



# MIDDLETOWN

## CITY EVENTS

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# Building Strong Community-Driven Events

# Who, What, Where, Why, When AND How

*This is a step-by-step strategy for creating  
events that resonate with your specific  
communities!*

# Who Are you wanting to reach?

When planning a community event, you'll want to reach a wide range of people, depending on the goals of the event.

Generally, the target audience can include:

- Local Residents:** The primary group is the people who live in the community or surrounding areas. These are the individuals who will directly benefit from and participate in the event. It's important to create an inclusive environment that welcomes everyone, regardless of age, background, or interests.
- Families and Children:** Events that are family-friendly or geared toward children can attract parents looking for activities for their kids. This demographic might be drawn to events with games, educational activities, or entertainment that the whole family can enjoy.
- Older Adults/Seniors:** Many community events also aim to reach older adults, providing them with social opportunities, health information, or entertainment. Creating accessible events for seniors can help prevent social isolation and foster a stronger sense of community.
- Local Businesses and Vendors:** If your event involves booths or commerce (e.g., markets, food trucks, art shows), you'll be reaching out to local businesses and entrepreneurs. Engaging them can help foster economic growth in the area and create networking opportunities.





# Who Are you wanting to reach cont.

•**Volunteers and Community Leaders:** Reaching out to individuals who are passionate about volunteering and helping others can be important. These people can help with event planning, setup, and execution, and may also help spread the word to their networks.

•**Youth and Teenagers:** Engaging younger people in community events can help build a future foundation for continued community involvement. Teenagers, in particular, can be a great resource for promoting the event on social media, volunteering, or even running their own activities.

•**Cultural or Interest Groups:** If the event focuses on a particular cultural celebration, cause, or interest (e.g., environmental issues, arts, food), you might want to target specific groups who share those passions. This can include niche communities like hobbyists, activists, or cultural groups.

•**Tourists or Visitors:** Depending on the nature of the event, you may also want to draw people from outside your immediate community. For example, festivals, performances, and large-scale public events can attract tourists, giving them a reason to visit and experience the area.





# What are you wanting the outcome to be?

If I were organizing a community event, my main goals would revolve around creating a positive, lasting impact on the people and the area involved. Here are the outcomes I'd want to see:

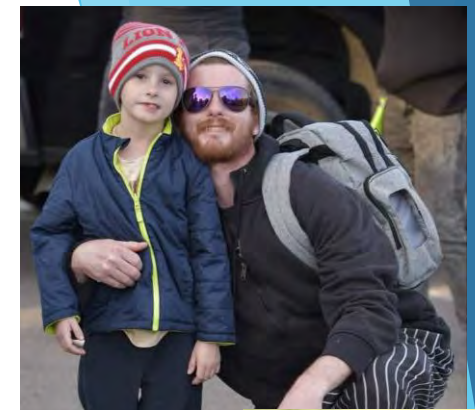
- ▶ **Stronger Social Ties:** I'd want people to leave feeling more connected to each other. Whether it's through a casual conversation or a shared experience, the goal would be to help build relationships and reduce feelings of isolation.
- ▶ **A Sense of Belonging:** I'd aim for the event to foster a deeper sense of pride and ownership in the community. It's about making people feel like they are part of something larger than themselves and that they have a role to play in shaping the future of the place they live.
- ▶ **Engagement and Volunteerism:** Encouraging people to get more involved in their community, whether that's through volunteering at future events or taking part in local initiatives, would be a key outcome. The more people feel they can contribute, the stronger the community becomes.
- ▶ **Celebration of Diversity and Culture:** I'd want the event to showcase the unique aspects of the community, from its local culture to its diversity. It's important to highlight the richness that comes from the variety of backgrounds and perspectives in the area.
- ▶ **Positive Impact on Local Businesses:** By supporting and promoting local vendors, artists, and businesses at the event, I'd hope to boost the local economy and help people discover new places to shop, eat, or visit in their community.





# What are you wanting the outcome to be cont.

- ▶ Inspiration and Empowerment: Whether it's through a motivational speaker, a workshop, or just the shared energy of the event, I'd want people to leave feeling inspired—whether it's to try something new, start a project, or just feel more hopeful about the future.
- ▶ Fun and Memorable Moments: I'd want people to leave with great memories. A sense of enjoyment, laughter, and shared experiences can help make an event feel successful and encourage people to return for future gatherings.
- ▶ Raising Awareness for Important Causes: If the event ties into a cause (like sustainability, mental health, or **community development**), I'd want it to spark conversations and increase awareness. People should leave with a better understanding of the issues and how they can get involved or make a difference.
- ▶ Improved Well-being: I'd want the event to contribute to the health of the community, whether through physical activities, wellness resources, or simply providing a space for people to relax and de-stress.
- ▶ Legacy for Future Events: **Finally, I'd want the event to be** the beginning of something that continues to grow. Whether it's a recurring annual gathering or just the start of a new community initiative, the event should leave a lasting legacy that continues to bring people together for years to come.



*Ultimately, the goal would be to create a ripple effect, where the positive energy from the event spreads throughout the community, making it a more connected, supportive, and vibrant place for everyone.*



# Where is the best location for your event?

The best location for a community event depends on a few key factors, such as the type of event, the size of the crowd, and the overall vibe you want to create. Here are some ideal location options based on different event needs:

## Public Parks or Green Spaces

**Why it's great:** Parks offer a relaxed, open environment with plenty of space for outdoor activities, games, food trucks, and entertainment. They're ideal for events that involve families, picnics, or outdoor sports.

**Best for:** Festivals, outdoor concerts, sports tournaments, farmers' markets, and family-oriented gatherings.

**Considerations:** Make sure there are permits available and that you have access to necessary amenities (restrooms, water, etc.).

## Community Centers

**Why it's great:** These locations offer indoor spaces that are easily accessible to local residents and usually come with facilities like kitchens, seating, and audio-visual equipment. **They're versatile for both small and large events.**

**Best for:** Workshops, educational events, craft fairs, potlucks, or smaller community gatherings.

**Considerations:** Check availability and rental costs. You may need to arrange for food, parking, and accessibility.

## Downtown or Main Street Areas

**Why it's great:** Hosting an event in a central, high-traffic area helps draw attention and invites both locals and visitors to stop by. The atmosphere of a busy, vibrant location can enhance the energy of an event, especially for markets or festivals.

**Best for:** Street fairs, art shows, music festivals, or food festivals.

**Considerations:** Consider parking, road closures, and the logistics of managing foot traffic.



# Where is the best location for your event cont.

## Outdoor Amphitheaters or Pavilions

**Why it's great:** These are perfect for events that involve performances, music, or theater. The outdoor setting, combined with built-in seating, can accommodate a larger crowd.

Best for: Concerts, movie screenings, outdoor theater, or public speaking events.

Considerations: Check if they have sound systems and what additional equipment may be needed.

## Local Restaurants, Cafés, or Bars

**Why it's great:** A smaller, more intimate community event can benefit from a local restaurant or café. This setting can be ideal for things like pop-up markets, book clubs, or casual social gatherings.

Best for: Networking events, smaller meetups, art shows, or themed parties.

Considerations: Make sure the venue has enough space for your group, and consider their capacity limits.

## Convention Centers / Colleges

**Why it's great:** These venues are excellent for larger-scale events and can be customized to suit a variety of needs, with breakout rooms, large floors for vendors, and facilities for workshops and presentations.

Best for: Trade shows, expos, conventions, and large conferences.

Considerations: High rental costs and logistical coordination, including catering and AV support.





# Where is the best location for your event cont.

## Historic Sites or Landmarks

**Why it's great:** Hosting an event at a location with historical significance can add a unique flair to the experience. These places often have character and charm that make for memorable experiences.

Best for: Cultural festivals, historical tours, or themed events.

Considerations: Limited availability and accessibility might be a challenge, and you may need special permits.



## Parking Lots or Empty Lots

**Why it's great:** For larger, temporary setups (think food trucks, big tents, or outdoor entertainment), parking lots or open spaces can be perfect. These spaces can accommodate a lot of foot traffic and allow you to set up multiple areas for different activities.

Best for: Pop-up markets, car shows, food festivals, or large outdoor events.

Considerations: Accessibility, safety, and ensuring the area is properly permitted for public use.



# Key Considerations When Choosing a Location:

- ▶ **Accessibility:** Ensure the location is easy for people to get to and that it's ADA compliant for those with disabilities.
- ▶ **Space:** Consider the size of your expected crowd and the activities planned—will the space allow for both crowd movement and different event zones?
- ▶ **Weather:** For outdoor events, always have a contingency plan in case of bad weather.
- ▶ **Amenities:** Check for restrooms, parking, electricity, food options, and shelter. These will help make the event more comfortable for attendees.
- ▶ **Cost and Permits:** Ensure the location fits within your budget and that you have the proper permits for hosting the event.
- ▶ **Vibe and Atmosphere:** Does the location fit the energy or theme you want for your event? A relaxed park setting might not be the best choice for a formal gala, for example.
- ▶ Choosing the right location is all about matching the event's needs with the space that best supports it.





# Why do we do Events?

- **Building Connections:** They bring people together, helping to foster relationships and a sense of belonging. People get to meet their neighbors, make new friends, and strengthen existing bonds within the community.
- **Cultural Expression and Awareness:** Community events often highlight local traditions, art, and culture, offering an opportunity for people to learn about and celebrate their shared history or unique cultural aspects.
- **Social Support:** These events can create spaces where individuals feel supported and understood. They can help reduce isolation, especially for marginalized or underrepresented groups, by providing inclusive spaces for interaction.
- **Community Engagement:** Events encourage active participation in the local community, whether through volunteering, organizing, or simply attending. This kind of engagement helps people feel more invested in improving their surroundings.
- **Local Economy Boost:** When community events are held, they often support local businesses by attracting visitors, boosting sales for vendors, food trucks, artisans, etc. This has a positive ripple effect on the area's economy.
- **Health and Well-being:** Many events promote physical and mental well-being, whether through sports, outdoor activities, mindfulness sessions, or just giving people a space to relax and enjoy themselves.

# How do we pull it all together?

*Pulling off a successful community event involves careful planning, collaboration, and **organization**. Here's a **step**-by-step guide to help you execute your event smoothly:*

- ▶ 1. Define Your Goals and Purpose
- ▶ 2. Create a Budget
- ▶ 3. Choose a Date and Time
- ▶ 4. Secure a Location
- ▶ 5. Get the Word Out (Marketing & Promotion)
- ▶ 6. Recruit Volunteers and Partners
- ▶ 7. Plan the Event Logistics
- ▶ 8. Ensure Accessibility and Inclusivity
- ▶ 9. Set Up the Event
- ▶ 10. Run the Event
- ▶ 11. Wrap Up the Event
- ▶ 12. Follow Up

*Pulling off a community event takes a lot of effort, but the results—creating a sense of unity, fun, and connection in the community—are well worth it. Good organization, communication, and a passionate team can turn your vision into a reality!*



# Show & Tell

- ▶ **Let's split into small groups.**
- ▶ Discuss your Who, what, where, why, when and how around the group based on each of your communities.
- ▶ What part of the above is easiest to implement first?
- ▶ Before you leave here today, name that event and put a date to it!

# Questions & Answers





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