



# BLOCK

# Party

GUIDE  
AND  
PLANNING  
KIT

## WHAT IS A BLOCK PARTY?

A block party is a large, informal public celebration that provides you and your neighbours the opportunity to socialize and have fun together. Block parties help promote a stronger sense of community, enhance safety within the neighbourhood, and celebrate the reasons why people call Whitecourt home. You can make your block party just about any shape or size. Schedule a party after a neighbourhood clean up, after a neighbourhood garage sale or on special occasions (such as Love Whitecourt Day). Whatever the nature of your first party, the next will be much easier to organize - and it may even turn into an annual event.

## BLOCK PARTY APPLICATION GUIDE

The Town of Whitecourt will issue Block Party Permits to provided that certain conditions are met. These conditions have been established to ensure the safety of our community members, as well as to prevent excessive inconvenience to neighbouring residents and businesses.

### **Block Party Restrictions**

1. Generally, Block Party Permits will be approved for Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays.
2. Block Parties can take place between 10:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. only.
3. Organizers will save the Town harmless from any claims, lawsuits, etc. arising from this function.
4. Noise levels must remain within limits acceptable to neighbouring property owners.
5. Alcohol is not permitted on public property.
6. No open fires are permitted on the Town rights of way.
7. All structures, tables, etc. should be placed at the sides of street and must be easily removable.
8. Organizers are responsible for arranging for barricades on the street during the time of the function, and removal of the barricades at the conclusion of the function. Barricades must be placed at each end of the block, adequately warning vehicles of the street closure. The Town will provide barricades free of charge. Organizers are responsible for the safe return of barricades and will be invoiced for any damaged barricades. If barricades are not available from the Town, party organizers must rent barricades from a private vendor. Barricades must be illuminated after dark.
9. Organizers are liable for any damage done to Town property and private property on the site during the event.
10. Organizers are responsible for clean up of the streets to the condition prior to the function.
11. The organizer must allow the use of the designated street by emergency vehicles, including police vehicles.
12. The applicant(s) will be the contact person(s) in charge of the function and must remain at the Block Party until its conclusion.



## BLOCK PARTY APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Fill out the Block Party Application Form.
2. Signatures from at least 75% of the residents on the block indicating their consent must be submitted with the application (use attached Block Party Sign Off Form – make additional copies as needed). Photocopies of the signatures will not be accepted. Incomplete forms will be returned to the applicant, unprocessed.
3. Mail or drop off the complete application and Temporary Traffic Control Permit Application (if required) to the Town Administration Office.
4. The Planning and Development Department must receive an application at least 15 calendar days before the event.
5. You will receive a permit within seven (7) days after the complete application is received. If the permit is not received by this time, please call 780-778-2273 to inquire.
6. Copies of this permit, once approved, are distributed to the following key contacts:
  - a. Applicants
  - b. Chief Administrative Officer
  - c. Director Community Safety
  - d. Town of Whitecourt Crime Prevention Coordinator
  - e. Manager of Works



## TIPS AND IDEAS

- Use natural neighbourhood boundaries where possible (i.e. end of the block).
- Decide early and make it clear in your flyer if this will be a Block Party restricted to those on the street/block or whether people can invite friends/relatives (if yes how many).
- Have neighbours pull together 3 or 4 BBQ's so that everyone can eat at the same time.
- Remember to reserve one BBQ for vegetarians, vegans, kosher meats, and other types of diet restrictions.
- Block Parties can also be held in some of the public parks around town - call the Town Office for more details.

### **Neighbourhood History**

- Research the history of your neighbourhood through the Library or the Town of Whitecourt.
- Identify special people that lived in your area such as a politician, artist, eccentric, hero, etc.
- Have neighbours guess the neighbourhood history by playing charades (who, what, where and when questions).



## TIPS AND IDEAS CONT.

### **Cultural Connections**

- Have everyone bring their favorite family dish
- Teach everyone how to say 3 things in another language
- Use a world map to indicate where everyone originally came from
- Record the story of how everyone came to live in the neighbourhood and what they like best about the neighbourhood.

### **Neighbourhood Action**

- Discuss what issues or concerns neighbours may have and establish teams to explore how to resolve them. (Note: keep this part of the party to a set time; remember a block party should be fun!)
- Have a clean up time, build a bench, plant a garden, paint street numbers etc. as part of the Block Party activities- this is a good way to start a Block Party tradition in your neighbourhood.

### **Kids Games**

- Sidewalk chalk, obstacle course, face painting, balloons, skipping ropes, road hockey, etc.

### **Neighbourhood bingo**

- Collect neighbours' signatures in this fun icebreaker game.
  - Speaks a second language
  - Born in the 1930's
  - Has freckles
  - Traveled outside of Canada in 2004
  - Likes to exercise
  - Wearing sandals
  - Has a great smile
  - Likes to play golf
  - Plays a musical instrument
  - Planted a garden
  - Wears glasses
  - Did not see 3rd "Lord of the Rings" movie
  - Has brown eyes
  - Wearing Jeans
  - Wearing black socks
  - Plays soccer
  - Has a sister
  - Born in another country
  - Is a football fan
  - Born in another province

### **Live Music**

- Find out who plays musical instruments, if there is a local musician in your midst, or an inspiring group of kids that play together as a band in your neighbourhood. Set up a stage outside with a microphone and speakers and let the music begin!



## TIPS AND IDEAS CONT.

### **Talent Contest**

- Host a “neighbourhood talent contest” and you are sure to learn all kinds of interesting things about your neighbours. Design some fun categories that people of all ages can compete in and this event will practically run itself.

### **Face Painting**

- Put up some flyers in the local high schools- many students are looking for weekend work and volunteer hours.

### **Other**

- Contests of any kind can be exciting and allow people to show off their skills and hobbies. Why not try a baking contest, craft exhibit, scrapbooking display, karaoke contest, or joke contest with a laugh-o-meter.
- Have some kids sell lemonade and rice crispy squares, then put the money towards charity, neighbourhood projects, or the block party fund for next year!



## WHAT YOU SHOULD DO...

### **2 MONTHS AHEAD**

- Find a couple of neighbours to help you with organizing the event.
- Create an Organizing Committee and make sure everyone is included in the decision making process.
- If this is the first time your neighbourhood has had a block party, you may want to survey or send a flyer out to your neighbours. See [Flyers](#).

Enlist as many neighbours as you can to help out. Someone can type the flyer; someone else can collect them. You may want to ask some kids to drop the flyers off at residences.

After the results are collected, invite everyone interested to a planning meeting.

### **1 MONTH AHEAD**

- Have a follow-up meeting to discuss what still needs to be done. Send out invitations.
- A fillable electronic invitation template is included at the back of this kit.

**Remember to be creative, perhaps attach blown up balloons to the invitation and tie the whole thing to your neighbour’s doorknob - a whole street full of these is sure to get everyone’s attention!**

## WHAT YOU SHOULD DO...

### 1 WEEK AHEAD

- Publicize the party and include a reminder that the street will be closed.
- Confirm arrangements for the traffic barricades.

### PARTY DAY

#### Set-up

- Designate areas for food, seating, music, activities, etc.
- Strategically place garbage cans.

#### Arrival

- Assign greeters to welcome and introduce people.
- Sign-in sheet and nametags.

#### Party Schedule

- Post the day's events and the schedule.

#### Clean up

- Have everyone help clean up at the end or assign the job to a youth task force.
- Take down street barriers.
- Remember to ask everyone what they liked best and make a note of it for next year!

## PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING

Remember that meetings and organizational activities should be fun; try to include as many community members as possible!

Party Date and Time \_\_\_\_\_  
Rainout Alternatives \_\_\_\_\_

Scope of Party (How much area will need to be blocked off?) \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Party \_\_\_\_\_

Type or Theme of Party (BBQ, Potluck, Canada Day, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Budget (Cost of permits? Supplies?) \_\_\_\_\_



## TASKS TO DELEGATE AT THE PLANNING MEETING

- Send out invitations to everyone in the neighbourhood as well as anyone else who might be invited (Mayor, RCMP, firefighters, etc.).
- Organize meetings as needed.
- Acquire name tags if applicable.

### ACTIVITIES

- Games/ Activities/ Icebreakers for all ages.
- Prizes? Music? Contests?
- Involve kids and teens in planning and supervising activities.

### FOOD

- Tables, BBQ's, coolers, etc.
- Dishes and cutlery (should everyone bring their own, should plastic ones be supplied).

### CLEAN - UP

- Garbage cans and bags.
- Take down signs and pick up any garbage.
- Return barricades to the Town of Whitecourt.

The more hands the better- try to schedule meetings for times that families, seniors, and students can attend.



# FLYERS

Here is an idea of what should be included in a survey or flyer that will be distributed about 2 months ahead of the bock party...

Make sure you explain what a Block Party is, encourage attendance, share some of the benefits, get opinions on how to handle the food, and find out which dates will work best.

\_\_\_\_\_ is Having a Block Party!

A few neighbours have been talking and we thought it would be fun to get together and have a "meet-on-the-street event". It could be an opportunity to meet each other and to have some fun! To get this event underway, we would like to know what you think!

**Are you interested in participating in a neighbourhood party? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_**

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Which of the following suggestions would suit your family the best? Indicate your 1st and 2nd choice.**

- A. Each family brings their own hamburger, buns and refreshments, plus a dessert or a salad to share.
- B. The hamburgers & buns are supplied and everyone contributes money to pay for them.
- C. Each family brings their own refreshments plus an appetizer, salad or dessert to share.
- D. Each family brings their own picnic meal and a dessert to share.
- E. Everyone brings one dish to share (casserole, salad, or dessert – to be assigned) and their own refreshments.

**1st Choice \_\_\_\_\_ 2nd Choice \_\_\_\_\_**





**FLYERS CON'T.**

If you have other ideas please jot them down!

---

---

---

---

If you would like to help organize, let us know. Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

Please return this questionnaire by \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

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 \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

**Thanks Neighbour!**

# Whitecourt BLOCK

*Parties*

**YOU ARE INVITED!**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Time \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

Please RSVP by \_\_\_\_\_

- yes
- no

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE DROP OFF  
YOUR RSVP AT** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_





# BLOCK PARTY APPLICATION

Day(s) and Date(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Block Party \_\_\_\_\_

Time(s) **Start** \_\_\_\_\_ **Finish** \_\_\_\_\_ **Set-up** \_\_\_\_\_ **Clean-up** \_\_\_\_\_

# of Participants Expected: \_\_\_\_\_

Activities Planned (check those which apply and provide details)

- Entertainment/Amplified Music/Speeches \_\_\_\_\_
- Sale/Offering of Food/Beverage: \_\_\_\_\_
- Sponsor Signs / Banners \_\_\_\_\_
- Temporary Structures (tents/stage/portable toilets ) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Attach a site plan showing proposed locations.)
- Additional Activities \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone **Day** \_\_\_\_\_ **Home** \_\_\_\_\_ **Fax** \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

On-Site Liaison Person: \_\_\_\_\_

On-Site Liaison Person Contact #'s **Cell or Pager** \_\_\_\_\_ **Fax** \_\_\_\_\_

An on-site liaison person must be identified and must be present at all times during set-up, tear down and during the event. This person must have the authority to make decisions on behalf of the event and must be accessible to Town staff, Police etc. via cell phone or pager.

**Please return completed application form to:**

Town of Whitecourt  
Planning and Development Department  
5004-52 Avenue  
Whitecourt AB T7S 1N6  
Phone: 780-778-2273 Fax: 780-778-4166

**Please ensure you have attached the following:**

- Site Plan (if applicable)
- Block Party Sign-Off Form
- Temporary Traffic Control Permit Application (if required)

On behalf of the applicant, I/we acknowledge that I/we have read and understood the conditions in the Application Guidelines and agree to comply with them.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

<b>For Town Use Only</b>	
Approval Status	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No





# BLOCK PARTY EXPENSE FORM

Block Party Date \_\_\_\_\_

Party Location \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Participants \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact** Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Expense Type	Vendor	Detail/Description	Amount (with GST)	Eligible

**Total**

\*\*Original receipts are required to accompany this form.

**For Town Use Only**  
 Approved eligible expenses \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_