



# HOW-TO

# Event Planning



**GET READY!** Follow these steps to make any People Make Parks event you do a success.

## BEGIN PLANNING: AT LEAST 3 MONTHS BEFORE

- Work with your Park Manager and Outreach (OC) or Catalyst (CC) Coordinator to choose a date for your event. If possible, learn what other events are happening in your community during that same time, so as not to compete for people's attention.
- Apply for your **Special Events permit** (<https://nyceventpermits.nyc.gov/Parks/>) if the event will take place in the park.
- Confirm your goals for the event and decide what activities you'll do.
- Consider assigning group members to the following roles or committees: *Community Outreach, Press and Public Relations, Event Logistics (Technical Requirements, Supplies), Event Hosting (Volunteer Coordination, Day-of-Needs).*

Special Events Permits take at least 30 days to process, and are required for events in public parks with over 20 participants.

## ORGANIZE: AT LEAST 2-2 1/2 MONTHS BEFORE

- Create an event budget and discuss how you'll raise funds.
- Decide what supplies you'll need and brainstorm potential sources.
- Discuss who you want to attend the event and what strategies you'll use to reach them.
- Find other community partners who can help organize, outreach, and/or assist with the event.

## OUTREACH: ONE MONTH BEFORE

- Draft outreach materials. See our best practices checklist for poster/flyer design.
- Draft public relations materials. View a sample press release.
- Look for translators who can assist non-English speakers and/or translate signs and directions into languages relevant to your community.
- Begin fundraising activities.
- Contact your OC or CC and the Park Manager so they can further support your event planning.
- Send outreach materials (posters, flyers, postcards) to a printer or print yourself.
- Send a "Save the Date" email announcement to your community partners and ask them to forward to their contacts.

## PREP FOR THE EVENT: 2-3 WEEKS BEFORE

- Buy general supplies for the event and/or request Park supplies from your OC or CC.
- Confirm your translator (if needed) and meet to discuss his or her responsibilities.
- If needed, apply for sound permit from your local police precinct; this can only be done after your special events permit is approved.
- Host a practice run of the event with your OC or CC, your Park Manager, and a few friends or community partners to identify potential problems. *Make changes as needed.*
- Organize day-of materials.
- Start community outreach and public relations.

Make sure to Discuss details for the day-of the event such as:

> WHO will be at an information table to handle sign-in and comments.

> WHAT will you say if people have questions about the capital project, your group, or the purpose of the event.

> HOW will you handle challenging situations that arise (e.g., people who are confused or have questions about the event, people who disagree with the project or goals)

## **ALMOST THERE: DURING THE LAST WEEK**

- Review last-minute details and buy final supplies such as water, snacks, etc.
- Do final online, press, and community outreach to strengthen attendance.
- Transport materials to the location (day before or morning of).

## **GO! Host the event!**

- Set up information table, chairs, and event-related support materials.
- Hang posters or signs in locations where they can be seen.
- Have ready your sign-in sheet and pens for when people arrive.
- Check-in with the translator to confirm his/her role and responsibilities and answer last-minute questions.
- Take photographs throughout the day to document the event.
- After the event is over, pack up materials and clean up trash.
- Collect sign-in sheets and related materials for later review.

## **RUN WITH IT! Report and share your findings.**

### **DEBRIEF: WITHIN 1-2 WEEKS**

- Meet as a group to review and discuss the event and how it went.
- Choose a few group members who will review the activity results in more detail.
- Select a date to meet again to discuss the activity results with the entire group.

### **ANALYZE AND DOCUMENT: WITHIN 1-2 MONTHS**

- Meet to review the activity results and discuss how they can be documented in a summary report.
- Draft a summary report based on these findings.

### **SHARE WITH OTHERS: WITHIN 2-3 MONTHS**

- Meet as a group to review the draft report.
- Show the draft report to your OC or CC to get feedback.
- Edit the report as needed until it's ready to show to others.
- Work with your OC or CC to arrange a meeting to share the report with Parks Department representatives.
- Arrange a meeting to share the report with your community

## **SUMMARY REPORTS**

A summary report may include:

- > How many people attended the event and participated in each activity
- > Information describing the participants for each activity such as (Number of adults vs. children; number of men vs. women; number of people by zip code; number of people by age)
- > Charts, columns, graphs, or images that document in visual form the results of each activity
- > Event photographs,
- > Historical images and/or maps of the park.

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**PARTNERSHIPS  
for PARKS**



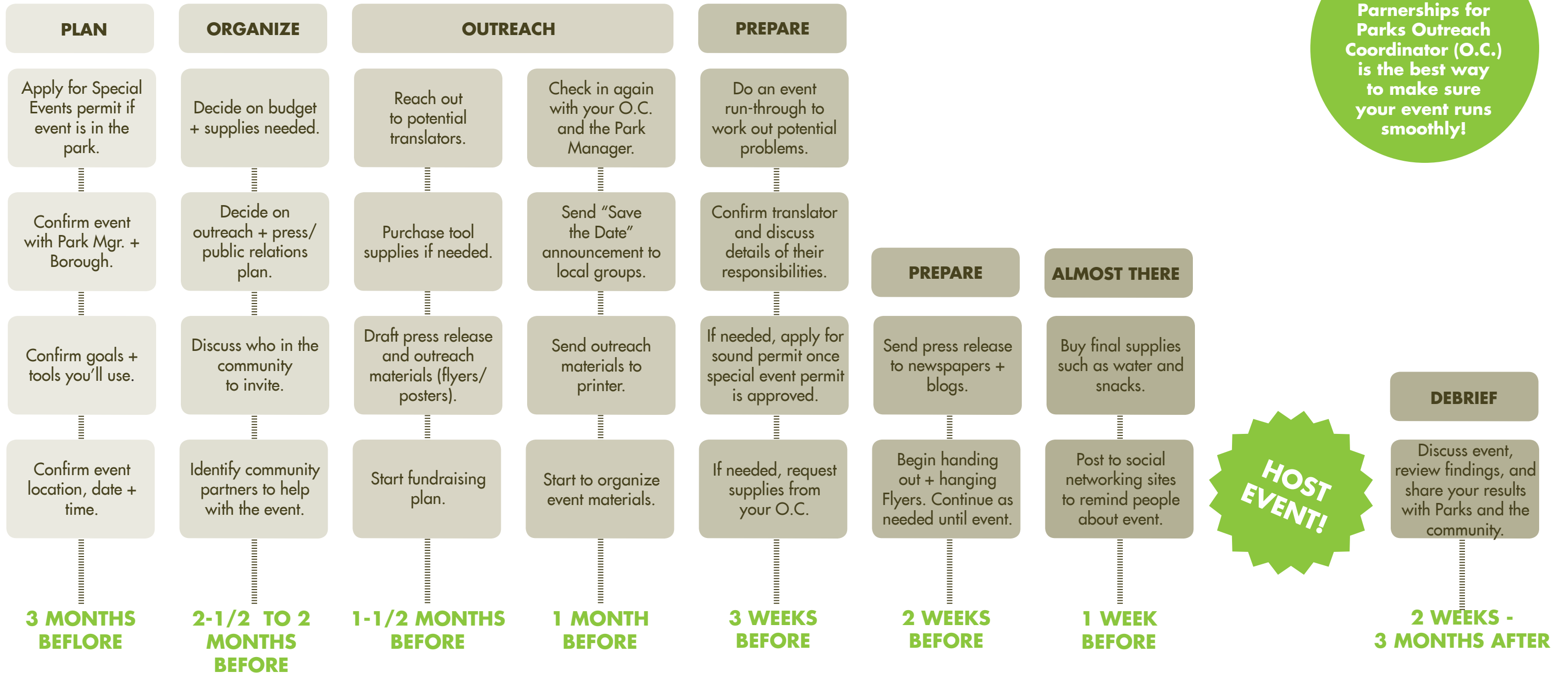
City of New York  
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CityParks  
Foundation



# SAMPLE TIMELINE

# Planning a Community Visioning Event



Working with your Partnerships for Parks Outreach Coordinator (O.C.) is the best way to make sure your event runs smoothly!

This is a sample timeline. Depending on group size, budget, number of tools used, and community, the timeline may vary.