time due to risk of spreading the virus.
- For Play Streets, sharing of toys and other play items should be avoided. Encourage neighbours to bring their own play items and consider drawing chalk circles or tape markings on the ground to keep physically distanced while playing 'together'. Children should be supervised by a responsible adult at all times.
- Practice good hand hygiene. It is advisable to have hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes available for use by all, and to encourage neighbours to bring their own too.
- Get creative! Some games and activities can be done with no physical contact such as trivia and sidewalk games and art. Some games can be adapted so that families/cohorts can safely play using their own or disinfected equipment like horseshoes, croquet, bocce or lawn darts.

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 should 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 is required to keep a record of attendance at your event and can be used for follow-up post-event. One person should be responsible for keeping track of the sign-in sheet to avoid cross contamination of shared writing materials.
- Encourage everyone to make their own name tags at home and to wear them to help with introductions. No handshakes or physical greetings are allowed.

- Portable fire barrels are allowed. 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 and 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

- 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.
- Organizers must follow all current Alberta Health Services COVID-19 Information: [Guidance for Outdoor Events](#).
- 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:

Shireen Mears, Neighbourhood Initiatives Lead. Phone: 780-496-1474 Email: blockpartyplaystreet@edmonton.ca

COVID-19 RESOURCES

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

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

[COVID 19 Information - Guidance for Outdoor Events](#)

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

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