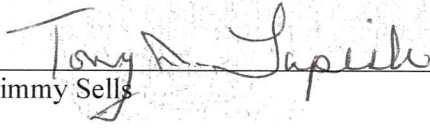


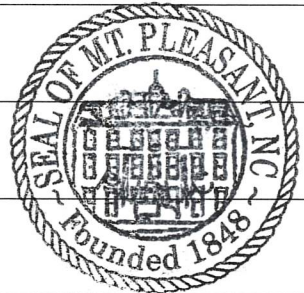
TOWN OF MOUNT PLEASANT



PARADE SAFETY POLICY

March 2026

Effective Date:	March 10, 2026
Reviewed/Revised:	March 10, 2026
Approved by:	
Plan Coordinator:	Jimmy Sells



Municipal Parade Safety Policy

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Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect the safety of parade participants and spectators, reduce municipal liability exposure, maintain public order, and preserve the enjoyment and tradition of community parades within the Town of Mount Pleasant.

This policy applies to all parades conducted within the town limits, whether sponsored by the Town or by private organizations.

1. Parade Authorization

1. All parades conducted within the town limits must obtain a permit issued by the Town Clerk or designated municipal department.
2. Applications must be submitted no fewer than sixty (60) days prior to the proposed parade date.
3. The application must include:
 - Proposed parade route
 - Event duration and schedule
 - Emergency action plan
 - Estimated number and type of participants
 - Description of floats, vehicles, animals, or special equipment

The Town reserves the right to approve, modify, or deny applications based on public safety considerations.

2. Participant Requirements

1. Each parade entry (float, vehicle, marching unit, band, organization) must designate a responsible adult contact person.
 2. All vehicle operators must:
 - Possess a valid driver's license
 - Maintain current insurance coverage
 - Operate vehicles in a safe and prudent manner
 - Truck w/trailer (trucks with trailer greater than 45' are not permitted due to narrow streets)
 3. Maximum allowable speeds:
 - Floats: 5 miles per hour
 - Other vehicles: 10 miles per hour unless otherwise approved
 4. Drivers are responsible for maintaining constant awareness of pedestrians and walkers near their vehicle.
-

3. Candy and Item Distribution

Permitted:

- Candy or promotional items may be **handed** directly to spectators by designated walkers accompanying a float or vehicle.
- Distribution must occur from the sidewalk or a clearly defined parade boundary (such as the 6-foot parking lane along North Main Street), and never from a moving vehicle.

Prohibited:

- **Throwing candy**, toys, beads, or any other objects from floats, vehicles, or moving participants.
- **Distributing items** in this manner encourages spectators, particularly children, to enter the roadway.

Rationale:

Prohibiting **thrown** items reduces the risk of children entering the roadway, prevents vehicle-related injuries, minimizes post-parade debris entering yards and storm drains, and reduces municipal liability exposure. The tradition of giving treats is preserved through safe, hand-to-hand distribution.

4. Parade Safety Rules

1. Spectators must remain on sidewalks or behind designated safety boundaries.
 2. Parade participants must maintain a minimum three (3) foot separation from spectators. Designated parking lanes (approximately 6 feet wide) may serve as a visual and physical safety buffer.
 3. Alcohol and controlled substances are strictly prohibited for all parade drivers, participants, and walkers.
 4. Animals must be properly restrained and handled by experienced individuals and cannot walk in the parade.
 5. No Equestrian entries are permitted.
 6. Emergency personnel and designated town officials retain authority to slow, redirect, pause, or terminate the parade if public safety is threatened.
 7. Weather – Parade participants and staff must recognize that decisions affecting the whole community also apply to them. Decisions about continuation of the parade will be made by Town Staff preferably by the Event Coordinator and Emergency Planner. The ultimate goal is to protect the well-being and safety of all involved. For lightning, the parade will be halted at the first sound of thunder and/or flash of lightning and not restarted until 30 minutes after the last sound of thunder and/or flash of lightning.
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5. Insurance and Liability

1. Float and vehicle owners must provide proof of valid liability insurance.
2. Parade participants must sign an acknowledgment confirming they have read and agree to comply with all parade safety rules.

3. The Town of Mount Pleasant shall not be liable for injuries, damage, or losses resulting from a participant's failure to comply with this policy.
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6. Enforcement

Town officials, Cabarrus County Sheriff's Deputies, and designated event managers are authorized to enforce all parade rules.

Violations may result in:

- Immediate removal from the parade
 - Disqualification from future town parades
 - Referral to law enforcement when violations involve criminal conduct or public endangerment
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7. Exceptions and Special Considerations

1. Written requests for exceptions (such as float design variances or accessibility accommodations) must be submitted no fewer than thirty (30) days prior to the parade date.
 2. Exceptions may be granted at the discretion of the Town Clerk or designated Parade Committee when consistent with public safety.
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8. Public Notification

1. Parade rules shall be posted on the Town's official website and social media at least thirty (30) days prior to the event.
 2. Applications and safety rules shall be made available to all participating organizations.
 3. Temporary signage along the parade route shall remind spectators to remain behind designated safety boundaries and avoid entering the roadway.
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9. Mandatory Safety Briefing

All parade participants must attend a mandatory safety briefing or review approved information provided by the Town (to be developed after approval). The briefing shall cover:

- Vehicle and float operation
- Candy and item distribution procedures
- Crowd management expectations
- Emergency response procedures

Failure to complete the safety briefing may result in disqualification from participation.

10. Effective Date

This policy shall become effective immediately upon approval by the Town Board and shall apply to all parades conducted within the Town of Mount Pleasant.

Policy Considerations

- This policy reflects safety practices adopted by comparable North Carolina municipalities and is designed to reduce accidents, injuries, post-parade debris, and liability exposure.
- The policy does not eliminate the distribution of candy or promotional items; it simply requires safe, controlled, hand-to-hand distribution.
- Clear rules, defined parade boundaries, and designated events managers are especially important in small-town settings where floats and pedestrians share limited roadway space.
- The policy remains flexible enough to accommodate holiday parades, seasonal festivals, civic celebrations, and special events while prioritizing public safety.

TOWN BOARD SUMMARY VERSION

Town of Mount Pleasant – Parade Safety Policy Overview

Purpose

This policy establishes clear, reasonable safety standards for all parades held within the Town of Mount Pleasant. Its goals are to:

- Protect children and families
- Reduce accident risk
- Limit municipal liability exposure
- Preserve parade traditions in a safer manner

The policy applies to both Town-sponsored and privately organized parades within town limits.

Key Policy Points

1. Permit Requirement

- All parades require a permit.
- Applications must be submitted at least 60 days in advance.
- Applicants must provide route details, participant information, and an emergency plan.

2. Vehicle & Float Safety

- Floats: maximum 5 mph
- Other vehicles: maximum 10 mph
- All drivers must be licensed and insured.
- Each entry must designate a responsible adult contact.
- Truck w/trailer (trucks with trailer greater than 45' are not permitted due to narrow streets)

3. Candy & Item Distribution (Major Clarification)

1. **Hand-to-hand distribution is permitted** by designated walkers from sidewalks or defined parade boundaries (such as the 6-foot parking lane along North Main Street).
 - This preserves tradition while preventing:
 - Children running into the roadway
 - Vehicle-pedestrian collisions
 - Slip-and-fall injuries
 - Post-parade debris entering yards and storm drains
 - Increased municipal liability exposure
2. **Throwing candy or objects is prohibited.**

4. Safety Boundaries

- Spectators must remain on sidewalks or behind defined boundaries.
- A minimum 3-foot separation must be maintained between participants and spectators.

5. Insurance & Liability

- Float/vehicle owners must provide proof of insurance.
- Participants must acknowledge safety rules.
- Violations may result in removal or ineligibility for future parades.

6. Enforcement

- Town officials, parade event managers, and Cabarrus County Sheriff's Deputies may enforce rules.
- Emergency personnel may pause or stop the parade if safety is compromised.

What This Policy Does NOT Do

- It does NOT eliminate candy distribution.
- It does NOT make parades more restrictive than comparable towns.
- It does NOT reduce the festive nature of events.
- It does NOT create unnecessary bureaucracy.

It simply replaces throwing with safer hand-to-hand distribution and clarifies enforcement authority.

Why This Matters

Small towns face increasing liability exposure from preventable injuries. A single serious accident involving a child can have lasting financial and reputational consequences.

This policy is proactive, balanced, and designed to prevent harm before it occurs.

Closing Position for Board Discussion

This policy:

- Preserves parade tradition
- Keeps candy distribution
- Protects children
- Reduces litter and storm drain debris
- Provides clear enforcement authority
- Aligns with modern safety practices

It is measured, reasonable, and designed for a small-town environment where floats and pedestrians share limited roadway space.

Common Arguments and Response

Argument: “Throwing items is tradition and fun.”

Response:

Tradition evolves when safety requires it. Hand-to-hand distribution preserves the spirit of giving without encouraging children to run into the street. Many communities have modernized this practice after preventable injuries.

Fun should never depend on creating avoidable risk.

Argument: “We’ve always done it this way and never had a problem.”

Response:

Past luck does not eliminate future risk. Near misses often go undocumented. Municipal responsibility requires proactive safety standards, not reactive policies after an injury occurs.

One serious incident could outweigh decades of “no problems.”

Argument: “It will reduce participation or sponsorship.”

Response:

Comparable towns that prohibit throwing have maintained strong participation. Sponsors primarily seek visibility and community goodwill—not the ability to throw items.

Clear, consistent safety rules create confidence for families and participants alike.

Argument: “Enforcing a no-throwing rule will be difficult.”

Response:

The rule is simple and easy to observe. Event Managers can quickly identify violations. Clear pre-parade briefings and signed acknowledgments greatly improve compliance.

Most participants follow clearly communicated expectations.

Argument: “Kids love running for candy.”

Response:

The policy prioritizes keeping children out of moving traffic lanes. Running toward floats—especially between vehicles—creates unpredictable hazards for drivers.

Children can still receive candy safely from walkers without entering the roadway.

Argument: "This is overregulation."

Response:

The policy does not ban parades or eliminate traditions. It sets minimal, common-sense guardrails:

- Slow vehicle speeds
- No throwing objects
- Defined spectator boundaries
- Proof of insurance

These are standard safety measures, not burdensome regulations.

Argument: "The Town is just trying to avoid liability."

Response:

Yes—responsible governance includes reducing preventable liability exposure. Protecting public safety and limiting taxpayer risk are core municipal duties.

Preventing injury protects families first and taxpayers second.

CURRENT PARADE APPLICATION/POLICY (2026)

TOWN OF MOUNT PLEASANT
INDEPENDENCE PARADE APPLICATION
Saturday, June 27, 2026
Parade begins promptly at 5 pm

Parade Application due Friday, June 12, 2026 @ 4:30 pm

Parade Line Up begins at 3 pm. You must be in line by 4:30 pm. The streets close at 4:45 pm.

Each entry must fill out an application. Once the application is received, you will receive a confirming phone call and email with parade details.

Entry/Organization Name: _____

Contact Name: _____ Contact Phone Number: _____

Address: _____

City & State _____ Zip Code _____

Contact Email Address: _____

Type of Parade Entry (Required - Each Entry Must Fill Out An Application)

Car Golf Cart Tractor/Mower Walking Group Float (with walkers) Float (without walkers)

Truck Other _____

Truck w/trailer (trucks with trailer greater than 45' are not permitted due to narrow streets)
_____ (please provide length)

Church Scout Troup/4H Group Dance Group Queen Martial Arts Group Political Group
Motorcycle Group Antique Vehicle Other _____

Groups: Group Contact will be responsible for communicating all details to others in the group and all must arrive together.

****PLEASE NOTE DUE TO SAFETY CONCERNS, EQUESTRIAN ENTRIES ARE NO LONGER PERMITTED*****

You must submit an application and receive confirmation in order to participate.

I agree that I have read, understood, and agree to follow all the rules and guidelines of the Town of Mount Pleasant Independence Parade. I agree to hold harmless the Town of Mount Pleasant, its employees, agents, volunteers, and sponsors from all claims, liabilities, costs, expenses, and damages which may result from my participation in this event.

Signature of Contact

Date

Questions? Contact the Town of Mount Pleasant Events, 704-436-9800 Ext 1003

Email application to events@mtpleasantnc.gov