

Love Where You Live: Host a Block Party!

10 Reasons to Host a Block Party

1. To get to know your neighbours and welcome new ones
2. Celebrate your community
3. Encourage a sense of pride and belonging
4. Build meaningful connections
5. Opportunity to network and build new community groups or sports teams
6. Discover something new about the area
7. To make your community more safe
8. Learn about resources in your community and city
9. Create a new tradition
10. Have some fun!



There is no better way to get to know your neighbours than to have a block party. Neighbourhood block parties can develop relationships amongst neighbours, which creates a strong sense of community and a safer place to live. Block parties provide an opportunity for neighbourhood residents to get to know one another, have some fun, and mingle. A connected neighbourhood can create a sense of pride, safety and cohesion for all

who live there. Neighbours who know each other are able to look out for one another and create a safer community.

Block parties can be big or small, in the winter or summer, and can be based around whatever subject you think your community would find interesting. This can include a BBQ or garden tours. Whatever type of block party you and your neighbors want to have, this guide gives you the information you need to make it a success!



FEDERATION OF
CALGARY COMMUNITIES

What is a block party?

A block party isn't just about gathering people together on a street. It's about bringing a community together. Block parties offer the rare opportunity to bring a sense of small town life into Calgary. Block parties don't have to happen on a road or a street, they can happen anywhere that brings neighbours together.

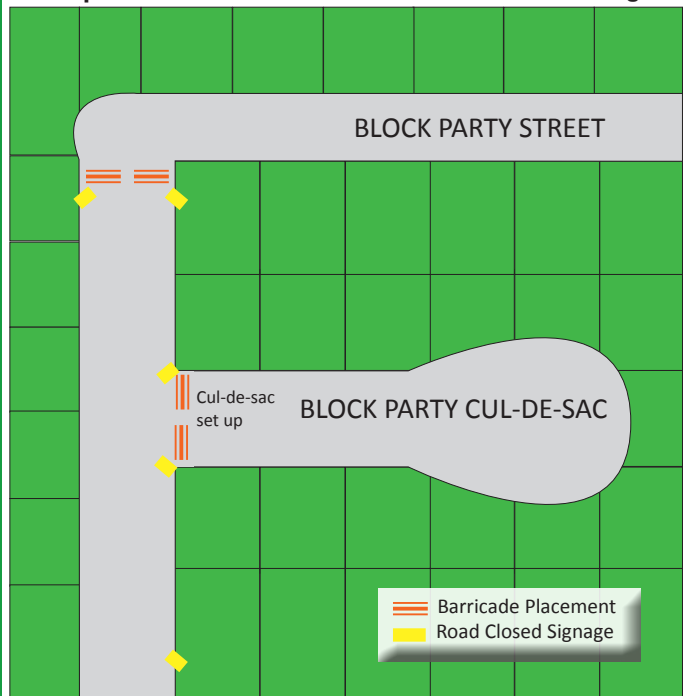


Permits and Costs in Calgary for Block Parties

If your block party is going to be held on a city street there are a couple of things you must know:

- A Block Party Permit is required from The City, so the roadway can be closed.
- A Block Party Permit costs \$17.50 (subject to change, call 3-1-1 for most up-to-date fees).
- If barricades are required, there is an additional \$160 fee.
- Once a permit application is submitted, a member of the traffic engineering division at The City will contact you and a block party permit package will be delivered. This will provide more in-depth information about what is needed from you.
- Permits are granted on an individual basis.
- To obtain a permit you must have 100 percent of the residents on the block sign a petition with their approval or disapproval of the party. Eighty percent of these must be in favour of the party.
- Permits take three weeks to process, so give plenty of time.
- No alcohol is permitted on city streets.
- Visit The City of Calgary online at www.calgary.ca or phone 3-1-1 for all of The City's block party requirements.

Examples of Where to Place Barricades and Signs





Great Ideas for a Fun Block Party

The games at a block party can make all the difference between an entertaining and inviting party and one which falls flat. Here are a few ideas for fun games to play at your party:

Host a Bike Parade:

It isn't often that a block is car free, so give your children a chance to enjoy this. Have the kids decorate their bikes with streamers and balloons and then have a parade of kids right in the middle of the street. Get the adults to watch and have the older kids help the younger ones decorate their bikes.

Have a Group Grill-Off:

When it's time to cook food, have 8-10 neighbours bring their BBQs out onto the street and grill all the food together. This may not be an activity for the kids, but it does offer an opportunity for the adults to chat and work together.

Bubble Battles:

Bubbles are always a hit with kids, but for this activity everyone is going to blow bubbles all at once until the entire street is full of bubbles floating through the air. Supply bubbles and regular wands and have all the neighbours bring any special bubble wands and devices they might have.

Water Balloon Toss:

This is a pretty straight forward activity. Fill some balloons and either play a game of catch, until only one team hasn't broken their balloon. Or simply start a block-wide water fight.

Talent Show:

Ask some folks in the neighbourhood if they would like to show off a special talent. Whether it's juggling, singing, playing an instrument or anything else. Set some time aside to show off your community's talents!

Outdoor Movie:

Set up a projector and a screen (or a large, white sheet) outside and play a movie. Distribution rights and licensing requirements apply. Contact a distribution company, such as Audio Cine Films, for costs and requirements.

Let Us Know!

The Federation of Calgary Communities loves to celebrate what is going on in communities around Calgary. It's always amazing to see and hear of all the great community building activities that occur in our city!

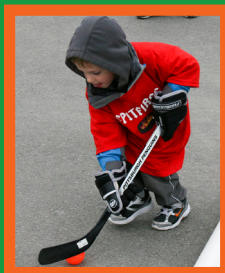
We would love to see photos and hear stories from your event, so please send us an email with all the details surrounding your celebration.

Please email us at bsc@calgarycommunities.com or phone 403.244.4111 to let us know about your celebration.



Party Checklist

- ☐ Organizing Team
- ☐ Task Leads
- ☐ Date
- ☐ Time
- ☐ Location
- ☐ Budget
- ☐ Permits
- ☐ Volunteers
- ☐ Food
- ☐ Drinks
- ☐ Promotion
- ☐ Sponsorship
- ☐ Seating
- ☐ Tables
- ☐ Party Games
- ☐ Decorations
- ☐ Extra Equipment
- ☐ Rain-out option



How to Get Started Planning the Party

Organizing a block party may seem like an overwhelming task. But it's not nearly as complicated as it seems. Here are a few ideas for how to start planning your block party:

- **Create** an organizing team. Begin breaking out various tasks such as advertising, permits, and food and drink.
- **Promote** the block party! Encourage ideas for the party, attendance, and opinions on food, the theme and the date.
- **Discuss** how large you want the block party to be. You can always start small and grow bigger in future years.
- **Approach** your local community association for advice on dates, locations, and ideas.
- **Contact** The City of Calgary to understand the guidelines your party must follow and to obtain permits.
- **Go** door-to-door to discuss the block party with your neighbours. This will bring you new ideas and a personal touch to the party.

3-6 Months Before

- Host a meeting
- Determine who will do what
- Rent/organize any equipment, food, permits, etc. that are necessary
 - Plan your budget
- Ask sponsors for donations
- Contact your City of Calgary representative and the Community Association



1-3 Months Before

- Promote and advertise for your event
- Confirm your reservations for equipment, food, permits, etc.
- Confirm your sponsor's commitments



Things to Consider for Hosting a Party

There are some important things to consider when deciding to host a block party.

Where will the party be located?

Block parties don't have to be hosted on a block. They could be hosted in a green space, back alley, or a neighbour's yard.

When will the party happen?

Possible good dates for block parties are weekends and holidays. When considering a date try to pick one that doesn't conflict with other community events, or major city events.

What type of party will it be?

Your block party could follow any number of themes: a BBQ, potluck, catered meal, picnic, garden tour, cultural gathering, water park, or historical walk. These are just a few examples of the hundreds of possibilities of what a block party could be. Have fun and mix and match ideas.

How will it be funded?

Block parties could cost as little or as much as you would like. When you decide to host a block party it is important to decide where the money for it is coming from and how much you are going to need. A budget is a necessity. Try approaching local businesses for donations or sponsorship. This can also lead to future partnerships.

Why are you having the party?

Are you gathering people together so they can meet their neighbours? Do you want to start up a new walking club or sports team? Decide why you're planning this gathering. Also, consider having a block party bulletin board where people can display advertisements for special interests, such as baby sitting, book clubs, walking clubs and new sports teams.



The Day of the Party

- Set up and organize tables/chairs, food, music, anything that needs to be done before the party starts
- Introduce yourself to people and let them know what is happening
 - Help run games, food table, etc.
- After the party, organize clean-up
 - Most importantly HAVE FUN!

The Week Before

- Keep promoting the event
- Know the number of people attending your event to confirm numbers to any food companies or rentals

People to Call

Successful

block parties take coordination and information. To help with this, The City of Calgary can provide you with information about what is required for your party, permits for road closures, barriers and park bookings. For information from The City of Calgary call 3-1-1 or visit calgary.ca. You may also want to check in with your local community association to see if they would like to partner with you for the party. The community association may also be able to put you in contact with The City liaison for your neighbourhood. For information about your community association contact the Federation of Calgary Communities online at calgarycommunities.com or by phone at 403-244-4111.



Block Party Questionnaire

A few of your neighbours have been talking and thought it would be fun to host a block party! This is the perfect opportunity for us to get to know one another and possibly develop new friendships. To get this event underway, we would like to know what you think!

Are you interested in a neighbourhood block party?

Yes_____ No_____

If yes, when is the best date and time of day?

1st Choice: Date:_____ Time:_____

2nd Choice: Date:_____ Time:_____

Which of the following options best suits your family?

___ Each family brings their own hamburgers, buns and refreshments and we grill the burgers together. Plus a desert to share.

___ The meal is catered by an outside company and everyone contributes a little bit of money.

___ Each family brings their own picnic meal and a dessert to share.

___ Potluck. Everyone brings one dish to share with the party.

(List answers in most favourable to least favourable order: 1 = most favourable, 4 = least favourable)

If you have any other ideas please jot them down: _____

Would you like to help organize this event?

Yes: _____ No: _____

Please return this questionnaire by:

_____ to _____ at _____
(Date) (Name) (Address)

We will send out a second notice to let everyone know the outcome of the survey. Please remember to give us your name and address so we can contact you directly.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

Thanks neighbour!

Block Party Sign-in Sheet

[illegible]

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Ways to Engage with your Block Party Participants

Block parties offer a unique opportunity to get to know your community members and what their needs are.

- **Block Party Bingo:** Devise a sheet of games with each house/block member getting a square and something unique written about them (see below for an example).
- **Block-Wide Scavenger Hunt:** Arrange a scavenger hunt across your block. Have things like: take a photo with your neighbour who has been to Thailand.
- **Block-Wide Name that Tune:** Ask people on the block what their favourite song is then, when the name of the song has been guessed correctly, announce whose favourite song that was and get them to stand up.

BLOCK PARTY BINGO

Find someone at the party to represent each square

Lives in a blue house	Was born in another country	Has three or more kids
Has a dog and a cat	Block Party Organizer	Has lived in the community for 10+ years
Is retired	Is still in elementary/junior high	Is attending post-secondary



Contact Information

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