

NEIGHBORHOOD BLOCK PARTY

Meet Your Neighbors & Get Involved in Your Community

If you would like to have a Neighborhood Block Party, we can help!

The City of Holland can help arrange:

- Flyers to distribute to your neighbors
- Fire Department personnel to stop by with fire engines*
- Police Patrol Units*
- Informative City brochures to give away during the party



**Attendance of emergency personnel depends on availability*

Tips for a successful Block Party:

- Make sure the entire block knows the time and date of the event
- Have all neighbors sign an acknowledgement that they are aware and agree to the street closing for the party
 - Limit the time of the Block Party to no longer than three daylight hours
- Do not use large items (or park cars) to block the roadway. Emergency vehicles need to have easy access should the need arise. (The Police Department will provide you with barricades.)
- Have a contact person for the neighbors, polices, and City officials
 - Take precautions to avoid injuries to all

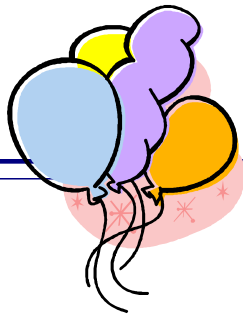
Please plan your event a few weeks in advanced to allow us to help you with planning, scheduling and obtaining permission to close your street.



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**To get started, contact:
Keith Chapman (616-355-3139)
k.chapman@cityofholland.com**

City of Holland, Community and Neighborhood Services Visit www.cityofholland.com



Neighborhood Block Party

Are you looking to set up a **Block Party** for your neighborhood?

Fantastic! At least 10 neighborhoods are having one this summer! Block Parties are the best way to get to know your neighbors, your local government representatives, and your neighborhood resource staff.

Most importantly, they are great ways to increase safety and a sense of community in your neighborhood. Neighborhoods are better and safer places to live when there is a sense of caring in the area.

Block Parties vary from a simple gathering of a few folks in a front yard sharing memories and beverages, to elaborate, highly organized events involving dozens of streets in a neighborhood. Whichever type suits your area; we encourage you to make this a day to renew neighborhood awareness, exchange greetings, and to celebrate the importance of neighborhood relationships.

Block Parties are ways for neighborhoods to come together, get to know each other, and form relationships that:

- Promote a stronger sense of community
- Promote higher safety within the neighborhood
- Provide opportunities to meet face-to-face with city officials and service providers in order to better understand what resources are available, and how to address concerns, questions, or suggestions

The Block Parties can also be used as an organizing event for a neighborhood block. These events further the sense of community as we provide a unified voice that can better address any concerns or suggestions with “strength in numbers”. The City of Holland actively supports and encourages neighborhood block parties because of all the benefits.

Your imagination is the limit when planning activities that will make your block party memorable. Provide safe and fun activities appropriate for the age groups present. The following information will help you get started with planning your block party.

Neighborhood Block Party Planning Kit

Getting Started: Make sure you fill out the Block Party Registration Form, and return it to the Community and Neighborhood Services Department at 270 River Ave. Call Keith Chapman at 355-3139, if you have any questions.

Plan the Party: Do what works for you, but respect your neighbor's property and privacy. If you use the street for your party, do not block residents who do not want to participate. Be sure that emergency vehicles are able to enter the block party area at all times.



Coordinate Activities: Your imagination is the limit when planning activities that will make your Block Party memorable. Make activities appropriate for the age group safe and fun. Some suggested activities are listed below:

- Bike decorating contest
- Games like Twister, Limbo, Bingo, and Croquet
- Story time/kids read-a-thon
- Obstacle course
- Watermelon eating contest (no hands is fun!)
- Art contest (use sidewalk chalk for this)
- Volleyball
- Dominoes and card games (try to set tables in shade)
- Cake walk
- Horseshoes
- Visits from City Firefighters, Police Officers (check the appropriate space on the registration form to request visits)
- Scavenger hunts
- Neighborhood trivia contest
- Display old neighborhood pictures or memorabilia
- Water games (shaving cream and balloons are essential)
- Paper airplane contest
- Egg toss
- Face painting
- Live band, or other music/dancing (need application for public broadcasting)
- Crafts and baked goods
- Relay races (try balancing an egg on a spoon)

Keep it Simple: Potluck dinners are easiest for beginners. Since many people are near their homes, it is probably convenient for them to use their own facilities and utensils. Ask neighbors to bring their own lawn chairs to the picnic site.





Inform your Neighbors: Get the message out to all your neighbors. It's a good idea to get the word out at least one-month in advance, and to distribute reminders the week of the party. This is a good opportunity to visit with your neighbors and make contact with those you haven't met.

Take block party fliers door-to-door if possible. If you wish to cover a very large area, try dividing your neighborhood into equal sections and working with neighbors to make sure everyone is informed.

Helpful Hint: Make your flier or invitation catchy and informative. In addition to the date, time, and place, list all necessary items to bring, such as food, beverages, ice, and paper goods. Suggest extras, such as lawn chairs, coolers, bug spray, sunscreen, and athletic equipment. Give a brief preview of the party agenda. List phone

numbers of organizers.

Have Fun and Keep It Going: Once the Block Party begins, relax and enjoy the fun! Visit with neighbors to gauge their interest in future activities of this type. Some neighborhoods may wish to plan regular activities that promote neighborhood interaction. Anything that fosters a sense of community is a welcome event in any neighborhood!



Consider other events such as annual neighborhood garage sales, a spring clean-up, holiday parties, and beautification projects. If your neighborhood hasn't already done so, you may wish to organize your neighborhood.



Don't forget! Keep the arrangements as simple as possible and the atmosphere relaxed and informal. Nametags are recommended, especially in newer neighborhoods. After all, the point is to get acquainted!

Block Parties are a good place to discuss neighborhood concerns, but don't make your Block Party into a business meeting. It is okay to distribute a newsletter or literature and circulate a sign-in sheet.

Remember that you are not alone. The City of Holland looks forward to receiving Block Party registration forms. We know that your neighborhood is a vital part of the community, and we are here to help you whenever we can.

Block Party Registration Form

Please enter the following information and return to: **Community and Neighborhood Services, 270 River Ave, Holland MI 49423** or by fax to **(616) 546-7058, Attn: Keith Chapman**

Date: _____

Contact Person: _____ Address: _____

Home Phone Number: _____ Cell Phone Number: _____

Party Time: Date: _____ From: _____ To: _____ (All Block Parties should end and have barricades removed by 9:00 p.m.)

Party Location: (please be as specific as possible): _____

Which street would you like closed? _____ Between: _____ and _____

Party Theme or Special Features: _____

Is this the first time your block has held a Block Party? _____ yes _____ no

Would you like? (Check all that apply)

- Barricades? (Will be delivered to contact person's address)
- A visit from a Fire Truck?
- A visit from the Police?
- A visit from City staff, representative, or City Council Member?

Note: All requests for visits from Police, Fire, or City representative must be received by the City of Holland with a two week notice before the event. A minimum 7 day notice is required for barricades only. It is anticipated that there may be more requests for Police and Fire vehicles that can be filled. We will forward your request to the appropriate department and honor as many requests as possible.



Block Party Request

Date of Party: _____

Date Received: _____

Street: _____ Between _____ & _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

