

City of Kalamazoo

First Amendment Assemblies

Use of Parks, Sidewalk & Streets

The City of Kalamazoo supports and welcomes expressions of free speech in many forms and formats and respects the rights of people to peaceably assemble. Public spaces may be used for expression of free speech by individuals and groups. First amendment assemblies may not cause damage to public or private property, nor cause or incite violence.

1. Public Parks

- a. Individuals or groups may use any public park for a first amendment assembly without reserving the space, without the need for a permit, and without a fee.
- b. If the public park is reserved by another group for that day / time, the person with the reservation has priority and a first amendment assembly cannot interfere with that person's permitted use of the park.
- c. If an individual or group wishes to reserve a park for their use, or wishes to use a stage or have electrical outlets turned on, they may do so by contacting the City's Parks & Recreation Department at least 10 calendar days in advance of the event, filling out a special event form, and paying the appropriate fee (forms and contact information [available here](#)).

2. Public Sidewalks

- a. Individuals or groups may use a sidewalk for a first amendment assembly without reserving the space, without the need for a permit, and without a fee.
- b. If the public sidewalk is reserved by another group for that day / time, the person with the reservation has priority and a first amendment assembly cannot interfere with that person's permitted use of the public sidewalk.
- c. First amendment assembly marches can use sidewalks.
 - i. Participants must use crosswalks and obey traffic / pedestrian signals.
- d. If an individual or group wishes to have a Public Safety escort of their march, or wishes to have traffic safety barricades erected, they may do so by contacting the City's Parks & Recreation Department at least 10 calendar days in advance of the event, filling out a special event form, and paying the appropriate fee (forms and contact information [available here](#)).
- e. A first amendment assembly on a sidewalk may not:
 - i. Block the public's use of the sidewalk
 - ii. Block the entrance to a driveway or an entrance to a property or building

- iii. Have banners that are so large as to block drivers' vision or create a safety hazard
- iv. Interfere with Americans with Disability Act accessibility requirements

3. Public Streets

- a. All first amendment assemblies which wish to use a public street (marches or other events) must first receive prior City approval by contacting the City's Parks & Recreation Department at least 10 calendar days in advance of the event, filling out a special event form, and paying the appropriate fee (additional fees may be charged for road barricades, city staffing, etc.) (forms and contact information [available here](#)).
 - i. The City of Kalamazoo will determine appropriate measures needed to protect the safety of protestors and motorists.
- b. Any individual or group which uses a public street for a first amendment assembly without prior approval may be required to move the assembly to a public sidewalk.

4. Non-compliance

- a. An individual or group which uses a public space for a first amendment assembly not in compliance with the above may be subject to ticketing, fines and/or arrest.

5. Contacts

Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety
Office of Community Affairs
(269) 337-8270
greenenv@kalamazoo.org

Parks / Sidewalks / Street Reservations
(269) 337-8191
www.kzooparks.org/specialevents
cokparksandrecreation@kalamazoo.org