



Recipient Event Planning Guide

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CREATE YOUR TIMELINE

4-6 months prior to event

- Select and secure venue

3-4 months prior to event

- Contact any third-party vendors and reserve activities and logistical services
- Complete and submit permit applications, event, and liquor liability insurances to the City Clerk
- Obtain sponsors

2-3 months prior to event

- Create and proof event poster and/or handouts send to printing company
- Confirm bands or other entertainment with signed contract
- Create social media event page

1 month prior to event

- Check with City to confirm approval of permits
- Begin selling and promoting ticket sales
- Email press release to local media
- Begin distributing event posters to local businesses
- Begin posting event to online event calendars with funding/sponsor logos

1-2 weeks prior to the event

- Check RSVP or ticket sales and send final attendee numbers to your caterer
- Reconfirm event dates and times with performers, caterers, sponsors, and staff
- Hold pre-event meetings with third-party vendors, managers of the venue, and volunteers.
- Create a detailed hour-by-hour event timeline for key volunteers and vendors based on meeting conversations and distribute to them
- Create an "event day survival kit" full of needed items: pens, sharpies, highlighters, tape, scissors, production schedule, vendor notes, load-in/out procedures, etc.
- Send final information to attendees including directions, maps, and last-minute details if a ticketed event
- Discuss severe weather coordination with planning team if hosting an outdoor event

1-2 days prior to the event

- Make sure you have important contact numbers for venue managers, third-party vendors, volunteers, or non-emergency police in one place and easily accessible on the event day. It is helpful to laminate these and put on your staff lanyards
- Deliver materials/equipment to the venue site (if possible)

THIRD PARTY VENDOR BOOKING TIMELINES

The importance of securing and coordinating with third-party vendors at an event cannot be understated because vendors act as the infrastructure to hosting a successful event.

- **Audio/visual production 2-3 months prior**
- **Music/entertainment 1-2 months prior**
- **Catering/bartending 4-6 weeks prior**
- **Tables, chairs, and tents asap:** It's a good idea to reserve these items as soon as possible during the peak wedding season (May through August). In the off-season or for very small events, reservations at least two to three weeks in advance is a good decision.
- **Portable restrooms and wash stations 2-4 week prior:** Standard portable restroom units should be reserved at least two weeks in advance. Luxury restroom trailers should be reserved as soon as possible because some weekends can book eight months in advance.
- **Waste collection 4 weeks prior:** For events under 50,000 people, you will want to secure trash containers at least 30 days in advance.
- **Event staffing services 1 month prior**

SAMPLE CONTACT LIST OF THIRD-PARTY VENDORS

Audio/Visual Production	Catering/Bartending	Tables/Chairs/Tents
Northern Sun Production	Bleu Duck Kitchen	Majestic Events
Big BANG Companies	Chester's Kitchen & Bar	Rentex
Majestic Events	The Tap House	
	The Kahler Hospitality Group	
	Victoria's Ristorante & Wine Bar	
Portable Restrooms/Wash Stations	Waste Collection	Event Staffing Services
On-Site Companies	Waste Management	Big BANG Companies
	LRS	
Potential Vendors (Food & Beverage, Bakery, Artisan)		

List of Potential Downtown Rochester Vendors		
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Resources for additional third-party vendor contacts:

Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce: (507) 288-1122 or chamber@rochestermnchamber.com

Experience Rochester: (507) 288-4331 or info@minnesotasrochester.com

CITY PERMITS

[Take this survey to figure out which permits your event will need and what departments to contact.](#)

**This tool was created by RDA to help with the permitting process but should not be the only tool to determine permits needed for your event.*

There are three main permits to consider for events:

**Check the [city's licensing website](#) to view more information and confirm what permits are needed*

City of Rochester Special Event Permit: Needed for events exceeding 300 participants or that plan to have amplified sound

- City department: [City Clerk](#)
- Cost: \$100

Right of Way Permit: Needed for street closures or bagged meters

- City department: [Public Works](#)
- Cost:
 - \$11: Under 10-hour meter bag per day
 - \$3: 10-hour meter bag per day
 - \$3: per meter on Saturday and Sunday

Temporary Membrane Structure Permit: Needed for outdoor tents or structures measuring over 10'x20" or 200 square ft

- City department: [Rochester Fire Department](#)
- Cost: \$75 for application, an additional \$75 for a tent

MARKETING

If you have questions please send all designs to Elaina Doeden, RDA marketing and design project manager, at edoeden@downtownrochestermn.com **at least two weeks** prior to your production deadline to ensure a timely review.

GRANT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT VERBIAGE

The below verbiage should be included in all promotional materials, included but not limited to websites, posters, social media events/posts, and media interviews.

EVENTS THAT TAKE PLACE IN SSD BUT NOT PEACE PLAZA



Funded in part by a Start-Up Event Grant from the Rochester Downtown alliance.

DowntownRochesterMN.com

EVENTS THAT TAKE PLACE IN PEACE PLAZA



Funded in part by a Start-Up Event Grant from the Rochester Downtown Alliance and Destination Medical Center.

DowntownRochesterMN.com

[Rochester Downtown Alliance logo usage guidelines and downloadable files](#)

[Destination Medical Center logo usage \(for events hosted in Peace Plaza\)](#).

For files and how to use the DMC logo, please contact Geno Palazzari, DMC communications manager, at genopalazzari@dmceda.org or 307-696-9088.

MENTIONS IN MEDIA AND ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Please include the appropriate verbiage below as well as tag RDA on social media.

Tag Downtown Rochester, MN on social media

- Facebook: @DowntownRochesterMN
- Instagram: @DowntownRochesterMN

PROMOTION

PRINT

Press release

- Approximately one month before your event, prepare an official press release that is no longer than one page in length with a point of contact (you or your organization) (using no less than 11-point font or no more than 12-point font).

- Include “FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE” and the date of which the press release is published/distributed.
- Be sure to include the five W’s: Who, What, When, Where, Why
- Also, as a courtesy, refrain from sending your press release to individual reporters unless you have already built rapport with a particular person.

Event posters

- Design an event poster and distribute them at key strategic locations that relate to your target audience. Be sure to include “Funded in part by a Start-Up Event Grant from the Rochester Downtown Alliance” with the RDA logo.

MEDIA

After drafting and finalizing your press release, it is worth reaching out to local news media to earn pre-event coverage. News media channels include organizations like:

- KTTC (NBC)/FOX 47
- KAAL (ABC)
- KIMT (CBS)
- Post Bulletin
- Townsquare Media (radio, KROC FM, KROC AM, Y105 FM, etc.)
- You can find a complete list with a Google search

When pitching your event to local media, it is important to keep your message short and concise and include highlights about your event to make it stand out from similar past, present, or future events.

DIGITAL

Online calendars

- There are many free online calendars to publish your event on. To begin, publish your event on the downtown Rochester online calendar at DowntownRochesterMN.com/Submit.
- Other recommended free community event calendars
 - [ABC 6 News—KAAL TV](#)
 - ExperienceRochesterMN.com
 - [KIMT News 3](#)
 - [KTTC TV](#)
 - [Post Bulletin and 507 Magazine](#)
 - [Rochester Local](#)
 - [Townsquare Media](#)

Social media

- Create a Facebook event. Use this social media tool to publish updates and information about the event and engage with other users on social media about your event. You can add RDA as a contributor or tagged in the event.
- Utilize other social media platforms like Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, Snapchat, Google+, etc. and tag RDA.

POST EVENT

Make sure you are tracking your spending throughout the process. Creating a spreadsheet that is shared with all team members with purchasing privileges may be useful.

EVALUATION

Suggested Questions to Consider:

- Was communication with third-party vendors, entertainment, and volunteers effective?
- Was the venue a good choice for your event?
- How many attendees were there?
- How did attendees engage with your activities or respond to your programming?
- Were you able to adhere to your budget?
- Did you achieve your goal or objective with the event?
- Do you think the event had an impact on the community? If so, what was that impact?
- Would you hold this event again?

It may be helpful to put together a re-cap packet to send out to those who were involved.

[Example re-cap packet](#)

REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS

WHAT CAN GRANT FUNDS BE USED FOR?

- Administrative overhead should be minimal.
- Funds can be used for catering and vendors but **may not** be used for direct food, beverage, or alcohol purchase
- Funds **may not** be used to purchase permanent (depreciable) assets (tools, laptops, cameras, etc.), or for political or religious event, activities, or programs

PROCESS FOR REIMBURSEMENT

Post event, email the following documents to the RDA team. The deadline to submit for reimbursement is **30 days after your event date**.

- [W9 Form](#)
- [Completed Event Recap Form](#)
- Final Budget
 - [Example Budget Template](#)
- Scan all receipts/Invoices into one PDF.

Please email these documents to: events@downtownrochestermn.org and CC: wanda@downtownrochestermn.org