



TOWN OF TABER

BLOCK

PARTY

Planning Guide



2021

www.taber.ca



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Special Event Application Forms
Available at www.taber.ca/events

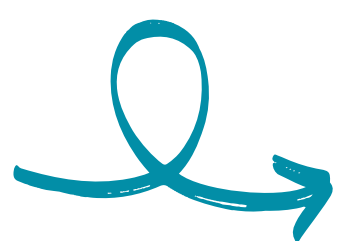




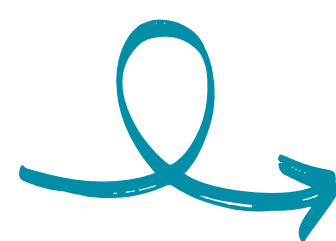
Introduction

Welcome! A neighbourhood block party is a wonderful opportunity to get your community together. Meet some new people, have some fun and work together on building a strong community.

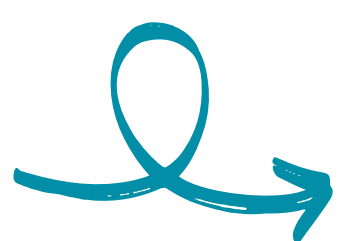
Top 10 Reasons To Have a Block Party!



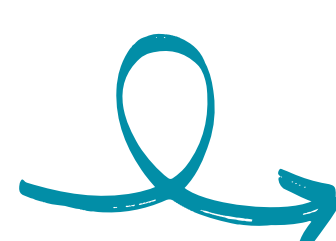
Simply to have FUN! No excuses or reasons needed to celebrate



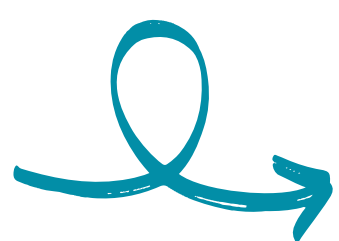
To encourage neighbours to look after the neighbourhood



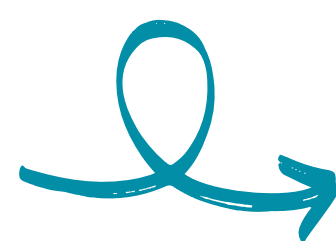
To meet your neighbours and learn where they live and who lives where



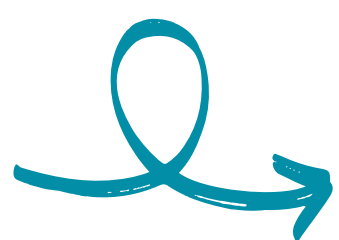
To plan other neighbourhood projects, that inspire community connection



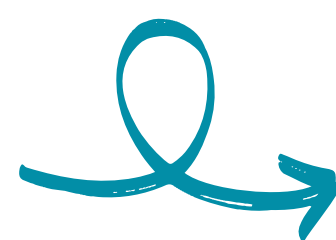
Knowing others in your neighbourhood improves community spirit and safety



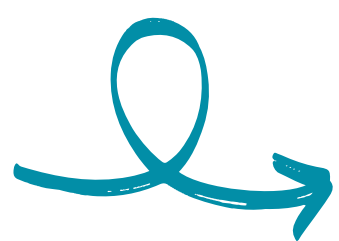
To learn a little about each other and know who might need a little extra help from time to time



To increase the sense of belonging in your community



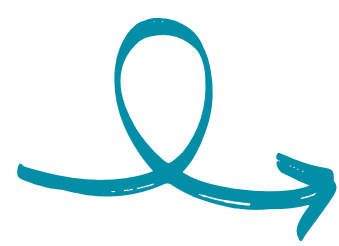
To meet some of the long time neighbours and learn about your community history



To establish new friendships

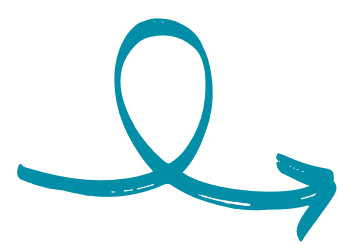


To make connections with neighbours you share interests or skills with



Let's have FUN!

- Block Parties are a fun way to connect with people in your direct community
- In this guide you will find a step-by-step process for planning your event, along with templates and tools
- Also included are some suggested activities for your event, and some helpful things to make the event welcoming and inclusive for all members of your community
- Finally, we have some ideas of other ways to connect with your neighbours and get involved in community actions and projects



Things to Consider:

- It is recommended to use a public space, as this will increase the likelihood of shared responsibilities for the event. If your block party is on public land (such as a street or in a park), a special event permit is required
- Other locations for hosting a block party may include a neighbour's yard
- Residents should observe security precautions by keeping houses and doors locked while at the event
- Be courteous: loud amplification of music can be disruptive to others
- When setting up your event area and parking, ensure emergency service vehicles have access at all times
- Alcohol consumption is not permitted on town roads or public property
- Ensure you are following all current provincial guidelines for gatherings and restrictions, see www.alberta.ca for updated details



GETTING STARTED

1. Getting Started

- The idea of a block party is to bring neighbours together, it's a good idea to find 1 or 2 neighbours (or more) to help you plan the event
- The first step is to create an organizing committee, it is important to include everyone in decisions about the event. Allow people to work in their strengths and use their talents to contribute to the group
- If this is your first time hosting a block party, you may want to send out a flyer to explain what a block party is, encourage attendance, perhaps share some of the benefits, get opinions on how to handle the food, and suggest possible dates and times to have the event
- Get everyone involved - have someone design the flyer, someone else collect them, maybe the neighbourhood kids can drop off flyers in mailboxes, use your imagination
- Remember to check the tools and templates section for more

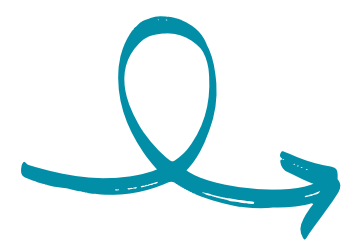
2. Types of Block Parties

What type of block party works for your neighbourhood?

- Barbeques - everyone brings their own food, maybe they even pull out their bbq's to the front lawns (where possible) and grill together
- Picnics - everyone brings their own meals
- Catered - everyone shares in the cost and food is purchased for the party
- OR - a combination of the above, do what works for your neighbourhood

Remember, try not to go overboard, if people feel the event is too much work, especially in the beginning years, they will be less inclined to participate.

Keep it simple!



3. How Big To Make It

- Start off with a smaller event than a larger one. It can always grow!
- In selecting who to invite, use natural neighbourhood boundaries where possible (i.e. the end of a block). If you are planning a street or cul-de-sac party, make sure you invite everyone from that area
- Decide early and make it clear in your flyer if this is a block party restricted to those on the street/block or where people are allowed to invite friends/family, and if so how many?
- Remember, to keep an eye on www.alberta.ca for updated guidelines on gatherings



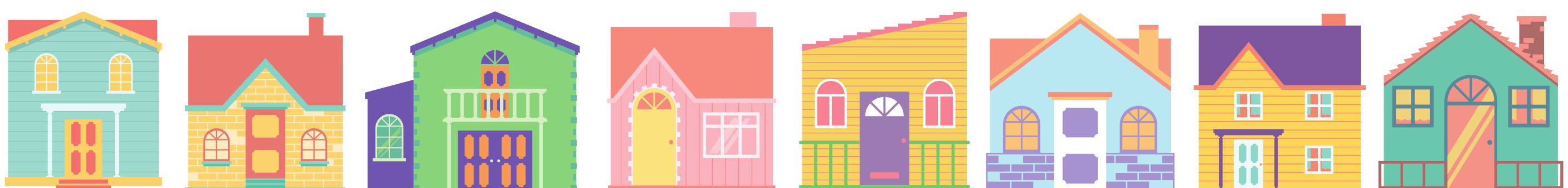
4. Location

- Local park*
- Street*
- A neighbour's yard (as per AHS guidelines)

It is recommended to use a public space, if at all possible. This will increase the likelihood of shared responsibility and public safety for the event

* Local parks and streets are on public lands, and will require a special event application (See tools and templates section for more).

**Please consider any attendees who may have mobility or special needs when deciding on the location.



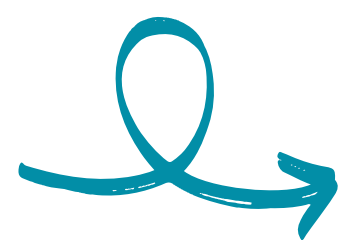


5. Applications & Permits

- A permit is required to host a neighbourhood party on or in the Town of Taber roadways or public lands (such as parks). This is completed through a special event application and is registered through the Arts, Culture & Events Coordinator, call 403-223-6013
- Special Event Applications can be found on www.taber.ca/events
- Application forms need to be submitted to the Town at least 2 weeks prior to the event to ensure they are processed in time for your event
- This also allows enough time for the Town to address any concerns or inquiries
- Block Party Applications must be made by a homeowner on the block or in the neighbourhood of the party
- A map showing the location of the block party and the location of the temporary road closure (if requested) will need to be included with your application. Remember, even with road closures, there must be access for emergency vehicles at all times

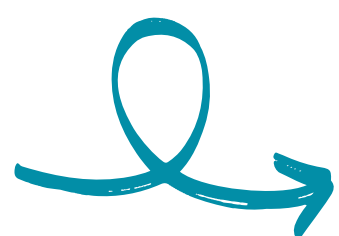
GUIDELINES:

1. The block being used is occupied predominantly by owner/residents
2. Block party time limits are 7:00am - 11:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am - 11:00pm on weekends (as per the Community Standards Bylaw)
3. Applicants must remain at the party until its conclusion and clean up is complete.
4. Alcoholic beverages are not permitted on Town Streets or on any public land
5. Open fires are not permitted on Town streets
6. Emergency vehicle access must be maintained at all times during the event (i.e. fire, ambulance, police)



6. The Timing to Plan The Event

- Once the committee has looked at all the suggestions, the invitation with date, time and what to bring should go out about 2 weeks before the event
- Mid-May to Mid-September is a good time, but you can always have a little winter fun too!
- Have an alternate rainout/snow day planned, just in case
- Keep in mind who lives in the neighbourhood when setting the hours for the party. If young children or seniors are living near the party, plan to finish earlier
- Adjustments may need to be made if a neighbour already has an event of their own planned
- More resources to help you can be found in the tools & templates section



7. Getting the Word Out

It is important to keep everyone informed, here are some ideas:

- Invitations can be used with a request to drop back their suggestions for the event in your mailbox
- Information can be gathered from your neighbours by going door-to-door. This is a suggested approach as it adds a personal touch and people often offer to help
- A casual approach can be used to inform neighbours as you see them out and about
- Neighbours can be called on the phone
- Make an extra effort to get your new neighbours out to the event
- Take every opportunity to talk it up in the neighbourhood as often as possible prior to the event
- Post on your neighbourhoods Facebook group or community bulletin board



8. Role of the Organizer

- Make decisions about the set up and day of activities
- Act as a greeter at the event
- Introduce new neighbours and help people connect with each other
- Make sure the clean up is complete at the end of the event
- Complete and submit special event form, if required

9. Set Up Tips

- Set up a sign-in book for records for the next year, it will also help you develop a contact list for the neighbourhood. Or set up an online group that people can stay connected on
- Name tags are very important. You can purchase them or get creative in making them
- Line up tables for the food and have a few garbage and recycling receptacles available, label what goes in each bin
- Coordinate for everyone to bring their own tables, chairs, plates, cutlery, cups, food and beverages
- Set up a few hand sanitizing stations and post a few posters on Covid-19 safety (available at www.alberta.ca)
- If using barbeques, who will bring them?
- Institute a bathroom policy, "everyone to use his or her own," so that home safety and security is maintained
- Decide if pets are allowed
- Be ready to oversee the set up & clean up after the event. Consider making someone, even the neighbourhood youth, the waste & recycling coordinator for the event
- You may wish to do an evaluation at the end of the event to collect ideas for next time!

Fun Tip

Encourage the talent in your community to come
- musicians, magicians, mimes, story-tellers...





10. Fire Pits

- Remember, fire pits are not permitted on a public road or in a park
- Fire pits can be used on private property, all Town bylaws and AHS distancing requirements need to be considered
- For rules and regulations related to fire pits, permits and approvals - visit <https://www.taber.ca/how-do-i/apply/fire-permit> for more details and contacts

11. Food Safety

- Community organizations/groups do not need a permit from AHS to serve food at a community event, including fundraising events where food (such as hot dogs/hamburgers) are sold for a minimal cost
- Proper food handling should always be a priority
- Alberta Health Services offers free online courses in food safety, click here for details: <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/eph>
- Or contact AHS Education Services at 1-855-247-3433

12. Final Reminders

- Neighbours should observe security precautions by keeping back doors and gates locked and possessions in sight
- Loud music is prohibited
- Remember when setting up tables and chairs that emergency vehicles may need access
- You may want to post signs the day before the event to remind everyone to remove cars for street closure
- Keep an eye out for any changes in weather



ACTIVITY IDEAS

What should we do during the event?

- Visit and Eat - over the centuries, food has always had a very social component in societies
- Take time to introduce one another and point to their home. This can be done in a game format too!
- Encourage the talent in your community to come - musicians, artists, magicians, singers, dancers, radio hosts or maybe a prize-winning cook, and MORE!
- Invite different community groups and businesses to set up displays - maybe you have a fitness leader, a hockey coach, a home baking business, the options are endless!
- Consider who will be attending your celebration, try to host activities that everyone can participate in
- Encourage intergenerational and intercultural participation. Communities thrive when we all celebrate together, across our lines of identity
- Ensure the party is accessible for everyone, including individuals with mobility challenges

Suggested Activities

Spring/Summer

- Driveway/backyard theatre
- Photo Booths
- Kids Art Walk
- Bike or pet parade
- Garden Tours
- Sidewalk Chalk
- Sports
- Water Games
- Lawn Games
- Bouncy Castles (check your insurance)
- Relay & Carnival Games

Fall/Winter

- Skating Party
- Hot Chocolate Bar
- S'More Station
- Book or Craft Clubs
- Build a snowman or snow fort
- Have a snowball fight
- Ice sculpture competition
- Karaoke Party
- Hockey Game
- Minute-to-Win-it Games
- Walking Tours
- Holiday Light or Decoration Tours



CONNECTING

Our community is growing increasingly diverse, which is a benefit to everyone by providing opportunities to learn about other people and cultures. It is important that we build neighbourhoods that are welcoming and inclusive of all people, from different cultures, backgrounds and ways of life.

→ CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

- Record the story of how everyone came to live in the neighbourhood - from across town to across the world! And have everyone share what they like most about living here.
- Language is important - at the very least, try to use the word for "hello" in different languages on your poster and other promotional material. Saying "hello" to someone in their native (first) language can go a long way towards fostering a healthy relationship.

→ WHY CONNECT WITH YOUR NEIGHBOURS

- Connected neighbours leads to positive individual and community well-being - feeling safe, being engaged and having an overall sense of belonging.

→ NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTION

- When neighbours connect with each other, there is an opportunity to take collective action on an issue or project that will benefit all neighbours of the community. You can take a brief moment before the celebration to have a discussion, or plan for a community discussion group.
- Plan a clean up day, build a park bench, plant a community garden or paint street numbers as part of the Block Party Activities - be creative! Remember to check with our planning department before starting to see if there are any permits required - 403-223-6009



TOOLS & TEMPLATES

Resources In This Section

- Planning Checklist
- Planning Committee To Do List
- Sample Poster
- Sample Sign In Sheet
- Sample Post-Event Evaluation Form
- Neighbourhood Bingo





Planning Checklist

2+ Weeks Prior

- Gather a few neighbours to help start the planning
- Submit a Special Event Application Form to the Town of Taber (if required)
- Discuss liability insurance with your home insurance provider

1-2 Weeks Prior

- Send out invitations
- Arrange to have tables set up for food and activities that may require them
- Arrange for BBQ's, coolers, ice and water
- Arrange for garbage/recycling/compost bins, with extra bags and clean up supplies
- Arrange for first aid kit(s), fire extinguisher(s) and make site plan ensuring emergency access
- Arrange barricades, if needed, for closing the street (please request on your special event application)
- Double check current provincial restrictions on gatherings at www.alberta.ca

1 Week Prior

- Meet with your organizing team to confirm details
- Delegate and recruit help where necessary

Continued on Next Page

Please note that if you'd like request a street closure, a special event application must be submitted and the closure approved by the Town



Planning Checklist Continued

Day Of

- Designate the areas for parking, BBQ's, food, garbage/recycling/composting, sitting areas, and games/activities areas
- Set up the arrival area, with greeters to welcome and check in everyone - provide directions and introduce people. Have a sign in sheet ready and name tags.
- After everyone has arrived, welcome them all, announce the days events and make any special announcements.
- Have FUN!

Clean-Up

- Have a Block Party Evaluation Form Available (see samples) or send out a poll online after the event
- Ensure all trash and garbage has been picked up and cleared away and that recycling/composting is taken to the proper place
- Take down and recycle any signs/posters that may have been posted
- Ensure all equipment and supplies are put away

Follow Up

- Celebrate a job well done!
- Make a few notes for next years event
- Follow up on anything that may have been missed during the clean-up



Planning Committee To Do List

Responsibility	Who/Address	Phone/Email
Main Contact <input type="checkbox"/> Organise planning group/meetings <input type="checkbox"/> Submit Special Event Application <input type="checkbox"/> Send out invitations <input type="checkbox"/> Answer Questions		
Activities <input type="checkbox"/> Activities/games for all ages/abilities <input type="checkbox"/> Decide whether to offer door prizes <input type="checkbox"/> Involve kids & teens in planning		
Food <input type="checkbox"/> Arrange tables, BBQ's, coolers, ice, water, etc <input type="checkbox"/> Collect money/donations for any group food supplies (if needed)		
Site Preparation <input type="checkbox"/> Plan for parking, food, seating and activity areas <input type="checkbox"/> Signs and directions <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure emergency access, first aid and fire extinguisher(s)		
Clean Up <input type="checkbox"/> Source garbage/recycling/composting bins and extra bags <input type="checkbox"/> Arrange cleaning supplies <input type="checkbox"/> Take down signs/posters		
Other		



YOU'RE INVITED TO A ...

Neighbourhood

BLOCK PARTY

Date: _____

Time: _____

Place: _____

Want to Help Out? Or need some info?

Contact: _____

RSVP by Dropping this in the mailbox at

_____ by _____

(address)

(date)





Block Party Evaluation Form

Your feedback is appreciated to help plan future block parties and community events:

What were the 3 best things about the block party?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What 3 things would you recommend for the next party?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

How would you like to maintain the neighbourhood connection that was started at the block party during the rest of the year?

Are you willing to help with the planning of future neighbourhood events?

- Yes
 No

If yes, please leave your name and contacts:

Name:
Phone #:
Email:

Please return this form by (date) _____ to (name) _____
at (address) _____



NEIGHBOURHOOD BINGO

Your Name: _____

Find someone who has/is and write their name in the squares matching below, try not to use the same person more than once - have fun!

Moved Here from Another Province	Has a Dog	Plays Guitar	Has travelled to Europe	Has a Vegetable Garden
Has Ridden A Horse	Can do a Card Trick	House Number Ends In a "4"	Has 3 or More Kids	Born In Another Country
Can Do A Cartwheel	Is Retired	Helped organize this Block Party	Likes to Ski	In Elementary School
Likes to Run	Can raise one eyebrow	Has a Cat	Plays baseball	Speaks another language
Lived here 10+ Years	Drives a Truck	Tradesman	Goes Camping	Knows how to Knit

