



Recreation, Culture & Parks
Policy 09-004: Special Events Policy

Approval Date: November 10, 2014
Approval Authority: Council, By-Law 3859, 2026-025
Effective Date: November 10, 2014

Next Scheduled Review Year: 2031
Department: RCP
Last reviewed: March 23, 2026
Revision Date/s: March 23, 2026

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy establishes a consistent framework for the planning, approval, and management of special events held on municipal property to ensure they are safe, accessible, and respectful of community standards and municipal resources.

PURPOSE

The Town of Tillsonburg (Town) recognizes the importance of special events in enhancing the community's quality of life, fostering a sense of community, attracting visitors, and promoting economic development. This Special Event Policy outlines the guidelines, procedures, and requirements for hosting events on Town property and/or streets, ensuring that events are safe, organized, and in alignment with the Town's goals and values.

SCOPE

This policy applies to any Special Events taking place on Town property and/or streets, or has an impact on public safety, traffic, or the environment.

DEFINITIONS

“Certificate of Insurance” is an official document issued by an insurer confirming that the Event Organizer holds the insurance coverage required by the Town for the operation of a Special Event. The Certificate must demonstrate that the Event Organizer carries Commercial General Liability insurance meeting the Town’s minimum limits, that the **Town of Tillsonburg is named as an Additional Insured**, and that the policy includes all required provisions such as non-owned automobile coverage, host liquor liability where applicable, and 30 days’ advance written notice of cancellation.

“Event Organizer” is any individual, group, organization, or entity responsible for planning, coordinating, and executing a special event within the Town of Tillsonburg. The Event Organizer is the primary point of contact for the Town and is accountable for ensuring that the event complies with all applicable laws, regulations, and policies, including obtaining necessary permits, arranging for security and safety measures, managing vendors, and addressing logistics such as waste management, traffic control, and emergency services. The Event Organizer may be a non-profit organization, a business, or an individual acting on behalf of a larger group, but in all cases, they must assume responsibility for the event's operation and ensure the welfare of participants and the public.

“High-Risk Event” is a Special Event that presents an elevated level of risk to public safety, municipal property, or overall event operations due to factors such as high anticipated attendance, the presence of alcohol, use of temporary or complex structures, activities requiring road closures or significant traffic disruption, or elements involving pyrotechnics, open flames, hazardous activities, or other conditions that may require enhanced oversight. Events may also be classified as high-risk when they involve vulnerable populations, take place in confined spaces, or otherwise necessitate additional safety precautions as determined by Town staff, emergency services, or the Ontario Provincial Police. High-Risk Events typically require stronger mitigation measures, including possible increases in insurance limits, security staffing, crowd management planning, or additional approvals from relevant authorities.

“Municipal Property” refers to any land, facility, building, roadway, sidewalk, park, open space, structure, or asset owned, leased, or managed by the Town of Tillsonburg. This includes but is not limited to streets, trails, sports fields, community centres, parking lots, and any associated infrastructure.

“Public Event” is any Special Event that is open to the general public, advertised broadly, or accessible without invitation, regardless of whether an admission fee is charged. Public Events typically occur on Municipal Property.

“Private Event” is any gathering or activity that is restricted to invited guests or members of a specific organization, group, or individual. Private Events are not open or advertised to the general public. If held on Municipal Property, Private Events must comply with all applicable Town policies, permits, and insurance requirements.

“Special Event” is any planned gathering, performance, or activity that involves public participation, use of Town resources, takes place on Town property and/or streets, or has an impact on public safety, or traffic. Examples include parades, festivals, concerts, sporting events, charity events, walk/run/bike events, etc.

“Special Event Application” is the formal document submitted by an Event Organizer to the Town of Tillsonburg to request approval for hosting a special event. The application serves as a detailed proposal outlining the event’s nature, purpose, scope, and logistical requirements. It includes necessary information such as the event date(s), location, site plan, expected attendance, security plans, traffic and parking arrangements, waste management strategies, and any required permits (e.g., for alcohol, vendors, road closures, etc.). The application must also demonstrate compliance with relevant Town by-laws, safety protocols, and public health guidelines. Submission of a Special Event Application is the first step in the approval process and must be submitted within the designated timeframes prior to the event date.

“Staff” refers to the designated personnel from the Town of Tillsonburg who are responsible for reviewing, coordinating, supporting, and overseeing the planning and execution of special events within the Town. Staff assist Event Organizers with ensuring compliance with Town regulations, facilitating communication between departments, managing logistical concerns, and addressing public safety and resource needs during the event.

“Town of Tillsonburg” (“Town”) refers to the municipal government and its governing body, including elected officials, staff, departments, and agencies responsible for the administration, regulation, and oversight of activities within the town limits of Tillsonburg. The Town of Tillsonburg is the authority that establishes policies, procedures, and regulations, including those related to external special events. It is responsible for reviewing event applications, issuing permits, ensuring public safety, managing Town resources and enforcing local by-laws. The Town of Tillsonburg acts as the primary entity that Event Organizers interact with when planning and executing events within its jurisdiction, and it has the final authority in granting, modifying, or denying event permits and approvals.

IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURE

1. Application Process

- 1.1 Event Organizers must submit a completed Special Event Application to the Town **at least 30 days** prior to the event date.
- 1.2 Applications must include an event plan detailing logistics, security, waste management, traffic control, emergency services, and other considerations as determined by the Town.

2. Approval Process

- 2.1 Town of Tillsonburg staff and required stakeholders, including various Town departments and service partners, will review applications to ensure compliance with all applicable Town by-laws, regulations, and safety requirements.
- 2.2 Event Organizers will be notified of approval, conditional approval, or denial within 14 business days of submitting the application.
- 2.3 If the Special Event/Organization has any outstanding amounts/fees owing to the Town, the Special Event may not be approved until arrears are paid.
- 2.4 If multiple Special Event Request applications are received for the same location on the same date(s), the Town reserves the right to determine which application will be approved. Town staff will consider booking history, the order of which applications were received, and the significance of the Special Event.

3. Fees and Permits

- 3.1 Event Organizers may be required to pay various fees, including but not limited to permit fees, costs for insurance, public safety (police, fire), etc. The fee structure is based on the scale and nature of the event.
- 3.2 Additional Town permits and licensing fees may be required, such as for alcohol sales, vendors, street closures, etc.
- 3.3 Rental fees and/or rates will not be waived or discounted for the use of outdoor space. Staff are required to abide by Council approved By-Law fees.
- 3.4 For the request of Town Services, Event Organizers must follow Town of Tillsonburg service request process.

4. Insurance, Liability and Indemnification

- 4.1 Indemnification and Hold-Harmless Clause:
 - 4.1.1 The Event Organizer shall indemnify, defend, and save harmless the Town of Tillsonburg, its elected officials, officers, employees and agents from and against any and all claims of any nature, actions, causes of action, losses, expenses, fines, costs (including legal costs), interest or damages of every nature and kind whatsoever, including but not limited to bodily injury, sickness, disease or death or damage to or destruction of tangible property including loss of revenue or incurred

expense resulting from disruption of service, arising out of or allegedly attributable to the negligence, acts, errors, omissions, misfeasance, nonfeasance, fraud or willful misconduct of the Event Organizer, its directors, officers, employees, agents, contractors and subcontractors, or any of them, in connection with or in any way related to the delivery or performance of this Contract. This indemnity shall be in addition to and not in lieu of any insurance to be provided by the Event Organizer in accordance with this Contract and shall survive this Contract.

4.2 Commercial General Liability Insurance:

4.2.1 Commercial General Liability Insurance satisfactory to the Town and underwritten by an insurer licensed to conduct business in the Province of Ontario is required. The policy shall provide coverage for Bodily Injury, Property Damage and Personal Injury and shall include but not be limited to:

- A limit of liability of not less than \$5 million/occurrence for simple events, \$5 million/occurrence for medium sized events and larger events, or as determined by Town staff based on event requirements
- Add the Town of Tillsonburg as an Additional Insured with respect to the operations of the Named Insured
- The policy shall contain a provision for cross-liability and severability of interest in respect of the Named Insured
- Non-owned automobile coverage with a limit of not less than \$2 million and shall include contractual non-owned coverage
- Tenants' Legal Liability
- Products and Completed Operations coverage
- Contractual Liability
- The policy shall provide 30 days prior notice of cancellation
- Host liquor liability

4.3 All Risk Property Insurance:

4.3.1 All risks (including sewer damage, flood and earthquake) property insurance in an amount equal to the full replacement cost of Property of Every Description and kind owned by the User or for which the User is legally responsible, and which is located on or about the Premises.

4.4 Primary Coverage

4.4.1 The Event Organizer's insurance shall be primary coverage and not additional to and shall not seek contribution from any other insurance policies available to the municipality.

4.5 Certificate of Insurance

- 4.5.1 The Event Organizer shall provide a Certificate of Insurance evidencing coverage in force at least 10 business days prior to the special event date. Insurance must meet the Town's minimum coverage requirements as outlined in the application process.

5. Public Safety

- 5.1 Event Organizers should have a public safety plan which should include provisions for crowd control, emergency response, and communication with Town emergency services.
- 5.2 Security staffing, including police officers, may be required depending on the size and nature of the event. This will be determined by the Ontario Provincial Police.

6. Road Closures, Traffic and Parking

- 6.1 The Town has an obligation to prioritize public safety when closing roads to ensure that the residents and businesses can safely move and to prevent scheduling conflicts with other events/activities occurring throughout the Town.
- 6.2 Events that impact traffic flow or require street closures must include a traffic control plan. Where applicable, the organizer will be required to obtain an MTO permit and to complete a Town of Tillsonburg encroachment permit application for review by Town staff.
- 6.3 Event organizers are responsible for preparing and submitting a road closure and detour plan for review and approval by the Town prior to the event. Town staff will review the submitted plan and may provide comments or required revisions to ensure safe and effective traffic management; however, the Town will not prepare or develop the plan on behalf of the organizer. All road closures for Special Events must comply with the requirements of the Town of Tillsonburg.
- 6.4 Parking arrangements must be clearly outlined, and organizers may be required to provide parking attendants and/or shuttle services. Event Organizers must adhere to Town of Tillsonburg By-Laws; [Traffic and Parking By-law #2022-029](#); or as amended.

7. Waste Management, Event Clean Up

- 7.1 Organizers are responsible for ensuring that waste management services (including trash collection, recycling, and restroom facilities) are in place before, during, and after the event.
- 7.2 Events should aim to minimize environmental impact through sustainable practices.
- 7.3 Event Organizers must ensure that the venue is thoroughly cleaned and restored to its original condition after the event. This includes removing all waste, recycling materials, and any temporary infrastructure. Failure

to comply with the removal of items from the site may result in additional fees charged.

8. Noise Bylaw Compliance

8.1 Events must adhere to Town of Tillsonburg Noise By-Law [#4255](#) or as amended. This includes restrictions on amplified sound, music, and public address systems.

8.2 The Town may impose specific quiet hours or decibel limits based on the nature of the event and its location.

9. Vendors

9.1 Event Organizers are responsible for managing all vendors, ensuring they meet local health, safety, and licensing standards.

9.2 Licenses may be required for food, selling wares, alcohol sales, etc. All vendors must comply with regulations regarding food safety, sanitation, and fire safety.

10. Alcohol Sales/Consumption

10.1 If alcohol is to be sold or consumed at the event, a separate permit must be obtained from the Town and the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario “AGCO”, in accordance with local laws and regulations.

10.2 Smart Serve Certified bartenders are to be the only persons serving alcohol.

11. Lottery

11.1 A municipality may issue a license to eligible charitable, religious, or non-profit organizations for ticket raffle lotteries where the total value of prizes to be awarded is not more than \$50,000.

11.2 Event Organizers conducting a lottery (raffle, 50/50 draw, etc.) must obtain a lottery license from the Municipality, in accordance with local laws and AGCO regulations.

12. Event Cancellation, Denial and Revocation of a Special Event Permit

12.1 The Town may cancel or request to reschedule an External Special Event for various reasons, which may include but are not limited to:

- The Event Organizer has failed to provide a complete Special Event Request application to the Town and/or failed to submit a timely application.
- The Event Organizer fails to comply with or agree to all the terms and conditions of the permit.
- The date/venue requested has already been approved for another permitted activity.
- Information contained within the application or supplemental information requested from the Event Organizer is found to be materially false.

- Event Organizers' insurance has lapsed or been cancelled.
- The Special Event would create or constitute a public nuisance.
- The Special Event promotes violence or incites hatred against individuals or groups.
- The Special Event would cause significant damage to public property.
- The Special Event cannot be adjusted to avoid the potential risk and endangerment of the public.
- Neither the Town or Event Organizer can provide sufficient staff or volunteers to accommodate the Special Event and maintain public safety.

12.2 All appeals to the denial or revocation of a Special Event Permit shall be made through Town Council.

13. Inclement Weather

13.1 Event Organizers are encouraged to have contingency plans in place for weather-related disruptions. In the event of extreme weather or other unforeseen circumstances that may pose a threat to public safety, the Town may cancel or require the event be rescheduled.

13.2 Event Organizers hosting a Sports Competition/Tournament must abide by the Town of Tillsonburg Outdoor Sport Field/Rain-Field Closure Standard Operating Procedure.

13.3 If at any point an event is cancelled due to weather, equipment malfunction or facility issues, Town of Tillsonburg staff will notify the permit holder/Event Organizer of this, and every effort will be made to accommodate the event at a time best suited for both parties.

14. Damages

14.1 Event Organizers will be held financially accountable for all property and/or equipment damages that may occur during the applicant's occupancy, or because of the use of same.

14.2 The Town facility/property must be restored to its pre-event condition, a maximum of 24 hours from the time of completion of the External Special Event, unless authorization has been obtained from the Town of Tillsonburg. Failure to comply with the removal of items from the site will result in additional fees being charged.

15. Accessibility

15.1 As an advocate for all citizens of the Town of Tillsonburg, the Town is committed to ensuring that all Special Events that take place on Town property are accessible to everyone and are in compliance with the Province Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11.

16. Non-Discrimination

16.1 The Town supports inclusivity and diversity in its special events and may decide to not grant permits for events that promote discrimination based on race, colour, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, or other protected categories.

17. Smoking and Vaping

17.1 Smoking and Vaping are not permitted on Town property within 9 meters of any Town facility as per by-law #3596

ENFORCEMENT AND VIOLATIONS

Event Organizers are responsible for reviewing and being familiar with all applicable by-laws, town policies, rules and regulations and ensuring all attendees follow and abide by these for the duration of the permitted booking. Failure to comply with the terms outlined in this policy, including but not limited to adherence to safety requirements, insurance coverage, or event schedule, may result in revocation of permits, and future restrictions on event approvals.

AUTHORITY

The Director of Recreation, Culture & Parks or his/her designate is hereby given authority to process all Special Event Applications and provide final approvals providing they meet the criteria contained in the Town of Tillsonburg Special Event Manual.

Administrative changes to the Manual will be at the discretion of the CAO and Senior Management.

ATTACHMENTS

Town of Tillsonburg Special Events Manual