



Resident Report Town of East Gwillimbury Events Strategy

April 16, 2025

Photo Credit: Town of East Gwillimbury



The Town of East Gwillimbury Events Strategy provides a roadmap for making decisions related to events in the community. It will guide the Town's activities as it aims to deliver sustainable and diverse events that are enjoyed by all residents.

Why an Event Strategy is Needed

Events are opportunities for connection. They have the power to build bonds between people, communities and places. The potential of events to bring people together is already on display in East Gwillimbury. Thousands of people attend Town-run events and residents appreciate the events that are offered.

East Gwillimbury's population is growing and diversifying fast, and there is increasing demand for events. These factors and other challenges need to be addressed to make sure the community is well positioned to host successful events. Changes will be needed to do this, including for example, how staff are organized to work on events and how they support community organizations to host their own events. Making improvements will ensure that the whole community continues to benefit from events well into the future.



Spotlight on Events

There are many popular events in the community, including Music Nights, Canada Day, the Santa Claus Parade, Celebrating the Arts: A Taste of Culture, and more. Thousands of people enjoy these events every year!

Benefits of Events



SOCIAL BENEFITS

- Improves health and well-being
- Community cohesion
- Connection and socialization
- Cultural exchange
- Education and awareness
- Volunteerism and civic engagement
- Community pride



ECONOMIC BENEFITS

- Supporting the local economy and businesses
- Creating and sustaining event-related jobs
- Promoting local products and services
- Drawing visitor spending to the community
- Increases resources for governments



ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

- Connecting residents to the environment
- Helping preserve important local areas
- Encouraging eco-friendly practices
- Beautifying the community

Photo Credits: Town of East Gwillimbury



East Gwillimbury's Vision for Events

Events in East Gwillimbury bring residents and communities together to celebrate what they share and also what makes them unique.

What the Events Strategy Will Help us Achieve

- ✓ Events meet community-wide and community specific needs.
- ✓ Events are delivered within the financial and operational capacity of the Town.
- ✓ Community organizations are further engaged in delivering events.
- ✓ Community members are aware of and participate enthusiastically in events.
- ✓ Event facilities are well-programmed and animated, and can accommodate the community's event venue needs.
- ✓ Events are accessible and inclusive to all, welcoming newcomers and people of diverse cultures in the community.



Top 10 Actions From the Strategy

The following actions are identified as top priorities. They have the most potential to make events in East Gwillimbury even better. Our plan as a Town is to do these things over the next five years as our resources allow.



1. Establish a 'one-door-in' approach for events at the Town and clarify internal roles and responsibilities related to event delivery.



2. Adopt a set of criteria to assist in determining which events merit investment by the Town.



3. Implement an event services matrix to assist the Town in determining what level of involvement and support the Town will provide to different types of event organizers.



4. Consider adding human resources to increase capacity of the Town and community to deliver events, using a priority focused and phased-in approach.



5. Establish a Special Events Advisory Team (SEAT).



6. Develop a community events grant program.



7. Encourage more small-scale events at parks across East Gwillimbury through program elements like "Block Party in a Box" and outdoor facility enhancements.



8. Develop a Special Event Plan for the HALP.



9. Enhance diversity and inclusion in event delivery, including integration of IIDEA Action Plan projects and initiatives.



10. Implement the Town's forthcoming Sustainable Event Strategy as events are planned and delivered.

Tools to Stay on Track

The Events Strategy includes several tools the Town can use to help make decisions that advance our goals. These include:

- **Event Evaluation Criteria** – to help decide which community events to support
- **Event Services Matrix** – to help decide what services to offer to event organizers
- **Event Space Location Criteria** – to help decide where new event venues should be located
- **Implementation Plan** – to direct what specific actions we should take and when
- **Performance Measures** – to improve our understanding of how we are meeting our goals and to help us report on progress

Measuring Progress

The Town will use a variety of surveys and measures to monitor progress towards the goals of the Events Strategy. For example, tracking resident satisfaction, the number and demographic diversity of event attendees, event impacts on infrastructure and natural areas, and the number of community organizations delivering events.

Where We Go From Here

The Events Strategy gives the Town the information it needs to start making changes to how events happen in East Gwillimbury. Many people and organizations will have an opportunity to work together along the way including Town staff, community organizations, event vendors and sponsors, volunteers and residents. The result will be events that meet current and future needs, and that bring people and communities together.