



To: Art Exhibitors and Festival Participants

September 2026

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We look forward to seeing you at the incredible 62nd annual Festival in the Park.

Below is a memo full of information. Please call or email us with any questions.

See you soon!



Registration

- ☐ Friday, September 25; Freedom Park, 2435 Cumberland Avenue, Charlotte, NC 28203 (GPS location)
- ☐ Check-in time: 8:00 am - 2:00 pm, Friday
- ☐ Early check-in: Thursday 24th, 1 pm – 4:30 pm; the form is in the Artist Packet on the website, or you can email us.
- ☐ Receive your exhibitor badges, space assignment and parking pass at registration.

Vehicles/Parking

- ☐ All vehicles must be OUT of Freedom Park by 2:00 pm on Friday and two hours before opening each day.
- ☐ All vehicles must be removed from within the park as soon as they are unloaded. No cars are allowed in the park after 2:00 pm.
- ☐ All vehicles are to DRIVE to location, UNLOAD immediately, PARK vehicle, then SET UP.
- ☐ No parking or driving will be allowed in grassy areas. All vehicles must be removed from within the park as soon as unloaded. No cars are allowed to stay in the park during Festival hours.
- ☐ Vehicles must ENTER the Park from the Cumberland Road / Lilac entrance to Park and EXIT via Princeton Road only. You will be required to have a parking pass to enter the park. This is for your safety and the safety of your patrons.
- ☐ No overnight lodging is allowed in Freedom Park.
- ☐ Upon announcement from security that vehicles will be allowed in the park on Sunday closing, Vendors must be packed before entering the park to load up. This is for your safety and the safety of your patrons.
- ☐ If parking in the neighborhood of Freedom Park...**PLEASE be considerate** of homeowners. Watch for the “No Parking” signs!

Wi-Fi/Internet

Access to the internet via Wi-Fi or cellular coverage may be limited and/or intermittent. The Festival added new technical infrastructure this year. However, we encourage our artists to bring a backup method for accepting payments, as online merchant services for processing card payments cannot be guaranteed.



Booths/Tents

- ☐ One 110-watt electrical outlet is allowed per tent. Each outlet will pull a maximum of four (4) 100-watt spots. A maximum of four (4) 100-watt spots are allowed. Silent generators are welcome.
- ☐ Damage by the vendor to Freedom Park will be at the vendor's expense.
- ☐ Watch for lawn irrigation sprinkler heads.
- ☐ Interior booth space, which our patrons may access, is the sole responsibility of the artist or concessionaire. Park staff are not able to provide ground coverings for your space - including in the event of inclement weather.
- ☐ For the safety and security of our participants, please keep supplies and merchandise in your booth space. **Unattended items outside your assigned space may be removed and discarded by MCPR staff at work to maintain the festival grounds, especially during breakdown.**

Booth/Tent Sitting

- ☐ Sign up for a tent sitter when you check in! Take a break; if you are the only person staffing your booth, Festival in the Park will provide a volunteer to relieve you for a half-hour period. Sign up on Thursday/Friday for your needs for the remainder of the Festival.
- ☐ Booth sitters are not responsible for selling goods for the artists or exchanging funds for items being sold by the artists. The artists can sign up for booth sitting at the beginning of the Festival. The Artist's Relations Committee is responsible for having a booth sitter available to tend to the artist's booth for no more than 30 minutes per booth. This service will be provided no more than four times per booth/artist daily. Booth sitting is unavailable for artists with two or more adults attending the Festival. Booth sitting will be done by both the volunteers for the Festival in addition to the ARC members based on the availability of the volunteers and ARC members.

Artist's Judging

The artist's judging will begin on Friday. Be prepared.



EMERGENCY/Medical /Police/Fire

- ☐ Call 911 and Tom Geisler, Security coordinator, 704-618-9010
- ☐ **The Fire Marshall requires that each tent be secured at each corner with a minimum of 40-pound weights.** The applicant shall ensure that tents are adequately roped, braced, anchored, and secured in a manner that provides stability in light of weather conditions. Tents must also include a certificate certifying that tents are fire retardant or must have sewn-in labels indicating the same. The applicant shall be responsible for any damage caused by any tent, including personal injury, death, or property damage, whether from a tent that collapses, blows away, or is otherwise not secure or unsafe.

Artist's Relations

- ☐ **Please text our Artist's Relations Staff at 704-696-6737 if you need anything.** We will get to you as soon as we possibly can. Please understand we work by work order, and your situation will be handled in the order it was received. Also, there are two BLUE tents in the park..."Info Tent."
- ☐ Ice is available; please contact Artists Relations.

Inclement Weather

The Festival in the Park is a rain-or-shine event. In case of inclement weather, you may choose to close your booth and remove your artwork from the elements. However, you must notify festival staff before closing your booth. Parking vehicles in Freedom Park will not be permitted for any reason, including removing artwork, during Festival in the Park operating hours.

Vendor Exit Procedures

Tom Geisler, Festival in the Park security coordinator, will determine when the park is safe to allow vehicles in to load out. He requests that you pack everything before moving your car into the park. Entry will be at the Lilac/Cumberland entrance. You will be allowed to line up on the street for entry at the end of the Festival (5 p.m. on Sunday). The exit for loaded vehicles is on Princeton. All traffic around the pond is one-way. Our staff and volunteers appreciate your participation and hope you enjoyed the Festival. See you next year.



Directions to exhibitor parking after unloading on Thursday or Friday (GPS location: 1900 East Blvd, Charlotte, NC)

Directions to Exhibitor parking on East Blvd. (parking pass required)

1. Head east (left) on Princeton Ave toward Geneva Ct.
2. Take the 3rd left onto Queens Road West
3. Turn left onto East Blvd.
4. Turn left into Freedom Park.

Total Travel Estimate: 1.07 miles - about 2 minutes





Frequently Asked Questions

Question	Answer
What are the hours of operation for the Festival?	Dates: September 25 – 27, 2026 Friday, September 25 – 4:00 pm – 9:00 pm Saturday, September 26 – 10:00 am – 9:00 pm Sunday, September 27 – 10:00 am – 5:00 pm
Where do I park to check in for the Festival?	Registration: Friday, September 25 at Freedom Park Check-in time: Friday, September 25: 8:00 am - 2:00 pm Early check-in: Thursday, September 24, 1:00pm – 4:30 pm. The registration form is in the Artist Packet on the website. Or you can send us an email. Check-in is at 2435 Cumberland Avenue. You can park there for a short time to check in, and then you will be allowed to enter the park to unload your tent and art work. You are to unload immediately, go park your car and come back to set up.
Where do I park during the Festival?	The East Blvd. parking lot of Freedom Park @ location: 1900 East Blvd., Charlotte, NC, will be reserved for all of the Festival vendors/participants. Parking pass required.
Where can I park in the evenings?	In the evenings (after the Festival) you may park at your hotel or campground.
Can I leave my van or RV parked in Freedom Park parking lot?	No, MCP&R does not allow it to be left overnight. You will be asked to leave by the police, or it could possibly be towed. A list of RV lots were in with your acceptance letter/package.
If I have a physical disability, do I park in the same lots as the other artists and vendors?	If you have a physical disability you may park in the East Blvd lot. There are a limited number of handicapped spaces in the main lot and they are usually filled very quickly.
Does the Festival supply lists of nearby restaurants?	Refer to your acceptance package, a list of restaurants is included.



Question	Answer
Where is the nearest hardware store/Home Depot/Lowe's?	Blackhawk Hardware is in Park Road Shopping Center, a few miles away. From the East Blvd Freedom Park parking lot, turn left onto East Blvd. Then turn left at Kenilworth. Slight left onto Park Road and go 1.5 miles. Park Road Shopping Center is on the left. Lowe's at South Blvd / Iverson Way is only a few minutes away. From the East Blvd Freedom Park parking lot, turn left onto East Blvd, go approximately one mile and turn left on to South Blvd. Lowe's will be on your left at Iverson Way. Home Depot at 1220 North Wendover is about 15-20 minutes away. Head northwest on East Blvd. toward Scott Avenue. Turn right at Scott, slight left at Kenilworth Avenue. Take the US 74E / I-277 N/ John Belk Frwy ramp on NC -16N. Merge onto I-277 N/US 74 East. Take exit 2B to merge onto US 74 East toward Independence Blvd. Take exit 243A to Wendover Road Southbound, merge onto N. Wendover Road. Home Depot is on the left. Target is within two miles. Turn right onto East Blvd. (Freedom Park entrance) to Kings Drive (turn left), travel to North Kings Drive. Target is at the corner of Kings and Charlottetowne Avenue / Independence Blvd.
Can I drive into the Festival area daily or nightly to unload my vehicle and restock my booth?	Yes, you may drive to your booth to unload and restock. All vehicles are to be out of the park on Friday, set up day, by 2pm. On other days, vehicles are to be out of the park two (2) hours prior to the opening. To enter after the close of the day, you must receive permission from the security/police.
What time is the best time to load and unload my goods?	See above.
Who do I contact regarding dust, noise, fumes, or offensive odors?	Contact your Artist Relations booth; they will contact the appropriate person. Dust – Operations (Megan Smith Braswell) Noise - Operations (Megan Smith Braswell) Fumes - Operations (Megan Smith Braswell) Offensive Odors - Operations (Megan Smith Braswell)
Do you offer booth sitting?	Booth sitting is provided by volunteers in 30-minute increments. You can sign up for booth sitting upon check-in. If you want to sign up for booth sitting after that time, contact Artist's Relations for available times.



Question	Answer
Can the booth sitters sell my goods while I am away?	Due to the liability involved, volunteers should not be asked to exchange money.
Who do I contact if there is a power failure in my booth?	Contact Artist's Relations. They will contact the appropriate person. Power – Operations (Megan Smith Braswell)
Do you supply food and drinks for the artists?	In the Festival check in building on top of the hill, we have bottled water and coffee available for participants.
Do you provide ice and water?	In the Festival check-in building on top of the hill, we have bottled water and coffee available for participants. Ice will be available to purchase from the Ice Vendor. Check with Artist's Relations.
Is there a cost for ice or water?	There is a cost for ice. Bottled water is available in the Festival Headquarters at the top of the hill and in the two Information Booths.
What is the process of the Artist's judging?	Judging is done in the following manner: Judges give artist a 1-5. Five being the best. They talk to the artists that want to share, how they worked, and what their ideas were. Then, the judges sit together and compare notes. We choose Best in Show first and then separate 3D and 2D, and from our ranking and we chose 1 st , 2nd, etc. The categories are: 1) Creativity Originality, 2) Design Composition, 3) Use of Media Skill, 4) Effort, and 5) Impact Visual Impression.



Artists/Vendor Survey

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. We intend to use your responses to make our festival the best one you attend. Please go to the following link to complete the artist survey.

Thank you, Festival in the Park



<https://forms.gle/YsG1LeqzbdWVHS2J6>

If you cannot access a computer, scan the QR code with your phone to complete the survey.
Or complete the survey below.

Festival in the Park - Vendor Sales 2027

Artist or Food Concessionaire

Name / Space : _____

Total Retail Sales (approximate for three days at FITP): _____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this information. We intend to use this information to make our festival the best one you will attend. A Festival staff member will pick up this form on Sunday. This will be used for Festival purposes only.

**Festival in the Park presents the 16th annual
"Kings Drive Art Walk" fine arts & crafts festival
Saturday, May 1, 2027, 11:00 am – 6:00 pm
Sunday, MAY 2, 2027, 11:00 am – 5:00 pm
Applications may be downloaded at www.KingsDriveArtWalk.org
Applications online at: <http://festivalinthepark.org/kings-drive-art-walk/applications/artist-application/>**



Artists/Vendor Survey

Space Number: _____

Name: _____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. We intend to use your responses to make our festival the best one you will attend. Please circle your ratings with 1 being the least satisfied and 5 completely satisfied. Please use the reverse side for any comments. A Festival staff member will pick up questionnaires on Sunday morning.

1. Did attendance meet your expectations? 1 2 3 4 5
2. Did sales revenue meet your expectations? 1 2 3 4 5
3. Did staff support meet your expectations? 1 2 3 4 5
4. Based on your experience at this year's event, would you recommend the event to a fellow artist/vendor? 1 2 3 4 5
5. Based on your experience at this event, how likely will you attend future events?
 - ☐ Very likely
 - ☐ Likely
 - ☐ Somewhat likely, not unlikely
 - ☐ Unlikely
 - ☐ Very unlikely
6. How was your experience with the application process timely and understandable? 1 2 3 4 5
7. Did you find the check-in and set-up process manageable? 1 2 3 4 5
8. What was your experience with the festival amenities, restrooms, food, and location? 1 2 3 4 5



9. What was the most important reason you came to this year's

Festival in the Park? _____

10. Based on your experience this year with FITP, what feedback would you like to share with the Board? _____

Please use the reverse for additional comments.



Festival Publicity 2026

Festival in the Park's pre-event communications strategy employs a combination of signage in high-profile locations, paid media, earned media, email marketing, and social media outreach to target the Charlotte-metro media market.

We receive extensive publicity and coverage for the festival over the entire Charlotte metro media market through our media relationships with digital media publishers and nearly all of our region's radio and television broadcasters. The Festival is often featured on WBTV News, Charlotte Today (WCNC, NBC Charlotte), NBC Charlotte News (WCNC, NBC Charlotte), Charlotte Five, Queen City Weekend (WSOC, ABC), WFAE (National Public Radio - 90.7 FM) and Axios Charlotte (formerly Charlotte Agenda).

Radio outlets covering the Charlotte metro market have also mentioned the Festival on-air and online, including drive-time radio programs across all formats (Country, Urban, Rock, Talk, etc.). We are also included in neighborhood/community newsletters across Charlotte.

The Festival has been included in dozens of online event calendars throughout the region, often as the top-billed event for the Festival weekend.

Our email marketing targets more than 8,500+ households in four messages sent in September.

Signage in Charlotte's city center includes Overstreet banners. These are posted for one month before the Festival in the heavily trafficked Tryon Street corridor, resulting in more than 5 million impressions.

Our social media channels include Facebook (over 13,000+) and Instagram, where we employ a variety of tactics to engage a broad and diverse audience, including paid/boosted posts.

Through this communications strategy, our outreach obtains millions of impressions from the audience throughout the month of September across the entire Charlotte metro region to continue attracting robust patronage for the Festival.



Tent

CHARLOTTE FIRE DEPARTMENT

**FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE
500 DALTON AVE CHARLOTTE, NC 28206**

Guidelines and Permitting Requirements

Rev. 2/2/2021

The guidelines established herein are based on provisions of the North Carolina Fire Code. Any proposed alternative measures to the requirements below shall provide an equal level of safety and shall require prior approval of the fire official. Tent and membrane structures must comply with all sections of the North Carolina Fire Code.

Permits

The erection of any tent or canopy in **excess of 800 square feet** requires prior approval and an operational permit issued by the Charlotte Fire Department, Fire Prevention Bureau Office. Exceptions:

- Tents or canopies not exceeding 1,800 square feet that are open on all sides without sidewalls, drops or other physical obstructions on 75 percent or more of the perimeter.
- Tents or canopies used exclusively for camping or funeral services.

Before a permit is granted, a certificate must be submitted to the fire official certifying the tent is composed of materials meeting the flame propagation performance criteria of Test Method 1 or Test Method 2 of NFPA 701.

Additionally, any tent with an occupant load of 50 or more persons shall require the submittal of a detailed site plan, indicating seating and table arrangements, location of any stage and other interior structures, exit arrangements and location and type of heating and electrical equipment.

Access, Location, and Parking

Fire apparatus access roads shall be a minimum of 20 feet, and roads shall not be obstructed in any manner, including the parking of vehicles.

Tents shall not be located within 20 feet of lot lines, buildings, other tents or membrane structures, and internal combustion engines, with the following exceptions:

- Separation distances between tents and membrane structures NOT used for cooking are not required when the aggregate floor area of the tents does not exceed 15,000 square feet.



- Tents need not be separated from buildings when ALL of the following conditions are met.

1. The aggregate floor area of the tent or membrane structure shall not exceed 10,000 square feet;
2. The aggregate area of the tent AND building shall not exceed the allowable floor area as indicated in the International Building Code.
3. Required exiting is maintained for both the tent and building, including travel distances.
4. Fire apparatus access roads are maintained.

Tents with an area of 15,000 square feet or more shall not be located closer than 50 feet from any building or other tent, except with connecting corridors between multiple tents.

Connecting corridors are allowed provided that an approved exit is located at each end of such corridor.

A fire break or access of not less than 12 feet shall be maintained on all sides of tents, unless otherwise approved by the fire official.

Tents shall be properly roped, braced and anchored to withstand the elements of weather and to guard against collapsing.

Means of Egress

Means of egress from tents shall comply with the following:

1. Exits shall be spaced at equal intervals as can be best accomplished.
2. Any tent area shall be within 100 feet of an exit.
3. The required number and minimum width of exits shall be in accordance with the following:
 - Occupant load (OL) 10 to 199: Minimum 2 exits, minimum 72 inches per exit.
 - OL 200 to 499: Minimum 3 exits, 72 inches per exit.
 - OL 500 to 999: Minimum 4 exits, 96 inches per exit.
 - OL 1,000 to 1,999: Minimum 5 exits, 120 inches per exit; or 7 exits, 96 inches per exit.
 - OL 2,000 to 2,999: Minimum 6 exits, 120 inches per exit; or 8 exits, 96 inches per exit.
 - Over 3,000: Minimum 7 exits, 120 inches per exit; or 9 exits, 96 inches per exit. Note: For occupant loads exceeding 3,000, minimum exits shall be based on the total occupant load multiplied by 0.2 inches per person.



- Curtains over-exit openings shall be of a color or colors that contrast the adjoining tent color, and curtains shall be on sliding metal supports located a minimum of 80 inches above the floor surface. Curtains may be taped along edges with colored tape to achieve the contrast requirements stated above if approved by the fire official.
- Exit doors, if required, shall open in the direction of travel.
- Proper aisle widths shall be maintained for theater-style seating. Consult with your fire inspector for further.
- Seats in theater-style seating arrangements with more than 200 chairs must be fastened together in groups of not less than three to create seat stability.
- Exit signs shall be clearly posted at each exit for tents serving an OL of 50 persons or more. Exit signs shall be either listed and labeled in accordance with UL 924 as the “internally illuminated” type, or externally illuminated in accordance with the following:
 - For OL of 300 or less, two separate circuits, one of which is separate from all other circuits; or
 - For OL of more than 300, two sources of power, one of which is an “emergency system” supplied by batteries or on-site generators, for a minimum of 90 minutes duration.
- Means of egress shall be illuminated at floor level during all times the tent is occupied. In most cases, the general lighting already available will satisfy this requirement.

Fire Protection Equipment

Portable dry chemical fire extinguishers with a minimum 2A-10BC rating shall be provided so that travel distance does not exceed 75 from any point to an extinguisher.

Extinguishers shall have updated inspection tags (inspected annually) and shall be mounted on approved hangers. The hanging of extinguishers utilizing zip ties etc., is not acceptable.

Certain use conditions (fireworks sales, etc.) may require pressurized water extinguishers in addition to the dry chemical type.

Cooking Tents

All cooking tents shall be provided with a Class K fire extinguisher.

Heating or warming of food utilizing solid fuel burning materials (i.e. Sterno fuel cans) shall be approved provided such use is not within 10 feet of an exit or combustible materials.

Cooking tents shall be separated from all other tents by a minimum of 20 feet.



Heating of Tents

Heating of tents shall be accomplished by forced air, with the heating equipment located outside. LP gas containers for heating shall be located as follows:

- Containers with a capacity of 500 gallons or less shall be located a minimum of 10 feet from tent.
- Containers with a capacity of greater than 500 gallons shall be located a minimum of 25 feet from tent.
- All hoses for LP tanks shall be protected from physical damage, and LP gas tank valves shall be fully accessible and closed when not in use.

General

Generators and other internal combustion power sources shall be located a minimum of 20 feet from tents, and protected from public contact by fencing, barricades, etc.

Combustible decorative material is strictly prohibited and floor service and area surrounding the exterior of the tent up to 30 feet shall be free of combustible material that may present a fire hazard.

Crowd managers shall be required at a ratio of 1 per 250 occupants.

CFD stand-by personnel will be required for tents with an occupant load of 300 persons or more

Charlotte Fire Department | 500 Dalton Avenue | Charlotte, NC 28206 Rev 2/2/2021



Early set-up will be requested for local area art exhibitors,

it is also available for all other art exhibitors:

early Thursday registration

1:00 pm – 4:30 pm

September 24, 2026

Complete and mail this form
to the Festival office
or **notify us by email.**

You must leave the park by 8 pm.

Office: 1409 East Boulevard, Charlotte, NC 28203

festival@FESTIVALinthePARK.org

(You will not receive confirmation for early setup.)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Mobile: _____

E-mail: _____

Registration: Friday, September 25, 2026

Check-in: 8:00 am - 2:00 pm

Check-in GPS location, Freedom Park - 2435 Cumberland Avenue, Charlotte, NC 28203

(GPS location for Festival parking during the show: *1900 East Blvd, Charlotte, NC*)



Hotel Name: Tru by Hilton Fort Mill **Address:** 120 Crisanto Ave, Fort Mill, SC 29715 -
Exclusive Rate: [Festival in the Park](#) \$109.00 per night (plus tax)
Included Perks: Free hot breakfast buffet, free WiFi, and complimentary self-parking
How to Reserve Your Room: Call the hotel directly at +1 803-228-9175 and request the Festival in the Park group block rate.