

# 6 easy steps to throw a block party

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A neighborhood block party is an excellent way to enjoy a warm summer day, socialize with your neighbors and meet new people who live on your street.

## Step 1 - Plan ahead!

Block parties require a street closure permit. When selecting a date for your event, allow 4-6 weeks for completing the application and to ensure two weeks-notice to the City in advance notice of your permit request. The application process is not as daunting as it may seem, and the folks at the City's Block Party department are very helpful! Contact them by calling (503) 823-4003.

### Points to consider:

- Permits are typically not issued for parties that are longer than four blocks or extend past 10 p.m.
- You cannot have a block party on a street that is on a bus route, has a bus layover, or is a signalized traffic intersection.
- Also, the City won't allow alcohol in the street, so plan for drinking to take place on neighbors' private property.
- Finally, if you're planning to have amplified music that someone could hear (and possibly complain about) more than 10 houses away, be prepared to also fill out a noise variance application, found at: [www.portlandoregon.gov/oni/article/92724](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/oni/article/92724)

## Step 2 – Get your permit application

Once you have decided upon a date, visit the Portland Bureau of Transportation's (PBOT) website [www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/564356](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/564356) to download the permit application. There are two different block party applications -one that requires insurance, and a simple 1-4 block closure that allows for insurance as optional:

- Block Party (insurance optional): allow 1 to 4 city blocks to be closed, but with specific criteria that must be met. Visit [www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/442216](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/442216) for a list of criteria, application & instructions .
- Block Party (insurance required): For events that don't meet the requirements of the insurance-optional application. For a list of criteria, application & instructions visit [www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/442154](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/442154)
- There is a fee of \$10 for the application and to close one block, plus a \$5 charge for each additional block you wish closed.

## Step 3 – Consider insuring your event

As the party organizer, the City leaves it up to you to decide whether you want liability insurance. You may decide that the risk is low enough that you don't want insurance. If you do decide to get insurance here are some options:

- Many home-owners' policies offer coverage for an event.

- A special rider may be purchased from your existing home-owner or renter's policy to cover the closure.
- Many insurance agencies may put together what is called a special event policy.

#### **Step 4– Gather signatures**

Your block party application will include a petition, which must have signatures of at least 80% of residents and businesses in the affected blocks, or businesses you wish to be closed. If you attempt to get a signature and no one is home, try again at least two more times. If after three tries, no one responds, you must leave a block party flyer. If a house is vacant, indicate that on the petition. You need to account for all of the houses on the block and its adjacent properties, including side yards.

Once you have all of the signatures, submit your completed application to PBOT in person at the Parks & Recreation office at 1120 SW 5<sup>th</sup> Ave., or by mail, fax or email. The address for each of these is on the application form. Upon approval, the City will send you your street closure permit, usually within 2 business days of your event.

#### **Step 5 - Rent barricades**

Search "Block Party Barricades" to find the best price on barricade rentals. Once you've chosen a company, ask for six, "Type 1" barricades. These will be placed at both ends of your street with a copy of the permit attached and will keep cars from driving through your party.

#### **Step 6 - Coordinate entertainment & food**

Distribute a flyer two weeks in advance of the event to remind neighbors and request donations of food, beverages, tables, chairs etc. Consider having an activity especially if there are young children in the neighborhood.

**Parks Party as Option:** Another great option is to hold your block party in a park. To begin, you need to reserve a park and obtain a park permit for a modest fee. Parks can be reserved by calling (503) 823-2525. If have your party in the park, you can skip steps 1 and 2 on this list.

Really it's that easy!! I have coordinated two block parties and the rewards of building social connections with my neighbors far outweigh the time spent in planning.