

Bismarck Block Party Playbook

A go-to guide for inspiration, resources and steps for activating streets in your neighborhood



About Us



880 Cities is a nonprofit organization based in Toronto, Canada. We are dedicated to contributing to the transformation of cities into places where people can walk, bike, access public transit and visit vibrant parks and public places. Our approach is to engage people and communities across multiple sectors to inspire the creation of cities that are easily accessible, safe, and enjoyable for all. We achieve our mission through grant projects, research and advocacy, and innovative services. For more, visit: 880cities.org.



Bismarck-Burleigh Public Health employs public health professionals who work to protect the health of the population for Bismarck and Burleigh County. Public Health promotes and encourages preventive health care and healthy lifestyles for all. Public Health plays a vital role in the development of policies and standards to address the challenges to our community's health.



With 83,000 members in North Dakota, AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering Americans 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. Learn more about AARP ND in your community at www.aarp.org/nd.

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Neighborhood block parties are a unique opportunity to meet your neighbors and celebrate your community. This guide details how we organized the first Bismarck Block Party and provides inspiration, resources and a roadmap to replicate this in your neighborhood. We hope this guide aids in transforming public spaces in your neighborhood into places for play, neighborly connection, programming, and measured impact.



INTRODUCTION

What is a neighborhood block party?

A block party can be defined as a pop-up community street event that allows neighbors to meet, connect and have fun together, often requiring the temporary closure of a street to cars. Block parties reimagine public space as places for dance, play, food, music, performance, games and other activities. These events are often free to attend and open to everyone in the neighborhood.

Since inception, neighborhood block parties have been used to bring communities together to promote unity, joy and celebration. In the United States, these gatherings can be traced back to New York City neighborhoods in the early 20th century. Some of the early uses were to commemorate soldiers going off to war, support community fundraising efforts and enjoy live music.



In a time where approximately half of U.S. adults report experiencing loneliness, the need for spaces that bring people together are vital to the health and wellbeing of individuals and their neighborhoods.

Why *host* a neighborhood block party?

Block parties benefit the health and vitality of neighborhoods and their residents. For decades they have worked to cultivate social connection and belonging, community cohesion, vibrancy and fun. Here are just a few reasons to consider hosting a block party in your neighborhood:

1. Promote social connection among neighbors

Block parties provide opportunities to improve the social connectedness of neighborhoods. In a time where approximately half of U.S. adults report experiencing loneliness, the need for spaces that bring people together are vital to the health and wellbeing of individuals and their neighborhoods. Like food and water, we depend on social connections for our survival. The lack of social connection among individuals has been tied to increased risk of premature death, heart disease, stroke, anxiety, and depression. In older adults, chronic

loneliness and social isolation has been linked to faster cognitive decline and a 50% increase in the risk for developing dementia¹.

Block parties bring folks out of their homes and into public space for face-to-face interactions with neighbors. It's a chance to meet someone new and even discover shared interests, values, hobbies etc. Getting to know your neighbors also means you know who to turn to during times of need. In fact, socially connected communities are more likely to be more prepared and resilient in disaster situations².

2. Support neighborhood cohesion

In addition to promoting social connections, block parties are associated with increased feelings of belonging and community trust. Block parties are a unique opening to engage with people of diverse ages and backgrounds that you might not typically spend time with. These types of community gatherings have the potential to bridge divides and bring us all closer together.

1 <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/surgeon-general-social-connection-advisory.pdf>

2 <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/sg-social-connection-general.pdf>

3. Increase civic engagement

Block parties can act as a launch pad for future events and initiatives within the neighborhood and create a more engaged community. A seemingly one-off event could become a long-standing tradition within the neighborhood or spark new ideas to tackle existing challenges, such as community clean-ups.

4. Showcase local assets

Block parties are a great way to spotlight local businesses, vendors or organizations in your community. Neighbors might discover a new business or learn more about services available in their community.

5. Play and have fun!

Since its inception, block parties have brought neighbors together to celebrate and have fun. Block parties reimagine streets as places to play by providing simple games and activities for people of all ages and abilities to enjoy.





PART 1

HOW WE DID IT

The Bismarck Block Party

Overview

The Bismarck Block Party was an initiative started by the Bismarck-Burleigh Public Health with funding from the Change Network. It was implemented with strategic support from AARP North Dakota and nonprofit 8 80 Cities. The overall goal of the Bismarck Block Party was to develop an impactful, replicable and accessible model of community street events that effectively transform public spaces into places for social connection and play amongst neighbors. Through engaging programming and playful design, the event aimed to generate appetite among residents to re-create this concept on select streets within their neighborhoods and create the Bismarck Block Party Playbook to act as a guide.

The Bismarck Block Party event was held on July 30th, 2024, from 6:00-8:00 pm on a portion of E Central Ave between N. 8th St. and N. 9th St, including North Central Park.

How we organized the first Bismarck Block Party

Getting started

Our initial planning phase began in March 2024, with a kick-off call with lead organizers Bismarck-Burleigh Public Health, AARP North Dakota and 8 80 Cities to finalize the scale of the project, the budget available, and the overarching vision for the activation.

In April 2024, we held a virtual workshop with local volunteers and community organizations to brainstorm ideas for the activation, build excitement, and co-create a vision & goals. The outcome of this workshop was a list of assets in the community that could be mobilized to support the event's success, programming ideas, desired outcomes, and success metrics.

With a clear vision and set of goals established, we began mapping out a concept plan based on the programming and design ideas generated in the workshop. This gave



us a clearer understanding of what actions were needed to get us to the event date and provided a base for initial outreach to programmers, vendors and neighbors, many of whom were identified in the workshop.

Mobilizing local resources

A key part of the event's success was leveraging local assets. We organized various activities to promote community connection and enjoyment for people of all ages and abilities. These activities included games, live music, food, painting, and more.

Here's how we did it:

- **Programming/Entertainment:** We reached out to local programmers to activate E Central Ave and North Central Park, including a painting pop-up with a local visual artist, [Painter Nicole](#), a live performance from local folk band the [MoonCats](#), a pop-up pickleball instructional with a local instructor Rod Morasch, and puppy yoga session with [Transitions Yoga](#) and non-profit animal rescue [Furry Friends Rockin' Rescue](#). Also, coordinating with the Bismarck Fire Department to have a fire truck stationed on the street.



- **Food & Refreshments:** The event featured catering by local Filipino food caterer [Auntie Jade's](#) and shave ice vendor [Mo's Snowshack](#).



- **Seating:** We coordinated with the City of Bismarck's Forestry Department to drop off tree logs and stumps for additional seating.



- Additionally, we worked with the Bismarck Parks and Recreation District (BPRD) to arrange the drop-off of a picnic table for the painting pop-up.



- **Volunteers:** We leveraged AARP North Dakota's volunteer network to support the event's promotion and to help measure the event's impact with various observational tools and surveys.

Generating buzz & taking it to the block

After finalizing the event activities, we developed a detailed site plan outlining vendors' locations, seating, tents, and games. We secured the necessary city permits to coordinate a temporary street closure and noise exemption during the event. To build excitement and inform residents within the community about the block party, we employed a series of communication and engagement tactics to increase our reach. This included:

1. Promoting the event on AARP North Dakota's webpage.
2. Story coverage of the community event on [KX News](#).
3. Tabling at the July 27th BisMarket in Kiwanis Park.
4. Distributing door-hanger flyers around the local neighborhood; and
5. Creating an online event page on Facebook.

Day-of-Event Coordination

On event day, it was all hands-on deck as the set-up crew and volunteers worked to get the space primed for the block party. A few hours before the official street closure, we were on site to receive equipment deliveries and other materials. Barricades and signs were installed an hour before the event to implement the street closure. We set up tables, chairs, tents, yoga mats, signage, and games. We also used chalk to create a colorful, safe street crossing demonstration and vibrant, playful street art.

By 6 pm, the programmers and vendors took their places as hundreds of residents flocked to the event space to have fun and connect. Even with the impending weather, eventgoers were all smiles. As the event ended, the clean-up crew worked to get the space back in shape, collecting all the trash and packing up equipment. The barricades and signs for street closure were removed, and regular service was resumed.





100% of people surveyed would like to see more events like this in the future!

What we learned

The vision for the Bismarck Block Party was to demonstrate how streets can be transformed places for social connection and play amongst neighbors of all ages and abilities. We set out to pilot a replicable and accessible model of pop-up community street events that could be used to form the basis of the Bismarck Block Party Playbook and act as inspiration and a guide for neighbors to activate streets in their communities.

The goals for the event were as follows:

- People feel an increased sense of safety, play, sociability & belonging
- More people staying in the space
- More people accessing the space
- People rate the event positively
- People indicate they would want to see more events like this

To assess the impact and success of the Bismarck Block Party in achieving our goals, we enlisted the help of volunteers to collect data on how people were moving through and engaging with the event space before and during the event using various observational and qualitative data tools (See Tools & Templates – Measuring Impact).

Based on our impact assessment, we learned:

1 People want to see more events like this in Bismarck.

- 100% of people surveyed would like to see more events like this in the future

The positive reception to this event highlights the need for the Bismarck Block Party Playbook to help guide and catalyze block parties in neighborhoods across Bismarck.

2 The block party facilitated opportunities for social connection.

- 89% of people surveyed socialized with friends, family, or neighbors
- 79% said they met someone new that day

A key goal identified for this event was increasing the sociability of the space. The block party excelled in creating a space for friends, family and neighbors to meet and connect and even resulted in many survey respondents meeting someone new that day.

3 The block party attracted people of all ages to play, be active, and have fun.

- 100% of people surveyed had fun that day
- 94% were active
- 63% said they played

Through fun, engaging and inclusive programming, we encouraged people of all ages to participate. The event welcomed everyone to enjoy games, live music, food, community art, and recreational activities like pickleball and puppy yoga within the park.

4 The block party helped foster a more welcoming and inviting environment.

- 100% of people surveyed felt welcome in the space
- 82% agreed that the event activities reflected their interests
- 83% felt a sense of belonging
- More women, older adults and children were observed during the event than at the same time the evening before.

Through fun, engaging and inclusive programming, we encouraged people of all ages to participate. The event welcomed everyone to enjoy games, live music, food, community art, and recreational activities like pickleball and puppy yoga within the park.

5 More people were observed accessing and engaging in various activities within the space during the block party event than without it.

- 628% increase in people accessing the space
- 1070% increase in total activity recorded

During the event, we observed a substantial increase in foot traffic on E Central Ave between N. 8th and N. 9th and North Central Park. The event encouraged people to stay and engage with space in ways they hadn't previously. Several activities were recorded for the first time, including standing, sitting, eating, commercial, cultural, and socializing.

Overall, the event succeeded in transforming the street into a place for play and connection among all ages and cultivating a welcoming and fun environment for all. Through the Bismarck Block Party, we demonstrated how playful and inclusive programming and design can transform streets into places for people and public life to truly thrive.





PART 2

HOW YOU CAN DO IT TOO

Now that you know how we did it, this section provides a road map for transforming public spaces in your neighborhood and hosting your very own block party.

1. Getting started (See Tools & Templates – *Getting Started*)

There are many different reasons for initiating a neighborhood block party; maybe you want to bring attention to a particular issue, bring the community together to work on a common activity or have fun and meet your neighbors. Regardless, it is essential to establish a theme and goal for your event to help you approach other members of your neighborhood to help with the planning process. You want to enlist the help of a few neighbors to coordinate event details.

Co-creating a shared Vision & Goals

Your vision outlines the overall impact you want your block party to have on attendees and the neighborhood. What will a successful event look, sound and feel like? When defining your goals, think about what you want to achieve and the desired outcomes of the event. Making sure these goals are in alignment with the overarching vision.

Measures of Success

How will you know your event is successful and you have achieved your goals? By clearly outlining a list of key success indicators at the outset and how you will measure them. For example, one of our goals for the Bismarck Block Party was to increase the sociability of the space. Success was defined by the percentage of attendees who met someone new during the event and was measured using a simple feedback survey that asked participants if they had met someone new that day.

Asset Mapping

When getting started it is important to take stock of what existing assets or resources you already have access to in your neighborhood and explore how you might leverage them to support your block party. Make a list of things you might need for your block party and identify who in the community could help.



Your chosen location will dictate what permits and applications you might need. You will need to apply for city permits for events on public property.



Picking your Location

Block parties can also be held in various settings, though for this guide, we have focused on activating public spaces such as streets and parks; block parties can also exist in private spaces such as your front driveway or yard. Your chosen location will also dictate what permits and applications you might need. You will need to apply for city permits for events on public property. Looking at physical assets that already exist in your community and what activities you anticipate at the event can help narrow down your options.

Date & Time

Once you have a solid idea and location to host your event, it is time to pick a date and time to communicate with your neighbors and create some buzz. Your planning team can help provide input on the best date/time. In general, you want to look for days of the week or times when your neighbors tend to be home. Look to weekday evenings, weekends or holidays as a starting point.

Some things to consider:

- **If you intend to have amplified music at your event**, it is best to avoid scheduling your event too late to ensure you respect other neighbors and noise level restrictions within residential areas in Bismarck. Within residential districts in Bismarck, there is a maximum of 55 decibels available from 7 am-11 pm and 50 decibels from 11pm-7am. If you intend to host a larger event, it might be wise to apply for a special permit to relieve noise level restrictions for the duration of the event. See *Tools & Templates – How-Tos of the Permitting Process* for guidance on how to apply for a Noise Variance Permit.
- **Make sure to factor in the time needed to set up and clean up your event.**

2. Building your team (See Tools & Templates – Building your team)

After gathering neighbors, establish a regular event planning team, meeting more frequently as the date approaches. These meetings can be used to delegate tasks, including who can help distribute invitations, secure materials & food, procure volunteers, submit permit applications, and assist with set-up/clean-up. You will want to set up a document that clearly outlines tasks and who's responsible for each.

3. Programming and Participation

When thinking about ideas for programming during the event, keep it simple! Block parties do not need to be expensive or complicated. To create a welcoming and inclusive environment, you will want to ensure you have a good mix of games and activities for people of all ages and abilities. Here is a list of possible low-cost activities to keep people engaged and encourage play:

Hula hoops



Jump rope & stomp rockets



Bubbles



Chalk art



Yoga



Painting



It's a good rule of thumb to have a combination of both planned and unstructured play opportunities during your block party.

4. Generating buzz (See Tools & Templates – Taking it to the block!)

At least 3-4 weeks before the event date, you'll want to start communicating with your neighbors about the event. The methods you employ will depend on the size of your event and who needs to be involved (i.e., will your street or the whole neighborhood be invited?).

Door-to-door outreach to neighbors near the street you're looking to activate with invitations/flyers adds a personal touch to your event and is a great way to get to know your neighbors and get some early feedback. These handouts should detail the planned date, time, and location and describe the event, including anticipated programming and details about food and refreshments (see Figure 1).

You can also create a Facebook event to share details about the event and invite community members. Social media is an excellent tool for diversifying your reach and audience (see Figure 2).



FIGURE 1
Bismarck Block Party Flyer

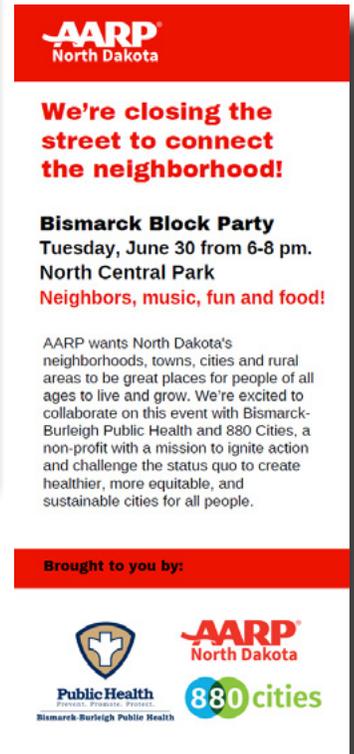
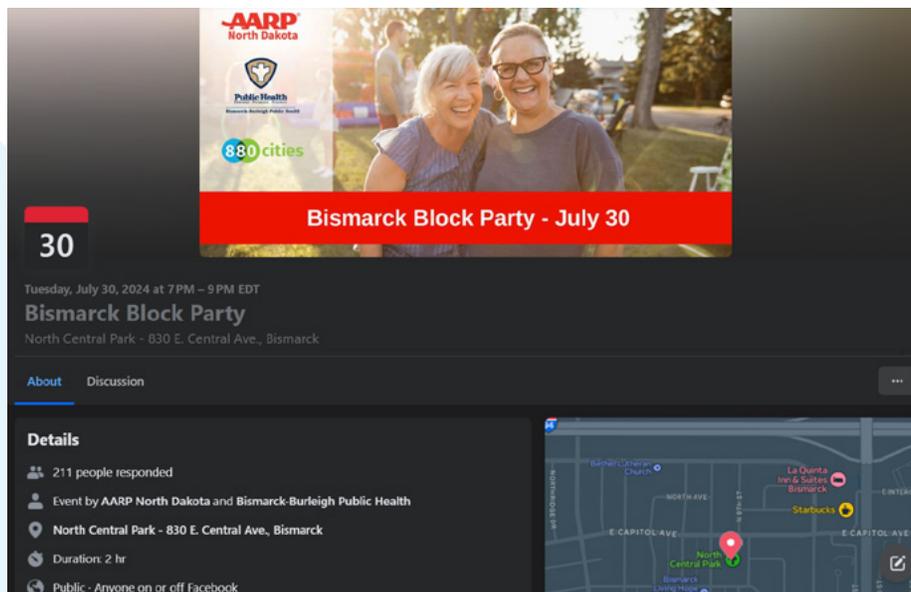


FIGURE 2
Bismarck Block Party Facebook Event Page



5. Taking it to the block (See Tools & Templates – *Taking it to the block!*)

Once you have the date, time, location and programming in mind, the next step is to develop a concept plan & site plan to visually map where the event activities will occur on the street (See Figure 3 & 4). This creates a smooth and easy set-up process for volunteers, vendors, programmers and other event crew members. The plan will also be used as a supporting document for certain permits & applications you need to submit for your event.

If you want to activate a street in your neighborhood, you must obtain approval from the City of Bismarck to issue a street closure permit for your block party. Though the permit application process is free, there is an approx. \$350 cost for standard street barricades. The event organizer will be solely responsible for coordinating the installation and removal of barricades and signage. Additionally, if you have amplified music, you must apply for a special permit for temporary relief from noise regulations in residential areas. (See Tools & Templates – *How-Tos of the Permitting Process*).

FIGURE 3
Initial Concept Plan

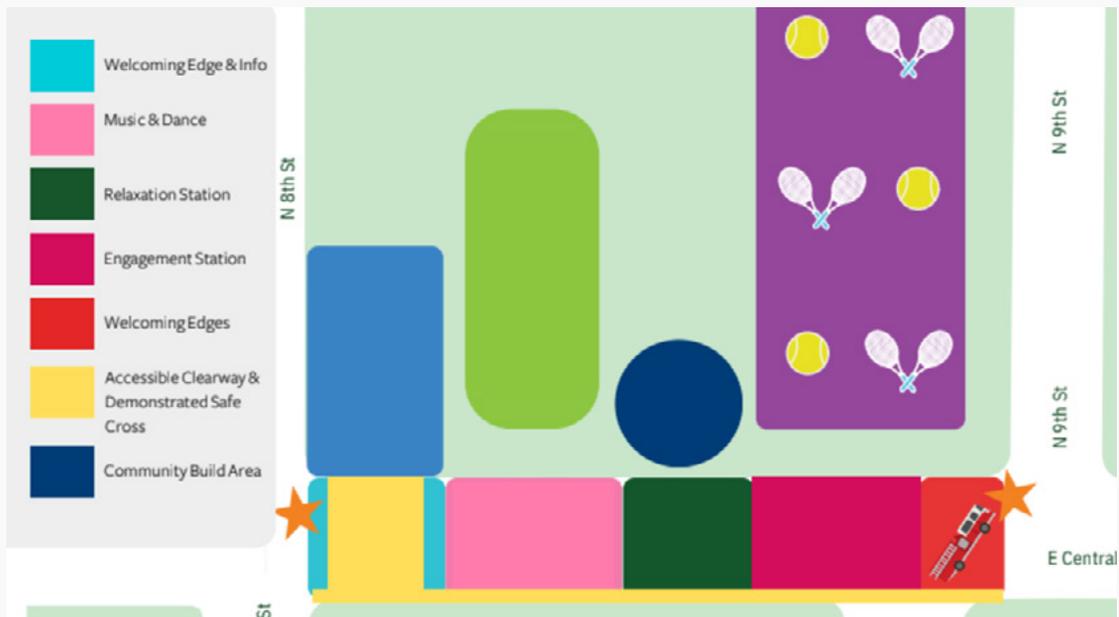


FIGURE 4
Detailed Site Plan



6. Measuring impact (See Tools & Templates – *Measuring Impact*)

Lastly, to truly measure the success of your block party, you will want to understand its impact on neighbors and the space. This will help you identify what went well and what might need to be tweaked for future block parties. We did this for the Bismarck Block Party by doing simple observational studies of people at the event and inviting them to participate in an optional feedback survey.

The key findings from these tools can aid in telling the story of your event and be leveraged to illustrate the importance of these events for creating a more livable and connected community. Determining what you want to measure will help narrow down what tools to employ.

BISMARCK BLOCK PARTY EXAMPLE

For the Bismarck Block Party, we were interested in understanding the effect of the block party on sociability, feelings of belonging, play and movement. Volunteers helped us collect data on how people moved through space using a Travel Count Tool and observed the activities people engaged in using an Activity Mapping Tool (See Tools & Templates – *Measuring impact*). We used a survey to dig deeper into sentiments about the event, including feelings of belonging and physical and social activity.



Tips for Your Block Party

Here's a few tips we picked up along the way that can help make your block party even more successful.

1 Encouraging Play

If you aim to have more unstructured play opportunities (i.e. chalk, hula hoops, bubbles etc.) at your block party, ensuring a facilitator or greeter is present to inspire play and create a fun & welcoming environment can significantly impact how people engage with the activation. Simple prompts and signage displayed in the space can also help encourage participation.

2 Always have a Plan B!

Things don't always go as planned, especially with outdoor events in public spaces. Always have a rain date or a backup plan for inclement weather.

3 Grab an extra hand!

Recruiting volunteers and engaging local partners can significantly contribute to the successful implementation of your block party. Having extra hands to assist with set up/clean up makes for a much more manageable and enjoyable experience. Additionally, partnering with local organizations and businesses can help you secure additional materials and resources to support your event.

See [Tools & Templates – Block Party Checklist](#) for a simple checklist to ensure you cover all the basics and your block party goes off without a hitch.

4 Event Schedule

If you plan on having a variety of scheduled activities, it is worth displaying an event schedule at various spots around the block party so people are aware of what will happen and when, and they are encouraged to stay and be present within the space.





PART 3

TOOLS & TEMPLATES

1. Getting started

2. Building your team

3. Taking it to the block!

- a. How-Tos of the Permitting Process
- b. Application for Community Events in Public Right-of-Way
- c. Residential Block Party Form

4. Measuring Impact

- a. Travel Count Tool
- b. Activity Mapping Tool
- c. Intercept Survey

5. Block Party Checklist

1. Getting started

Planning Your Block Party

What is the idea for the block party? (ex. Community BBQ, Holiday Party)

What are the goals for the event? What impact are you hoping to have on the community? (ex. Neighbors feel a greater sense of belonging, Neighbors meet someone new)

Pick a date and time. (ex. Weekday evenings, weekends and holidays are a good starting point.)

Date:

Time:

Alternative rain date:

Location of street closure:

Who needs to be involved? (ex. City Parks & Recreation, Forestry, Media, Public Health Dpt.)

2. Building your team

Mapping Assets

What existing resources can you leverage to support your block party (i.e. materials, people, funding)? *ex. tables, chairs, BBQ grill, coolers*

Community Resources

NEEDS

What do you need? *ex. Music*

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Who can help you with this? *ex. Local band*

3. Taking it to the block!

Roles & Responsibilities

Task	Responsibility	Done?

Getting the word out

How will you inform your neighbors about the upcoming block party?

(Ex. door-to-door outreach with flyers, direct email, Facebook event page)

What key messaging will you use to communicate with neighbors?

HOW

PERMITTING PROCESS

TOS

The City of Bismarck has policies for community events and block parties in public space. This process outlines the necessary applications and submission guidelines to ensure compliance for your event.

1. COMMUNITY EVENTS PERMIT

You will need to submit an application for a permit to the City Administration **at least 45 days prior to the event date** to carry out community events in the public right-of-way (i.e. public streets, sidewalks).

The request **must** have the following information:

- Event name, date and time
- Requested street closure dates and time
- Map of event layout
- Sponsoring Individual/Organization
- Purpose of event
- Event activities
- Event organizer, contact info, phone number.

See *Application for a Community Event in the Public Right of Way*.

2. LOOKING TO HAVE AMPLIFIED MUSIC AT YOUR EVENT?



You will need to apply for a **Noise Variance Permit** from Bismarck-Burleigh Public Health Department - Environmental Health Division **at least 45 days prior to the event date**.

To apply, you will need to Setup an Account through the City of Bismarck's Land Records Management eTRAKiT system at <https://trakitapi.bismarcknd.gov/etrakit/>. Then, select Apply for New Licenses.

3. RESIDENTIAL STREET CLOSURE PERMIT

To request a street closure for your block party, you will need to complete & submit a *Residential Block Party Form* **10 days prior** to the closure date to the City of Bismarck Engineering Department.

The request **must** have the following information:

- Street name and nearest intersection streets at the end of the purposed closures
- Time and date of event
- Purpose of the closure
- Event organizer, contact info, phone number.

If you obtain approval, the event organizer will be responsible for:

- Coordinating the installation and removal of barricades and signage by a private signing contractor. This includes any costs incurred, the barricades will cost about \$350 dollars, so make sure to factor this into your budget for the event.

• **At least 48-hours before the closure:**

- o Contacting all emergency services (Ambulance, Fire, Police) and notifying Engineering Department to confirm street closure installation.

For more details on the City of Bismarck's Residential Block Party Policy visit: <https://www.bismarcknd.gov/2150/Public-Events-In-The-Right-Of-Way>



Application for a Community Event in the Public Right of Way

The City Commission may grant permits for certain types of community events or festivals to take place upon the public streets, sidewalks, squares, avenues, or alleys of the City.

The sponsor of the event or festival shall submit to the City Administration this completed application for a permit at least 45 days prior to the opening of the community event or festival. A completed application will be considered by the City Commission.

Name of Event: _____

Event Dates and Times: _____

Requested Street Closure Dates and Times: _____

Provide a location map with a layout of any street closures, on street parking utilization, impacts to sidewalks, emergency service access and vendor spaces.

Sponsoring Individual/Organization: _____

The purpose of the festival or event: _____

The activities that will be held as part of the event:

Is the festival sponsored by a non-profit community service organization? _____

If no, how does the event or festival constitute a community service? _____

Event Manager/Coordinator Contact Information:

Name: _____

Email Address: _____

Cell Phone: _____



Food Vendors will not be permitted in the public right of way unless they are in good standing with Bismarck-Burleigh Public Health Department – Environmental Health Division.

Final approval is required from Board of City Commissioners.

If approval is granted by the Board of City Commissioners, the applicant will be required to provide:

- Proof of liability insurance. Coverages to be \$2 million per occurrence and \$500,000 per person and add City of Bismarck to the policy as an additional insured with waiver of subrogation.
- Proof of food vendors being licensed and inspected by Bismarck-Burleigh Public Health Department - Environmental Health Division
- If alcohol is being served, a special event liquor permit is required.
- If amplified music is provided, a Noise Variance Permit issued from Bismarck-Burleigh Public Health Department - Environmental Health Division is required.
- Hire a professional signing contractor to install Type III barricades across the entire street width at the ends of the street closure area plus one Road Closed sign for each end of the street closure area.

Failure to meet these requirements may result in revoking the approval.

All questions regarding this application should be directed to the City of Bismarck Traffic Engineer. 701.355.1505



Code of City Ordinance

10-05.1-03. Community Events and Festivals. The City Commission may grant permits for certain types of community events or festivals to take place upon the public streets, sidewalks, squares, avenues, or alleys of the City.

1. The sponsor of the event or festival shall submit to City Administration a written application for a permit at least 45 days prior to the opening of the community event or festival for which a permit is desired. The application shall state:
 - a. The time, date and location of the festival or event. The applicant shall include a map of the proposed event showing the layout of booths, stalls or other attractions and including the specific location of any outdoor grilling activities;
 - b. The group, firm or individual by whom the festival or event will be sponsored;
 - c. The purpose of the festival or event;
 - d. The activities that will be held;
 - e. The streets requested to be closed. A drawing showing the requested street closures shall be included with the application.
2. A completed application will be considered by the City Commission.
3. In granting permits for community events and festivals, the City Commission shall consider the following:
 - a. The nature of the event or festival and how it can serve the community and its citizens;
 - b. The time period during which the event or festival will occur;
 - c. The location of the event or festival and whether the location inhibits the safe flow of traffic in the City;
 - d. Whether or not the location(s) proposed for cooking or grilling activities is appropriate considering area residents and businesses;
 - e. Whether the activities would be in compliance with other applicable laws;
 - f. Whether the event or festival is to benefit non-profit community service organizations. Commercial events or festivals which generate profit for the private sector, other than profit incidental to the festival or event which is made by persons other than the sponsor of the festival or event, shall be permitted only if the applicant submits evidence to the review committee that the event or festival constitutes a community service; and
 - g. The general health, safety and welfare of the participants in the event or festival and the citizens of the City.
 - h. The sponsor of the event or festival shall provide all cleaning services necessary to rid the festival area of all debris and litter created as a result of the event or festival.
 - i. The issuance of a permit to a sponsor shall authorize only that sponsor and participants specifically authorized by the sponsor to participate in that community event or festival without the restrictions imposed by this chapter.
 - j. Authorized participants in a community event or festival for which a permit has been issued shall not be required to obtain a city permit required by the provisions of this Chapter for the period during which the community event or festival takes place.





RESIDENTIAL BLOCK PARTY FORM

Street Name and Nearest Intersection Streets at the end of the Proposed Closures

Time and Date of Event

Purpose of the Closure

Event Organizer

Organizer Address

Phone Number

Email Address

Signage Company Name, Contact Person, and Phone Number



4. Measuring Impact

a. Travel Count Tool

This tool quantifies the approximate age, gender and number of people who walk, bike or use a mobility device by tallying the number of people who cross an imaginary travel count line. Travel counts are conducted within 15-minute intervals.

FIGURE 1

Bismarck Block Party
Travel Count Tool Example

How to use this tool:

1. Find a good spot to observe your travel count line from.
2. Indicate your name and the current weather conditions (i.e. temperature) at the top right corner of your sheet.
3. Start your 15-min timer.
4. Tally the approx. age/gender and mode of transportation of every person crossing your travel count line.



Travel Counts

Location: On E Central Ave Weather: Name: Date: Time:

PEOPLE WALKING				PEOPLE CYCLING				PEOPLE USING MOBILITY DEVICES			
AGE	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	AGE	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	AGE	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
0-4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		0-4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		0-4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5-14	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		5-14	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		5-14	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
15-24	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		15-24	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		15-24	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
25-44	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		25-44	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		25-44	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
45-64	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		45-64	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		45-64	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
65+	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		65+	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		65+	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
TOTAL				TOTAL				TOTAL			

TIP

Set up travel count lines along key access points such as event entrances/exits.

Travel Counts

Location:

Weather:

Name:

Date:

Time:

[INSERT MAP OF STREET]

Travel Counts

Location:

Weather:

Name:

Date:

Time:

PEOPLE WALKING			TOTAL
AGE	MALE	FEMALE	
0-4			
5-14			
15-24			
25-44			
45-64			
65+			
TOTAL			

PEOPLE CYCLING			TOTAL
AGE	MALE	FEMALE	
0-4			
5-14			
15-24			
25-44			
45-64			
65+			
TOTAL			

PEOPLE USING MOBILITY DEVICES			TOTAL
AGE	MALE	FEMALE	
0-4			
5-14			
15-24			
25-44			
45-64			
65+			
TOTAL			

4. Measuring Impact

b. Activity Mapping Tool

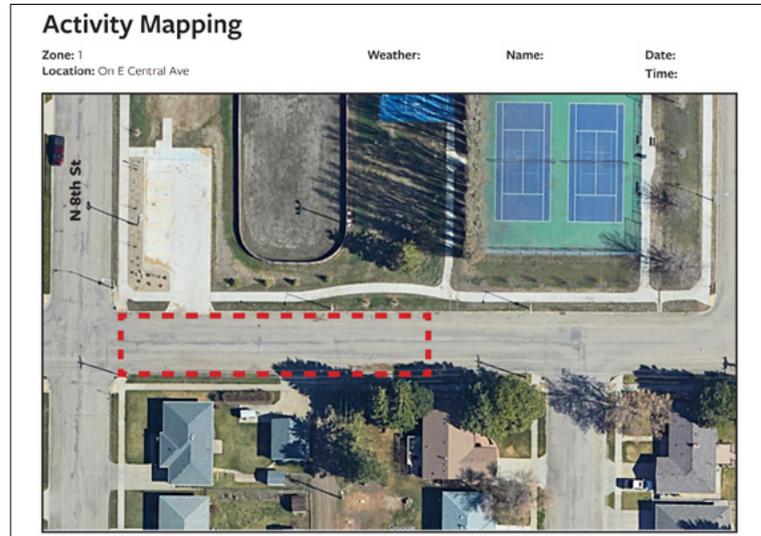
This tool quantifies the approximate age, gender, and number of people who spend time within the study area and the activities they are engaging in a particular zone. Activity counts are conducted within 15-minute intervals.

FIGURE 2

Bismarck Block Party
Activity Mapping Tool Example

How to use this tool:

1. Find a good spot to observe your zone.
2. Indicate your name and the current weather conditions (i.e. temperature) at the top right corner of your sheet.
3. Start your 15-min timer.
4. Tally the perceived age/gender and type of activity you observe someone doing in your zone.
5. Then, mark the location of the activity on the map with the corresponding symbol to indicate where the activity is taking place. For example, if you observed someone standing within your area, you would draw an 'X' on your map to correspond to the legend.



Activity Mapping

Zone: 1 Weather: Name: Date: Time:

Location: On E Central Ave

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	TALLY	TOTAL	AGE	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
				0-4	5-14	15-24	25-44
X Standing	Anyone standing within the area (not engaged in any of the categories below)			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
T Waiting for a Ride	Anyone waiting for a taxi, ride share, tour bus, etc.			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
B Bench Sitting	Anyone sitting on public benches or similar, that is designed for sitting.			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
S Secondary Sitting	Anyone sitting on things like ledges, stairs, lawns, or pavement			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
W Walking	Anyone who is walking through the space			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
E Eating and Drinking	Anyone eating or drinking, not including people on restaurant patios			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
S Commercial Activity	Anyone shopping and selling at on-street vendors and stalls			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
C Cultural Activity	Anyone performing music, magic, dancing, baking, etc.			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
P Physical Activity	Activities such as skateboarding, jogging, yoga, people playing, etc.			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
W Walking a Pet	Anyone standing, waiting, or walking within the area with a pet			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
% Socializing	Anyone who is talking or hanging out in groups			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
T Taking Photos	Anyone taking photographs with a camera or phone			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
# Other	Anyone not engaging in one of the activities listed above			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
TOTAL							

TIP

It is worth dividing the space into two or three zones for larger events and study areas to make it more manageable for volunteers.

Activity Mapping

Zone:

Location:

Weather:

Name:

Date:

Time:

[INSERT MAP OF STREET]

Activity Mapping

Zone:

Weather:

Name:

Date:

Location:

Time:

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	TALLY	TOTAL
X Standing	Anyone standing within the area (not engaged in any of the categories below)		
T Waiting for a Ride	Anyone waiting for a taxi, rideshare, tour bus, etc.		
B Bench Sitting	Anyone sitting on public benches or similar, that is designed for sitting		
S Secondary Sitting	Anyone sitting on things like ledges, stairs, lawns, or pavement		
@ Walking	Anyone who is walking through the space		
E Eating and Drinking	Anyone eating or drinking, not including people on restaurant patios		
\$ Commercial Activity	Anyone shopping and selling at on-street vendors and stalls		
C Cultural Activity	Anyone performing music, magic, dancing, busking, etc.		
P Physical Activity	Activities such as skateboarding, jogging, yoga, people playing, etc.		
W Walking a Pet	Anyone standing, waiting, or walking within the area with a pet		
% Socializing	Anyone who is talking or hanging out in groups		
? Taking Photos	Anyone taking photographs with a camera or phone		
# Other	Anyone not engaging in one of the activities listed above		

AGE	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
0-4			
5-14			
15-24			
25-44			
45-64			
65+			
TOTAL			

4. Measuring Impact

c. Intercept Survey

FIGURE 3

Bismarck Block Party
Intercept Survey Example

BISMARCK BLOCK PARTY Date: _____

The Bismarck Block Party is a free event to support social connection amongst neighbors. It is a collaboration between AARP North Dakota, Bismarck-Burleigh Public Health and 880 Cities. To ensure we are able to measure the impact of the event, we are conducting a short survey.

Personal information collected through this survey will remain confidential and only be used by staff to review public feedback related to this project.

SECTION 1: NATURE OF VISIT

1.1. How did you get here today? Select option traveled for longest distance.

Walk Private car
 Bike Other (specify): _____
 Public transit
 Taxi/Rideshare

1.2. What best describes your relationship to this neighborhood? Check all that apply.

Neighbor/resident
 Employee (of nearby workplace)
 Student (of nearby school)
 Tourist (from another city)
 Local resident (from another neighborhood)

SECTION 2: SOCIAL CONNECTION

2.1. Did you meet someone new today?
 Yes No

2.2. Did you socialize with friends, neighbors or family today?
 Yes No

SECTION 3: PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

3.1. Did you play today?
 Yes No

3.2. Were you active today?
 Yes No

SECTION 4: SENSE OF BELONGING

4.1. Did you see your interests reflected in this space today?
 Yes No

4.2. Do you feel a sense of belonging in this space?
 Yes No

4.3. Do you feel welcome in this space?
 Yes No

SECTION 5: IMPRESSIONS OF BLOCK PARTY

4.1. Did you have fun today?
 Yes No

4.2. Would you like to see something like this in your neighborhood?
 Yes No

If **yes**, what activities would you like to see at future events?

PAGE 1

TIP

Recruit volunteers to help conduct intercept surveys, so organizers can understand how neighbors felt about the event.

SECTION 6: TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF!

We are asking these demographic questions to better understand who is taking this survey and who might be missing. The survey results will be reported all together in one large group (aggregated) and in such a way that no one person can be identified.

Answering the questions below is voluntary. You do not have to answer if you do not want to.

6.1. How old are you?

Under 18 years old 56 to 64 years old
 19 to 29 years old 65 to 74 years old
 30 to 39 years old 75 years old or above
 40 to 55 years old Prefer not to answer

6.2. Which of the following best describes your gender identity? (Choose all that apply)

Woman
 Man
 Trans woman
 Trans man
 Gender Non-binary
 Gender Fluid/Gender Queer
 Two-Spirit
 I do not identify with a gender
 Prefer not to answer
 Not listed, please describe:

6.3. Do you identify as a member of any of the following groups? (Select all that apply).

Person with a disability
 Member of a racialized group
 Immigrant or Refugee
 2SLGBTQ+
 Indigenous
 None
 Prefer not to answer

PAGE 2

Event Title

Date:

[EVENT DESCRIPTION]. To ensure we are able to measure the impact of the event, we are conducting a short survey.

Personal information collected through this survey will remain confidential and only be used by event organizers to review public feedback related to this project.

SECTION 1: NATURE OF VISIT

1.1. How did you get here today? Select option traveled for longest distance.

- Walk Private car
 Bike Other (specify):
 Public transit _____
 Taxi/Rideshare _____

1.2. What best describes your relationship to this neighborhood? Check all that apply.

- Neighbor/resident
 Employee (of nearby workplace)
 Student (of nearby school)
 Tourist (from another city)
 Local resident (from another neighborhood)

SECTION 2: SOCIAL CONNECTION

2.1. Did you meet someone new today?

- Yes No

2.2. Did you socialize with friends, neighbors or family today?

- Yes No

SECTION 3: PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

3.1. Did you play today?

- Yes No

3.2. Were you active today?

- Yes No

SECTION 4: SENSE OF BELONGING

4.1. Did you see your interests reflected in this space today?

- Yes No

4.2. Do you feel a sense of belonging in this space?

- Yes No

4.3. Do you feel welcome in this space?

- Yes No

SECTION 5: IMPRESSIONS OF BLOCK PARTY

4.1. Did you have fun today?

- Yes No

4.2. Would you like to see something like this in your neighborhood?

- Yes No

If **yes**, what activities would you like to see at future events?

SECTION 6: TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF!

We are asking these demographic questions to better understand who is taking this survey and who might be missing. The survey results will be reported all together in one large group (aggregated) and in such a way that no one person can be identified.

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- 19 to 29 years old
- 30 to 39 years old
- 40 to 55 years old
- 56 to 64 years old
- 65 to 74 years old
- 75 years old or above
- Prefer not to answer

6.2. Which of the following best describes your gender identity? (Choose all that apply)

- Woman
- Man
- Trans woman
- Trans man
- Gender Non-binary
- Gender Fluid/Gender Queer
- Two-Spirit
- I do not identify with a gender
- Prefer not to answer
- Not listed, please describe:

6.3. Do you identify as a member of any of the following groups? (Select all that apply).

- Person with a disability
- Member of a racialized group
- Immigrant or Refugee
- 2SLGBTQ+
- Indigenous
- None
- Prefer not to answer

5. Block Party Checklist

Event Planning Guide

2 Months Prior

	Enlist the help of a few neighbors to form your planning committee
	Pick a date, time and location
	Decide on a budget for your event
	Schedule planning meetings with neighbors to discuss event details and plan activities
	Craft goals and desired outcomes of the event.
	Choose a party theme.

4-6 Weeks Prior

	Secure a community events permit. (Application must be submitted 45 days prior.)
	Apply for a Noise Variance Permit (if applicable). (Application must be submitted 45 days prior.)
	Develop a draft concept plan to map out event activities.
	Send out invitations to neighbors.
	Establish a game plan for the event day and delegate tasks accordingly.
	Decide how food will be handled. (i.e. Will food be available for purchase or in a potluck style?)
	Create materials and equipment list and decide what needs to be rented, borrowed or purchased.

2-3 Weeks Prior

	Develop a detailed map of the event layout to aid set-up process.
	Submit Residential Street Closure Permit application. Application must be submitted 10 days prior.
	Contact private signing contractor to coordinate installation/removal of barrier and signage for street closure.
	Recruit volunteers to help with outreach, setup/cleanup and/or measuring the impact of the party.

5. Block Party Checklist

Event Planning Guide cont.

Week of

	Notify the City of Bismarck Engineering Department to confirm street closure installation.
	Contact all emergency services (Ambulance, Fire, Police) about upcoming closure.
	Secure any last-minute supplies and materials.
	Do final outreach to neighbors to remind them of the upcoming closure and party.

Day Of

	Arrive early and be on site for any planned equipment deliveries or vendors' arrival.
	Set up tables, chairs, BBQs, coolers, tents etc.
	Ensure signs and barricades are in place.
	Arrange games and activities for people of all ages.
	Have a greeter or facilitator to welcome folks and encourage participation.
	Additional trash cans and recycling bins should be provided to manage waste.
	Socialize and thank neighbors for taking part!

After Event

	Remove any signage and decorations posted for the event and coordinate removal of barricades.
	Ensure all trash has been picked up and the space is back in good condition.
	Schedule a follow-up/debrief with the planning committee.