



When is an Outdoor Special Event Permit required?

The most common types of events requiring an Outdoor Special Event Permit are:

- Festivals, Carnivals, Concerts & Block Parties
- Parades, Organized Walks/Runs/Races
- Professional Filming/Photography

As well as any organized activity containing one or more of the following:

- Estimated attendance exceeds 25
- Specific area(s) need to be reserved
- Includes street and/or sidewalk closures
- Includes addition of temporary structures
- Requires APD assistance for traffic control
- Includes alcoholic beverages
- Includes fireworks or open flames

Where is the best location for my outdoor special event?

Many issues come into play when considering a new event location. The existing infrastructure at a park versus the cost of developing an event on a street may prove the deciding factor. While most parks and greenways in Asheville are open year-round, most outdoor restroom facilities and power to various exterior outlets and lights are closed during winter months due to freezing temperatures. As such, additional costs for portable restrooms, generators and light towers at parks may need to be planned for events scheduled during winter months.

Street closures are rarely approved for recreational closures on weekdays. The day and time of the event as well as set-up requirements may prohibit the event from occurring on a street. Streets do not commonly contain electricity or water access. DOT roadways and streets with public transportation routes are typically unavailable for closure. Parks are preferred over streets for special event programming purposes when in close proximity to each other.

There are two preferred parks within the downtown business district that are best suited for outdoor special events. Each site has specific requirements for use and is governed by an overall activity and recovery calendar so to not over tax any particular area.

Pritchard Park: This intimate venue is in the heart of the downtown business district and most commonly used for small concerts and public performances. Amplified sound in this area is strictly monitored.

Pack Square Park – Pack Square (includes Raised Lawn & Vance Monument Median): The Raised Lawn is a small space adjacent to the Biltmore Corporate Headquarters. The Vance Monument Median is a small public area surrounding the Vance Monument. The street of North Pack Square divides these areas and may be closed to create one continuous event space. The Vance Monument Median is not available for independent reservation. Consideration for street closure is granted during weekend hours only - South Pack Square may additionally be closed on a Sunday. Parking meter closure fees may apply. Stages and port-a-johns are not permitted within this area.

Pack Square Park – Roger McGuire Green & Reuter Terrace (reserved as a single unit): Our largest downtown event space includes a 20x30 performance stage with lights, an open green, terraced lawns and beautiful fountains. The *City-County parking lot may be available as a backstage area but must remain open for business traffic during normal business hours. Parking meter closure fees may apply. (*No infrastructure or programming within the City-County parking lot through Dec. 2011 due to courthouse construction project.)





Is a permit necessary for a protest or a rally?

The City of Asheville encourages free expression of ideas. As part of a citizen's right to protest, an Outdoor Special Event Permit is not required for independent, non-commercial speech activity. Some spaces are limited in size, are used for more than one purpose, or present special public safety concerns. Non-permitted activities that interfere with other scheduled/permitted uses, or that compromise the safety of the participants or public may be directed to alternate locations. Advance notice to the City of Asheville's Event Permitting Specialist is recommended.

An organized rally, versus an independent protest, will typically include elements that *do* require special permitting. A larger, organized gathering versus an independent, non-commercial speech activity may place the producer in a position of liability for public safety and accommodation including the development of an emergency action plan. Commonly regulated event components such as structural additions, street, sidewalk and parking closures, electricity access, as well as specific reservations of property require approval through the outdoor special event permitting process.

What are the most common application forms needed for outdoor special event permitting?

Submitting an application to hold a special event within outdoor public spaces requires a combination of supplied forms and self-composed attachments based on the size, type, location and other variables of the event. The term "form" refers to specific templates/forms that are provided by the City, to be completed by the event organizer. The term "attachments" refers to unique items that must be composed or provided by the applicant to support the application as a whole. The [Outdoor Special Event Permit Application](#) is a form that serves as the coversheet to all secondary forms and attachments. The [Outdoor Special Event Permit Application](#) contains a submittal checklist on the final page outlining the most common forms and attachments that are typically required to complete the submittal.

Where do I submit the permit application paperwork once completed?

The Event Permitting Specialist at the Development Services Center oversees the permitting process relating to use of outdoor public space for special events. The Event Permitting Specialist acts as a liaison to the various internal departments involved with each permit request. The Event Permitting Specialist will work with the event organizer in obtaining all necessary approvals, arrange for any appointments with department representatives, and will issue the final documents once all supporting approvals are granted.

All application forms, supporting documents/attachments and the \$25 application fee (or flat-rate \$50 block party fee) should be submitted to the Event Permitting Specialist at the Development Services Center. Please call ahead to schedule an appointment if a review of the submittal or assistance in completing the application paperwork is needed. The Development Services Center is open Monday – Friday, 8:00am – 4:30pm.

City of Asheville – Development Services Center
Attn: Jon Fillman, Outdoor Special Events
P.O. Box 7148 (Physical Address: Public Works Building, 161 S. Charlotte St., 28801)
Asheville, NC 28802
828-259-5738 (direct phone)
828-259-5676 (fax)
jfillman@ashevillenc.gov (email)





When will I receive the final permits for my event?

The Outdoor Special Event Permit is the final 'seal of approval' for all outdoor special events and is issued once all underlying permits are fully processed and approved by individual departments as applicable. Due to the inherent nature of special event production, it is common for permits to be issued only days prior to the event. For advance advertising and planning purposes, preliminary (conditional) approval may be granted within one-week of receipt of a fully-completed event application. Preliminary approval is obtained through the Event Permitting Specialist and based on an initial review of the plans disclosed within the application paperwork.

How do I obtain a lease, deed or rental agreement for the North Carolina Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission's Special One-Time Permit Application (for sale/consumption of alcoholic beverages?)

Once preliminary approval is granted by the Event Permit Specialist, the event organizer may request a temporary space lease for the purpose of securing advance permissions and approvals. This is not a permit for the event but rather a document that serves as proof of a preliminary hold on the space and date of request. The Event Permit Specialist will provide the organizer with a contact name and number for Police signature upon request and after the temporary space lease is issued.

How do I reach a City of Asheville department directly?

While the Event Permitting Specialist oversees the permitting process relating to use of outdoor public space for special events, it is often helpful to know how to reach the individual departments who are responsible for approving each component of an event application.

Asheville Parks, Recreation & Cultural Arts/APRCA

- General Administration 828-259-5800
- City-Produced Festivals 828-259-5841
- Athletic Programs/Facilities 828-251-4024
- Park Maintenance Services 828-251-4049

Development Services Center/DSC

- Outdoor Special Events 828-259-5846
- Building Safety 828-259-5738
- Electrical
- Fire Prevention
- Fireworks & Open Flames
- Planning & Development

Asheville Police Department/APD

828-252-1110

Asheville Fire Department/AFD

828-259-5640

Transportation Department (Street/Sidewalk Closures)

828-259-5943

Parking Services (Parking Meters)

828-259-5792

Asheville Transit Department

828-253-5691

Sanitation Department

828-259-5857

Streets Department (Barricades/Cones)

828-259-5852

Water Department (Hydrant Meters)

828-251-1122

