



County of Santa Clara

Roads and Airports Department

Special Event Permit Guidelines and Information

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Thank you for contacting the County of Santa Clara Roads and Airports Department regarding your Special Event. We welcome the opportunity to work with you to help ensure that your event is a success. These guidelines have been prepared to help guide you through the process of obtaining a Special Event Permit for an event on a County maintained road in unincorporated Santa Clara County. All forms and information referred to in these guidelines is available at the Special Events webpage: <https://countyroads.sccgov.org/special-event-permits>

A Special Event Permit from the Roads and Airports Department is required for certain events that impact or occur within the County Right of Way (ROW), identified as a block party, minor special event, major special event, or expressive activity, as defined by County Ordinance Sections B3-145 thru B3-161. The County (ROW) includes all or any part of the entire width of the right of way, whether or not such entire area is used for purposes of pedestrian or vehicular travel.

Should you have any questions along the way, please feel free to contact us as follows:

Email: permits@rda.sccgov.org
Office Phone: 408-573-2475

1. Governing Ordinance

The information in these guidelines is consistent with the County of Santa Clara’s Special Events Ordinance (“County Ordinance”), which is designed to effectively regulate events on County roads so that they are safe, clean, and cause minimal impacts. You may view the Special Events Ordinance in its entirety at the webpage for Santa Clara County Code of Ordinances, under Title B, Division B3, Chapter VII Special Events on County Roads (https://library.municode.com/ca/santa_clara_county/codes/code_of_ordinances).

2. Description of Events

Your application will require submitting a completed application that identifies the type of event and paying a fee. The table below summarizes the event that requires a Special Event permit and the associated fee.

Special Event Categories Requiring Permits

Event Type	People Attending	Road Closure or Restricts Use of Road	Additional Characteristics and Ordinance Reference	Fee
Major Special Event (no road closure)	> 500 people	No	B3-146(i)	Actual cost for County staff and resources; deposit
Major Special Event (road closure)	Any number	Yes	B3-146(i)	Actual cost for County staff and resources; deposit
Minor Special Event	< 500 people	No	Does not close or restrict road, but does not comply with usual traffic regulations or controls; OR requires temporary structure on road. B3-146(j)	\$200
Block Party	Neighborhood	Yes	B3-146(b); B3-147(a)(1)	\$98
Expressive Activity	Any number	Likely	B3-146(b); B3-147(a)(4)	\$200

Regarding the characteristics listed above for minor special events:

- Temporary structures on the road may include, but are not limited to, the following: placement of a tent, canopy, medical stations, rest-stops, or portable toilets.
- Not complying with usual traffic regulations refers to any number of situations which may include, but not limited to, the following: placement of temporary signage (informational, directional); personnel near the roadway and directing pedestrians or traffic at decision points; or pedestrians walking on the road (not walking in a marked crosswalk or the manner of walking is not in a reasonably safe manner).

Two types of Special Events do not require a permit:

- The activity consists of 50 to 500 individuals and complies fully with traffic regulations and meets requirements per County Ordinance B3-147(a)(5) and B3-148(b).
- Funeral processions by a licensed mortuary or funeral home (refer to County Ordinance Section B3-148(a)).

In addition, refer to County Ordinance B3-147(c) regarding spontaneous events or events that require advance planning that require a permit from the Planning and Building Department or Fire Marshal's Office.

3. Verify County Road

Not all roads in unincorporated Santa Clara County are County maintained, and instead may be a private road or a state highway. Route maps submitted with the application must clearly identify County maintained roads as well as identify the owner of a non-County maintained road. Special Event Permits from County Roads and Airports only apply to events and activities on County Maintained roads and does not constitute a County general approval for the event.

Refer to two links provided in the Special Event Permits webpage to determine if the road or road segments are County maintained roads:

- SCC Planning Map: Link leads to an online map that includes layered information, permitting reviewer to select to see County Maintained roads.
- Roads and Boundaries – Information: Provides instructions on using SCC Planning Map, in order to determine if a road is County maintained and to check jurisdictional boundaries.

If the event is on a private road or state highway, but may impact County roads through advance temporary traffic signage:

- Do not file for a Special Event Permit, but instead file for an Encroachment Permit application. Refer to the Encroachment Permit application webpage for information:
<https://countyroads.sccgov.org/encroachment-permits>
- Organizers must meet with the owners of the private road, and obtain their approval, if the private road is part of the event route. County Roads and Airports will not provide a permit for private roads.

4. Special Event Permit Application – Forms and Documents to Submit

All Special Event Permit applications must include the following documents:

- **Special Event Permit Application Form**
 - Complete all portions of the fillable application form.
 - Do not submit scanned or copied versions, or images/photos of the form. Save the form to your computer, complete it, and then submit the completed form.

- **Indemnification Form**
 - Complete the Indemnification Form (a hold harmless agreement in a form approved by the County) agreeing to defend, indemnify and hold harmless the County against losses and liabilities incurred from the conduct of the permittee or its officers, employees or agents.

- **Block Party Neighborhood Signatures Form (Block Parties Only)**
 - A block party requires approval of 75% of the residents within the confines of the street barricades placed to block off the neighborhood. Preference is to restrict the event to the area of the neighborhood with 100% of the resident signatures.
 - To demonstrate approval, applicants must submit a Block Party Neighborhood Signatures Form with the application.
 - Refer to additional information in the section below entitled “Block Party Additional Information. Especially note that Sheriffs Office approval is required to issue a permit for a Block Party.

- **Event Site and Route Maps**
 - Event Site maps for minor or major special event permits must include the areas designated for parking, main event area (refreshments, registration, announcements, awards), first aid area, sanitary facilities, and event organizer/administration area.
 - Route maps must include road names with designation as “County maintained road” or “Not County road”, rest stops, sanitary facilities, and general directional information (the route the participants are to follow).
 - If route covers a large area, applicants must include a descriptive cover page that addresses the entire route and identifies route segments broken out for clarity, then include detailed route segments with legible road names (and if County road) in the subsequent pages.
 - Roads and Airports may request a Turn by Turn description to be submitted for review.

- **Traffic Control Plan for Major and Minor Special Events**
 - The route map is to provide an understanding of county roads impacted by the event, whereas a Traffic Control Plan identifies safety measures including temporary traffic or pedestrian signage to be placed along the route.
 - Provide a Traffic Control Plan (TCP) that identifies temporary closures (side of road, or lane of road) with provisions for accommodating pedestrian and vehicular traffic and use of temporary traffic control devices, including traffic cones, barricades signs, pavement markings and traffic control officers(on foot, bicycles, motorcycles, or cars).

- **Event Notification**
 - A section of the application will require an event notification statement to explain the manner of providing notice of permit conditions to businesses and residents who may be directly affected by the conduct of the event.
 - Include with the application an event flyer or message to be disseminated to all businesses and residents affected by the road closure or event..

- **Project Site BMP Form**
 - The Project Site BMP (Best Management Practices) Form must be completed, signed and submitted with the application in order to demonstrate compliance with County Ordinance Section B3-153(I). The form is available at the Special Events webpage.
 - All applicants must check the boxes for WM5 (solid waste management procedures and practices; referring to common litter generated by the public)
 - If the Special Event includes sanitary stations, applicants must check the box for WM9 (sanitary/septic waste management practices).
 - The Special Event webpage includes a description of the WM5 and WM9 BMP’s.

- **Insurance**

- Proof of insurance must be submitted to the County prior to issuance of the permit and must be maintained throughout the duration of the permit.
- If the County determines that a particular event which is no more than one day and does not present a substantial risk to the County, then the County may waive the insurance requirements.
- You may submit the Special Event Application Form before obtaining the insurance. However, permit issuance will be suspended pending receipt of the insurance.

5. Permit Requirements and Restrictions

Refer to County Ordinance Section B3-153 for additional permit conditions, requirements, or restrictions. Referred to sections below entitled "Items Reviewed that Lead to Special Event Permit Issuance" and "Special Event Permit Denial or Revoked" for additional requirements and conditions. Refer also to the section below entitled "Large Special Events or Events with Tents/Fireworks".

6. Fee and Required Deposit

Special Event Permit fees are for services provided to review work that will occur in the County right-of-way. Services provided include permit processing, review, inspection, and administration by County Roads and Airports personnel. The fees for minor special events, expressive activity and block parties are set by the Board of Supervisors. The fee for a major special event will be the actual cost for County staff and resources.

Issuance of the Special Event permit will require payment of the fee or a deposit for the estimated fee, in the case of a major special event. For major special events, organizers will be provided an estimate for the fee and will be required to provide the estimated fee as a deposit, with a full cost accounting to occur after the event is completed to determine if an additional fee is to be collected or if a partial refund is to be provided.

7. Block Party Additional Information

A Block Party has additional requirements including requirement for Sheriff's Office approval.

- Sheriff's Office approval is required for a Block Party. At the time of application, an email will be sent to the Sheriff's Office that will include the applicants email address, the completed Special Event Application Form, and the completed Block Party Neighborhood Signature Form. Sheriff's Office will notify both the applicant and the County Roads and Airports when approval is granted.
- Street Barricades: There will be no blocking of the street other than with the removable barricades furnished by the County. An applicant whose request has been approved is responsible for picking up street barricades, placing the barricades per the approved plan, then removing the barricades and returning to the County. At the time of the permit issuance, you will be instructed to the County Roads and Airports yard with the approved pickup and drop-off times. The required barricades, based on availability, will be provided at no cost. The Special Event Permit must be presented when the barricades are picked up. Barricades must be picked up no later than noon on the Friday prior to the block party and must be returned within the first County business day after the block party. The applicant will be required to pay for replacement costs for any barricades not returned to the County.
- Emergency vehicles must be able to enter and vacate the block party area.
- An applicant whose request has been approved may not continue the block party after the approved time.
- Even with an approved permit for outdoor amplification of music, noises of all types, including radios, stereos, etc. should be kept to a minimum. All music must be off by 10 PM or submit for a special event from the .

8. Large Special Events or Events with Tents/Fireworks

Very large and/or long running events, events that include tents/canopies in excess of 400 square feet, or events involving cooking booths, typically require application through the planning department and/or through the Fire Marshal's office. Please visit the Santa Clara County Department of Planning and Development webpage for information about special events, tents and fireworks:

<https://plandev.sccgov.org/how/plan-event/special-events-tents-fireworks>

9. Other Jurisdictions Approval or Agreements

Certain events may require concurrent approval with the local jurisdiction, or the police of that jurisdiction will provide police assistance or providing traffic control. Agreements with the local jurisdiction or police must be submitted with the Special Event Application, either at the time of the agreement being submitted or immediately thereafter, or the permit may not be issued.

10. Cleanup and Final Inspection

After the event is completed, clean up and proper disposal of garbage and trash from the event location is required within seventy-two hours of the end of the event. For major events, event organizers are encouraged to initiate and complete cleanup on the day of the event and notify your assigned County inspector for an event-day final inspection (may reduce costs if it avoids a separate day to inspect).

11. Deadlines for Filing of a Special Event Application

Applications for the events identified above must be filed according to the following timelines.

- Major Special Event – not less than 60 calendar days before the event.
- Minor Special Event – not less than 30 calendar days before the event.
- Block Party – not less than 15 calendar days before the block party.
- Special Event Involving Expressive Activity – not less than 7 calendar days before the event.

Always submit much earlier. In order to be subject to these review timelines, applications must be determined by permit staff to be complete with all required forms submitted. You will be notified when the permit is considered complete. For major and minor special events, please allow up to two weeks to review and process the application.

12. Items Reviewed that Lead to Special Event Permit Issuance

A permit will be issued if it is determined that the following criteria has been met:

- The proposed use of the road is not governed by or subject to any other permit procedures provided elsewhere in the Special Events Ordinance or applicable laws, rules or regulations.
- The preparation for or the conduct of the proposed event will not unreasonably or unfeasibly burden County resources necessary to preserve the public's use of the road, the area contiguous to the road or other public property.
- The preparation for or the conduct of the proposed event will not unduly impede, obstruct, or interfere with the operation of emergency vehicles or equipment in or through the particular permit area or adversely affect the County's ability to perform County functions or furnish County services in the vicinity of the permit area.
- The proposed event does not otherwise present a substantial or unwarranted safety, noise or traffic hazard.
- For events that will result in a road closure and traffic diversion, a temporary traffic control plan has been prepared addressing the proposed detour routes to the extent such a plan is required and approved by the County.
- The manner of providing notice of permit conditions to businesses and residents who may be directly affected by the conduct of the event has been provided.

- The proposed event will not cause adverse impacts on health or safety to surrounding residential or commercial uses, which cannot be effectively mitigated.

13. Special Event Permit Denial or Revoked

A permit will be denied or revoked (after it is issued) if one or more of the to following exists:

- One or more of the criteria for approval, above, has not been met.
- The applicant has knowingly or deliberately made a false, misleading or fraudulent statement of a material fact in the application.
- The application does not contain all information requested.
- The applicant has failed to conduct a previously authorized major or minor special event or block party, in accordance with the law, including the terms of the special event permit, or has failed to reimburse the County for property damage caused by the event, unless the applicant demonstrates changes to the operation of the event have been made to ensure compliance with the law and special event permit requirements for the event under consideration.
- The event is prohibited by any local or state law, statute, rule, ordinance or regulation.
- The applicant fails to comply with or agree to a permit condition.
- The applicant fails to agree, as a condition of permit issuance that if the road, or portion thereof, is destroyed or damaged by reason of permittee's event and the damage or destruction is directly attributable to the permittee, the permittee will reimburse the County for the actual replacement or repair cost of the destroyed or damaged property.

14. Appeal if Special Event Permit Denial or Revoked

Refer to County Ordinance Section B3-152 for the appeal process if the Special Event Permit application is denied or if the permit is revoked.

15. Non-Transferrable

The permit is not transferable. A special event permit is required for each and every separate special event and a permit issued for one event may not be used for a separate event.

More Questions? For more information on questions relating to the Special Event Permit application or fee process, please contact our Permit office: Email (permits@rda.sccgov.org) or call 408-573-2475.