Bradford West Gwillimbury

Public Square Event Planning Guide

425 Holland Street W





townofbwg.com/publicsquare

Welcome

Thank you for choosing to host your event at BWG's Public Square.

Public Square is a vibrant outdoor community gathering space designed to support festivals, celebrations, cultural events, community initiatives, performances, markets, and other activities that enhance the quality of life of residents and visitors.





This guide has been developed to help event organizers understand the requirements, timelines, approvals, and responsibilities associated with hosting an event at Public Square.

The information contained in this guide is intended to support the planning and delivery of safe, successful, and enjoyable events while ensuring compliance with Town policies, regulatory requirements, and public safety expectations.

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Questions?
Please Contact:

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www.townofbwg.com/publicsquare

About the BWG Public Square
A Community Gathering Space

The Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury is proud to offer Public Square as a community space for public events and gatherings.

Through the Town's event permitting process, community groups, organizations, businesses, and individuals may apply to host approved events that contribute positively to the community while respecting the operational and safety requirements of the site. Community Events are permitted at Public Square during the Town's permittable months of April through November.

Amenities at a Glance

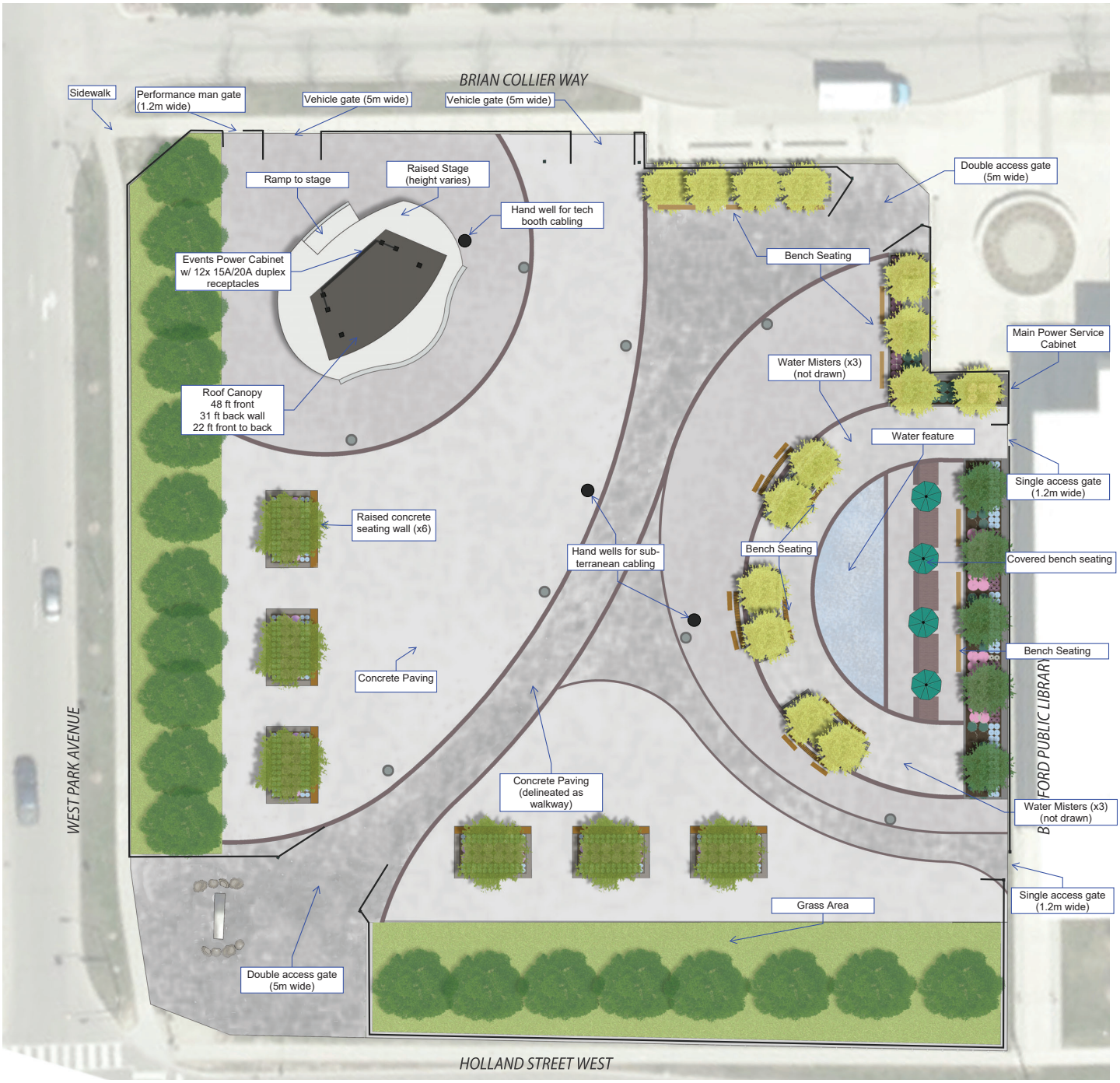
- Covered performance stage and band shell
- Bench seating and covered seating areas
- Decorative water feature and misting elements
- Standard electrical receptacles throughout the site
- Fenced event space with controlled access points
- Primarily hard-surfaced and accessible event area
- Limited green space
- Access to library washroom facilities for small and medium-sized events
- Central location adjacent to the BWG Public Library and Cultural Centre and BWG Leisure Centre

Electrical and water services are provided as a convenience and may not be sufficient for all event needs. Event Organizers are responsible for assessing service requirements and arranging any additional services, including a generator, at their own expense. The Town does not guarantee the suitability or capacity of provided services.



BWG Public Square

Site Map



Permitted Events & Activities

What is Permitted in the BWG Public Square

Events must demonstrate a meaningful benefit to the community and support one or more of the following:

- Arts and culture
- Education
- Health and wellness
- Recreation and physical activity
- Tourism
- Community engagement
- Community identity and placemaking
- Diversity, inclusion and accessibility
- Innovative experiences for residents and visitors

What is NOT Permitted in the BWG Public Square

The following activities are prohibited unless specifically approved in writing by the Town:

- Fireworks, open flames, candles, sparklers or torches
- Smoking and vaping
- Cannabis consumption
- Confetti, rice, glitter, sparkles, colored powder, paint or spray paint
- Straw bales
- Sidewalk chalk or spray chalk
- Adhesives that may damage Town property
- Petting Zoo's or Zoo to You offerings
- Sale and consumption of alcohol without municipal approvals.
- Vehicles are not permitted within the facility; the lay-by is to be used for loading and unloading only.
- Inflatable climbing structures and bouncy castles are prohibited.

Note: Inflatable games and attractions that do not involve climbing, jumping, or elevated play activities may be permitted with prior written authorization from the Town. Approved inflatable attractions require a minimum of $5,000,000 Commercial General Liability Insurance naming the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury as an Additional Insured.







Application

Application Criteria

To be considered for a permit, community festivals and events must provide a meaningful benefit to the community and must have a direct impact on one or more of the following areas:
- Arts, culture or education;
- Health and wellness or physical fitness;
- Enrich the character and identity of the Town;
- Create unique or innovative experiences;
- Extend the overall range and mix of programming in the Town;
- Bring visitors from outside of the area
- Be openly accepting and inclusive of all multicultural community members

The following types of events that are permitted in Public Square are:
Community Event (under 2,000 people) - Not-for-profit community events including, but not limited to walks/runs or cultural/educational. Community events that are operated for a collective, public or social benefit, in contrast with an entity that operates as a business aiming to generate a profit for its owners
Private/Commercial Event (under 2,000 people) - For-profit events including but not limited to food/beverage, artisans/crafts, events with alcohol and events that don't meet the community event criteria.
Events hosted at Public Square must generally have an anticipated attendance of 2,000 people or less.

Application Deadlines

Applications must be received a minimum of 60 business days (approximately 3 months) before the event date to be considered.
Applications are subject to a non-refundable $100.00 fee which will be deducted from your rental fee upon approval.

Returning Event Organizers
Applications for returning event organizers will be accepted beginning October 26, 2026 of the preceding calendar year.
Returning Event Organizers will be given first right of refusal for the equivalent event date in the following year.
New Event Organizers
Applications for new event organizers will be accepted beginning November 30, 2026 of the preceding calendar year.
Applications are reviewed in the order received. Submission of an application does not guarantee approval.
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All Event Organizers wishing to host an event in the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury's Public Square must submit an application.
Applications can be submitted online at www.townofbwg.com/publicsquare

Fees

BWG Public Square Rental Fees

Rental Duration	Event Attendance	Community Group/ Not for Profit	Private/ Commercial
Half Day (8-Hour Rental) Rate	Less than 1000	$750.00	$1500.00
Half Day (8-Hour Rental) Rate	More than 1000	$1150.00	$1900.00
Full Day (12-Hour Rental) Rate	Less than 1000	$1125.00	$2250.00
Full Day (12-Hour Rental) Rate	More than 1000	$1525.00	$2650.00
Additional Hourly Rate		$93.75	$187.50

***Duration includes set up and clean up times.**

Application Fee

Applications are subject to a non-refundable $100.00 fee which will be deducted from your rental fee upon approval.

Security Deposit

A security deposit is required to ensure compliance with the Town's policies, proper use of the Public Square, and protection of Town property. The security deposit is held by the Town and may be used to cover any damages, additional cleaning costs, or other expenses resulting from the event. The remaining deposit, if any, will be returned to the Event Organizer within 30 business days after the event, provided all Town property is left in satisfactory condition at the end of the permit time and all terms of the permit agreement have been met, including all garbage from the event placed in provided garbage bins. Failure to comply to will result in loss of deposit.

- $250 security deposit is applied for events under 1,000 people
- $500 security deposit is applied for events over 1,000 people

Booking Deposit

A non-refundable twenty-five percent (25%) booking deposit is required to secure your preferred event date. Payment is required upon signing the Event Agreement.

Music Licensing Requirements (Entandem Fees)

Music is permitted within Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury facilities, including the Public Square, under the following conditions:

Entandem Licensing Fee Requirement

All events that include live or recorded music (including iPods, smartphones, CDs, DJs, etc.) are subject to Entandem licensing fees. The Town is legally required to collect these third-party fees and submit them to Entandem (SOCAN/Re:Sound). Event Organizers are responsible for ensuring the Entandem fee is paid as part of their event booking process.

What is Covered Under Entandem?

Live performances (bands, musicians, DJs), background music (iPods, streaming devices, CDs, etc.) and any music played through amplification or sound systems.

An additional $266.21 Music Licensing Fee will be applied to events with music.

Application Process

Step 1: Application Submission
The Event Organizer must submit a Public Square Rental Application along with application fee.

Step 2: Staff Review
This review may take two to four weeks; a confirmation email will be sent acknowledging receipt of the application.
Applications may be circulated to:

- Parks Division
- Recreation & Cultural Services
- South Simcoe Police Service
- BWG Fire & Emergency Services
- Building Division
- By-law Enforcement
- Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit
- Other applicable agencies

Additional information may be requested during this review..

Step 3: Organizer Meeting
The Town may schedule a meeting with the Event Organizer to review event plans and operating requirements in advance of an approval or declination.

Step 4: Application Approval
Applications may be evaluated based on:

- Community benefit
- Event experience
- Completeness of submission
- Risk management planning
- Previous event history
- Regulatory compliance
- Operational feasibility

The Town reserves the right to approve, deny, or conditionally approve event applications.

Once all required changes have been completed and no further revisions are necessary, the application will be reviewed for final approval by the Director of Recreation and Cultural Services. At this stage, the Event Organizer will be issued a Permit for the event.

Note: Applications for unprecedented events are subject to Council approval. A formal Event Plan Presentation will be submitted to Council, and the Event Organizer will be required to attend the Council meeting to respond to questions.

Step 5: Permit Issuance
A Permit is officially issued upon execution of a signed agreement between the Event Organizer and the Town. A 25% non-refundable booking deposit is required to secure the event date, with the balance due in full no later than 45 business days prior to the event.

Document & Site Requirements

The online application does not save progress. All information must be entered and submitted in one session. Please describe in as much detail as possible for the following when submitting your application:

Event Overview

- Event name
- Event date
- Alternate date
- Event start time
- Event end time
- Setup start time
- Cleanup end time
- Estimated attendance of attendees
- Estimated number of volunteers
- Estimated number of staff
- Estimated number of performers

Event Schedule / Programming

- Detailed description of all event programming
- Entertainment schedule (performers, speakers, demonstrations)
- Indicate if alcohol will be served and if food vendors or food trucks will be present
- Indicate use of tents, inflatables, amplified sound and the stage
- Indicate if hydro access or generators will be required
- Indicate if security personnel or paid duty police will be hired

In addition to the Event Application Form, organizers must submit the following supporting documents to ensure a safe and well-organized event:

Site Map

A site map provides Town staff, emergency services, and vendors with a clear understanding of your event layout. This ensures safety, accessibility, and efficient placement of resources. Your map must be legible and identify the location of key elements such as:

- Food/beverage/retail/merchant vendors
- Tents or covered structures (Including inflatables)
- First Aid stations
- Portable toilets and handwashing stations (if applicable)
- Security (if applicable)
- Garbage, fencing, barricades, or restricted access areas

Emergency Response

An Emergency Response Plan ensures that event organizers are prepared to respond effectively in case of incidents, weather events, or emergencies. It provides Town staff and emergency services with evacuation details, communication procedures, and site safety measures to protect attendees and staff.

Traffic Mitigation *(over 1,000 people)*

Large events can create traffic congestion, impact nearby residents, and increase safety risks for pedestrians and drivers. Organizers must provide a traffic mitigation plan outlining parking arrangements, road closures, detours, and safety measures. Collaboration with Town staff, police, and emergency services may be required to ensure smooth and safe operations.

Washroom Guidelines *(over 1,000 people)*

All events must provide adequate washroom and handwashing facilities for attendees, vendors, and staff. The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit requires details of these facilities to be included in the event application. Witihin the BWG Public Library there are 3 female stalls, 1 male stall and 2 male urinals.

Events with over 1,000 people in attendance will require an additional 2 portable washrooms.

Events with over 1,000 people and alcohol served will require an additional 3 portable washrooms.

All supporting documents must be submitted with the Event Application Form. Please see the Event Application Appendix for further information.

Insurance, Permits & Licenses

Insurance

Event Organizer Insurance

All Event Organizers are required to provide the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury with a valid Certificate of Insurance as follows:

- Commercial General Liability coverage with a minimum of $2 million.

Events that have inflatable games, (must receive approval) have alcohol (must have SOP) or involve higher-risk activities will require a minimum of 5$ Million Commercial General Liability coverage.

- The Certificate of Insurance must name "The Corporation of the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury" as an Additional Insured, include the address of 425 Holland St W and the event name, and remain valid through the event date.
- Event organizer Certificates of Insurance must be submitted no later than 20 business days prior to the event date.

Vendor Insurance

All vendors, including any community group/organization setting up a booth or participating in the event must also provide the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury with a valid Certificate of Insurance:

- Commercial General Liability coverage with a minimum of $2 million.
- The Certificate of Insurance must name "The Corporation of the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury" as an Additional Insured, include the address of 425 Holland St W and the event name, and remain valid through the event date.
- Vendor Certificates of Insurance must be submitted no later than 15 business days prior to the event date.

Important Notes:

- Failure to submit the required insurance documentation by the specified deadlines may result in permit revocation.
- Vendors without valid insurance documentation will not be permitted on-site.

Food Vendor/SMDHU Requirements

Any event involving food preparation, handling, or distribution must comply with the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) regulations.

Coordinator Application (Event Organizer Responsibility)

Event Organizers must submit a "Coordinator Application for Special Event" form to the SMDHU. This application outlines the overall event details, including the list of participating food vendors. The form and further information can be accessed on the SMDHU website: Coordinator Application – SMDHU. This must be submitted no later than **20 business days** before event the date.

Vendor Application (Vendor & Organizer Responsibility)

Each food vendor must individually complete and submit a "Vendor Application for Special Event Permit" to the SMDHU. Vendors must comply with all Public Health food safety regulations and inspection requirements. All vendor insurance must be collected and submitted to the Event Coordinator.

Proof of Submission to the Town

Both the Event Organizer and each participating food vendor are required to provide proof of their application submission to the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury. Proof of submission must be received by the Town no later than **15 business days** prior to the event date.

Business Licensing Requirements for Food Vehicles

(Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury – By-law 2014-70)

Applicability

As per the Town's Business Licensing By-law 2014-70, all food vendors classified as a Refreshment Vehicle or Refreshment Cart are required to obtain a Temporary Business License from the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury.

Definitions (By-law 2014-70)

Refreshment Vehicle: A vehicle used or designed for the sale of refreshments, including Motorized Refreshment Vehicles and Refreshment Carts.

Refreshment Cart: A non-motorized device or conveyance used or designed for the sale, transportation, storage, or cooking of refreshments to the public.

Temporary Business License Application Requirements

To obtain a Temporary Business License, the applicant must submit the following to the Town's Licensing Officer no later than **30 business days** prior to the event:

- Completed Business License Application Form
- Photo Identification (valid government-issued)
- Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) Approval and inspection.
- List of all Operators who will be working the refreshment vehicle/cart
- Certificate of Insurance (minimum $2 million liability), The Certificate of Insurance must name "The Corporation of the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury" as an Additional Insured, include the address of 425 Holland St W and the event name, and remain valid through the event date.
- Temporary Application Fee: $75.00. Full Business Application Fee: $250.
- Approval/inspection from Bradford West Gwillimbury Fire Services for use of cooking arrangements that require fire suppression systems (e.g., fryers/grills) and for use of applicable fuels. All food trucks issued a temporary or full business license may be subject to inspection by the BWG Fire Department. Where an inspection is conducted, a fee of $147.29 per hour shall apply.
- Approval/inspection from Licensing Officer/By-law prior to the event

Submission & Inquiries

Completed applications and documentation must be submitted to:
licensing@townofbwg.com

For additional information or questions regarding licensing requirements, vendors are encouraged to contact the Licensing Officer directly.

Important Notes:

Failure to obtain a valid Temporary Business License may result in prohibition from participating in the event.

Temporary Business Licenses are valid for a singular event. If a food truck or cart opporator is planning on attending two or more events, a full business license and all requirements and fees associated with it must be completed.

Food trucks may only operate within locations approved by the Town and identified on the approved Site Plan.

Up to three foodtrucks may be invited to any given event. All three must set-up and remain with the lay-away along Brian Collier Way.

All materials related to a business licnese must be submitted to the Town 30 business days in advance of an event. It is the organizers responsibillity to collect all required materials. www.townofbwg.com/publicsquare

Safety & Accessibillity

Cooking Within Tents - BWG Fire & Emergency Services

All vendors with cooking equipment will be subject to an inspection from a Bradford Fire and Emergency Services Fire Prevention Inspector.

- All tent materials must be certified fire-retardant (NFPA 701, 705 or CAN/ULC-S109-M).
- No cooking in enclosed tents—cooking tents must be fully open on all sides.
- Tents must be placed at least 3 metres from any structure, fence, or obstruction.
- Outdoor cooking that produces sparks, flame or grease-laden vapours must be at least 3 metres from any non-fire-retardant tent or canopy.
- A Class ABC fire extinguisher must be within 10 metres of all cooking appliances.
- Fuel-fired cooking appliances may require approval from TSSA.
- All electrical equipment must meet Electrical Safety Authority requirements.
- Vendors cooking with oil must place a grease mat beneath their setup to protect the space.
- Please click the following hyperlink to view all guidlines - Cooking Within Tents Guidelines

For fire safety questions, contact BWG Fire Prevention: 905-775-7311 or fireprevention@townofbwg.com

Stage Production & Rigging

Events utilizing:

- Staging
- Professional audio systems or lighting systems
- Trussing
- Rigging
- Temporary structures

may be required to submit technical plans.

Public Square stage infrastructure includes:

2-inch pipe support hangers rated at 100 lbs per linear foot
Two chain support locations rated at 800 lbs each

The Town reserves the right to require:

- Production plans
- Rigging plans
- Engineering drawings
- Professional certifications
- Additional insurance

Published load capacities are provided for planning purposes only and shall be verified during event planning.

Accessibility

Event organizers shall incorporate reasonable accessibility accommodations into event planning and operations.

Accessibility considerations may include:

- Accessible routes
- Accessible viewing areas
- Accessible seating
- Mobility device accommodation
- Emergency evacuation procedures

Cancellation & Post-Event

Weather, Postponement & Cancellation

Public Square events operate rain or shine.
Event Organizers are responsible for monitoring weather conditions and implementing their Emergency Response Plan.
The Town reserves the right, acting reasonably, to suspend, reschedule (subject to facility availability), postpone, evacuate, or cancel an event where weather conditions create or may create a risk to public safety.
Decisions made by the Town regarding public safety shall be binding upon the Event Organizer.

On-Site Documentation

The following must be available on-site throughout the event:

- Approved Event Permit
- Approved Site Plan
- Emergency Response Plan
- Insurance Certificates
- Vendor List
- Applicable licences and approvals

Documentation must be provided upon request by Town staff or regulatory authorities.

Post-Event Evaluation

The Town may conduct a post-event evaluation following the event. Evaluation factors may include:

- Compliance with permit conditions
- Safety performance
- Site condition
- Submission of documentation
- Community impact
- Regulatory compliance
- Cooperation with Town staff
- Complaints received

Evaluation results may be considered when reviewing future applications.



Event Application Appendix

Required Supporting Documents

To ensure a safe and well-organized event, organizers with events must submit the following documents along with the Event Application Form:

- **Emergency Response Plan** outlining evacuation procedures, emergency contacts, and on-site safety measures.

The following documents are templates and can be revised to fit the details of your event.

Emergency Response Plan Template

Organizer Contact (Primary):
On-Site Emergency Contact 1 #:
On-Site Emergency Contact 2#:

1. How will you communicate with attendees during an emergency? (PA system, megaphone, staff briefings)
2. Who is responsible for calling 9-1-1 and directing emergency responders to the scene?
3. What is the designated meeting/evacuation point in case of evacuation?
4. Who will be the lead contact coordinating with Town staff during an incident?

Situation	Planned Response (before and during the event)
Calling off the event • Who will make the decision to call off the event? **In situations causing or anticipated to cause risk/harm to the public, the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury and/or South Simcoe Police Service and/or BWG Fire and Emergency Services retains the authority to call off or end any event.*	
Communication • Please indicate how the members of your team will communicate emergencies. • Please indicate how your team will communicate to the public.	
Severe/inclement weather • What will you do in case of lightning, heavy winds, or extreme heat? • Where will attendees seek shelter if needed? • How will cancellation or delays be communicated to attendees and vendors?	

Medical emergencies • Do you have a designated First Aid Station? • Are certified First Aiders on-site? • Where is the closest AED (Automated External Defibrillator)? • What is the procedure if a medical emergency occurs in the crowd/ vendor areas?	
Lost person/child • What steps will be take if a child is reported missing? • What is your procedure for reuniting a lost child or individual with their guardian? • What communication system will be used to broadcast a missing person alert?	
Lost goods • What is the designated location for lost and found items? • What is the procedure for documenting and returning lost items to their owners?	
Fire or hazardous incident • Are all vendors using open flames or generators aware of fire safety regulations? • Do you have fire extinguishers on-site? • Who will manage crowd control in case of fire or hazardous material spill?	
Evacuation procedure • How will attendees be notified in the event of an evacuation (e.g., PA system, event staff, signage)? • Who is responsible for coordinating and leading the evacuation? • How will accessibility needs (mobility devices, strollers, etc.) be accommodated during evacuation?	
Post-Incident Reporting • Who will document incidents (injuries, evacuations, emergencies)? • How will incidents be reported back to Town staff after the event?	

Traffic Mitigation Plan Template *(required for events over 1,000 people)*

1. Estimated number of attendees:
   Parking & Transportation
2. On-site parking capacity is approximately 400 spaces. Please note that the BWG Leisure Centre and BWG Public Library may be operating during your event, which can reduce the number of spaces available to attendees. Event organizers should plan for overflow parking and clearly communicate parking options in advance.
3. Off-site parking arrangements:
4. Shuttle service: Yes / No
5. Accessible parking locations:
6. Road Impacts:
   Road Closures Required? Yes / No
   Detour Routes Planned? Yes / No
7. Traffic Control Personnel (paid duty officers, volunteers, or traffic marshals).
8. Pedestrian Safety
9. Crosswalk supervision



Photos of Public Square














Bradford
West
Gwillimbury







Grants and Funding Opportunities

The Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury encourages and supports community-led events that contribute to local culture, recreation, and tourism. Event Organizers may be eligible for municipal or external funding programs to help offset event costs.

1. **Town of BWG – Community Grant Program**
   The Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury Community Grant Program provides financial support to local community groups and organizations hosting events, programs, or initiatives that benefit residents. Application deadline is December 1, annually. More information and application details can be found at: www.townofbwg.com/grants

2. **County and Regional Opportunities**
   Event organizers may also explore grants and sponsorships available through regional partners such as:

- Simcoe County Tourism, Culture & Sport Enhancement Fund:

Applications generally open at the beginning of the year. More information and application details can be found at: https://experience.simcoe.ca/resources/tourism-culture-sport-grant/

3. **Provincial and Federal Funding**
   Depending on the event scope and audience, organizers may be eligible for broader funding streams, including:

- Ontario Trillium Foundation (community impact and volunteer-based programs) otf.ca
- Celebrate Ontario / Experience Ontario Grants (tourism and cultural events)
- Celebrate Canada/Canada Heritage and Multiculturalism Grants (cultural and diversity programming). Application deadline is November 23, 2026, for the upcoming year. More information and application details can be found at: https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/celebrate-canada.html

Tips for Applicants:
Plan Early: Align your application timelines with your event planning schedule.
Check Eligibility Carefully: Some programs only fund certain types of events or organizations.
Document Contributions: Keep track of in-kind support, volunteer hours, and funding

Contact Information

Please direct your questions to the Events & Marketing Coordinator:
Evan Bryan
ebryan@townofbwg.com
905-775-5366 ext 5103