



Special Event Planning Guide

Version 1, 2022

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Staff Liaisons



Festivals and Events

Special Events Team

✉ events@stcatharines.ca

Tourism Team

✉ tourism@stcatharines.ca

Citizens First

One-time rentals and bookings

✉ citizensfirst@stcatharines.ca



Additional Liaisons

Planning and Building Services

☎ 905.688.5601 x 1660

Fire Prevention Office

☎ 905.688.5601 x 4224

St. Catharines Emergency Management

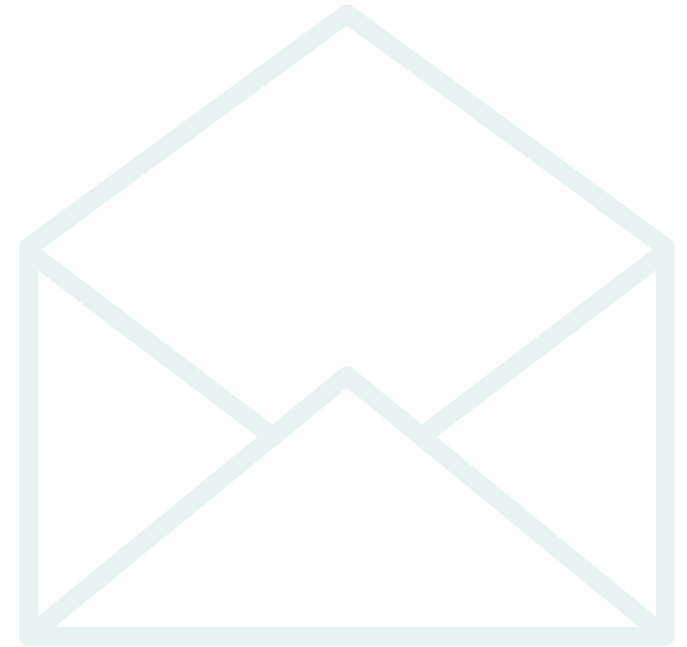
☎ 905.688.5601 x 4591

Niagara Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

☎ 905.984.5050

Niagara Regional Police Service

☎ 905.688.4111



Special Events Permit Checklist and Requirements

Requirement Checklist

Your City of St. Catharines staff liaison will inform you of your requirements, based on your event needs.

Please note, not all requirements are mandatory for events.

The following pages contain a fillable checklist. The check box, like the example below, indicates an action item required by the event organizer.

Check box example

An action item is not required by the event organizer if there is not a check box. This is an information piece only.

Accessibility

If you are having an event on City of St. Catharines property, you must:

Abide by and read the [City's Accessibility Policies](#)

For more information and resources please visit:

[St. Catharines Corporate Accessibility Information](#)

Aircrafts, Drones, Helicopters, Hot Air Balloons, Small Planes

If your event is having a drone, the following information must be submitted to your City staff liaison:

A copy of the Special Flight Operation Certificate, which is used by Transport Canada.

Take-off / landing area requirements as required by Transport Canada.

Evidence of commercial general liability insurance to include bodily injury, personal injury, and property damage specific to the operation of drones.

Drone photography and or video work may be subject to the City's Film Policy and permitting requirements.

To learn more, please visit: [City of St. Catharines Film Permits](#)

If your event is having a helicopter, hot air balloon, small plane or any other aircraft, the following information must be submitted to your City staff liaison:

The dimensions of the aircraft.

Let City liaison know if rides will be provided.

A minimum \$10 million certificate of insurance.

A copy of the Special Flight Operation Certificate, which is used by Transport Canada. This will also specify the type of balloon being operated.

For more information: [Transport Canada](#)

Alcohol

If you are having alcohol at your event, as stated in the Municipal Alcohol Policy, and as outlined by the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO), you must:

Provide a Letter of Non-Objection or Letter of **Municipal Significance** from the City of St. Catharines.

Obtain a Special Occasion Permit through the **Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario**.

Provide a list of Smart Serve certified individuals (first and last name) to the City of St. Catharines, including their Smart Serve certificate numbers.

Ensure that the serving area permitted for alcohol at an outdoor event is securely fenced. The set-up and tear down of this is the responsibility of the event organizer.

Hire security personnel, as is mandatory with the presence of alcohol.

Acknowledge that additional insurance may be required.

Municipal Significance

When applying for a Special Occasion Permit for a public event, you may be asked by the AGCO to obtain a designation of Municipal Significance.

The applicant will:

Provide a letter detailing the event to the City of St. Catharines. The letter must follow the **Municipal Significance Process**.

Submit a detailed layout / site plan of the event showing any tents, propane equipment, etc.

Obtain a park permit through Community, Recreation and Culture Services if the event is taking place on City property.

Provide a certificate of insurance if the event is taking place on city property.

Obtain an **Event Promoter Licence** through the City of St. Catharines if vendors will be participating.

Allow the municipality 30 days for processing the Special Occasion Permit, in addition to any AGCO timeline.

The City of St. Catharines will:

Circulate the submitted layout of the event to the City of St. Catharines Fire Services, Planning and Building Services and Legal Services departments. Once it has been determined that the applicant has complied and the application has been approved, the City of St. Catharines will issue a Letter of Non-Objection or Letter of Municipal Significance to the applicant for the event.

For more information and resources please visit:

[St. Catharines Liquor Licencing](#)

Amplified Sound

Clearly audible amplified sound is restricted between the hours of 11 p.m. and 7 a.m.

Music cannot read over 85 decibels within 20 metres of the front of the stage or music source when a band or music is playing.

For more information and resources:

[St. Catharines Noise By-law](#)

Animals, Animal Rides, Animal Exhibits or Petting Zoo

Events hosting animal exhibits require an application be made to the Niagara Region. The intention to hold any animal activities, exhibits or rides should also be indicated on your Special Event Permit Request Application form.

Please note that the City of St. Catharines prohibits performances or circuses in which an animal is required to perform for the amusement or entertainment of an audience.

For more information on animals within parks can be found in the City of St. Catharines [Parks By-Law](#)

To register an event with Niagara Region, please visit:

[Niagara Region Event Registration](#)

Barbecues

If you are having a barbecue at your special event, you will require:

An inspection from Fire Services.

Technical Standards and Safety Authority (TSSA) Certification.

Sign off from Niagara Regional Public Health.

This requirement is related to cooking activities, use of propane / fuel and inspections. Fire crews will have the authority to extinguish a fire that is not in compliance with the by-law.

For more information, visit:

[City of St. Catharines Barbecues and Smokers](#)

Carnival and Amusement Rides

If you are having a carnival or amusement ride at your special event, you must:

Have TSSA Certification for all rides.

Provide proof of Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) coverage for the ride operator.

Certificate of Insurance

You are required to obtain and maintain insurance coverage which must:

Be a minimum amount of \$2 million (\$5 million if alcohol present or closing a road).

Be public and general commercial liability insurance.

Name The Corporation of the City of St. Catharines, 50 Church Street, Box 3012, St. Catharines ON L2R 7C2 as additional insured.

Include all dates, times, locations and activities associated with the event.

Electrical Safety Authority (ESA)

Generators larger than 12 kilowatts or 240 volts require an electrical permit and ESA inspection. If you are having an event that uses electrical equipment and large generators, you will require:

An ESA electrical permit.

An ESA electrical inspection.

Organizers should arrange for a permit four to six weeks in advance of the event.

For more information:

[Electrical Safety Authority](#)

Emergency Management Plan

If you are having a large event, an emergency management plan must be completed by the event organizer and submitted for review by the special event team.

Emergency Management Plan

Event Promoter Licensing

The most common type of licence required for special events, not being held in City parks, is the [Event Promoter Licence](#).

Your staff liaison will guide you accordingly on the types of permits and licences required for your event.

Fireworks Permit and Approval

To display fireworks at an event you must:

Obtain a [Display Fireworks Permit](#) issued in accordance with the [Fireworks By-law](#) by the Fire Chief.

Have a display supervisor, a person who is an approved purchaser of display fireworks who is qualified under the act to supervise the discharge of display fireworks.

For more information:

[City of St. Catharines Fireworks By-law](#)
[St. Catharines Firework Information](#)

First-Aid Services

If you are hosting an event on City property, it is the responsibility of the organizer to provide certified first-aid personnel on-site, through a qualified agency or individual.

First-aid certified personnel

Food or Beverages – Niagara Region Public Health

If you are providing food or beverages (for sale or at no charge) at your event, you must:

Indicate your intentions when filling out a [Niagara Region Special Event Registration form](#)

Obtain approval from Niagara Region Public Health

Once your application is reviewed by the Region, you must submit the status to your City staff liaison.

For more information:

[Niagara Region Application Guidelines for Event Coordinators](#)

Food Trucks

If you are having food trucks at your event, vendor placement is the responsibility of each event organizer, and is subject to approval by city staff.

Food trucks that are not included under a general park permit are required to obtain the appropriate business licensing from the clerks department.

Business Licensing

It is the responsibility of the organizer to engage with the affected Business Improvement Area to ensure consideration and sympathetic placement for primary competitive products.

It is the organizers responsibility to ensure that vendors at public events and markets follow health guidelines, TSSA requirements and certificate of insurance requirements.

All special events with food service to the public must be pre-approved by Niagara Region Public Health.

A public health inspector may be on-site during the event to conduct an inspection of the event set-up and food vendor booths.

Inflatables

If your event is having inflatables, you must:

Have the City of St. Catharines review the inflatable contract provided by the equipment vendor.

Hold a certificate of general liability insurance naming the Corporation of the City of St. Catharines as an additional insured in the amount of \$5 million.

Provide a site plan showing the location of the inflatables.

Have them set up and licensed by a Technical Standards and Safety Authority (TSSA) trained professional.

Provide a copy of locates if staking inflatables through [Ontario One Call](#).

For more information please visit:

[Technical Standards and Safety Authority](#)

Music, Live or Recorded

If you are broadcasting live or recorded music you require a licence from Entandem.

Licence from [Entandem](#)

Parking Lot Rentals and Parking Services

If you wish to rent a parking lot for exclusive use for your event, you will require:

Consultation with the special event team on which lots can be reserved.

Parking lot locations can be found here:

[St. Catharines Parking Lots and Garages](#)

Permit and Fee Payments

All event organizers must:

Pay all required fees a minimum of 30 days prior to their event.

Ensure any cancellations or permit changes are received a minimum of 30 days prior to their event.

Permit Requirements

If you are hosting an event on City property, the requirements associated with your event listed in this workbook must be completed for your permit to be released. Be sure to:

Read the permit terms and conditions.

Ensure the permit is accurate.

Sign the permit.

Pay the associated fee for the permit.

Police Officers: Paid Duty – Niagara Regional Police Services

It is the event organizers responsibility to check with the Niagara Regional Police Service to see if paid duty police officers are required at their event. If advised they are needed, you must:

Complete a paid duty request application.

Visit www.niagarapolice.ca

Raffles / Games of Chance / Bingo / Ticket Draws Policy

If your event is having a raffle, game of chance, bingo, or ticket draw, you must have a:

Lottery Licence

Additional requirements are based on which type of lottery you are having.

For more information please visit:

[Lottery and Gaming Licences](#)

Resident Notification Letter

If your event is:

- At a park or playfield and having amplified sound
- Has a road closure
- Is expected to have more than 1,000 participants
- Or has new event components

You will require:

Resident Notification Letter

Resident notification letters for events will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Community consultation may be required for new events, or significant changes to existing events.

Road Closure

If your event has a road closure, you will be required to:

Indicate the need for a road closure on the [Special Event Permit Application Form](#).

Provide a Certificate of Insurance naming the Corporation of the City of St. Catharines as an additional insured in the amount of \$5 million.

Pay the fee in accordance with the [approved-fee schedule](#).

Provide a Traffic Protection Plan prepared by a qualified contractor of [Ontario Traffic Manual Book 7](#).

Provide advanced notification signage. This is required only for major on-road events that have over 1,000 attendees.

Obtain approval from Niagara Region and Niagara Regional Police where applicable.

In the event of a road closure, City of St. Catharines Fire Services require that a 6-metre emergency lane be provided and maintained to facilitate the movement of vehicles, equipment, and operations during an emergency response.

The requirement for a 6-metre access or emergency lane is the minimum width required for a fire-access route under the Ontario Building Code.

For more information, visit [City of St. Catharines Road Closures](#)

Shuttle Buses

If you are having many attendees at your event, and parking is limited at the venue, you may want to consider hiring a shuttle bus.

For more information visit: [St. Catharines Transit Commission](#)

Sign Permits

Sign permits ensure that sign structures within the city meet the standards set out in the Ontario Building Code, as well as City by-laws and other applicable legislation.

Typical signs that require permits include:

Billboard signs

Canopy signs

Flag / wrap signs

Ground signs

Pole signs

Portable signs

Wall signs

Two sets of complete construction drawings, drawn to scale, must accompany all applications for permits.

For more information, visit [City of St. Catharines Sign Permits](#)

Site Plan or Route Map

If your event is being held on City property, you will require

A detailed site plan or route map that includes vendors, stages, tents, emergency exits, routes, etc.

Special Event Application

This application is mandatory for all organizers. If you are hosting an event in the City of St. Catharines, you will be required to complete an application form online:

Application for [Special Event Permit](#)

All bookings are bound by our terms and conditions. Once your application is received, you will be contacted by your City staff liaison for next steps in the process.

Special Event Licence Agreement

A Special Event Licence agreement is required when an event is not held in a City Park.

This agreement is a comprehensive legal agreement.

The agreement is often associated with events that require road closures, parades and on-street events.

Street Banner Permits

The City of St. Catharines has five locations where roadside poles allow for the display of street banners. The locations include:

- Ontario Street at Adams Street
- Geneva Street at Balfour Street
- Merritt Street at Walnut Lane
- Main Street at Brock Street
- Lake Street at Louisa Street

The installation of street banners is limited to charitable organizations or the promotion of community activities. Street banners are not permitted as a form of advertising for religious purposes or commercial gain and must comply with the City's Sponsorship and Advertising Policy.

Approved applicants must pay a street banner permit fee and provide a minimum of \$5 million liability insurance with The Corporation of The City of St. Catharines named as additional insured. In some cases, Niagara Region must also be named on the insurance certificate.

All costs associated with the manufacturing of street banners are the responsibility of the applicant. Street banners must be made according to the City of St. Catharines' specifications.

Street Banner Application

Fees associated with this application can be found in the [Rates and Fees](#).

Tents / Canopies

If you are having tents at your event, you must:

Provide a copy of locates from [Ontario One Call](#).

Obtain a **building permit** for a tent or groups of tents provided that the tent or group of tents are;

- More than 60 square metres (645 square feet) in aggregate ground area.
 - Attached to a building and constructed less than 3 metres from other structures.
-

All tents and canopies must be secured by being weighted down with weights or sandbags, or being pegged or staked in. This is the responsibility of the event organizer.

No cooking is permitted in tents occupied by the public.

All tents and temporary structures must be fully accessible to all participants / visitors including individuals with disabilities.

For more information please visit:

[St. Catharines Planning and Building Services department](#)

Volunteers

If you are having volunteers at your event, under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), you will be required to provide:

AODA training

Under the AODA, any volunteers with your organization that prepare policies or provide direct services on behalf of the organization must receive training.

For more information, visit:

[Government of Ontario's Accessibility Laws](#)

Washrooms / Sanitary Facilities

If your event location does not have sufficient facilities for the anticipated attendees, organizers will be responsible for providing:

Portable washrooms that are accessible to all

Hand wash stations

Look at the attendance of your event to determine how many you will need. The City of St. Catharines recommends the minimum number of hand wash stations for an event as follows:

Number of Washroom Fixtures at Events:

by gender and attendance at peak times

Gender	Attendance	Toilets	Urinals	Hand Wash
Males	1-600	1	2	2
Females	1-600	3	-	2
Males	601-1,200	3	3	4
Females	601-1,200	6	-	4

Additional Fixtures for Males:

- 1 toilet for each 300 additional persons
- 1 hand wash station for each 600 additional persons
- Urinals may be substituted up to 2/3 for toilets

Additional Fixtures for Females:

- 1 toilet for each 300 additional persons
- 1 hand wash station for each 600 additional persons

Waste Management

The City of St. Catharines encourages all event organizers (including special events held on private property) to adopt environmentally friendly alternatives to plastics and to use non-plastic, compostable alternatives, where possible as part of a waste reduction strategy.

At your event to help with waste management, we recommend that you connect with Niagara Region to request recycling bins and compost bins.

[Special Event Recycling and Organic Container Rentals](#)

Planning Resources

Smoke and Vape-Free Outdoor Spaces

The Region of Niagara approved a smoke and vape-free outdoor spaces by-law. This by-law applies to parks, playgrounds, sports fields, arenas, and splash pads in St. Catharines, as well as other public recreation properties. The smoke and vape-free outdoor spaces by-law is enforced by the Region's Tobacco Control Officers. For more information or to report a complaint, contact the Region's Tobacco Hotline.

For more information and resources please visit:

**Niagara's Smoke and Vape-Free Outdoor Spaces By-law
Tobacco Hotline - Free of Charge Help Line**

St. Catharines Cultural Investment Program (SCCIP)

The St. Catharines Cultural Investment Program (SCCIP) is designed to serve distinct segments of the creative sector and strengthen the overall cultural ecosystem in St. Catharines.

Members of the St. Catharines Arts and Culture Advisory Committee review all applications and make recommendations for investment to City Council. For future updates on SCCIP, you can sign up for the Cultural Investment Newsletter.

For more information and resources please visit:

St. Catharines Cultural Investment Program (SCCIP)

Special Event Waiving of Fees

The City of St. Catharines may waive fees to eligible applicants to help offset fee(s) that may have been charged by the City related to the delivery or presentation of a single or multi-day festival or event which offers an inclusive experience to a wide range of participants.

For more information and resources please visit:

St. Catharines Request for Special Event Waiving of Fees

Amateur Youth Sport Tourism Grant

The Amateur Youth Sport Tourism Grant provides assistance in the provision of hospitality for visiting sports teams, officials and spectators attending an amateur youth major sporting event being held in the City of St. Catharines at City and community facilities.

For more information and resources please visit:

**St. Catharines Amateur Youth Sport Tourism Grant
Application Form (AYSTC FORM)**

Other Useful Resources

AGCO

Niagara Region Public Health

City of St. Catharines By-laws