

City of Beaconsfield

# BLOCK PARTY PLANNING GUIDE

[beaconsfield.ca/block-parties](http://beaconsfield.ca/block-parties)



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# INTRODUCTION

## Let's have a block party!

Block parties are a great way to get to know your neighbours. They provide a casual relaxed setting where residents can meet, play, eat, and hopefully, find similarities that bring them closer together. With a little effort, a neighbourhood can become a cohesive community of families that care for each other and the overall health and vibrancy of the community. Our communities become stronger when we care about each other and the neighbourhoods we live in. Block parties are organized by residents for residents. Culture and Leisure Services processes the authorization application and act as a liaison between the organizer and the different City departments. While Block Parties are meant to be informal and fun, a certain amount of planning is involved.

## This guide is intended to help you along the way. It will provide:

- The regulations for block parties
- The process to follow in organizing a block party
- Resources to use for the event.



# 10 REASONS TO HAVE A BLOCK PARTY

- 1 To have fun!
- 2 To meet your neighbours. Get to know who lives on your street. Neighbours who know each other are more likely to look out for one another.
- 3 To increase a sense of belonging to your community.
- 4 To establish new friendships.
- 5 To learn more about your neighbours, especially those who might need a little help from time to time.
- 6 To meet some old-time residents in the neighbourhood and learn the neighbourhood's history.
- 7 To strengthen neighbourhood spirit and encourage residents to look after the neighbourhood.
- 8 To make additional connections within the community. When you know people, you can exchange skills or resources and perhaps organize a book club or other community activity.
- 9 To have a neighbourhood clean-up day, play some good music and barbecue once all the work is done.
- 10 To start a neighbourhood tradition of getting together at least once a year.

## The Role of the Block Party Host

- Oversees the set-up and take-down of the event. However, help from neighbours is always appreciated!;
- Ensures that everyone feels welcome and that neighbours are included in the festivities;
- Ensures that the space used for the event is left in its original state;
- Takes into account the other events that are happening in the area when choosing a date.  
- Consult the City's events calendar at [beaconsfield.ca](http://beaconsfield.ca);
- Encourages inter-generational and inter-cultural participation.  
Communities thrive when we all celebrate together.



# TYPES OF PARTIES

## Block Socials (= private properties)

A block social is usually a smaller gathering of people and takes place **solely on private property** (ex. front yard). **It does not require an authorization.**

## Block Parties (= public property)

- A Block Party is a gathering of a bigger group of people and it extends onto public property such as the road. This excludes City-owned Green spaces. **This type of party requires a municipal authorization;**
- The authorization application must be submitted online a **minimum of 15 days prior to the event.** The approval of temporary partial street closures for neighbourhood parties is at the discretion of the Culture and Leisure Service and the Montreal Fire Department (SIM);
- The City will lend barricades free of charge. Organizers must set them up on the street for the duration of the block party and remove them at the end of the event. Barricades must be installed at each end of the street, with adequate warning that the street is closed to all vehicles and must not impede the movement of emergency vehicles;
- **The organizers are responsible for the return of barricades; they will be billed for any missing or damaged barricades.**

## Guidelines

- All structures such as tables and tents must be placed on the side of the street and must be easily removable.
- The sound level (including music) must remain within acceptable limits and must not exceed 10:00 PM, in accordance with BEAC-033 regulations.
- **No alcohol consumption is allowed on public domain.**
- The organizers release the City from any claims, lawsuits, etc. arising from this event.;
- The organizers will be held responsible for any damage to public or private property arising from the event.
- The organizers commit to cleaning the streets and public property and restoring them to their original condition before the event.
- The applicant, as the designated contact person responsible for the event, must remain on-site until the end of the party.
- All regulations and By-Laws of the City of Beaconsfield must be adhered to.



# PLANNING YOUR BLOCK PARTY

Planning an event can feel daunting. Here is some guidance to help you plan your Block Party that will bring your neighbourhood together, as well as more information about the City's requirements:

## 1. Getting Started

- The idea of a neighbourhood block party is to bring neighbours together, so the first step is to talk to your neighbours about what a block party is.
- Talking with your neighbours will encourage attendance and you could get feedback on things like food and possible event dates and times.
- Invite as many neighbours as you can to help out with the planning. This will not only help with the organization of the event, but will create and deepen relationships.
- Social media is a great tool that can be used to state an online group, create a Facebook event and share event photos and memories.

## 2. Choose the location

- It is recommended to use a common public space. This will increase the likelihood of shared responsibility for the event. Options include:
  - An existing street or common area (must abide by City of Beaconsfield By-laws and **requires an authorization**).
  - A garage in the event of a rainout.
  - A common room in a condo unit.
- Will you need a road closure? If so, the City can provide barricades. Mention this in your authorization request.

## 3. Find the Best Date

- The more time you give to planning, the better organized you will be. **You must request your authorization at least 15 days in advance.**
- A weekend date or holiday is often the best time for an event.
- Have an alternate rainout date planned, just in case.
- Plan the time at which the event will be as well. Be conscious of who resides in your neighbourhood (ex. young children, elderly people).

## 4. How big to make it?

- In selecting who to invite, use natural neighbourhood boundaries like the end of the block. If you are planning a street or cul-de-sac party, you should invite everyone in that area.
- Block parties are small gatherings of 10-15 households on your street.
- Have an idea of how many families and/or participants will be attending when filling out your authorization application.

## 5. What type of Block party should you have?

Consider who is in your neighbourhood. What type of block party will best suit your neighbours?

- **Barbecues:** organizers purchase all that is needed and neighbours provide the money or everyone brings his or her own meat.
- **Picnics:** host a picnic and play some fun outdoor games together.
- **Potluck:** everyone brings one dish.



## 6. Create your set-up plan

Having a setup plan will make the preparation on the day of the event much smoother.

The authorization application requires a plan for the setup of the event. How many tables will you be using? Will you be using tents?

All structures such as tables and tents should be placed at the side of the street and must be easily removable. Please make sure that your plan is in accordance with the City of Beaconsfield By-laws.

## 7. Fill out the authorization application

When you have gathered all this information, you are ready to request an authorization for your event (only required if your event will take place on public property). Head over to the City's website and fill out the form: (insert link). Remember that you need to request an authorization no less than 15 days before the block party event takes place.

## 8. Getting the word out

Here are some ideas to keep neighbours informed:

- Door hangers or invitation models provided by the City can be used to announce the party details.
- Information can be spread by going door-to-door. This adds a personal touch and people often offer to help.
  - **Tip:** by meeting your neighbours, you can also talk about ways to liven up neighbourhood life on your street.
- Social media or other technologies are ways to spread the word, especially if you already have most of your neighbours' contact information.

## 9. Set up suggestions

Here are some suggestions for how your setup will proceed:

- Line up tables for the food and have the appropriate bins for garbage, recycling, and composting.
- Decide whether you will coordinate the following or if everyone will bring their own:
  - Tables and chairs
  - Plates and cutlery
  - Cups and beverages
- If using barbecues, who will bring them and who will cook the food?
- Institutes a bathroom policy: "everyone to use their own," so that home security is monitored.
- Decide together if pets are allowed.



# A FEW MORE SUGGESTIONS

- **Encourage your neighbours to share their contacts to facilitate future interactions.**
- Use name tags to help everyone help each other's names. This is especially helpful if there are newcomers to your neighbourhood.
- You may wish to do an evaluation at the end of the event to collect new ideas for the future.
- See if there are any group interests on your block like a book club, walking or running groups, etc.
- Make sure all feel welcome! Ensure your block party is welcoming and inclusive for all people who live in your neighbourhood.
- Consider designating a host to ensure new families are properly introduced to their neighbours.

## A Few Reminders

- Neighbours should observe security precautions by keeping back doors locked and equipment in sight.
- Loud music is prohibited.
- Keep emergency vehicles in mind when setting up tables and chairs.
- Do not forget to ask about allergies.

## How To Keep Your Block Party Green

- Have everyone bring their own reusable plate, cutlery, and water bottle to avoid disposable dish wear;
- Use compostable or recyclable materials;
- Purchase bulk condiments;
- Try to avoid over-packaging and single-use items;
- Provide sorting bins for organics, recyclables, and waste;
- Reduce consumption at source: before buying new items or accessories, look at what you already have and try to reuse it. Who knows? You might make some great discoveries.





# THEME IDEAS

Want to spice up your block party? Why not add a theme? People can dress up, bring themed beverages or food items, and plan games that fit with the theme. Here are some ideas:



## Disco Party\*

Get out the disco ball and bust out your dance moves for a fun time with your neighbours.



## Country\*

Giddy-up cowboys! Grab your hat and meet your neighbours to learn more a-boot them!



## Zombies

What better way to prepare for a zombie invasion than to get to know your neighbours better!



## Space

Have an out-of-this-world party with your neighbours and celebrate living on the same planet!



## WhoDunnit\*

The game is afoot! Come together to uncover knowledge about your neighbours.



## Luau\*

Aloha! Can't go on a tropical vacation, bring the tropics to you and your neighbours.



## Red Carpet\*

Invite your neighbours to a time of elegance and sophistication in your neighbourhood.



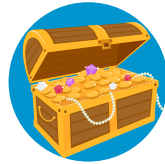
## Breakfast in Pyjamas

You want a relaxing time with your neighbours, why not come in your pyjamas?



## Superheroes

Invite your neighbours to save the day with you and celebrate the heroes of your community!



## Pirates

Ahoi neighbours! Come discover the hidden treasures that are closer relationships with your neighbours.



## World Tour

Celebrate the diversity of your community by highlighting your different cultures and traditions.



## Family Favourites

The game is afoot! Come together to uncover knowledge about your neighbours.

For more ideas of food, activities, and more, check out activity theme guide: [www.activityguide.beaconsfield.ca](http://www.activityguide.beaconsfield.ca)

\*Premade Party Boxes have been prepared by our team and are accessible to use (first come first served basis)



# PARTY IN A BOX

The organizer of the block party can borrow, as available, some activity totes from the City which include leisure supplies and games to support social connections for the event. A member of the Connections team will provide further details regarding themes as well as available options. Here are a few details:

## Totes will contain:

- Thematic decorations
- Portable photobooth
- Snakes and Ladders game, special for Beaconsfield neighbourhood parties Sidewalk chalk
- And a selection of 3 games from the following:
  - Twister
  - Bocce
  - Potato sack race bags
  - Giant bubble kit
  - Volleyball net
  - Giant checkers game
  - Giant parachute
  - Skipping ropes
  - Croquet set
  - Horseshoe
  - Bean bag toss
  - Spikeball
  - Giant Jenga
  - Reusable water balloons
  - And many more!

## Activity Ideas

- Try an outdoor movie – perfect for those warm summer nights.
- Set up a photo booth to create some memories.
- Try the “Minute to Win it” game.
- Encourage the talent of your neighbourhood to come forward – you may be living next to a musician, artist, DJ, magician, dancer, singer, radio host, or prize-winning cook.

## Kids Games

- Sidewalk chalks
- Lawn Twister
- Scavenger hunt
- Face painting
- Hula hoops
- Jump rope
- Water balloon race




# BLOCK PARTY SIGN-UP SHEET

LAST NAME, FAMILY MEMBERS	HOUSE #	PHONE #



# BLOCK PARTY



YOUNGEST OR OLDEST NEIGHBOUR YOU KNOW	HAS THEIR FIRST AID TRAINING	IS A STUDENT	CAN SPEAK 2 OR MORE LANGUAGES FLUENTLY	WORKS FROM HOME
RUNS A SMALL BUSINESS	HAS 3 OR MORE CHILDREN	LIKES TO PLAY GOLF	WAS BORN IN ANOTHER COUNTRY	HAS A UNIQUE HOBBY
HAS LIVED IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD FOR 10+ YEARS	IS A MONTREAL CANADIENS FAN		LOVES GARDENING	PLAYS A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT
IS PHYSICALLY ACTIVE	IS RETIRED	DRIVES A MOTORCYCLE	HAS A SPECIAL TALENT	WEARS CONTACT LENSES
LOVES KNITTING	HAS LIVED IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD FOR LESS THAN 1 YEAR	HAS GRANDCHILDREN	KNOWS AT LEAST 6 NEIGHBOURS BY NAME	HAS MORE THAN ONE PET



Your name:

