



Community Services
Block Party
a how-to guide

everything you need to know for planning a block party



Chestermere Block Party Planning Guide

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1. Introduction

Block parties are a great way to introduce yourself to neighbours, creating a homey feeling throughout the neighbourhood. Getting neighbours together for fun and food enables a renewed friendship among people in your area. Block parties provide an avenue for neighbours to get together, meet each other, have fun, and collaborate on common activities. As friendships grow, so do safe and caring neighbourhoods and communities.




Block party kits are proudly brought to you by Community Services, a department of The City of Chestermere, as well as generous community partners – Thank you M&M meats and No Frills!

If you have any concerns, comments, questions, or feedback, please contact Community Services as at 403-207-7050 or csinfo@chestermere.ca.

Our office hours are Mondays to Fridays from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

2. How to book a block party kit from Community Services

1. Call Community Services (CS) to schedule your date and select items for your block party kit. Please note your block party date is not reserved until completed waiver forms are received by CS. All block party kits come with barricades, sandwich boards, and gift certificates (if available). For a detail guide on planning a block party, please refer to Appendix A.
2. Please select items you would like in your block party kit:

		
<input type="checkbox"/> BBQ (no propane tank)	<input type="checkbox"/> Dishware (plates, cups, cutlery)	<input type="checkbox"/> Toys (sidewalk chalk, bubbles, sports equipment)

3. Complete block party waivers and return to Community Services, see Appendix B.

3. General bylaw and regulation

- Alcohol is only permitted on private property, not on city streets or in parks.
- Food cannot be sold on city streets unless proper permits have been obtained.
- Hours amplified music is allowed:
 - Monday to Thursday 11:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.
 - Friday and Saturday 11:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.
 - Sunday 1:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

4. Thank you!

Thank you for building neighbourhoods and safe, friendly communities. We hope you have a great party!

We are always looking for ways to improve our programs and services, please complete our survey form when returning block party items.

Please note: items from Community Services for your Block Party (sandwich boards, barbeque, etc.) must be picked up by Friday 3:00 p.m. on the week of your event.

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Appendix A – Planning your block party

1. Planning Your Block Party

2. Getting started

The idea of a block party is bringing neighbours together. Talk to your neighbours and see if they're interested in helping you organize the event. It is important to include as many interested people as possible in planning and organizing your event, so enlist as many volunteers as you can.

Responsibilities volunteers can help with may be:

- Being a point of contact to follow up and answer questions
- Completing forms and waivers
- Setting a theme, this gives your event a direction which eases planning details
- Sending out invitations and flyers, and responding to RSVPs
- Creating a rainy-day plan
- Looking after food and local donations
- Organizing costs and admission fees to alleviate party expenses
- Organizing games and activities for kids, youth, and adults
- Setting up a cleaning plan

3. Size of block party

Start with a smaller event rather than a larger one. It is easier to grow it than to shrink it.

In selecting who to invite, use natural Neighbourhood boundaries where possible. If you are planning a street or cul-de-sac party, you'll need to invite everyone from that area.

4. Types of block parties

Food and beverage can vary depending on the number of attendees and the type of event. Make sure food is properly labelled and ingredients are clearly identified for those with allergies / dietary restrictions. If meats are prepared for the whole group, designate a cook and make sure the meats are stored properly. Below are few options to off-set costs:

- Determine and purchase the amount of food and beverages needed from the invitation responses. Require everyone to pay a flat fee when they attend. (If you are charging a fee for the event, make sure it's noted on invitations and reminders.)
- Ask attendees to provide their own food for their own families.
- Host a potluck.

Below is a table about the different types of block parties:

Type	Barbecues	Picnics	Pot Luck	Cultural Potluck	Eco-friendly
Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organizers purchase all that is needed and neighbours provide the money• Everyone brings their own meal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Everyone brings their own meal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Everyone brings a dish	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Each family to bring a traditional dish; you will have an array of foods while learning more about your neighbours	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Everyone brings their own dinnerware, which they can then wash and reuse

5. Setting limits

It is important for guests to know the expectations and safety rules for the event – especially when entering houses or feeding pets. You may also want to set a time limit for they party to prevent it from

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being a nuisance to those trying to sleep, should your party run into the evening. Draft your guidelines and set it up at the sign-in station and in key areas such as the food station.

As per the City of Chestermere's bylaw, amplified music is allowed during the following hours:

- Monday to Thursday 11:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.
- Friday and Saturday 11:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.
- Sunday 1:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

6. Barricades

Registering your Block Party with the city ensures you will receive barricades for your street. Barricades can be used to direct the flow of traffic around your Block Party, while increasing safety for your guests. You do not need to make calls or special arrangements for these barricades as they will be dropped off by the City of Chestermere's Public Work Staff on Friday afternoon, then picked up on the following Monday.

7. Including everyone

Get to know your community better by inviting members from local community groups, businesses, and organizations. A Block Party is a great way to get to know those who have influence and contributed in your Neighbourhood, community, and Chestermere. Contact Community Services as we will be more than happy to help you connect with these people. Possible community member invitations are listed below and may be added to your contact form when booking:

- City Councillors
- Fire Department
- Mayor
- Public Works Offices
- RCMP / Police
- Block Party Sponsor

8. Getting the word out

It's important to keep neighbours informed about your event. Most local newspapers and organizations will allow you to advertise through them, free of charge, as it's a community event. If necessary, complete the Sign-Off Form. This can be filled out by going door to door indicating that neighbours have no objections to the street being blocked off.

Here are some others suggestions:

- Invitations can be specific, such as asking each family to bring... or a follow-up invitation with details can be sent to those who've RSVP'd.
- Distribute flyers / invites requesting for feedback / RSVP 3-4 weeks before the event. This will give neighbours plenty of time to prepare for the party.
- Information and suggestions can be gathered by going door to door. This will add to the personal touch and people are more likely to offer help.
- A casual approach can be used to inform neighbours as you see them out doing their lawns, walking their pets, etc.

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9. Supplies

Try to get neighbours to bring as many of their own things as possible (lawn chairs) for ease and convenience. Make sure items brought to the event are labelled, so they can be returned to their owners after the event.

Most of the supplies for your Block Party will be in the Neighbourhood Block Party Kit.

<i>Items in the Block Party Kit</i>	<i>Other supplies you may need</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper plates • Paper napkins • Plastic cutlery (forks, knives, spoons) • Plastic drinking cups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tables and chairs • Barbeques* and propane (*Community Services has 1 barbeque that can be borrowed, if date is available) • Tents (for shade and in case of poor weather) • Sound system – music • Coolers for perishable foods • Tubs with ice for beverages • Garbage, recycle, and compost containers • Decorations such as helium balloons

10. Games and Activities

Consider the layout of the event and plan different stations for different ages. Ensure you have games and activities for all age groups. Plan a few activities geared at breaking the ice for those neighbours who live at opposite ends of each other. Encourage the talent of your Neighbourhood to come forward – you may be living next to a musician, artist, storyteller, dancer, or singer!

Ask the local RCMP or fire department if they would stop by the party to conduct a mini hands-on for the kids. This will create memorable experiences while brushing up on safety tips.

Below is a table with examples of activities for different age groups.

<i>Age group</i>	<i>Toddlers</i>	<i>Kids</i>	<i>Youth</i>	<i>Adults</i>
<i>Activities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toys • Colouring books • Duck, duck, goose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Side walk chalk • Water fight • Hide and Seek 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts and craft • Capture the flag • Scavenger hunt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cards • Charades • Bocce Ball

11. Clean up – before, during, after

Before the party, make sure the party area is clean. Check surrounding yards for trash, doggie debris, and anything that can be tripping hazards.

During the party, ensure you have trash, recycling, and composting bins throughout the area.

After the party, ask a couple of guests to help you tidy things up.

12. Helpful tips for setting up

- When setting up tables and chairs for the event, make sure that emergency vehicles can still access the streets.
- Consider using a sign-in book for records for next year. This can help develop a contact list for the Neighbourhood.
- Name tags and pens for writing.
- Tables for food and have a few garbage cans nearby.
- Consider a bathroom policy “everyone uses their own”, so that home security is monitored.
- Consider a pet policy

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13. Important reminders and regulations

Below are some things to keep in mind during your block party:

- Pick up time is Friday at 3:00 p.m. for BBQ and block party kits
- Return time is Monday by 4:30 p.m. for block party items
- Remember when setting up tables and chairs, emergency vehicles may need to access the vicinity.
- Post signs the day before the event, this will remind everyone about the party and to remove their cars for street closures.
- Food cannot be sold on city streets unless proper permits have been obtained.
- Alcohol is only permitted on private property, not on city streets or in parks.
- Make sure barbeques are a safe distance away from kids and activities.
- Neighbours should observe security precautions, keep back doors locked and equipment in sight.
- Loud music is prohibited.

14. Sample Checklist

- Choose a date and confirm with Community Services (403-207-7050) for your Block Party kit.
- Forms to complete: Block Party Contact Information Sheet; Waiver of Liability and Release; Community Services Barbeque Rental (if applicable); and Event Evaluation Form.
- Plan the time of day. Do you want a pancake breakfast? An afternoon BBQ?
- Location: Do you plan to use the street, a backyard, a cul-de-sac, or a rented location? Ensure all proper permits and documentation are completed for your event.
- Plan the guest list. This may include residents of the same street or cul-de-sac, or surrounding farms or acreages. Avoid excluding residences. Decide if guests may invite friends, or if it will be restricted to people on the block.
- Designate the main contact person who will:
 - book the Block Party with Community Services
 - provide their contact information on the invitations and organize promotion of the event
 - answer questions of neighbours and residents
- Designate the food and refreshment coordinator, who will pick up supplies, arrange for food the day of, & ensure that tables, utensils, cutlery, coolers, etc. are provided and set up for the event.
- Designate an activity coordinator to plan games and activities for all ages and skill levels (toddlers, kids, youth, adults, etc.) and that these activities are in a location away from food preparation and busy streets. This person would take pictures, with the proper consent forms, and send it to Community Services for the photo contest!! They might also distribute prizes.
- Clean up coordinator: this person will be responsible for putting out garbage, recycle, and compost bins; ensuring bins are returned to their owners after the event; and organizing people to assist with general clean up before, during, and after the party.

*Although individuals can be assigned to coordinator roles, the roles can be a group effort. One person could fill all of these roles, but collaborating with others can reduce planning stress while ensuring most needs and sensitivities are met.

15. Contact us

If you have any concerns, comments, questions, or feedback, please contact Community Services as at 403-207-7050 or csinfo@chestermere.ca.

Our office hours are Mondays to Fridays from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

**Please note: items from Community Services for your Block Party (sandwich boards, barbeque, etc.) must be picked up by Friday 3:00 p.m. on the week of your event.*

Thank you for contributing to the bonding of neighbours and the building of safe, friendly communities. We hope you have a great party!

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Appendix B – Forms and Waivers

Please complete and sign the applicable forms and waivers, then return to Community Services to register your block party date.

1. Registration Form
2. Wavier of Liability and Release
3. Barbeque Rental Form
4. Sign-Off Form
5. Barbeque Maintenance and Cleaning Instructions
6. Photo Contest
7. Block Party Evaluation Form

Neighbourhood Block Party

1. Registration Form

Please fill out the information below and return this form to Community Services.

General Information

How did you hear about the Block Party kits?

Contact Information

Name of organizer

Address

Phone number

Email address

Date of event

**All Block Party Kits, including the BBQ, must be picked up by noon on the Friday before the party. All items, including the BBQ, must be returned by 4:30pm, the Monday after the event, and in the same condition. Please note that the Chestermere Municipal Building is closed on the weekends and statutory holidays.*

Can we contact you for feedback to improve our program? Yes No

Block Party Information

Address

Date of event

Time range of event

Total number of expected attendees

Total number of expected children

Block Party Items

Please select all the items you would like to borrow for your Block Party:

- Community Services barbeque rental (no propane tank)
- Dishware (napkins, cups, plates, utensils)
- Kids' games and toys (sidewalk chalk, bubbles, sports equipment)

Guest Request

Please indicate who you would like to attend your party, should they be available:

- Council
- The Mayor
- Fire Fighters with Fire Truck
- Peace Officer with Squad Car
- RCMP Officer with Squad Car
- Your Block Party Sponsor

Neighbourhood Block Party

2. Wavier of Liability and Release

Please read the following carefully and fill out the fields below. If you have any questions, have them answered before signing this document. Please return the completed form to Community Services.

Name	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>
Date of event*	<input type="text"/>
Time range of event	<input type="text"/>

**Please note your block party date is not reserved until completed waiver forms are received by CS.*

By completing, signing, and submitting this form, I am in full recognition and appreciation of the potential dangers do hereby waive, release, and forever discharge the City of Chestermere, its officers, agents, and employees from and against any and all claims, demands, action or causes of action for costs, expenses or damages to public and / or personal property or personal injury, or death, which may result from the closure of the address and date identified in this form.

I understand that the use of my address is voluntary and that I am only eligible for use of this street for a Block Party on the indicated date with the following conditions:

1. One lane must be left open, should any emergency vehicles be required to have access.
2. Liquor can only be served and consumed on private property; those drinking on the street can face prosecution for consuming in public.
3. Adherence to the City of Chestermere Noise Bylaw 2000-204/1, which states: "Except to the extent permitted by the Bylaw, no person shall make, continue, cause or allow to be made, continued, or caused any noise whatsoever, which by reason of its nature, intensity or volume, annoys, disturbs, endangers, or detracts from the comfort, repose, health, peace or safety of other persons within the City of Chestermere."

I assume full responsibility for any injuries or damages resulting from my use of the street for a Block Party including responsibility for using reasonable judgment in all aspects of the party. I recognize and understand that there are potential hazards, and that my participation is solely at my own risk and that I assume full responsibility for any resulting injuries and damages. I also understand that this Waiver of Liability and Release binds my heirs, executors, administrators, and assigns as well as myself.

I acknowledge that I have read and understand this entire Waiver of Liability and Release, and I agree to be legally bound by it.

Participant's name

Participant's signature

Date

Witness

Neighbourhood Block Party –

3. Barbeque Rental Form

Please read and fill out the information below and return this form to Community Services.

Security Deposit

Community Services requires a \$50.00 deposit in order to rent the barbeque. The cheque or credit card information will be held as security deposit and returned provided the barbeque is returned to Community Services on time (by 4:30pm the Monday following the party), cleaned and undamaged.

Contact Information

Name

Address

Phone number

Barbeque Condition

Please state the condition of the barbeque prior to rental, make sure to list all damages on the barbeque.

Credit Card Registration

Type of Card	<input type="checkbox"/> Visa <input type="checkbox"/> Master Card <input type="checkbox"/> American Express <input type="checkbox"/> Debit			
Card Number	<input type="text"/>			
Name on Card	<input type="text"/>			
Expiry Date	<input type="text"/>	Payment Amount	<input type="text"/>	
Notes	<input type="text"/>	Information Recorded By	<input type="text"/>	

Participant's signature

Date

For Administration Use

Security deposit received (\$50.00) by Community Services

- cheque
- credit Card

Security deposit returned

- Yes, damage deposit returned as the barbeque was returned on time, clean and in proper condition
- No, damage deposit was not returned as the barbeque was
 - Late (after Monday at 4:30pm)
 - not cleaned
 - damaged

Community Services staff signature

Barbeque renter signature

Neighbourhood Block Party

4. Sign-Off Form (Optional)

If there is concern regarding objections to the street being blocked off for the Block Party, this form can be filled out by going door to door indicating that neighbours have given consent to the blockage.

	Name	Address	Contact info	Signature
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Neighbourhood Block Party

5. Barbeque Maintenance and Cleaning Instructions

Usage

We want the barbeque to be used for many future events, so please make sure to use it respectfully and with care. If you notice any damage to the barbeque before you use it, please let a Community Services staff know as soon as possible. If you've notice the damages after rental pick up, take pictures for record keeping.

Please note, our barbeque does not come equipped with propane. You will have to supply your own propane – regular sized propane tanks are compatible with this unit.

Pick up

Determine a pick up time with Community Services for you to pick up the barbeque. You will need 3-4 strong individuals to lift the barbeque; it can be transported in a regular-sized pick-up truck. Make sure to secure the barbeque knobs and drip-trays, or they can be lost in transport.

Our office hours are Mondays to Fridays from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Please note: items from Community Services for your Block Party (sandwich boards, barbeque, etc.) must be picked up by Friday 3:00 p.m. on the week of your event.

Return

Ensure you have established with Community Services the return date and time of the barbeque. Return all parts of the barbeque as well as all items loaned (utensils and cleaning equipment).

Cleaning

Before cooking:

- Preheat the grill or griddle cook-top before you place food on it.
- Before you place food on the hot surface, cover the surface with a light layer of cooking oil (e.g., canola or olive oil), to prevent sticking.

After cooking:

- Burn off food residue on grills and clean with the stainless steel brushes supplied.
- When the barbeque has cooled, empty the grease / drip-tray and wash with soap and water (e.g., garden hose or power washer).
- Remove the cooking grate / grills and spray them with the degrease, and clean.
- Be sure to rinse all equipment with a garden hose or power washer.

Any damage occurring after your use of the barbeque must be reported and may be up to you to repair.

Neighbourhood Block Party

6. Photo Contest

Contest Information

The City of Chestermere's Community Services Department invites you to submit photos for our 2017 Neighbourhood Block Party Photo Contest. The winning entry will be displayed at the Chestermere Municipal Building and the winning photographer will receive a prize!

Entry Details

1. All digital photos submitted must be a minimum of 2MB
2. A completed entry form must be included with each photo. One form per photo.
3. Please submit your photos via email to smamun@chestermere.ca
4. Photos submitted become property of the City of Chestermere and cannot be returned

Entry Deadline

All entries must be received by September 30, 2017. We will not be able to accept entries after this deadline.

Contact Info

If you have any questions, please contact Sumon Mamun at smamun@chestermere.ca or 403-207-7046

Contest Submission

Title of photograph	<input type="text"/>
Date photo was taken	<input type="text"/>
Location of photo	<input type="text"/>
Photographer's name	<input type="text"/>
Phone number	<input type="text"/>
Email	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>
Postal code	<input type="text"/>

Waiver

I hereby authorize that the photograph I am submitting for the 2017 City of Chestermere's Community Services Neighbourhood Block Party Photo Contest were taken by legal means and in the province of Alberta. I also acknowledge that the photograph I am submitting is now property of the City of Chestermere and may be used for promotional materials and/or displayed on the City of Chestermere's website and social media channels. I authorize the City of Chestermere to display my name as the photographer, and have obtained consent forms from all individuals appearing in the photograph.

Signature

Date

Neighbourhood Block Party

7. Block Party Evaluation Form

Please assist us in evaluating the value of this program by completing the questions below and returning this form to Community Services. Your feedback will help us obtain future funding for this initiative.

Block Party Information

Date of Block Party	
Name of Organizer	
Number of attendees at Block Party	

Block Party Feedback

Please indicate your rating by checking the box that best identifies your Block Party experience.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	I Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Does Not Apply
I feel a stronger sense of community with the people on my block.						
I have met other families in our neighbourhood I can ask for help and support.						
The Block Party has helped me to feel a sense of belonging to my Neighbourhood.						

Would you recommend the Block Party Program to a friend, please explain below:

Yes No

How did you hear about the Block Party Kit? Do you have suggestions to help us bring more awareness to this program?

Did you receive a Door Prize to give away at your block party this year? If yes, please tell us if the door prize added value to your event. We are also interested in knowing how you decided the door prize winner?

Additional comments, suggestions, and feedback: