

# COMMUNITY EVENTS IN MADISON PARKS

## WHEN IS A PARKS EVENT PERMIT REQUIRED?

The Madison Parks Division is an extensive operation with a wide variety of parks and park users. The primary mission of the Parks Division is to provide citizens and visitors with open space and facilities for recreation and relaxation. However, special events may be allowed through the permitting process detailed here. Park Event permits are intended to regulate and control the use of City Parks so that the safety and general welfare of the public and our parks can be protected and maintained.

## What makes a park use request a special event?

Here are a few examples of when a park use request may be considered a special event:

- A. A large number of participants are expected.
- B. The event will be promoted to the general public.
- C. Admission will be charged.
- D. A park not normally used for events, such as a neighborhood park or beach, has been requested.
- E. Beer will be sold.
- F. The purpose of the event is to raise money, whether for a non-profit/charity or as a commercial venture.
- G. The event will use extensive space in a park.
- H.

If you are not sure whether your event qualifies as a special event, call the Parks Scheduler, (608)-264-9289, or email [MadisonEvents@cityofmadison.com](mailto:MadisonEvents@cityofmadison.com).

If your event requires a Parks Event Permit, click on "Planning Your Event."

**Start** with [STEP 1: Planning Your Event](#)

# COMMUNITY EVENTS IN MADISON PARKS

## STEP 1: PLANNING YOUR EVENT

### New Community Events

If the application is for a new event, approval by the Board of Park Commissioners may be required. Please include a one page narrative with the application and materials submitted for the event. The application and narrative will be reviewed by Parks staff and presented to the Board. The Board of Park Commissioners meet on the second Wednesday of the month and agenda items must be submitted by the last Friday of the previous month ([link to PDF](#)). Proposals submitted less than six months prior to an event will not be considered.

### Returning Community Events

Approval from the Board of Park Commissioners may also be required if the plans for a returning event differ significantly from previous year's events. Examples of changes that may require Board approval are: expansion of venue, gated admission, selling beer, additional stages, significantly increased attendance, etc. These applications must also be submitted at least six months in advance of the event.

## IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

Check the date - a late fee of \$250 will be charged for applications received after the deadlines indicated above.

Review the [fee schedule](#) to estimate the costs for your event and any extra permits or equipment rental you may need. Actual fees will be determined by parks staff – this fee information is only to help you with budgeting

If your event requires a Certificate of Insurance this document must be received by the City of Madison Risk Management Office 30 days prior to the event.

Contact the parks scheduler, (608) 264-9289 or email [Madison Events](#) to see if your preferred date and location are available

## GET STARTED

There are many steps to planning a successful event in the city of Madison. It is vital that you read and complete all of these steps. If you miss one, the approval process may be delayed and/or your permit application could be denied. This website will take you, step by step, through all of the necessary requirements.

- STEP 1: Planning Your Event
- STEP 2: Application Requirements
- STEP 3: Complete Event Schedule
- STEP 4: Event Site Map
- STEP 5: Safety and Security Plans
- STEP 6: Clean-up and Recycling Plan
- STEP 7: Notification Requirements
- STEP 8: Certificate of Insurance for your event
- STEP 9: Event Bicycle Parking
- STEP 10: Event Marketing
- STEP 11: Amplification Permit
- STEP 12: Parks Event Vending License
- STEP 13: Temporary Structures in parks
- STEP 14: Beer Sales in a Madison Parks
- STEP 15: Park Events Fee Schedule
- FINAL STEP: Parks Event Application Submission And Follow Up

**NEXT** Go to [STEP 2: Application Requirements](#)

**PREVIOUS** Go to [When is a Parks Event Permit required?](#)

# COMMUNITY EVENTS IN MADISON PARKS

## STEP 2: APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

The following information/documents are required of every event applying for a Parks Event permit. Be sure and provide the information and complete the forms as they pertain to your event:

- A detailed event schedule (including dates, times, possible rain dates and set-up/take-down)
- An Event Site Map
- Safety and security plans
- Clean-up and recycling plans
- Notification requirements
- Complete Application form

More information on each of these topics can be found on this website. Follow the work-flow for preparing your application by clicking through the “Next” categories at the bottom of each page.

Download the [Parks Event Permit Application Checklist](#) (.PDF) and move on to Step 3.

**NEXT** Go to [STEP 3: Event Schedule](#)

**PREVIOUS** Go to [STEP 1: Start Planning Your Event](#)

# COMMUNITY EVENTS IN MADISON PARKS

## STEP 3: COMPLETE EVENT SCHEDULE

- The schedule begins when event set-up starts and ends when cleanup of the event area is complete, all equipment is removed and the park is available for regular use.
- The schedule should encompass all activities planned for the event, such as:
  - Vending – when will vendors set-up, hours of operation, tear-down, leave park
  - Music/Performances – stage set-up, performance schedule, tear-down
  - Displays, Exhibits, Demonstrations – set-up, open hours, tear-down, leave park
  - Run/Walk/Parade, etc.- when does staging start, start time(s), end time(s)

### Events With Amplification

If the event will have amplified sound, an [Amplification Permit](#) (.PDF) is required. Be sure to include this application with the Park Event application materials. Permission for amplification does not exempt an event from Madison Ordinance noise restrictions.

Download the [Event Schedule form](#) (.PDF) then move on to Step 4.

**NEXT** Go to [STEP 4: Event Site Map](#)

**PREVIOUS** Go to [STEP 2: Application Requirements](#)

# COMMUNITY EVENTS IN MADISON PARKS

## STEP 4: EVENT SITE MAP

To ensure proper review of the event please attach a site and route plan (if applicable). To assist with site plans, park maps are available at [City of Madison Parks](#).

- Site plans should include, but are not limited to, the following: location of tents, stages, fencing, vendors, portable toilets, beer gardens, dumpsters, placement of vehicles, exit location for outdoor events that are fenced, clear signage, accessible paths for wheelchairs as well as ample disabled parking, and any other related event components not listed above.
- The site plan should also include areas within the requested park that will be used for the event including parking lots, shelters, ball diamonds, soccer fields, ped/bike paths, tennis courts, volleyball courts and any other specific park features that are included in the plans for the event. A detailed route map should also be provided if the event includes a run, walk, parade or other moving activity. A helpful online resource for route mapping is Map My Run at <http://www.mapmyrun.com/>
- *If the event includes a run/walk component, the approval of the Parks Division for the use of the park **does not imply approval of the proposed route**. Routes need to be approved with a [Parade Permit](#)*

Download the [Event Site Map form](#) (.PDF), then move on to Step 5.

**NEXT** Go to [STEP 5: Safety and Security Plans](#)

**PREVIOUS** Go to [STEP 3: Event Schedule](#)

# COMMUNITY EVENTS IN MADISON PARKS

## STEP 5: SAFETY AND SECURITY PLANS

- Madison Fire has provided an Emergency Action Plan template below for organizers to complete for their event safety plan.
- The Security Plan should include, but is not limited to, the hiring of private security companies and licensed professional emergency medical services; plans for crowd control; alcohol containment; securing valuables and protecting event participants
- City of Madison Police and Fire Department representatives may make additional recommendations after review of the Safety and Security Plans.

Download the [Emergency Action and Security plans form \(.PDF\)](#), and move on to Step 6.

**NEXT** Go to [STEP 6: Clean-up and Recycling Plan](#)

**PREVIOUS** Go to [STEP 4: Event Site Map](#)

# COMMUNITY EVENTS IN MADISON PARKS

## STEP 6: CLEAN-UP AND RECYCLING PLAN

- Each organization is responsible for clean-up of the event area. In accordance with Park Commission policies, a clean-up deposit of \$3000 may be required.
- Include plans for collection and disposal of materials during and after event - number and location of garbage/recycling containers and dumpsters; number/schedule of volunteers/staff assigned to collection and clean up.
- If City containers are not used, please provide the name and contact information of the collection agency providing equipment and service for the event.
- Any group that leaves an area in a condition that requires special clean up by park/City crews will be charged the full cost of clean-up.
- If you need assistance with your clean up and recycling plan, please contact the City of Madison's Recycling Office, via [email](#) or at (608) 267-2626.

Download the [Clean-up and Recycling Plan Form](#) (.PDF)

**NEXT** Go to [STEP 7: Notification Requirements](#)

**PREVIOUS** Go to [STEP 5: Safety and Security Plans](#)

# COMMUNITY EVENTS IN MADISON PARKS

## STEP 7: NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

- If your event will have over 300 participants/viewers, the [alder for that park location](#) must be notified.
- If an event necessitates traffic detours and/or parking restrictions, the traffic management plans must be filed with this application.
- If it is determined that area residents must be notified of the event, we will request a copy of the flyer/notice and the notification schedule to include with the application.

**NEXT** Go to [STEP 8: Insurance for Your Event](#)

**PREVIOUS** Go to [STEP 6: Clean-up and Recycling Plan](#)



# COMMUNITY EVENTS IN MADISON PARKS

## STEP 8: INSURANCE FOR YOUR EVENT

- Parks staff and the City's Risk Manager make the determination as to whether a certificate of insurance is required for an event or activity.
- The determination is based on the risk level of an event which is determined by such things as the size and nature of the event, activities planned for the event, the anticipated attendance, potential for injury, beer/alcohol, and other considerations.
- If a Certificate of Insurance is required the event organizer will submit a general liability insurance policy certificate in the amount of \$1,000,000 naming the City of Madison and its Parks Division as an Additional Insured. Parks vending permits will not be approved without this proof of insurance.
- The City of Madison Risk Management Office must receive this certificate 30 days prior to the event date. This official certificate may be submitted electronically, mailed or faxed.

City Risk Manager  
210 MLK JR. Blvd, Rm 406  
Madison, WI 53703

[email](#)

Phone (608) 266-5965

Fax (608) 267-8705

### **INDEMNIFICATION CLAUSE FOR PERMITS:**

The applicant for a Parks Event permit shall agree to indemnify, defend, and hold the City and its employees and agents harmless against all claims, liability, loss, damage, or expense incurred by the City on account of any injury to or death of any person or any damage to property caused by or resulting from the activities for which the permit is issued. The organization or person to which a permit is issued will be responsible for the conduct of the event, the condition of the permitted area, and actual fees for services provided. Falsification of information on the application will result in forfeiture of up to \$200 per falsified item.

NEXT Go to [STEP 9: Event Bicycle Parking](#)

PREVIOUS Go to [STEP 7: Notification Requirements](#)

# COMMUNITY EVENTS IN MADISON PARKS

## STEP 9: EVENT BICYCLE PARKING

- The City of Madison recommends event organizers reserve space for bike parking for a minimum of 2% of the total expected crowd attendance.
- An average length of 6 feet and a width of 1 ¾ feet should be reserved for parking a single bike. An average of 10 bicycles will fit in one car parking spot.
- Bicycle parking should be visible from the main entrance to the event. If it is not possible to fit bicycle parking appropriately in your event area, consider using the parking lanes of streets immediately adjacent to the event area. In order to use the street area adjacent, you will need to include this information and request in your Park Events application.

For more resources on bicycling in Madison and Wisconsin visit:

- [Bike Madison](#)
- The Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin [www.bfw.org](http://www.bfw.org)

NEXT Go to [STEP 10: Event Marketing](#)

PREVIOUS Go to [STEP 8: Insurance for Your Event](#)

# COMMUNITY EVENTS IN MADISON PARKS

## STEP 10: EVENT MARKETING

Conditional approval of an event by the Board of Park Commissioners is required before any promotion, marketing or advertising can be done for the event.

Be aware that the information from your permit application is considered public and may be used in developing event calendars by the City of Madison Parks Department.

### MARKETING THROUGH THE MADISON PARKS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

If you want your event to be listed on the Parks/City website's calendars, please complete the Marketing Information form. Your event will only be included on the calendars if all permits and applications are approved 30 days in advance and your event is open to the public. If this form is not completed, the event will not be included on the calendars.

[Download the MARKETING INFORMATION form \(.PDF\)](#)

### POSTER KIOSKS ON THE CAPITOL SQUARE AND STATE STREET

Madison Parks Staff maintains the enclosed kiosks on the Capitol Square and State Street. The posters are changed approximately every 2-3 weeks - depending on staff availability and maintenance duties. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have taken care of other ways to promote your event. You may drop off 12 posters, one month in advance of your event, at the Madison Parks Office, 210 MLK Jr. Blvd, Suite 104.

NEXT Go to [STEP 11: Event Amplification Permit](#)

PREVIOUS Go to [STEP 9: Event Bicycle Parking](#)

# COMMUNITY EVENTS IN MADISON PARKS

## STEP 11: EVENT AMPLIFICATION PERMIT

### Public Amplification Permit Application

By Ordinance, public amplification is not allowed in City Parks except by permission from the Parks Division. Permission for amplification does not exempt a group from obeying Ordinance restrictions on the volume of sound. Please be considerate of park neighbors and other park users. When notifying the alderperson and neighborhood association (if necessary) about your event, be sure to include detailed information about any plans you have for amplified sound.

### Excerpts from applicable City Ordinances:

#### **8.29 PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEMS IN PARKS.**

(1) No public address systems or sound amplification devices shall be used in any public park within the City of Madison except as permitted by this section. The Parks

Superintendent may issue permits in accordance with this section. A permit shall not exempt the holder from the provisions of Sec. 24.08.

(3) The Superintendent may limit the hours of operation and the location within the park of any such system or equipment so as to insure the benefit of such system or equipment to the group seeking its use and to minimize any unreasonable interference with the peace and enjoyment of other users of the park and those adjacent to such park.

(5) The Police Department is authorized to require the discontinuance of any such system or equipment operating outside the prescribed hours or location.

[Download the AMPLIFICATION PERMIT APPLICATION \(.PDF\)](#)

NEXT Go to [STEP 12: Parks Event Vending License](#)

PREVIOUS Go to [STEP 10: Event Marketing](#)

# COMMUNITY EVENTS IN MADISON PARKS

## STEP 12: PARKS EVENT VENDING PERMIT

A Parks Event Vending Permit is required for anyone who sells in a City Park (MGO 8.17). If vendors will be selling food, beverages, services and/or merchandise at your event a Parks Event Vending Permit is required. The fee for this license is dependent on the number of vendors at your event:

### FOOD VENDORS

If a vendor is selling food the City of Madison also requires a [Temporary Food Establishment Permit](#) which is available from the City Clerk's Office. The [Madison and Dane County Public Health Department](#) can provide more information on this permit and their requirements for the safe handling of food.

### INSURANCE

All vendors must supply a certificate of insurance for product and premises insurance in the amount of \$1,000,000 in the aggregate naming the City of Madison as 'additional insured.'

Please note that food cart vendors licensed by the city to sell downtown or on other streets are still required to purchase a parks event vending permit. They do, however, already have insurance on file with the city, and health department licenses.

### PERMIT TYPE

Daily	\$275.00 (NT)
Special Event Vending Umbrella Permit* (up to 7 vendors)	\$845.00 (NT)
Daily non-Profit/Public Purpose Event Vendor	\$75.00(NT)

\*An Umbrella Permit may be purchased by the Event Organizer and will cover up to 7 (seven) vendors. The Event Organizer's insurance must cover all vendors included under the Umbrella permit.

[Download the Parks Event Vending Permit Application \(.PDF\)](#)

NEXT Go to [STEP 13: Temporary Structures in Parks](#)

PREVIOUS Go to [STEP 11: Event Amplification](#)

# COMMUNITY EVENTS IN MADISON PARKS

## STEP 13: TEMPORARY STRUCTURES IN PARKS

A temporary structure is a tent (larger than a 10X10 pop up), staging, trailers, inflatables, and dunk tanks. Because of the increasing frequency of underground utilities and the danger to the public and to property from damaging them, the Parks Division **must** be involved when anyone wishes to install any temporary structure that penetrates the ground in a public park. In addition, Wisconsin Statute 182.0175 requires anyone who is responsible for the planning and performance of any type of ground penetration and excavation to provide advance notice to Digger's Hotline.

A permit is required for the placement of any of these temporary structures. However, you are only required to contact Digger's Hotline if the ground will be penetrated by stakes, tools, or equipment. No permit is required for the placement of chemical toilets, volleyball nets, or pop-up tents that are 10" X 10' or smaller. **ALSO, NO PERMIT IS REQUIRED TO HAVE A SMALL INFLATABLE AS LONG AS IT IS NO BIGGER THAN 15' x 15' AND IS NOT ANCHORED BY STAKES.**

Diggers Hotline is a statewide one-call notification system which provides advance notice to public utilities of intended excavation which may impact underground and overhead utility service.

Prior to installation of structures which involve putting stakes in the ground in public parkland, the following steps must be taken:

### Temporary Structure Permit Application

Please answer all the questions as fully and accurately as you can. Return the completed application, with your payment, at least 5 business days prior to your event. The permit fee is \$210.00 plus tax.

### Digger's Hotline, 1-800-242-8511

Call Digger's Hotline no earlier than 14 days before your event, and **no later than 5 working days prior to the event.** You **must** meet this timeline. There are no exceptions.

Digger's Hotline will assign you a Ticket Number for each area that will be excavated. You must furnish this number to the **Parks Office at least 5 days prior to your event.** You may fax or call us. Be sure to give us your name, the park site, and the date that the tent will be installed.

### Insurance

We need proof of insurance. The following rental agencies have insurance on file with us which meets the City of Madison's requirements:

A-Z RentAll, Event Essentials, Bucky's Tent Rental, Gallagher Tent & Awning, All Pumped Up LLC

If you rent from one of these businesses, you do not need to provide insurance. Otherwise, please contact the City of Madison's Risk Manager, Eric Veum, at 266-5965 for information on what coverage is necessary.

If you have any questions about this process, please call the Parks Office at 266-4711.

Madison Parks Division  
P.O. Box 2987  
Madison, WI 53701-2987  
608-266-4711  
fax 608-267-1162

**Diggers Hotline**  
**811**  
**800-242-8511**  
**<http://www.diggershotline.com>**

[Download the Temporary Structure Permit Application \(.PDF\)](#)

NEXT Go to [STEP 14: Beer Sales in Madison Parks](#)

PREVIOUS Go to [STEP 12: Special Event Vending License](#)

# COMMUNITY EVENTS IN MADISON PARKS

## STEP 14: BEER SALES IN MADISON PARKS

The Event Organizer must:

1. Obtain Beer Sales in a Park Permit (application attached)
2. Obtain Temporary Class “B” Retailers License ([application available in the City Clerk’s Office](#))
3. Abide by all of the following regulations.
  - ◆ Each sponsoring organization shall have its beer garden area specifically delineated by a fence for selling, serving and consumption of beer. The fence shall completely enclose the area except for space for ingress and egress. An adult member of the sponsoring organization or a security guard will check the identification of all persons entering the beer garden area.
  - ◆ The enclosing fence shall be two four-foot-high fences placed at least seventy-two (72) inches apart. The fence shall be snow fencing or an equally impenetrable material.
  - ◆ One or more security guards shall be on duty at all times during the operation of the area to prevent entry of minors or intoxicated people into the area and to prevent beer from being carried out or passed out of the area. The Police Department is authorized to require additional security based on past experience or special concerns about the event.
  - ◆ The organization shall prevent patrons from obstructing sidewalks and roadways adjacent to its area.
  - ◆ **No Glass Containers Allowed in the park!**
  - ◆ Each organization shall provide a reasonable number of signs indicating that drinking alcoholic beverages is prohibited on city streets and public ways, and that City Ordinances prohibit carrying out open containers containing alcohol from designated areas.
  - ◆ No person under the age of twenty-one shall participate in serving or delivering beer to patrons.
  - ◆ At least one licensed bartender shall be present at each outdoor area during all times of operation.
  - ◆ See: “City of Madison Insurance Requirements.”

### Temporary Class “B” Retailers License

*The following are regulations from the City Clerk’s Office. To obtain a Temporary Class “B” Retailers License, you must [fill out an application from the City Clerk’s Office](#), 210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.*

#### **May be Granted and Issued only to:**

- Bona fide clubs that have been in existence for at least 6 months prior to the date of application.
- State, county, or local fair associations, or agricultural societies.
- Church, lodge, or society that has been in existence for not less than 6 month prior to the date of application.
- Posts now or hereafter established of ex-servicemen’s organizations.

[Download the Madison Parks Beer Sales Permit \(.PDF\)](#)

NEXT Go to [STEP 15: Parks Event Fee Schedule](#)

PREVIOUS Go to [STEP 14: Temporary Structures in parks](#)

# COMMUNITY EVENTS IN MADISON PARKS

## STEP 15: PARK EVENTS FEE SCHEDULE

Use this schedule to aid your event budget planning. Final fee assessment is done by Community Events Staff. This schedule is subject to change without notice. NT = Non-Taxed Item

Programmed Event Scheduling Fee (based on size and complexity of event) \$200, \$500, or \$1,500 (NT)  
Successive Day Scheduling Fee \$50.00 (NT)  
Past Application Deadline Fee (60 days for community events) \$250.00 (NT)  
Commercial Shoots (video, still, catalog): Full Day \$225.00 (NT), Half Day \$175.00 (NT)  
Labor Charge \$50 per hour (2 hour minimum)  
Damage to property at cost, plus 10%  
Event Cancellation Charge \$200 (NT)

### Parks Permit Fees

Temporary Structure \$210.00  
Temporary Structure – each successive day fee \$35.00  
P. A. Permit (Amplified Sound) \$100.00 (NT)  
Beer Permit (to serve – no sales – alcohol in a non-alcohol park) \$50.00  
Beer Selling Permit \$700.00 (NT)  
Fireworks (per occurrence) \$350.00 (NT)

### Park Event Vending Permit Fees

Daily \$275.00 (NT)  
Daily Non-Profit/Public purpose \$75.00(NT)  
Special Event Vending Permit (up to 7 vendors) \$845.00 (NT)

### Equipment and Deposits

Trash Barrels (\$12.50 per barrel, 8 barrel minimum)  
Dumpsters (per dumpster, per tip) \$284.36  
Key Deposit for Shelters (Refundable) \$30.00 (NT)  
Key Deposit - Olin, Warner, Gates or Elver #2 Shelter (Refundable) \$300.00 (NT)  
Cleanup Deposit - (Refundable) \$3,000.00 (NT)

NEXT Go to [FINAL STEP: Parks Event Application Submission and Follow up](#)

PREVIOUS Go to [STEP 14: Beer Sales in Madison Parks](#)



# COMMUNITY EVENTS IN MADISON PARKS

## FINAL STEP: PARKS EVENT APPLICATION SUBMISSION AND FOLLOW UP

Congratulations - you have made it to the final step. By reaching this page, you have read through all of the necessary steps to plan, organize, and host an event in a city of Madison park. You have read through all of the supporting documents and supplementary applications. There are only a few more steps left!

- 1. COMPLETE** the [Parks Event Application](#). Review to ensure that you have all of the appropriate documents completed and included.
- 2. SUBMIT** the completed application(s) and applicable documents at least six months prior to your event on-line or to:  
City of Madison Parks Division  
210 MLK Jr. Blvd, Suite 104  
PO Box 2987  
Madison, WI 53701-2987  
FAX: (608) 267-1162  
Email: [madisonevents@cityofmadison.com](mailto:madisonevents@cityofmadison.com)

Please remember, you need a MINIMUM of six months in advance of the date of the event. A late fee of \$250 will be charged for applications received after the deadline.

- 3. REVIEW**  
Park Event Permit applications and materials are reviewed by the Park Use Staff Team and/or the Park Commission. Event Organizers may be required to attend the meeting when the application is reviewed. Park Event Staff will contact you if your attendance is required.
- 4. APPROVAL**  
IF/WHEN the application is approved a Park Event Permit will be issued to the Event Organizer. The permit will list the date, time and location of the event, as well as any conditions for the event.