



OUTDOOR MOVIE NIGHT Best Practices

Outdoor movie nights are a fun way to bring the community together and create memorable experiences. Whether hosted as a standalone event or as part of a larger community gathering, careful planning and attention to safety, logistics and equipment needs will help ensure your movie night is successful and compliant with City requirements. This guideline outlines best practices for organizing and hosting an outdoor movie night on City of Greater Sudbury property.



Planning and Preparation

- 1. Define the purpose of your event.** Decide why you are hosting the community outdoor movie night, for example, to celebrate a milestone, raise funds or bring neighbours together for a fun, shared experience.
- 2. Determine a suitable location.** Choose a site with enough open space for seating, screen setup and equipment, with convenient access for vehicles. Consider nearby amenities such as washrooms and waste containers. Ensure the area is accessible for all attendees, including those using mobility aids. Confirm power access in advance if you require electricity for the screen, projector or sound system.
- 3. Book your space early.** To host an outdoor movie night on City property, you must have a facility booking contract issued by the City of Greater Sudbury, and fees may apply. You must also provide event insurance with a minimum of \$2 million in general liability coverage, naming the City of Greater Sudbury as additionally insured. Email events@greatersudbury.ca to check the availability of your preferred location and date, and be connected with your City liaison.
- 4. Develop a budget.** Include costs for equipment rentals (screen, projector, sound system), insurance and any additional activities or concessions planned as part of the event.
- 5. Recruit volunteers.** Gather helpers to support setup, equipment operation, attendee management and cleanup. Assign clear roles to ensure the event runs smoothly.
- 6. Submit your Special Event Application Form.** Once you've confirmed your location and date are available and your booking is complete, submit a [Special Event Application](#) to provide City staff with the details of your event.

Screen Placement Considerations

A movie may be projected onto a large screen or the side of a building. Ensure the projection surface is flat, light-coloured and unobstructed.

Lighting Conditions:

Select a location with minimal ambient lighting (e.g., streetlights or nearby buildings) so that the movie can be viewed clearly after dark.

Start Time:

Schedule the movie to begin after sundown to ensure optimal visibility.

Neighbour Considerations:

Choose a location that limits disruption to nearby residents. Avoid projecting light or directing sound toward neighbouring homes or businesses, and ensure the movie does not continue too late into the night if in a residential area.

Film Licensing Requirements

Public outdoor movie screenings are considered public performances under Canadian copyright law. A public performance license is required to legally show a movie, even if admission is free.

In Ontario, public screening rights can be obtained from one of the following agencies:

- Audio Cine Films Inc. (ACF) – acf-film.com
- Criterion Pictures Canada – criterionpic.com

To obtain a license:

- Contact one of the agencies above and provide details of your event (film title, date, location, audience size and whether admission is charged).
- The agency will confirm if the film is available for public screening and provide a quote for the license fee.
- Keep documentation of your license approval on file for City verification.
- Note that streaming services (e.g., Netflix, Disney+, Prime Video) do not include public performance rights. These films cannot be used for public screenings.



For more resources, visit
greatersudbury.ca/planaspaciaevent

Alternative Option:

Another option is to hire a company that already holds the necessary public performance licenses for a range of films. These companies often provide a curated list of approved titles and may also supply the screen, sound system and projection equipment as part of a complete rental package. This approach can simplify logistics and ensure all legal and technical requirements are met. A quick online search in your area can help you identify local companies offering similar packages.

Safety and Security

- Establish a clear [emergency plan](#), including contact information for emergency services and event organizers.
- Assign volunteers to monitor crowd flow around the movie screen, seating areas and any walkways to ensure safety.
- Keep first aid supplies readily available and ensure at least one volunteer is trained in basic first aid.
- Ensure all electrical equipment, projectors and extension cords are safely set up and attended at all times.

Promotion and Communication

- Once your facility booking contract has been completed and approved, promote your event through social media, community bulletins and local networks.
- Provide clear information on event time, location, parking or transportation options and movie start time.
- Use signage to guide attendees to seating areas, restrooms, recycling stations and concessions (if applicable).

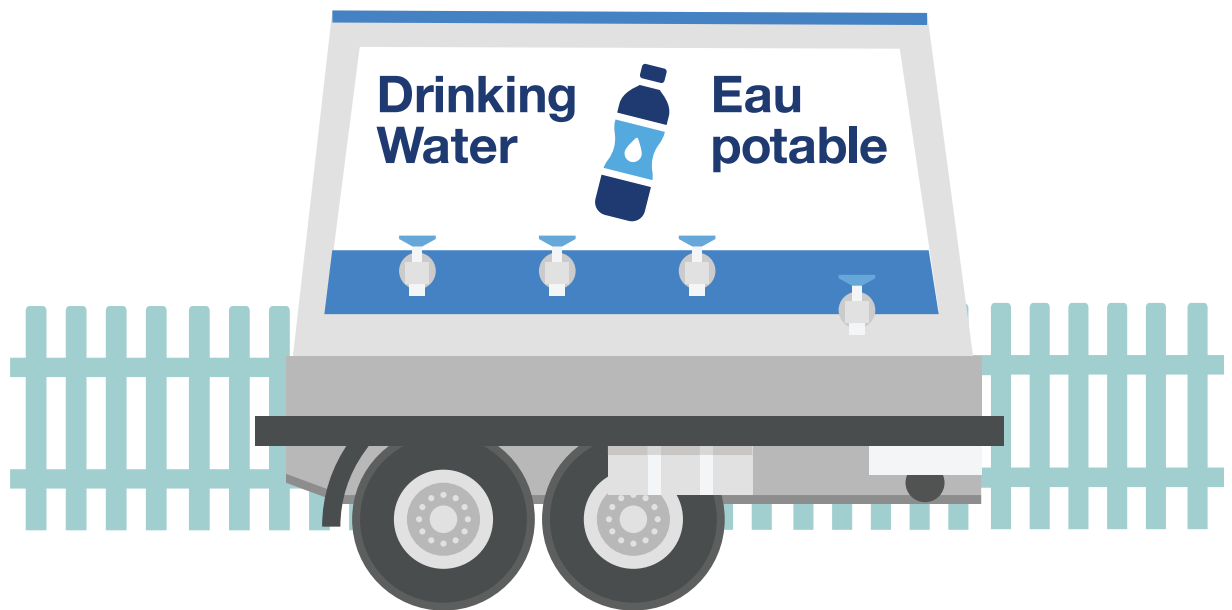
Sustainability

- Request [recycling and compost](#) bins through the City website.
- Avoid single-use plastics whenever possible.
- Encourage attendees to bring reusable water bottles, or submit a request to have the City's [Water Buggy](#) on-site at your event.

Post-Event

- Conduct a full cleanup of the event area immediately after the movie, ensuring all waste, decorations and equipment are properly disposed of or returned.
- If City equipment was used, return it to the designated storage area.
- Review feedback from volunteers and attendees to identify successes and areas for improvement.
- Share your event outcomes and photos with your City liaison, and thank your volunteers, sponsors and community members for their participation.

By following these best practices, you'll help ensure a safe, enjoyable and considerate outdoor movie event that fosters connection and engagement within the community.



For more resources, visit
greatersudbury.ca/planaspecialevent