

Madison Heights Event Guide

For Boards & Commissions

A practical guide to turning your great idea into a successful City program.

November, 2026

Madison Heights
Creating Community



SO, YOU WANT TO HOST AN EVENT?

This guide helps Boards and Commissions move an event from concept to execution. Start by defining the event's purpose, determine how that purpose will be fulfilled, and then work through the necessary logistics, requirements, and City processes. Use this guide as a practical roadmap for understanding what needs to happen, when it needs to happen, and who can help.

A good plan turns an idea into a successful event. Dates, locations, vendors, food, staffing, budgets, permits, safety, and communications all matter.

YOU ARE THE HOST.

As you plan, think about what you want attendees to feel, experience, and take away from the event. Keep the purpose clear, make people feel welcome, and create opportunities for meaningful connection.

24
Boards and Commissions

135+
City Appointees

25+
Annual City Events
Planned by Volunteers

EVENT DUPLICATION

The City hosts numerous events alongside City Boards and Commissions.

Three things to consider before you plan:

- Is it in the work plan?
- Is it already an event?
- Is there funding available?



WHO DOES WHAT?

Planning a successful Board or Commission event is a team effort. Each role has different responsibilities to help keep the event organized, on track, and within the Board's scope.

Chair & Vice-Chair

- Confirm the event and budget have been approved.
- Keep the Board informed of the committee's progress and recommendations.

City Council Liaison

- Confirm the event is included in the Board's work plan and obtain Council approval if needed.
- Keep Council informed of event plans and progress.
- Help ensure the event aligns with the City's mission and priorities.

Subcommittee / Event Team

- Drive event planning and coordinate details.
- Complete assigned tasks and follow through on next steps.
- Report progress and recommendations to the Chair and the Board.

Staff Liaison

- Coordinate the Board's needs with City support.
- Answer questions and clarify City processes.
- Provide administrative guidance as needed.

CHAIR & VICE-CHAIR Keep the Board on track

STAFF LIAISON Help navigate administrative processes

COUNCIL LIAISON Keep the Board connected to Council

SUBCOMMITTEE Drive event planning

FULL BOARD Provide direction and approve subcommittee actions

ONE EVENT. ONE LEAD.

Boards and Commissions are encouraged to collaborate on events; however, each event should have one designated Primary Board or Commission and an Event Subcommittee Chair to lead the planning process. The Primary Board serves as the key stakeholder and is responsible for keeping the event on track, overseeing the approved budget, and ensuring the event meets its goals. Partner Boards may assist with specific tasks and responsibilities, but serve in a supporting, volunteer capacity rather than sharing overall responsibility for the event.



Key Consideration:

- Does the City already have a similar event?
- Some of the most successful events have been a result of thoughtful collaboration.

PROCESS FLOW:

How to go from Idea to Execution.

Have a great idea

Is this event within the Board/Commission's approved workplan?
Confirm that the event aligns with the mission and work plan approved by City Council. Ensure the event does not duplicate or overlap with an event that is already being planned.

YES

NO

Staff Liaison reports the new event to the City Manager for administrative review.

Is it approved?

YES

NO

Sorry, no event

Are other Boards/Commissions involved?

YES

NO

Identify the Lead Board/Commission
Partners can contribute, but responsibilities should be defined at the beginning.

YES

Responsible board proceed to checklist on Page 4

CHECKLIST

Your next step is to use this guide to help plan and coordinate your event. While this checklist is not exhaustive, it provides a general framework to keep you on track and help ensure all necessary steps are addressed.

6-12 Months Until Event

Have a Great Idea

_____ Identify event concept and purpose

_____ Identify anticipated activities, vendors, food, entertainment, etc.

_____ Ensure alignment with Council's vision

_____ If partnering with another Board or Commission, assign the Primary Board or Commission in charge

_____ Research if the City already sponsors a similar event, and identify if there is a partnership opportunity.

Subcommittee Formation

_____ Form an event subcommittee at board/commission meeting

_____ Confirm subcommittee members and responsibilities
Keep the subcommittee below a quorum (less than half of the current voting members)

4-6 Months Until Event

Approve Date, Time, Location & Budget

_____ Establish preliminary budget & obtain Board/Commission approval for event (including budget)

_____ Identify potential sponsors, if applicable

_____ Determine event lead, and on-site contact
This should identify an individual who will be reachable by phone by DPS, Fire, and Police during event.

_____ Identity other Key Roles
Examples can include; Budget Lead, Volunteer Lead, Sponsorship Lead, Vendor Lead, etc.

Reserve Spaces

_____ Submit application/request to staff liaison to reserve pavilion, bandshell, shelter, or other City facility
Fees are waived for Board/Commission events on a first-come, first-served basis.

Vendor Planning

_____ Establish vendor guidelines

_____ Create vendor registration form & determine vendor fee, if applicable

_____ Determine if/how vendor payments will be collected

Helpful Reminder

Even if this is a reoccuring event, treat each year as a new event. Procedures, requirements, contacts, and circumstances can change from year to year. Following the checklist each time helps ensure everything is up to date and nothing important is missed.

_____ Begin vendor recruitment
Recruit City Departments to table at event alonside vendors (Animal Shelter, Police, Fire, etc.)

_____ Invite food truck vendors, if applicable
Food trucks historically have a long waitlist in the summer

Contingency Planning / Rain Dates

_____ Confirm and reserve the backup plan

3 Months Until Event

Marketing & Signage

_____ Develop marketing plan
City social media policy applies. City letterhead and logos require staff liaison approval.

_____ Plan social media promotion & posts

_____ Identify signage needs

Entertainment & Activities

_____ Confirm entertainment/activities

_____ Communicate any contracts and payment requirements

_____ Confirm insurance requirements, if applicable

Volunteer Planning

_____ Determine how many volunteers are needed

_____ Begin recruiting volunteers

Helpful Reminder

To have your event included in the City's Quarterly Madison Heights Happenings brochure, please note the following deadlines:

DEADLINES:
Spring (March - May) - January 1
Summer (June - August) - April 1
Fall (September - November) - June 1
Winter (December - January) - October 1

2 Months Until Event

Layout Planning

_____ Create preliminary site plan & submit Temporary Event Form

_____ Identify electricity/water/access needs

_____ Identify if road closures are required
Road closures require consultation with Emergency Services. Please let staff liaison know if this is needed.

Food Planning & Health Department

_____ Determine which Health Department forms are required

_____ Submit required documents to Oakland County Health Department

_____ Remind food trucks/vendors of their Special Transitory Food Unit (STFU) requirements

Event Trailer & Equipment

_____ Request event trailer, if applicable
The event trailer holds tables, chairs, tents, traffic cones, trash frames, extension cords, and utility supplies. Boards/Commissions are responsible for the City equipment they use.

1 Month Until Event

DEADLINE: Check Requests & Payment Options

_____ Submit check requests to staff liaison including name, amount, and address

_____ Confirm vendor/entertainment payment arrangements

_____ Request cash box from staff liaison, if applicable

_____ Request Square Reader, if applicable

_____ Submit requests for Sponsorship Invoices to staff liaison, if needed
Finance needs sufficient time to process and issue checks and invoices.

DEADLINE: Signage Requests

_____ Last call for signage requests

DEADLINE: Site Plan

_____ Finalize event site plan
Review accessibility needs from both a safety and universal access perspective

_____ Identify restrooms / plan for portables, if applicable

_____ Send official site plan to staff liaison, vendors, and others.

_____ Identify potential traffic concerns

DEADLINE: Staffing Needs

_____ Finalize volunteer list

_____ Assign event-day responsibilities

_____ Determine setup and cleanup teams

_____ Invite departments to table at event

_____ Confirm any City staff/Park Ranger support
City Manager to make final decision regarding staff support

Helpful Reminder

Park Rangers can unlock buildings, provide restroom access, service bathrooms, and operate lighting. They are not responsible for event setup, including arranging tables, setting up tents, or other event-related tasks.

2 Weeks Until Event

Decorations & Purchases

_____ Confirm all decorations & purchases

_____ Ensure any banner orders have been placed/printed

_____ Decide where materials will be stored

Run of Show / Schedule

_____ Draft run of show

Collect Checks

_____ Collect final sponsorship checks

Helpful Reminder

Keep both your staff liaison and the entire Board informed of the event's progress. While deliberation cannot take place in group chats with quorum due to Open Meetings Act requirements, it is appropriate to provide periodic updates on planning and progress.

Council Representatives are responsible for keeping City Council informed of event planning and ensuring that events remain consistent with Council's direction and overall mission.

Week of the Event

Final Checklist

_____ Check the weather forecast

_____ Confirm contingency plan

_____ Confirm run of show

_____ Confirm all vendors

_____ Establish person to pick up keys, checks, and supplies from staff liaison

_____ Remind all volunteers of the shifts they've signed up for

City staff are here to support your event, but we cannot accommodate last-minute requests. Please plan ahead and communicate needs as early as possible. The final week should be focused on confirming details and preparing for the event, not adding new requests or major changes.

Day of the Event

Before Everyone Arrives

Review the Run of Show and confirm...

- Who is the event lead and who is the backup contact.
- All volunteers know their assigned roles and where they need to be
- Who is handling vendors, food trucks, check-in, setup, cleanup, and any activities specific to your event
- Who to contact with questions or problems at event

Set up the site

- Unlock facilities and access areas as needed.
- Set up tables, chairs, tents, signage, trash/recycling, and other event-specific equipment.
- Confirm restrooms are accessible and ready.
- Check that walkways, entrances, exits, and emergency access remain clear.
- Identify accessibility needs from both a safety and universal access perspective.

Vendors and Food Trucks

Vendor Check-In

- Direct vendors to their assigned spaces.
- Confirm setup locations before vendors unload.
- Make sure vendors do not block entrances, accessible routes, emergency access, or other vendors
- Vendors should NOT be driving on the grass or sidewalks. This is a safety concern.

Food Trucks

- Have a designated person meet/direct food trucks when they arrive.
- Confirm exactly where each truck should park before they start setting up.
- Keep required access lanes and pedestrian areas clear.

Clean Up

- Take down event-specific equipment and signage
- Return tables, chairs, tents, and other City equipment
- Collect trash and recycling
- Lock facilities/trailer

Week After Event

Wrap - Up

_____ Return all City keys, equipment, and supplies

_____ Review participation, budget, and overall event success

_____ Note what worked, what didn't, and what should change next time

_____ Submit reimbursements and receipts to the Staff Liaison

_____ Submit outstanding invoices to the Staff Liaison

_____ Prepare a brief review of the event to share at the Board or Commission's next meeting. Provide this review to the Staff Liaison in advance so it can be included on the agenda