

CITY OF WILMINGTON

Special Event Planning Guide



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APPLYING FOR A PERMIT

Who Needs a Special Event Permit?

Special events are important contributors to the quality of life for Wilmington and are welcome activities in our community. The City of Wilmington is happy to assist organizations and groups in providing quality events. Special Event Permits are required for all events when any portion of the event occurs on or in a City of Wilmington public, street, plaza, park, trail, greenway, or sidewalk and not held entirely within a New Hanover County Park or on privately maintained property or roads. Events contained to private property do not require a Special Event Permit. The use of city parks outside of the downtown area will not require a Special Event Permit and would instead require coordination with the Parks and Recreation Division. When in doubt, contact our supervisor.

The City requires completion of this application in order to consider whether the activities proposed are in conformance with applicable laws and regulations, to ensure activities are not detrimental to public health, safety or welfare while balancing the needs of the residents and business owners affected by these events.

How to Apply

There are three main steps that must be completed (see next page for deadlines & pricing):

1. Contact the Recreation Supervisor - Special Events to confirm date availability
2. Submit an [event application](#)
3. Submit the corresponding application fee

APPLICATION FEES ARE NON-REFUNDABLE. APPLYING FOR AN EVENT DOES NOT GUARANTEE THAT YOUR EVENT WILL BE APPROVED

The City assumes no liability if an event is not approved. Selling tickets, advertising, gaining sponsorship and other activities done prior to event approval is done at the risk of the event organizer.

Role of Recreation Supervisor - Special Events

It is our goal to enhance the quality of life and economic prosperity of Wilmington through the support of special events while balancing the needs of the residents and business owners affected by these events. The Recreation Supervisor - Special Events is responsible for processing applications, sharing event information with the public through the Special Events Calendar, maintaining an Event Feedback Form for citizens, reviewing event requests for compliance with City Code, the City's Special Event Policy, and other relevant policies, and serving as a liaison between event organizers, City departments, and partner agencies throughout the permit process and during events.

Role of Event Organizer

Event organizers should be responsive to correspondence from the Recreation Supervisor - Special Events and should submit all required items by their deadline. Communication between the organizer and the Recreation Supervisor - Special Events is critical before, during, and after the event to ensure a smooth permitting process and a successful event. All special events are subject to the conditions outlined in the Special Event Permit and it is the organizer's responsibility to ensure compliance. An application is not considered complete until the application form and nonrefundable application fee has been received. Permit fees are collected upon an event's approval and are refundable up to 15 days prior to the event.

Definitions

- **Parades, Races, and Walks** are organized activities following a set course that involve full or partial closure of City streets, sidewalks, or greenways.
- **General Events** are organized activities that have a stationary footprint requiring the closure of roads or public squares or plazas, often involving amplified noise, food, beverage, merchandise, or other forms of entertainment. Examples include festivals, fairs, performances, rallies, markets, concerts, and other similar events.
- **Neighborhood Events** are small-scale organized activities that close local-service residential streets. These gatherings are initiated by local residents and are intended only for the neighborhood residents and their guests. Specific guidelines and policies for neighborhood events are provided in the glossary.

FEES & DEADLINES

Special Event Fees & Application Deadlines						
Event Type	Application Deadline	Application Fee Non-profit	Application Fee For Profit	Permit Fee	Participant Fee	Late Application Fee
Parade	90 days	\$150.00	\$500.00	\$50.00	\$0	\$300.00
Race/Walk 5K or less	90 days	\$75.00	\$250.00	\$50.00	\$1.00 per participant	\$150.00
Race/Walk longer than 5K	90 days	\$150.00	\$500.00	\$50.00	\$1.00 per Participant	\$300.00
General event with 1000 people or less	60 days	\$75.00	\$250.00	\$50.00	\$0	\$150.00
General Event with more than 1000 people	90 days	\$150.00	\$500.00	\$50.00	\$0	\$300.00
Neighborhood Event	30 days	\$25.00	N/A	\$50.00	\$0	\$50.00

Additional Expenses and Service Fees

Pricing structures of listed agencies are outlined for the convenience of the event organizer and are subject to change. This list reflects common event expenses and is not inclusive of all charges a special event may incur. It is the event organizer's responsibility to provide traffic control devices, tents, and other event infrastructure needs. Refund policies vary.

Other Expenses	Cost	Agency	Deadline
Parking Reservation Fees	\$23.75 per meter	City of Wilmington Parking Management	4 weeks prior to event

Off-Duty Police Officer Police Vehicle	\$46.00/hour minimum of 4 hrs \$25.00/vehicle for 4 hrs or \$50.00/day	Wilmington Police Department	Invoiced post-event by WPD
Type I Barricades	\$10.00/barricade \$60.00 damaged/lost barricade replacement	City of Wilmington Streets Division	Prior to event date
Bleachers* - Aluminum 3 Row (seats 30) - Mobile Aluminum Grandstand *Not available for Neighborhood Events	\$150.00 per day \$700.00 per day	City of Wilmington Parks & Recreation Division	Prior to event date
Stage* - 4 x 4 sections, up to 12 x 12 (3 feet high, includes stairs) *Not available for Neighborhood Events	\$40.00 per section	City of Wilmington Parks & Recreation Division	Prior to event date
Fire Department Permit/Inspection - Carnival/Fairs - Tents and Inflatables - Tents and Inflatables (after hrs) - Special Events/Exhibits/Trade Shows - Special Events/Exhibits/Trade Shows (after hrs) - Pyrotechnics	\$65.00 \$45.00 \$80.00 \$45.00 \$80.00 \$200.00	City of Wilmington Fire Department	4 weeks prior to event date
Alcohol Permit	\$50.00	ABC Commission	3 weeks prior to event date
Temporary Food Establishment	\$75.00	New Hanover County	15 days prior to event date
Insurance	Varies	Insurance Provider	4 weeks prior to event date
Portable Toilets	Varies	Varies	Prior to event date
Notification Materials	Varies	USPS or other	4 weeks prior to event date
Traffic Control Equipment	Varies	Varies	prior to event date
Water Street Park Permit Fee *Rentals currently unavailable	Resident \$75.00 Non-Profit \$100.00 For-Profit Non-Resident \$100.00 Non-Profit \$125.00 For-Profit	City of Wilmington Parks & Recreation Division	30 days prior to event date

Clean-up/Damage Deposit

A refundable clean-up/damage deposit is required for all events on City property (excluding neighborhood events). Payment of clean-up/damage deposit, must be received no later than 15 days prior to the event. Event organizers are responsible for making arrangements for litter and debris clean-up of the entire event area and that the site is restored to its original condition. All litter should be disposed of off-site. Clean-up activities must take place within the specified time determined by the City's Special Events Supervisor. The specified time will be communicated to the applicant during the review process and will be appropriate to the conclusion and location of the event. Any clean-up and/or repair costs incurred by the City, or if necessary, contractor's fees incurred by the City, due to the applicant's failure to clean and restore the site following event will be borne by the applicant, including but not limited to the retention of deposits. Additionally, applicant is responsible to clean, clear, repair or pay to repair damage to surrounding properties resulting from event attendees.

Clean-up/Damage Deposit		
Event Type	Projected # of Participants/Spectators	Refundable Cleanup deposit
Parade	N/A	\$500.00
Race/Walk 5K or less	0 - 200	\$250.00
	201 or more	\$500.00
Race/Walk longer than 5K	0 - 200	\$500.00
	201 or more	\$1000.00
General Event	0 - 1000	\$500.00
	1001 or more	\$1000.00
Neighborhood Event	N/A	N/A

PERMIT PROCESS OVERVIEW

How does it work?

As we begin processing your materials, we will contact you with updates and requests to facilitate the approval process. Simultaneously, we will coordinate with multiple City departments and other agencies to assess the needs of your event and to determine if the City will approve, place conditions upon, or deny the event request. A meeting with City staff to assess and advise on event plans and/or logistics may be required. The Special Events Supervisor has the discretion to deny any type of event if it is not in the best interest of the City or will create an undue burden on a particular geographic area.

Some events may require multiple permitting procedures. Additional permit applications, such as a park permit or noise permit may need to accompany this application. City staff will work with you to determine whether this is necessary and provide you with any additional paperwork you may need to submit.

How long does it take?

The process can take anywhere from a few weeks to a few months to complete, which is one of the reasons why it is critical that you meet the corresponding application deadline for your event type.

The following synopsis of the permitting process takes place once your application is received:

1. Submit applications including any applicable application fees at least 90 days in advance for a Race/Walk/Parade Event, 90 days in advance for General Events with more than 1000 people and 60 days in advance for a for General Events with 1000 people or less and 30 days in advance for Neighborhood Block Party Events.
2. Date & location of event tentatively reserved
3. Request reviewed by City staff
4. Adjust plans as required/necessary
5. Receive conditional approval
6. Complete any outstanding requirements
7. Receive Special Event Permit
8. Special Event Occurrence
9. Receive Evaluation

RESERVATIONS & LIMITATIONS

Reservation Policy

Event applications must be submitted according to the deadlines for each specific event type and will be accepted no more than 1 year prior to the date of the event without written approval from the Community Services Director. Submission of an application does not guarantee the issuance of a permit. Applications are not considered submitted until the application fee has been received.

Reservation of dates for special events shall be in the sole discretion of City staff. City staff shall consider whether the special event is an annual recurring event, the date the special event application was filed, the number of participants, and whether the event has historically added to the quality of life in the community and fostered economic growth. City staff, in their discretion, may reserve dates for annual recurring events for a three year time period.

- **New events** reserve dates and locations on a first-come, first-serve basis. Your date will be tentatively held once the Recreation Supervisor - Special Events has received an application and application fee. New event organizers should contact us before applying to ensure their preferred date and location are available.
- **Annual events** that receive a satisfactory evaluation have the priority to reserve the same annual date through a written Letter of Intent. Event organizers are invited to submit this letter immediately after receiving their evaluation for the current year's event. Failure to submit a Letter of Intent within 15 days will open that date or location up to other interested parties. Please note, annual events will still need to submit a complete application every year. View an example Letter of Intent in the glossary.

Special Events Calendar

Our online [Special Events Calendar](#) provides details about events scheduled to take place on public rights-of-way. You can use this resource to view other planned events and potentially available dates. This resource is also used to share road closure details with the public and to provide information for vendors interested in participating in events. Information contained within applications is used in developing this calendar.

Limitation on Events within the City:

Wilmington is proud to host numerous events. In order to continue to cost-effectively support these events with public staff, to protect the interests of community members who are regular users of streets, sidewalks, and greenways from undue inconvenience, and to continue to support these events that are positive for the health, recreation and well-being of participants and for the economic development of the City, the following restrictions shall be considered by the approving agencies in the reservation process:

- While there is no cap on the number of special event permits issued by the City, the Recreation Supervisor - Special Events has the discretion to disallow any event if it will create an undue burden on a particular geographic area or the City as a whole.
- Events using the same or similar routes, including the same general geographic area, particularly involving heavily used thoroughfares, should not be scheduled on the same day, subsequent days, or on subsequent weekends within the year. Events that request use of certain high-impact areas are subject to additional limitations as determined at the discretion of the Recreation Supervisor - Special Events.
- Absent of compelling circumstances, a minimum of three blocks separation must be maintained between any two permitted street closure locations occurring at the same date.
- Absent of compelling circumstances, no more than two permits shall be issued within any downtown business district or residential neighborhood for any given date and no more than twice a month.
- The Recreation Supervisor - Special Events has the discretion to disallow any event that is not in the best interest of the City of Wilmington. This can include events that have unfavorable reviews from other cities as well as any event that otherwise is not in the best interest of the City.
- The City welcomes events, however, some zoning districts have special business needs in reference to access, visibility, vehicular and pedestrian traffic and parking, particularly during special shopping and holiday weekends, which may be may be reason for permit denial. Please refer to the [Downtown Business Districts Uniform Site Layout Requirements](#) in the glossary.
- In the event of natural or civil disasters, the City reserves the right to cancel all outstanding permits within City limits. Should evacuation of a street, neighborhood, or district be deemed necessary by fire, police, or other emergency authorities, all outstanding permits for that area are null and void. Permits will be re-granted as soon as possible after the State of Emergency proclamation has been lifted.
- The City reserves the right to change, modify, update, or waive provisions of these guidelines where necessary for the public's health, safety or welfare.
- The City reserves the right to cancel street closure permits and/or take further restrictive actions where necessary to assure adherence to these guidelines.

EVENT INFRASTRUCTURE

Closure of City Streets

The temporary closure of City streets for an event is handled by the Recreation Supervisor - Special Events. If granted, a street closure gives the organizer use of the streets within the areas designated by the Special Event Permit. Typically (but not always) this will include access to all parking spaces within the closed right-of-way as well. It is the responsibility of the organizer to pay for any lost revenue as a result of the closed access to metered spaces. A 15-foot wide emergency access lane is required throughout the event site. Closures of State owned streets may require NCDOT consultation and approval. Pedestrian and handicapped access must be maintained on public sidewalk and trails throughout the event area, course or route.

Events involving the closure or obstruction of a public right-of-way will require safety barricades, variable message boards, and/or hiring of off duty police officers. The number and placement of barricades is determined by the Recreation Supervisor - Special Events. This is a critical measure and is strictly enforced to help ensure public health and safety at special events. Two (2) A-frame, Type I, street closure barricades are included with your issued permit. Additional Type I barricades are available for an additional fee. Event organizers are responsible for securing their own Type II/Type III barricades as required for their event as the City does not provide. [Description and pictures of Type I, II & III barricades](#) located in glossary.

Site Plan

All events are required to submit a site plan during the application process. This plan should identify illustrating the footprint of the entire event venue and/or event route including set up, staging, transition and finishing areas, the location of entrances and exits, retail, food, and alcoholic beverage vendors, controlled alcohol consumption areas, tents, stages, bleachers, grandstands, fencing, amplified sound, signs or banners, portable restrooms, electric and water hookups, generators, first aid stations, fire extinguishers, garbage and recycling receptacles, hazardous materials, exhibits, amusement rides, inflatables, parking, road closures, barricades, dimensions of all temporary structures, event command center and security where applicable

Traffic Control Plan (TCP)

All events which impact the normal flow of traffic must provide a Traffic Control Plan. For events with fewer than 100 people, a basic, written traffic control plan may be submitted. For events with more than 100 participants a more detailed plan will be required. For events that propose to close major arterial roads or multilane roads, a formal engineered traffic control plan may be required.

The Recreation Supervisor - Special Events can provide detailed instructions on what is required as a part of your traffic control plan. NCDOT will also be consulted where applicable. The City may require changes to the submitted traffic control plan. The City and NCDOT have final authority over the traffic control plan. The plan should include a detailed description of the following:

- The proposed route or event area which includes a complete listing of the roads, sidewalks, and trails to be used. For running, walking, cycling and parade events, include start and finish lines and indicate the direction in which the event will move.
- A routing plan, which demonstrates the roads or portions of roads requested to be closed to vehicular traffic during the event. Include a plan to resolve potential conflicts with people needing to access residences, businesses, and public facilities as well as a plan to address any public transportation that might be affected.
- Proposed locations for barricades, traffic control devices, signs, meter bags, volunteers and police. Please note that volunteers will be required at any barricades that will not be manned by police officers. The City will work with you to determine which barricades will require police presence.
- The timeline of the closures.

Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

All events are required to submit an [Emergency Action Plan](#) during the application process. This plan should identify emergency access, crowd managers, emergency notification methods, and how organizers will deal with emergencies. City staff will review each plan and make recommendations.

Waste Management Plan

The City requires that event areas be thoroughly cleaned during and following each event. It is imperative that event organizers have a detailed plan of how they intend to manage and dispose of trash and recyclable materials, as well as a general plan to not only clean up after the event, but to ensure a clean space throughout the duration of the event. Event organizers may use volunteers or professional cleaning or contracted companies for these services, but all materials must be removed completely from the site and all trash and recycling receptacles must be emptied after the event.

Safety & Security

Off-duty Wilmington Police officers/New Hanover County Sheriff's deputies are the most common and preferred methods of safety and security at special events in the City. During the event permitting process, the Recreation Supervisor - Special Events in consultation with City staff, will review each application and advise on the minimum number of law enforcement officers or other security needed for your event. To hire off-duty law enforcement, the event organizer will need to complete a contract with the Wilmington Police Department and/or the New Hanover County Sheriff's Department. The Recreation Supervisor - Special Events will assist with the coordination of that process.

Amplified Sound

Amplified sound is permitted provided that compliance with the City's noise ordinance is assured. A copy of the ordinance will be provided upon request. Event organizers should be sensitive to local business and residences when using sound equipment. The City reserves the right to limit sound amplification so that it will not unreasonably disturb non-participating persons surrounding the event. Complaints of loud, disturbing or unnecessary noise can result in the immediate revocation of the permit by the City of Wilmington Police Department. Issuance of a special event permit does not absolve applicant from being subject to the City's noise ordinance. Refer to [Noise Permit Application](#).

Food

The sale or preparation of food at a special event may require permits from the New Hanover County Health Department Environmental Services. The organizer is solely responsible for obtaining appropriate permits on behalf of any food vendors they are allowing at their event. Proof of issuance of health department permits will be required before receiving Special Event permit.

Restrooms

Event organizers are required to provide restroom facilities for participants and attendees, with at least 5% (and at least 1) being ADA compliant. The minimum requirement is 1 toilet per every 300 attendees. Event organizers can meet this minimum either by renting portable toilets or by attaining written permission to utilize the facilities of adjacent businesses. The Recreation Supervisor - Special Events, can provide options for companies that rent portable toilets if needed.

Fire Department Permits & Inspections

Your event will require a Fire Department permit if it involves:

- A tent over 400 sq. feet (a tent has 2+ sides)
- A canopy over 700 sq. feet (a canopy has 0-1 sides)
- Any inflatable that persons will enter, such as a bouncy house, that is over 400 sq. feet in size
- or that requires constant motorized inflation
- An amusement building, such as a fun house or haunted house Fireworks displays/pyrotechnics
- Exhibits or trade shows (events that showcase products or services)
- Street festivals or carnivals (large public entertainment events, which may include performances, tents, rides, amusement structures, animals, etc.)

[For additional information contact the City of Wilmington Fire & Life Safety Division.](#)

Alcohol on City Property

An alcohol permit is required if your event will involve the possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages on City property, sale of alcohol in any capacity, including providing complimentary alcohol only to ticketed or registered participants and similar arrangements. Alcohol permits are controlled and issued by the North Carolina Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC Commission). More information on ABC alcohol permit requirements can be found on the ABC website or by phone at (919) 779-0700. Event organizers are responsible for all aspects of their alcohol permit and they should ensure that patrons are in compliance with relevant policies. Failure to comply can result in the revocation of the permit or the issuance of citations to the event organizer and/or patrons.

The ABC Commission's current deadlines require that a completed application be submitted to the Wilmington Police Department at least 21 days prior to the event. The issued Special Event Permit must be included in this application. This means that you must meet all Recreation Supervisor - Special Events requirements prior to this 21-day deadline, so that you will have your Special Event Permit to submit with your ABC application materials. Attaining an ABC Permit can be a complex process. It is crucial to plan ahead and coordinate with the Recreation Supervisor - Special Events to ensure that this process runs as smoothly as possible. Please note that alcohol is only permitted in areas, parks and facilities as approved by City Council which include Riverfront Park, Legion Stadium, Hugh Morton Amphitheater, Halyburton Park Events Center and Empie Park.

Weather Conditions

It is the responsibility of the event organizer to track and monitor the weather and make the call on the potential cancellation of an event. City staff may provide guidance, but the ultimate decision will be made by the event organizer. The only exception to this is in times of a major crisis or an occurrence that is a direct threat to public health and safety. In the event of natural or civil disasters, the City reserves the right to cancel all outstanding permits within City limits. Should evacuation of a street, neighborhood, or district be deemed necessary by fire, police, or other emergency authorities, all outstanding permits for that area are null and void. Permits will be re-granted as soon as possible after the State of Emergency proclamation has been lifted. The City reserves the right to change, modify, update, or waive provisions of these guidelines where necessary for the public's health, safety or welfare.

PARKING

No Parking Postings

If your event will close streets within a business district, it may be necessary to post "No Parking" signs. The City of Wilmington Parking Management will post the signs 48 hours before the start of the restrictions. Not all events will require signs and it will be at the discretion of the Recreation Supervisor - Special Events on when to post them. This will be determined during the permitting process. It is the responsibility of the event organizer to pay for any lost revenue as a result of the closed access to metered spaces.

Towing

At times, events will require that cars be removed from within the footprint of the event. A car can only be towed if the parking space was clearly posted "No Parking" and only pre-determined event organizers or representatives as coordinated through the Recreation Supervisor - Special Events may request that the police have a car towed during a special event. To request a car towing, event organizers should contact the lead officer assigned to the event or an on-site event police officer. If none are available, the organizer should contact the Recreation Supervisor - Special Events.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Notification Policy

At least four weeks prior to the event, the event organizer must notify all affected community members, including residents, businesses, schools and places of worship, about their event, associated road closures, and other impacts. Any establishment that will be blocked, detoured, or heavily inconvenienced must be notified. Neighborhood Partnerships and Homeowner Associations must also be notified when applicable.

Each notification must include the following:

- Name of Event
- Sponsoring Organization(s)
- Date and timeframe of event
- Event location
- Description of event and information about the noise impacts of event, such as music or fireworks, and their timeframe
- Description of road closures (locations and times)
- Name, email address, and phone number of event organizer
- Website associated with event
- Recreation Supervisor - Special Events contact information

Approved Notification Methods

- Option 1: Mailed Postcards: Event organizers may mail standardized bright yellow postcards detailing event information to all affected community members. Postcard instructions are provided in the glossary.
- Option 2: Individualized Establishment Notification: Event organizers may individually contact affected community members in person, over the phone, or via email and submit their tracked interactions to the Recreation Supervisor - Special Events using the Establishment Notification Form, which is included in the glossary.
- Option 3: Apartment or Business Complex Notification: Event organizers may coordinate with property managers to alert all tenants of a large complex via the preferred communication method of the complex. Proof of this alternate form of notification must be submitted to the Recreation Supervisor - Special Events.

Event organizers may utilize a combination of the above methods of notification, or may submit a suggested alternate notification plan to the Recreation Supervisor - Special Events in advance, which may be approved, modified, or denied. The Recreation Supervisor - Special Events may require additional notification requirements, which will vary based on the impact of an event, including but not limited to: notification of the event be made in a newspaper of general circulation via paid advertisement or press release; social media; advisory signs; door-to-door notification.

The City encourages, for the benefit of both the event organizer and Wilmington community members, that organizers use additional notification means such as meetings with community groups, social and broadcast media, local calendars and newspapers, etc. It is generally beneficial to the success of your event for organizers to consider the impact of their events and to maintain communications with effected businesses, residents and community groups in the event planning. Notification forms and post card mailing instructions located in the glossary.

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

Certificate of Insurance

Events using public property (excluding neighborhood block parties) are required to secure an insurance policy for the event that includes the City of Wilmington as additional insured with limits determined by the City Risk Management. The event organizers (primary and/or secondary) shall purchase and maintain this insurance, providing coverage for the event with an insurance company authorized to do business in the State of North Carolina. Detailed requirements, limits, indemnification language and guidelines for insurance providers are available [here](#).

Third Party Insurance

The event organizer must ensure all safety sensitive contractors providing goods or services for the event maintain appropriate insurance coverage and limits. Examples of such contractors include but are not limited to inflatable companies, providers of amusement rides, vendors of all food and beverage items, etc.

EVENT EVALUATION

Site Visit

The Recreation Supervisor - Special Events and/or Special Event Planning Team performs routine site visits for special events. During this visit we will continue to serve as a liaison for event organizers to address last-minute event needs should they arise. We will also ensure compliance with the regulations outlined in the Special Event Permit and with the regulations enforced by other City departments or partner agencies as applicable.

Special Event Performance Evaluation Form

The Recreation Supervisor - Special Events staff will complete an [Event Performance Evaluation](#) following each event to measure the success of event organizers in conforming to policies and permitted activities. Events with an unsatisfactory performance rating may have additional requirements imposed for future years or may be denied for all future events. Event organizers will receive their performance evaluation within 15 days after their event.

Damages and Outstanding Bills

Any clean-up and/or repair costs incurred by the City, or if necessary, contractor's fees incurred by the City, due to the applicant's failure to clean and restore the site following event will be borne by the applicant, including but not limited to the retention of deposits. Additionally, applicant is responsible to clean, clear, repair or pay to repair damage to surrounding properties resulting from event attendees.

Letter of Intent

If an event organizer receives a satisfactory evaluation following their event, they will be invited to submit a [Letter of Intent](#) to reserve the same date and location for the event the following year. Failure to submit a Letter of Intent within 15 days will open that date or location up to other interested parties. Please note, annual events will still need to submit a complete application every year.

Event Feedback Form

The City of Wilmington maintains an [Event Feedback Form](#) which collects citizen and participant feedback at events. The Special Events Supervisor will use this information when reviewing and assessing current and future events and event policies as well as the post- event evaluation. We encourage event organizers to share this resource with their event attendees.

CITY SUPPORTED EVENTS

The City maintains a formalized list of Council approved city supported special events receiving in-kind support from the City that focus on the character, diversity and quality of Wilmington and contribute to quality of life, our local economy, celebrate holidays, and raise visibility as a tourism destination or permanent place to relocate.

In an effort to create a process for identifying special events that receive City support as well as to manage these events in a cost-effective and coordinated way, requests for City support will be considered as part of a competitive application process. Application deadline and approval will coincide with the City budget cycle with a call for submission every two years with awards of support for a two year term. Applications will be reviewed by a City cross-departmental committee who will present their recommendations to the City Manager in the form of a budget recommendation for City Council approval.

All existing City supported events shall retain current levels of service but shall be subject to event evaluation and must re-apply for support per the above process. Interviews with applicant may be required. The application for Special Event Support can be found [here](#).

The process for these requests is currently on hold

Criteria for City Support of Special Events:

1. Organizations receiving support shall recognize the City at the appropriate sponsorship levels based on value of support provided and provide the City with at least the same level of recognition as a similar supporter or sponsor. The organization must include in all publicity, including print, video, television and radio that the event is supported by the City. The City will be given name, logo, and banner representation in tandem with any other supporters'/sponsors' representation. Organizations will provide clear spoken recognition of the City and its contribution to any events or functions utilizing live entertainment.
2. Applicants must be nonprofits, businesses or agencies with current IRS status licensed to do business in North Carolina. Individuals are not eligible to apply.
3. Applicants should provide a comprehensive event overview including description of the event and event goals and how the effectiveness of the event will be evaluated.
4. Applicants shall describe what kind of benefits the City will receive including how the event increases awareness of the City as a visitor destination, how the event increases the number of visitors to the area, and their average length of stay.
5. Applicants should describe how the requesting organization generates a return on investment (economic impact) and how the effectiveness of the event will be evaluated.
6. Applicants must demonstrate strong financial management and effective controls, including cost effectiveness.
7. An event budget, which includes an estimate of City services requested, shall be submitted

8. Event shall have multiple funding sources.
 - a. City cannot be sole financer
 - b. A list of all revenue streams and their ratio to the requested City funding should be included with the application
9. Applicants shall describe what percentage of funds will be expended within city limits and what attempts are made to expend funding in city limits.
10. Applicants should state how their event is aligned with one of more of City Council's Focus Areas
11. A sustainability plan must be submitted with the application.
12. Events shall be open to the public
13. Applicant must demonstrate the ability to produce a well-planned safe event.
14. Satisfactory post-event performance evaluation
15. If applying for more than one event, a separate application and distinct separate budget are required.

Current List of City Supported Events

- Azalea Festival
- Riverfest
- Downtown Tree Lighting
- American Craft Walk
- Rims on the River Car Show
- St. Patrick's Day Parade
- Martin Luther King Parade
- Riverfront Farmers Market
- Orange St. Arts Fest
- Northside Resource Center Back to School
- Juneteenth Celebration
- Veteran's Day Parade

Hosting a Neighborhood Event

It's Easy to Apply:

1. Submit a Neighborhood Event application
2. Submit the \$25 non-refundable application fee over the phone, in person, or via mail

Once the Recreation Supervisor - Special Events receives both your application and application fee, staff will review your request and contact you directly to outline next steps and requirements. Submitting an application and fee does not guarantee that the request will be approved.

NOTE: There is a 30-day deadline for all block party requests

Frequently Asked Questions

- **Do I need a Permit?**
Yes, if you are requesting to close any City of Wilmington street. If your event is contained entirely on private property, no permit is required. When in doubt, contact our supervisor.
- **Why do I need barricades?**
For the safety and security of your community and event attendees, proper barricades are required in order to close a street. The Recreation Supervisor - Special Events, reviews each individual application and provides event-specific barricade requirements, depending on the size and location of your closure. Two (2) barricades are included with your permit.
- **What is the difference between a Neighborhood Event and a Special Event?**
Neighborhood events are low-impact events that are hosted by and intended to attract only the local residents who live on or in close proximity to the street being closed. Neighborhood events are NOT hosted by businesses, places of worship, or other establishments. They are NOT advertised to the general public. If any of these situations apply, you should complete the Special Event Application (additional fees and conditions apply - contact our Recreation Supervisor - Special Events for details).

FAQ'S

I have an idea for an event—how do I get started?

The first thing you should do is contact our Recreation Supervisor - Special Events at (910) 341-7855. Our staff will help you determine if your event will require a Special Event Permit and if it is feasible for the location you have in mind. If so, we'll invite you to apply.

I'm hosting an annual event. Do I need to reapply?

Yes, annual events must submit a complete application each year. Even the smallest logistical change can require careful evaluation— and with a rapidly growing city, neighborhoods will have an evolving relationship with events from year to year.

Why was my event permit application denied?

Private use of the public right-of-way is a privilege. There is no guarantee that any event request will be approved. Denials may result from missed deadlines, undue burdens on a local community, policy violations, or any other reason that may indicate the event is not in the best interest of the City.

I'm a vendor - how can I participate?

We do not coordinate vendors at events. Vendors should work directly with event organizers to arrange for vending at an event, and can find event organizer contact information on the online Special Events Calendar.

I've submitted my application and application fee. What are the next steps?

Your date and location have been tentatively held and the Recreation Supervisor - Special Events, will be in contact with you shortly to provide an explanation of the permit process and requirements applicable to your event. Simultaneously, our supervisor will also begin coordinating with various departments and agencies to evaluate the potential approval of your event. The process can take anywhere between a few weeks to a few months, depending on a variety of factors.

How can I make a complaint about an event?

We apologize for the potential inconvenience caused by an event in your area. To report issues related to an event, please complete our Event Feedback Form and we will consider this feedback when assessing future events and policies.

How do I plan an event or gathering in a City park?

The Parks & Recreation division handles requests for the majority of events on park property. Visit us at www.wilmingtonrecreation.com or contact the Parks & Recreation division (910) 341-7855 or info@wilmingtonrecreation.com for more information.

RESOURCE GLOSSARY

Letter of Intent Template

[Company/Organization] Letter of Intent

Attention: City of Wilmington Recreation Supervisor - Special Events

It is my intention to hold **[name of event]** in the year of 2019. We request the Recreation Supervisor - Special Events, to reserve **[event location]** on **[event date]**. We understand that this letter does not serve as a guarantee to this date, and that certain circumstances may affect this request including but not limited to:

- Poor performance score
- Outstanding invoices
- Construction
- Damages or flooding caused by severe weather
- Calendar irregularities
- Scheduling adjustments requested by the Recreation Supervisor - Special Events, that are in the best interest of the City of Wilmington

Furthermore we understand this letter is not a replacement for an official application which we will submit by the appropriate deadline. We understand that failure to submit a completed application in a timely manner negates any and all reservation of aforementioned location on said date.

Sincerely,
[Name]
[Organization]
[Contact Information]

Please note that in your letter of intent you may reserve the same day of the same week of the following calendar year (e.g. the second Saturday in February) or the same exact date of the following calendar year (e.g. February 14th).

City of Wilmington Special Event Performance Evaluation Form

Name of Event:
Date(s) of Event:
Number of years holding the event:
City supported event:

Pre Event	25 pts	
Application submitted on time	10 pts	
All city requirements met at least 14 days prior to the event (documents, plans, contracts, insurance licenses, etc.)	5 pts	
Notification plan completed in accordance with the Notification Policy	5 pts	
Event organizer readily available and responsive during permit process	5 pts	
All applicable fees paid on time	5 pts	
Comments:		
Total Points		

Set-up & Event	35 pts	
Required number of off duty police supervisor and or security personnel on site	5 pts	
Additional required personnel/crowd managers/volunteers on site	5 pts	
Compliance with pre-approved Traffic Control Plan. Proper street closures with required number of traffic/pedestrian control devices in place	5 pts	
Recommended number of portable toilets in place	5 pts	
Event Organizer or designee available on site	5 pts	
Compliance with pre-approved site plans with no violations/alterations	5 pts	
Compliance with all Special Event Policies and all other applicable city, county, and state policies	5 pts	
Comments:		
Total Points		

Post Event	40 pts	
Event footprint, route, course and surrounding areas cleaned and all trash, signs, and event generated debris removed from the footprint within the specified time determined by the City's Special Events Supervisor	10 pts	
Positive overall impact of event - positive response from community and attendees	20 pts	
Post event fees paid on time	10 pts	
Comments:		
Total Points		

Total Points All Categories (maximum 100 pts)		
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Considerations for Future Planning (*Example considerations: A more comprehensive egress plan for vendors is required; Recommended change to stage set-up to accommodate pedestrian and/or business access; Road closure timeframe should be lengthened to allow more set-up time; Event footprint should be reduced for future years*) :

Barricade Descriptions & Images

- Type I, II, and III barricades are all similar in that they are made by joining two panels and connecting them with hinges at the top.
- Type I barricades have one reflective rail on either side of the frame
- Type II barricades have two reflective rails
- Type III barricades have three reflective rails.

Types of Devices (Per the [Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices \(MUTCD\) 6F](#)):

f. Barricades

Design

A barricade is a portable or fixed device having from one to three rails with appropriate markings. It is used to control traffic by closing, restricting, or delineating all or a portion of the right-of-way.

Barricades shall be of three types: Type I, Type II, or Type III.

Stripes on barricade rails shall be alternating orange and white retro-reflective stripes (sloping downward at an angle of 45 degrees in the direction traffic is to pass). The stripes shall be six inches wide, except where rail lengths are less than 36 inches, when 4-inch-wide stripes may be used. The minimum rail length is 24 inches. Barricades used on expressways, freeways, and other high-speed roadways shall have a minimum of 270 square inches of retro-reflective area facing traffic.

Where a barricade extends entirely across a roadway, the stripes should slope downward in the direction toward which traffic must turn. Where both right and left turns are provided, the stripes may slope downward in both directions from the center of the barricade or barricades. Where no turns are intended, the stripes should slope downward toward the center of the barricade or barricades.

Barricade rails should be supported in a manner that will allow them to be seen by the motorist and provide a stable support not easily blown over by the wind or traffic. For Type I barricades, the support may include other unstriped horizontal panels necessary to provide stability.

Barricades are located adjacent to traffic and are therefore subject to impact by errant vehicles. Because of their vulnerable position and the hazard they could create, they should be constructed of lightweight materials and have no rigid stay bracing for A-frame designs.

On high-speed expressways or in other situations where barricades may be susceptible to overturning in the wind, sandbags should be used for ballasting. Sandbags may be placed on lower parts of the frame or stays to provide the required ballast but shall not be placed on top of any striped rail. Barricades shall not be ballasted by heavy objects such as rocks or chunks of concrete.

Application

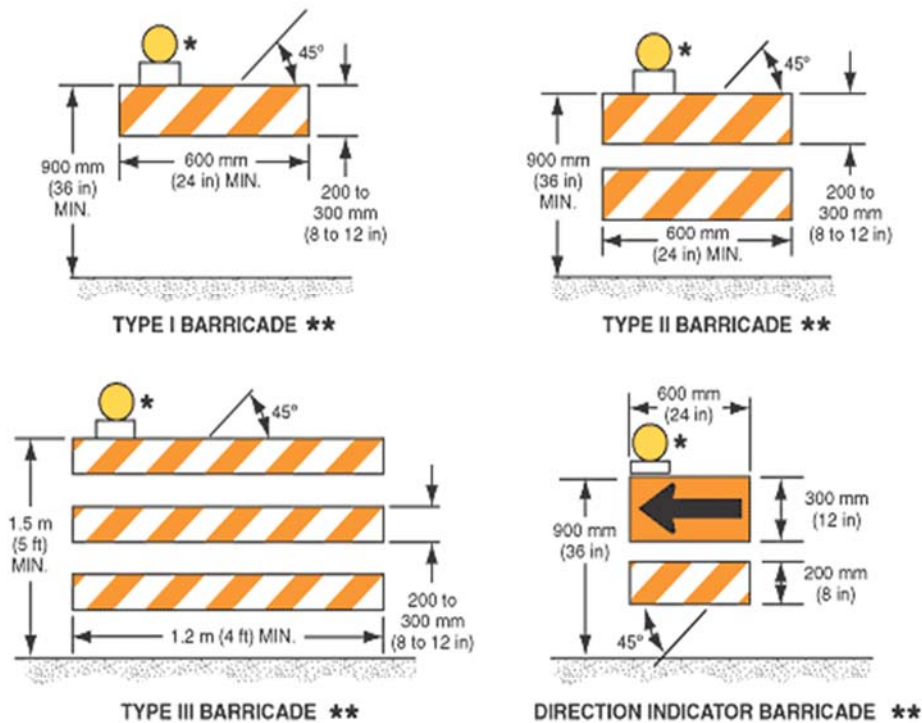
Type I or Type II barricades are intended for use in situations where traffic is maintained through the temporary traffic control zone. They may be used singly or in groups to mark a specific condition, or they may be used in a series for channelizing traffic. Type I barricades normally would be used on conventional roads or urban streets and arterials. Type II barricades have more retroreflective area and are intended for use on expressways and freeways or other high-speed roadways.

Type III barricades used at a road closure may extend completely across a roadway or from curb to curb. Where provision is made for access of authorized equipment and vehicles, the responsibility for the Type III barricades should be assigned to a person to ensure proper closure at the end of each work day.

When a highway is legally closed but access must still be allowed for local traffic, the Type III barricade should not be extended completely across a roadway. A sign with the appropriate legend concerning permissible use by local traffic shall be mounted. (See section 6F-1.a.5.)

Signs may be erected on barricades, particularly those of the fixed type, that offer a most advantageous facility for this purpose. The ROAD CLOSED and DETOUR ARROW signs, and the LARGE ARROW warning signs, for example, can be mounted effectively on or above the barricade that closes the roadway.

Figure 6F-7. Channelizing Devices (Sheet 2 of 2)



* Warning lights (optional)

** Rail stripe widths shall be 150 mm (6 in), except that 100 mm (4 in) wide stripes may be used if rail lengths are less than 900 mm (36 in). The sides of barricades facing traffic shall have retroreflective rail faces.

Note: If barricades are used to channelize pedestrians, there shall be continuous detectable bottom and top rails with no gaps between individual barricades to be detectable to users of long canes. The bottom of the bottom rail shall be no higher than 150 mm (6 in) above the ground surface. The top of the top rail shall be no lower than 900 mm (36 in) above the ground surface.

Downtown Business Districts Uniform Site Layout Requirements

The City welcomes events but certain zoning districts have special business needs in reference to access, visibility, vehicular and pedestrian traffic and parking, particularly during special shopping and holiday weekends, which may be reason for permit denial. The following uniform site layout requirements must be met (excluding events held in Riverfront Park). Site layout requirements for events on Water St. will be on a case by case basis to ensure business needs are met.

Tents, structures and displays must start at the center yellow road line allowing space between back of display and curb while maintaining a 15' emergency access lane in front displays.

Organizers shall alternate sides of the streets used by vendor tents, structures and displays in consecutive blocks of event space where applicable.

There shall be no merchandise, trash or clutter between back of displays and curb nor on sidewalks.

Tents, structures and displays shall keep the back of displays open and opaque for visibility where applicable.

A minimum of 3' is required to be maintained between display spaces for visibility and accessibility.

Displays shall be contained to allotted space.

Sample Uniform Site Layout

It is generally beneficial to the success of your event for organizers to consider the impact of their events and to maintain communications with effected businesses, residents and community groups in the event planning.

