



7 EVENT MANAGEMENT PLANS THAT MAKE AN EVENT OFFICE'S JOB EASIER

"If you don't know where you are going, you'll end up someplace else." – Yogi Berra

Many communities recognize the value of events and event tourism, and endeavour to produce and attract a year-round calendar of events that help boost their economy. The tricky part for local government, and any Event Office, is how to best manage the impact of these events. In particular, large events can put a strain on roads and transportation, public and private land, public infrastructure, waste management services, the environment, local government resources, a community's reputation or brand, and the safety and wellbeing of its residents.

One of the most effective approaches to managing the impact of large events is through the development of event management plans. These plans are typically associated with different functions of an event and are developed by the event organizer in collaboration with local governing agencies and stakeholders. These plans help capture logistical details and address the needs and expectations of the community in an effort to avoid surprises. Some Event Offices may even prefer to include event management plans as a contractual requirement when permitting large events on public land.

Event management plans are primarily focused on those things that have the potential to impact a community and its environment. Details about event budget, talent acquisition, programming, sponsor activation, and advertising aren't as relevant to an Event Office as they are less likely to directly impact the greater community.

Here are seven event management plans that an Event Office may request from an event organizer:

- **Critical Path Event Timeline** – this provides a clear, chronological list of key dates and deliverables that will affect the successful production and activation of the event. This timeline should include key dates from the following event management plans, scheduled meetings to review these plans with the relevant stakeholders, and permit/approval deadlines.
- **Traffic Management Plan** – this plan outlines access to the event, road closures, barricade placement, changes to major traffic routes, traffic control personnel, signage and public notifications, traffic signal modifications, off-site and on-site parking, and any required work permit approvals. Detailed maps should accompany this plan.
- **Waste Management Plan** – this plan encompasses all event venues and should outline garbage, recycling and composting

commitments and initiatives, washrooms, potable and non-potable water, post-event clean-up, and waste management personnel. Detailed maps should accompany this plan.

- **Emergency Management Plan** – this plan encompasses all event venues and should outline dedicated emergency services during the event, emergency response protocols for handling sudden or unexpected situations, a fire safety plan (occupancy, egresses, wildfire risk and response), vendor safety compliance, risk management communications, an evacuation plan, event security, and pre-event emergency table-top exercises. Detailed maps should accompany this plan.
- **Environmental Impact Management Plan** – this plan outlines protection of sensitive areas, wildlife interfaces and management, illegal camping response protocols, water contamination issues, public signage, and noise permits.
- **Marketing & Communications Plan** – this plan includes messaging by the event and community partners, tourism packaging (opportunities to promote the destination and extended stays), media protocols (e.g. in case of an emergency), event surveys, signage, and digital connectivity (wifi access during event).
- **Accommodation Plan** (e.g. camping, hotels) – this plan includes the location and logistics of event camping sites, amenities to support event accommodations, and the set-up, servicing and tear-down of these sites.

Some things to remember when developing event management plans:

- Planning should be a collaborative exercise with the community, and, if appropriate, with regional stakeholders, e.g. emergency management, local contractors, government, community protection groups.
- The level of detail in the plans should be proportionate to the size of an event – don't over complicate plans for small events, and ensure the plans are detailed enough for larger events.
- Event management plans are also an opportunity to integrate community needs, values, and Council priorities, and reduce administrative costs by streamlining communications across government agencies.

Continued on page 124

Large, complex events should be identified early in the event permitting process. By building a streamlined online application and permitting process that is designed to identify where and when an event may impact a community is the best approach when permitting complex events. It reduces erroneous information and missing details, ensures faster completion and submission by the event organizer, and enables the Event Office to custom design questions that trigger additional details from the organizer.

Has your Event Office worked with event management plans? Were they effective? Share your feedback by joining the conversation on Twitter and using the hashtag, #eventpermit.

Rene Michaely is the founder and chief visionary of eproval, a software platform designed to automate and streamline complex application and approval processes including event permits. Based in Vancouver, BC Canada, his team has an intimate understanding of government permitting and approval processes through their experience working with and for event offices. Rene has also been a product manager at an event registration startup and founder of a web development firm specializing in event websites and complex applications. You can reach Rene at rene@eproval.com, learn more about eproval at www.eproval.com, or follow [@eproval](https://twitter.com/eproval).