

# How to Plan a Block Party



Your guide  
to a successful block party  
in Old Ottawa South

# HOW TO PLAN A BLOCK PARTY

## Your guide to a successful block party in Old Ottawa South



### Block Parties in Old Ottawa South

What a better way to spend a summer day than planning and hosting your own block party in Old Ottawa South. It's a great time to relax and catch up the neighbours on your street, enjoy good home cooked food and share stories about living in the hood.

And the kids will love the opportunity to let loose playing all sorts of games and biking up and down on a car-free street until the setting sun.



### What is a block party?

A block party is a neighbourhood event in which residents in Old Ottawa South get together to hold a social gathering on their street. Parties can be held on weekends and holidays. The street can be closed off to traffic during the party.

The following is your step-by-step guide to a successful block party in Old Ottawa South based on how Hopewell Avenue residents plan and put on their annual block party.



### Key Steps for a Successful Block Party

- Set-up a block party committee and select your coordinator(s) for the event.
  - Create an invitation flyer prior to sending an application to the city. **See Sample 1.**
  - Deliver the flyer to all the neighbours notifying everyone about the intent of the party.
  - Connect with neighbours who may have concerns about the party and address their issues if possible.
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- Submit an application for your block party to the city one month in advance of the party. **See Sample 2.**
  - Permits are free of charge, and the city will provide the street barricades.
  - Once the application is submitted, the city will send you a waiver to complete and submit plus instructions about picking up and dropping off the street barricades.
  - A week before the party confirm that all arrangements for the party are in place.



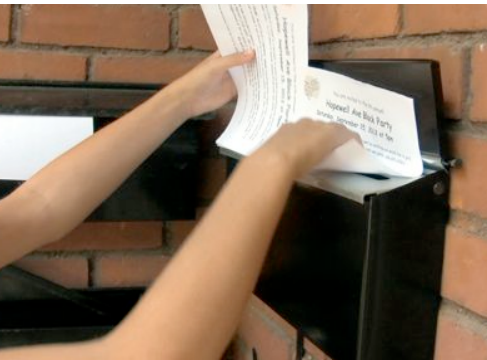
## Three Months Before



- Form a block party committee and hold a planning meeting.
- If you live on a street that cannot be closed, try to pair or twin up with a neighbouring street.
- Decide who will be the main contact or coordinator, responsible for sending out invitations and taking RSVPs.
- Assign responsibilities for:
  - \* Publicity
  - \* Music
  - \* MC for talent show
  - \* Activities & entertainment
  - \* Permit applications
  - \* Clean-up



- Survey the neighbourhood to select the date for the party.
- Plan your finances for the party and set a budget.
- Apply for any permits you will need to host the event.
- Decide how the food will be handled. Will the Committee:
  - \* Ask everyone to bring a main course and drinks for their own family, and a side dish to share?
  - \* Ask people to bring their own dishes?
  - \* Serve alcoholic beverages?  
If so, they must be served on someone's property.



## Six Weeks to One Month Before

- Drop off the invitation flyers to all the neighbours.
- Make sure to ask people to bring their own chairs and table.
- Reserve equipment you need to rent (tables, tents, sound system, etc).
- For fun, book and arrange for some local entertainment such as poets, singers, dancers, etc....
- Submit your application to the city.
- Review the city's Noise By-Law to make sure your event complies with it.

## One Week Before



- Publicize the party by stapling posters to a street posts and delivering a one page flyer to every house on the block.
- The flyer should have a reminder to bring a chair, table, dishes, utensils, potluck dish etc.
- If you have your neighbour's email address, send them a reminder.
- Confirm arrangements for barricades, entertainment, food, refreshments, tents, tables and any other equipment that will be rented or borrowed.

## Day of the Party



- Pick up and set up the street barricades.
- Arrange a long table for the potluck.
- Set up the BBQ's
- Set up lights and decorations.



- Make some name tags
- Pick up and set up a PA system for announcements, music, singers, etc from the Ottawa Folklore Centre.
- Be green - put out a couple of blue, black and green bins.
- Get a couple of containers of soapy water to clean dishes.



- Create some chair circles.
- Designate where the alcoholic beverages are to be located.
- Designate who will look after anything that's left over or forgotten after the party.



## After the Party

- Join forces with your neighbours to clean up.
- Get kids to help clean up!
- Send thank-yous to sponsors, donors and anyone else who helped make the event a success.
- Meet to evaluate the event's success and things that might be improved.
- Set a date for next year's party!



## City of Ottawa Resources

More information about planning a block party can be found on the City of Ottawa's website.

- Planning a Block Party  
[http://toolkit.crimepreventionottawa.ca/pg\\_PlanABlockParty.php](http://toolkit.crimepreventionottawa.ca/pg_PlanABlockParty.php)
- Guide for Hosting an Event  
<http://ottawa.ca/en/node/268382/index.html>
- Application, barricades & permits contact  
Pertrina Bonia, City of Ottawa, 613 580-2424 ext. 28164



## Other Resources

- Rental of PA System  
Old Ottawa South residents can rent a PA system from the Ottawa Folklore Centre: <http://www.ottawafolklore.com/contact/>
- Hopewell Block Party Website  
<http://hopewellspectacle.weebly.com/index.html>
- Savy Mom's Street Party Guide  
[http://www.savvymom.ca/index.php/newsletter/ott\\_party\\_onyour\\_street](http://www.savvymom.ca/index.php/newsletter/ott_party_onyour_street)
- Party Supplies
  - \* Airbounce Amusements [www.airbounce.com](http://www.airbounce.com)
  - \* Chez Lili Party Rentals [www.chezlilipartyrentals.ca](http://www.chezlilipartyrentals.ca)
  - \* Circus Delights [www.circus-delights.ca](http://www.circus-delights.ca)
  - \* Cody Party Centre [www.codypartyottawasouth.com](http://www.codypartyottawasouth.com)



## How to Plan a Block Party Guide

- Developed & Written By: Guy Souliere
- Advisors: Chris & Heather Barrett, Isla Jordan and Danielle Rolfe
- Design: Ed Kucerak
- Photographs: Ed Kucerak & Danielle Rolfe
- Special Thanks to the Residents of Hopewell Avenue

## Sample 1



You are invited to the 6th annual  
**Hopewell Ave Block Party**  
Saturday, September 15, 2012 at 5pm

Please bring a dish or a salad or a dessert to share as well as anything you would like to grill, and a lawn chair. To cut down on waste, please bring your own plate, cup and cutlery.

### VARIETY SHOW

**NEW THIS YEAR:** we will have a **variety show** featuring local talent from Hopewell Ave at 7pm. Please let us know if you would be willing to share a poem, song, skit, story or some other creative expression.

Please use the new block party website ([www.hopewellspectacle.weebly.com](http://www.hopewellspectacle.weebly.com)) or talk to Chris or Heather Barrett (730-4057, 182 Hopewell Ave) to sign up for the talent show, provide suggestions or let us know if you can help with set up, kids' activities, etc.

We will start setting up at 4pm.

We have permission from the City to close off Hopewell Ave between Seneca and Sloan 4 to 10pm.

## Sample 2



### APPLICATION FOR A BLOCK PARTY

Event Central, 101 Centerpointe Drive, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Ottawa, Ontario, K2G 5K7

Phone Number 580-2424 EXT. 14613    Fax Number 613-580-2719

**Block Party:** A residential block party may include a barbeque, dance or any like social event that the majority of residents living within the street closure limits support and is otherwise legal.

Contact Information	
Organizer's Name (individual must reside within the block)	
Organizer's Address	
Contact Name	
Contact Address	
Contact Phone	Day
	Evening
	Cell
	Fax
Alternate Contact	
Alternate Address	
Alternate Phone	Day
	Evening
	Fax
	Cell
Block Party	
Indicate specific streets for Block Party including both intersecting streets	
Describe activities at event	
Date of event	Rain date
Start Time	Rain date Start time
End Time	Rain date End time
Signature of Applicant	
OFFICE USE ONLY	
Received By:	Approved By:
Date Received:	Date Returned:
Date sent for Approval:	

Sample of Page 1 of the three page application.