Venues for Derby

How to Find and Manage a practice and / or Events Space

Who We Are

KATHRYN HOWARD, Events & Facility Manager

- Rose City Rollers Event and Facilities Manager for 5 years, managing a unique set of issues pertaining to local permit and landlord constraints at the Hangar at Oaks Amusement Park.

- 10 additional years of experience in permitting temporary and permanent spaces across the country for art installations for clients like Lexus, Sanrio, and Bacardi prior to coming onboard with RCR.

Who We Are

JEN MCCLURE, Creative Manager

- Started as a volunteer in 2014 and managed the Art Team for a few years before coming on as staff in 2018.

- Master of all thing creative for RCR – graphic design, photography, merch, social media, marketing, volunteer management…I do a lot!

The Hangar

- 12,000 square feet.
- No running water.
- Capacity capped to 100 or less for practices with a "handshake" deal with the local Fire Marshall's office.
- Special Events permits run on an annual cycle, we have negotiated to use these permits very flexibly to run our 50+ games a year.
- We toggle from a full bar license to a nonprofit permit bi-annually as fits our needs to additionally run a bar in the space.
- Rose City Rollers' schedule is highly dependent on working with Oaks Amusement Park to keep traffic on the tiny road in and out of the Park manageable for all parties.

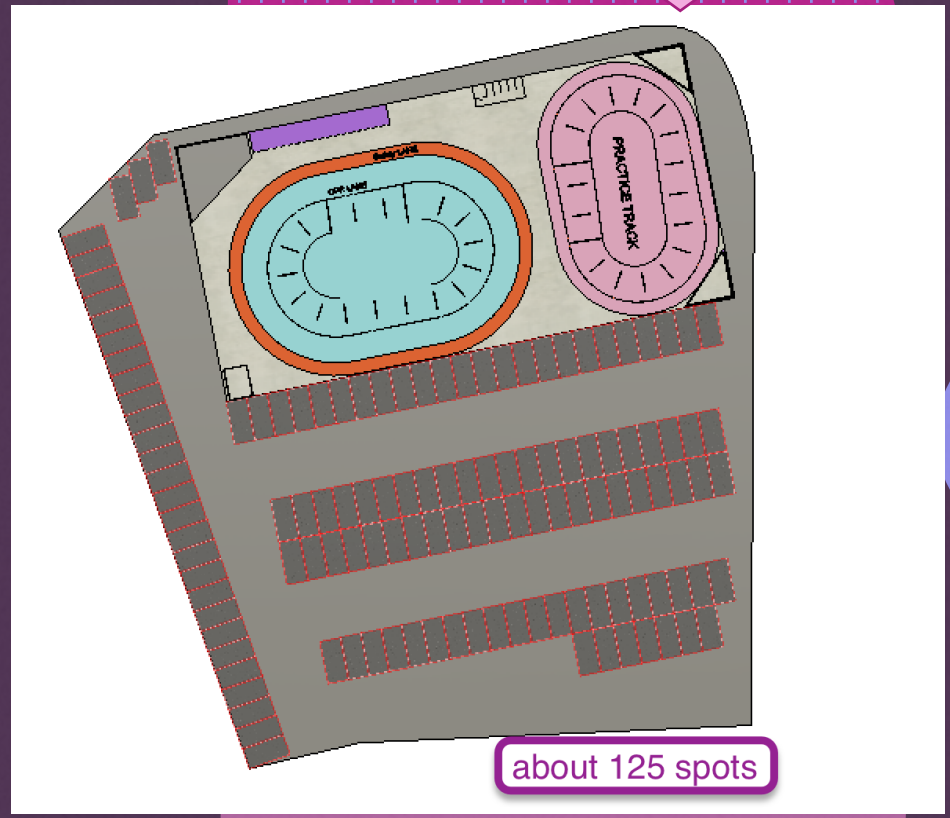
Check Boxes for Derby Spaces

- WFTDA approved minimum track with a 10’ ref lane – 8,100 (108 by 75) Square feet of floorspace, uninterrupted by columns.

- Guidelines for track and audience space at laid out in the WFTDA risk management guidelines: https://static.wftda.com/insurance/wftda-risk-management-guidelines.pdf

- Check your surface across the entire floorplan (duh).

Dreaming is free....

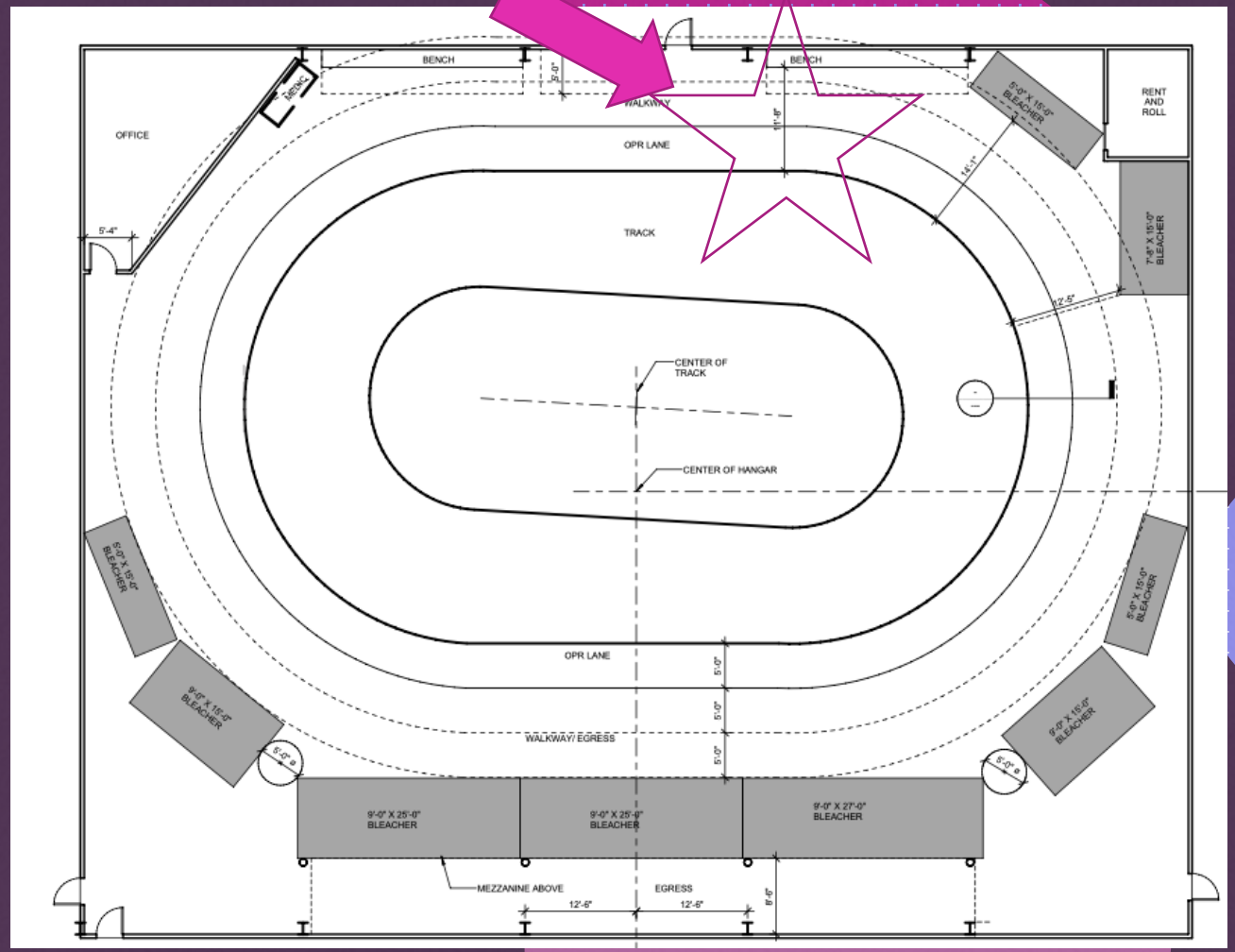


WFTDA Guidelines

- Are NOT set in Stone. Because the guidelines are pertinent to insurance coverage for your membership and fans, you speak with insurance about any space constraints or hazards to skating in the room and proceed with pursuing the space after getting their approval.

- Tosser@WFTDI.com can help!

The Hangar does not meet the 15 foot minimum clearance / we have a variance from WFTDA



Sport Court:

If you need to lay sport court tiles, you will need to factor in that expense

(12,600 10 by 10 inch tiles).

- https://www.courttilediscounters.com are really kind and helpful for reselling used court in my experience.
- Talk to other leagues, people may be holding 1 or 2 pallets you can have.
- Used Sport Court can be found on ebay but an in person look for warping is CRUCIAL.

DON'T ASSUME
tiles of different vintages will connect, sizing VARIES.

This is not an "intentional look"....

Nanna Says:

"Don't Ask / Don't get"

Define Your Needs

NOW

- Hours
- Budget
- Size
- Location
- Parking / Accessibility

ONE Year from NOW

- Hours
- Budget
- Size
- Location
- Parking / Accessibility

Build out a One-Sheet

One Sheets are great way for people to visualize what you are looking for. Save it as a pdf & jpg for easy sharing!

Don't have a graphic designer?
Check out CANVA!

- Easy to use templates
- It's free to try!
- Upload your brand colors + fonts to keep everything cohesive

THE ROSE CITY ROLLERS SEEK NEW VENUE

The Rose City Rollers (RCR) is a 501c3 nonprofit women's flat-track roller derby league in Portland. The largest such league in the world, RCR continues to grow, currently serving 270 junior skaters (from age 7) and 230 adult skaters.

Home to the two-time world champions Wheels of Justice, RCR attracts athletes as much for the training and competition as for the chance to be part of an inclusive community. Women, girls, and gender-expansive people of all shapes and sizes find their sport and their home here.

Partnerships with nonprofits such as Positive Coaching Alliance and Girl Scouts have enriched and expanded our programs. Grants from the Multnomah Athletic Foundation, Oregon Community Foundation, Portland Trail Blazers, and others have helped fund scholarships for low-income skaters and kept our gear lending library stocked with quality equipment for skaters of all ages.

VENUE WISH LIST:

Our ideal building would be a 25,000+ sq. ft. rectangular clear-span building with at least 20 ft. ceilings. It could be configured as two rooms, each at least 110' x 90' (10,000 sq. ft.), to accommodate two tracks. One of the tracks needs to have enough additional space around it to accommodate 750–1000 spectators for the events that sustain our revenue. There also needs to be room for merchandise storage and sales, concessions, production, locker rooms, and office/meeting space. We are open to having retail partners and sharing space.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

- Access to transit and bikeable
- Bathrooms/running water
- Parking for 200+ cars
- Preferred locations include SE, N, NW, and NE Portland with Milwaukie and East Portland as acceptable locations
- Locations in St. Johns, west of the West Hills, and in Gresham are not feasible
- RCR's venue hunt was recently featured on NBC Nightly News - to watch the clip visit https://www.rosecityrollers.com/news/

To help, contact RCR Executive Director Kim Stegeman at (503) 784-1444 or email rocketmean@rosecityrollers.com

Plan a Marketing Campaign

Spend some time strategically thinking about how you want to get your information out.

Gather compelling stories from members

Do a series of social media posts

Encourage your community to share

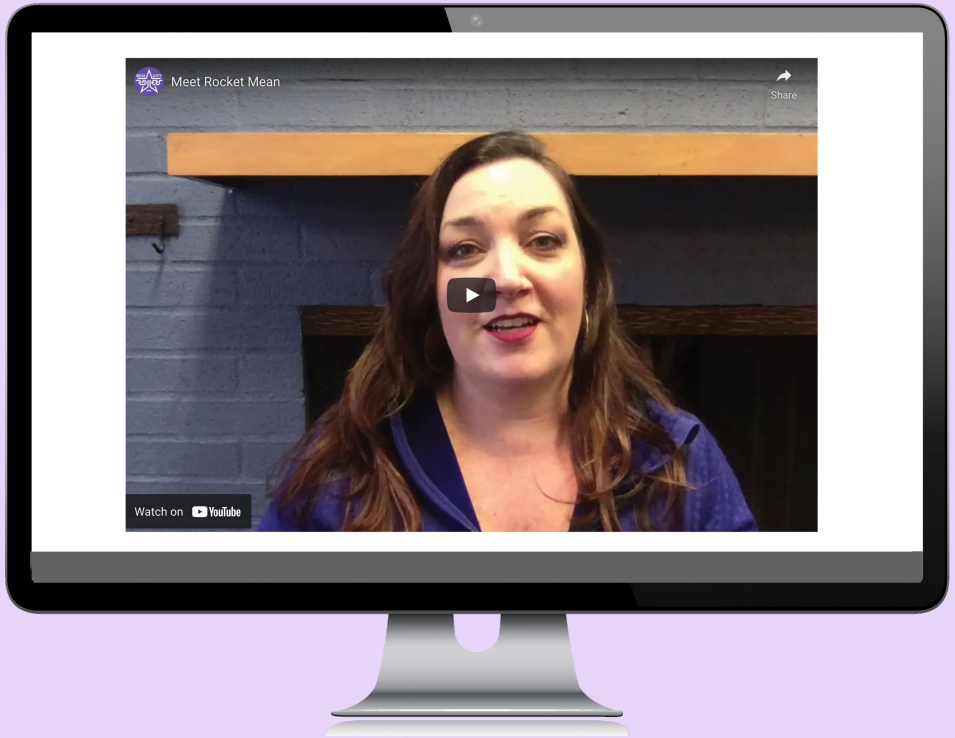
Schedule in email blasts

Set aside funds for advertising

Reach out to local news to amplify your message

Gather Compelling Stories

- Set up a filming day and invite members to come share why they love derby & why you need a new venue
  - Batching content saves time & you can repurpose content on social & through email.
- Set up a google form or survey and have people submit stories & photos
  - Use these to create carousel posts on Instagram



> RCR has been a catalyst for tremendous healing and empowerment at a time in my life when I was truly ready to receive it. Roller derby continues to take me on a journey of working on stepping into my power and owning it in so many areas of my life.
>
> -Luna Shovegood

Plan a Marketing Campaign

Spend some time strategically thinking about how you want to get your information out.

FACEBOOK

Long form videos

Photo based posts

Utilize Groups if you have them

INSTAGRAM

Carousel posts

Video content

Graphic based posts

TWITTER

Short blurbs w/ links to more info

LINKED IN

Business related content

Asking questions

TIKTOK

Short form videos

Low Production

Follow Trends

Social Media

Break your One-Sheet down into more digestible pieces to share in various places

Social Media

ADDITIONAL VIDEO CONTENT – Videos are a must-have for anyone building out social content today.

- Write out a script – Outlining what you want to say saves time during filming.
- Invest in a ring light and phone holder – Look great on camera & film without having to hold your phone.
- Show your personality – posts perform better when videos feel more genuine.
- Don’t be a perfectionist – Viewers prefer more raw, lower production content.

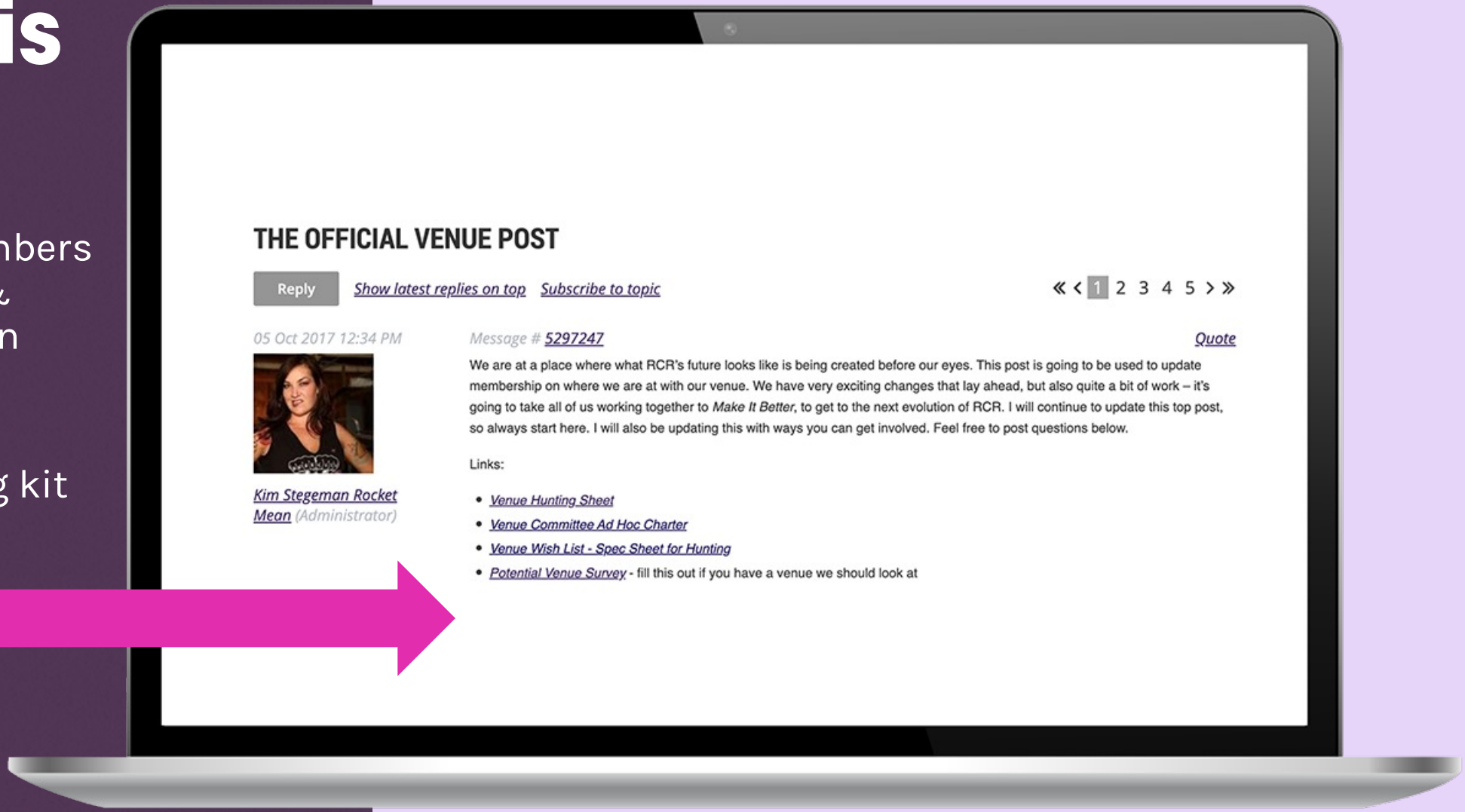
Videos don’t need to be a huge production – keep things simple & have fun!

Find examples on our TikTok!

Sharing is Caring

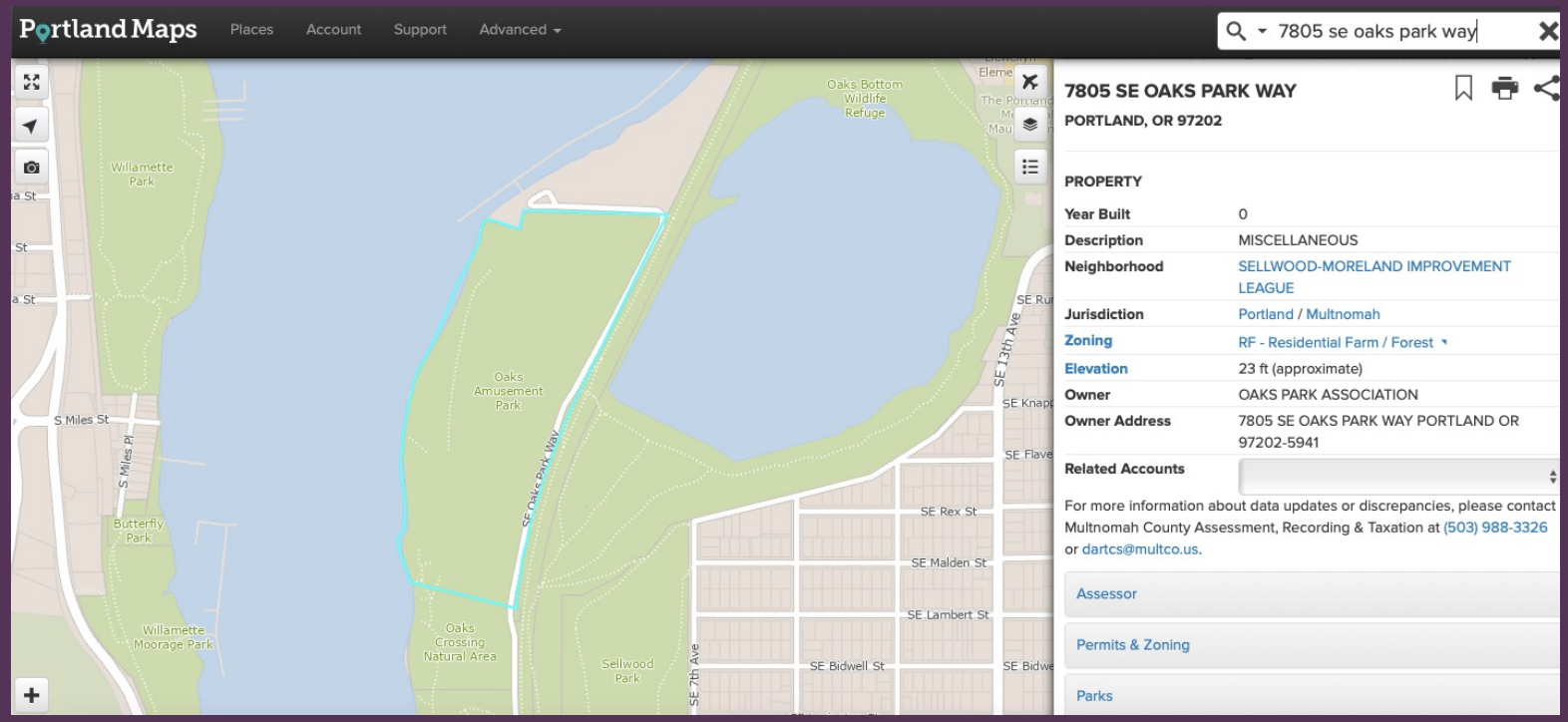
Encourage your members to spread the word & reach out to people in their networks.

Create a tool-sharing kit



How to find the owner of a building or property

FOR LEASE OR SALE:



LOOPNET.COM

The nationwide standard for finding out who owns a building or warehouse for commercial use.

LINKEDIN.COM

Great place to hunt down a facilities manager, look for job titles with "Facilities" "Operations" or even "Controller" in the title, reach out to the top of the food-chain decision-maker you can find.

PORTLANDMAPS.COM

Your local city planning office can help you track down info. Your city likely has something similar.

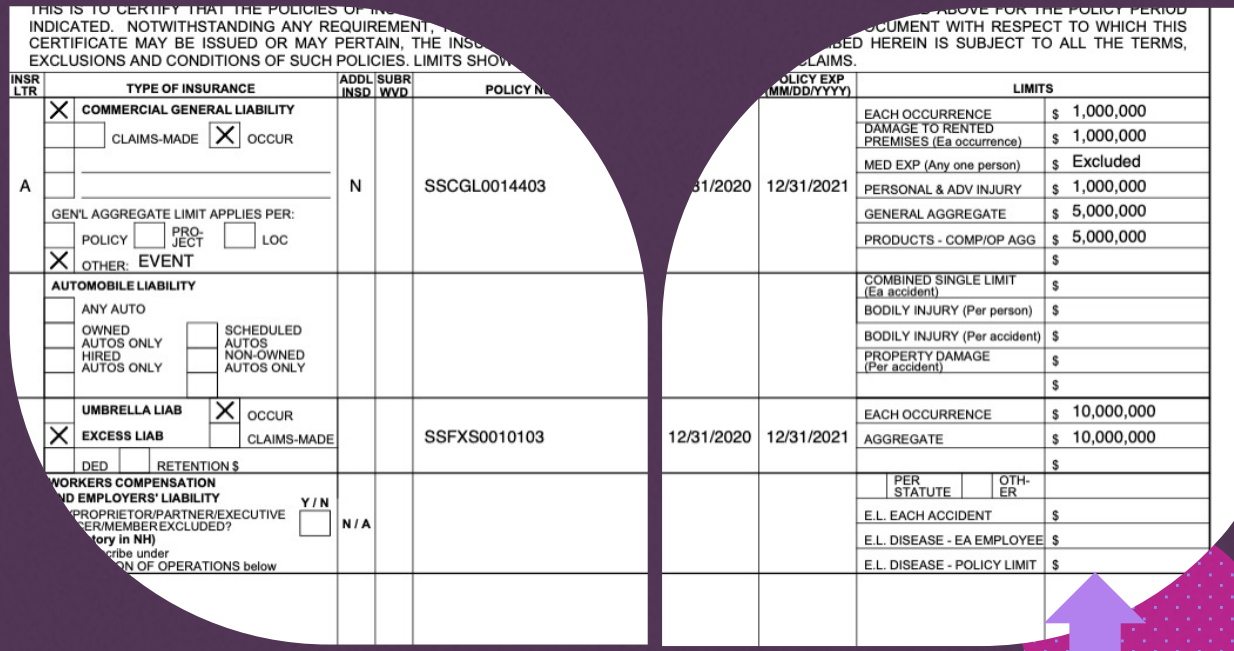
How to find a building or property - "superslueth"

Sharing and subletting / where are your partners in sport?

Show up in person, ask questions (bring swag!).

Can you use the space intermittently, what would need to happen for you to get a "yes" for your use?

Be confident, you are representing an inclusive well-established sport with a robust insurance policy, you are a great potential tenant!



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A SICK amount of insurance.

How to Make a Formal Approach

Hi,

I am the Founder / Board Member / Venue Hunt representative for xxx league. We have xxx number of members in our budding organization and are looking for dedicated space to practice our Sport.

Be Professional

We are members of the Women's Flat Track Derby Association and as such, are covered by their 1mil per occurrence, 5mil aggregate policy as an organization, and all of our skaters are also insured.

Lead with the Insurance

We follow all of Roller Derby's international safety guidelines to run a safe and inclusive sport for our membership. Our Mission is: ….....

Make a big deal of yourself

Negotiate

Be honest, don't inflate your current numbers and be clear from the first conversation about what you can afford.

Be sincere about where you are going as a league, if the decision maker doesn't support where you plan to be in 1 year, and you are signing a 1 year lease, that won't fly.

Get it in writing. Recap face to face discussions over email and record Zoom calls.

Negotiate

- Sell yourself as a mission driven nonprofit or League.
- Queer inclusive Sport / Well established Kids Programs across the country
- Do not end a conversation without using the opportunity to find out more:
    - What other businesses or properties do they own?
    - Who do they know that might have a space for you?

City Codes – The Landlord or Partner may NOT know.

If your use is different from their normal use of the building, the person in charge may not know the capacity or use limits of your proposed or current building.

Event Permits vs Permanent Permits

- Capacity for a game might be a per event permit with extra safeguards in place.
- Look into pulling a per event permit for games and scrimmages even if your usual building capacity is lower.
- This will be much easier to do if you are a nonprofit, but sometimes being in the process of applying to be a nonprofit is enough.

Fire Marshalls most often dictate capacity

- These are publicly accessible people here to serve the community, not terrifying overlords!
- The rules change over time, perhaps the rule getting in your way is on its way out after the next election.
- Find out exactly what is dictating the building's capacity limits and work with them to fix the issue or offer a solution, such as:
    - A stand by watch volunteer who goes through safety training or approved public assembly training
    - Bringing in your own Extinguishers and have your announcers trained to instruct fans on how to safely exit the building.
    - Tell them how you plan to create a safe space and ask for their feedback and advice. It can be a process.

DO NOT burn Bridges

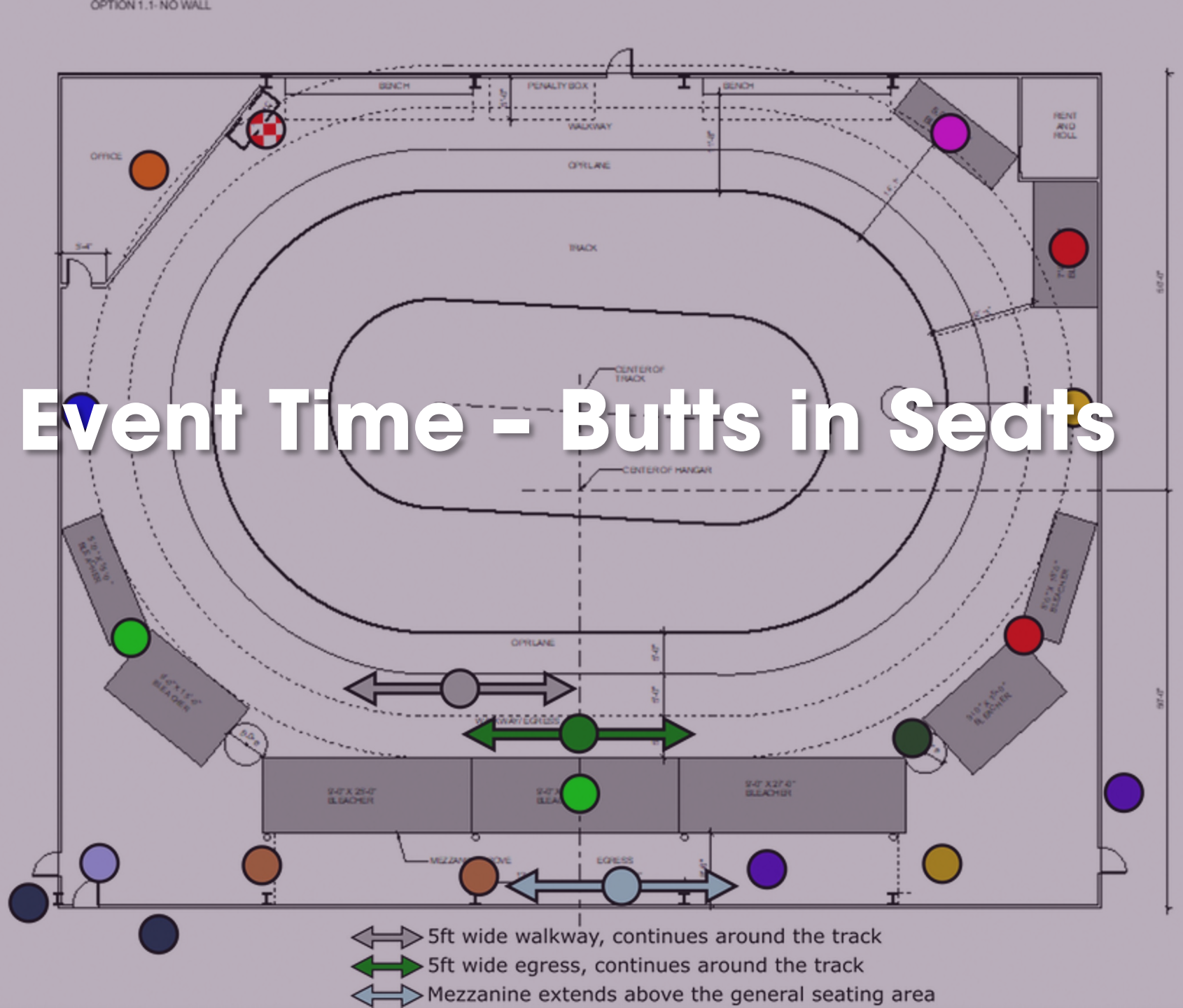
- Unless someone is a total jerk, assume they are in a rush and their answers or tone are not about you or what you are trying to do.
- Save the number and info from everyone you speak with. Refer to the advice of the professionals you are speaking with when chatting with others, they may know each other.
- If you find someone helpful in a city office or large real estate firm, get their name and their direct dial, and cultivate that person.

This pandemic series would not have happened had I taken the "bait" of some Oaks Park Leadership.

My best advice to anyone trying to build an event series or gain access to affordable space is to network to develop a deep roster of people you can call back for advice as needed, and that means having a lot of seemingly fruitless conversations.

This is NOT wasted time or effort.

Event Time – Butts in Seats



- ADA Seating
- Best Seat in the House!
- Cleaning Supplies
- Concessions
- Egress (do not block)
- Front Entrance
- General Seating
- Locker Rooms
- Medic
- Mezzanine (Above)
- Office/Merch
- Rent and Roll
- Reserved Seating
- Restrooms
- VIP Seating
- Walkway
- Wristband Checkpoint

Event Time - Local Ordinances

1

Your local special events office can guide you, do not assume you can have amplified sound or bar service at your venue until you have checked the boxes with them.

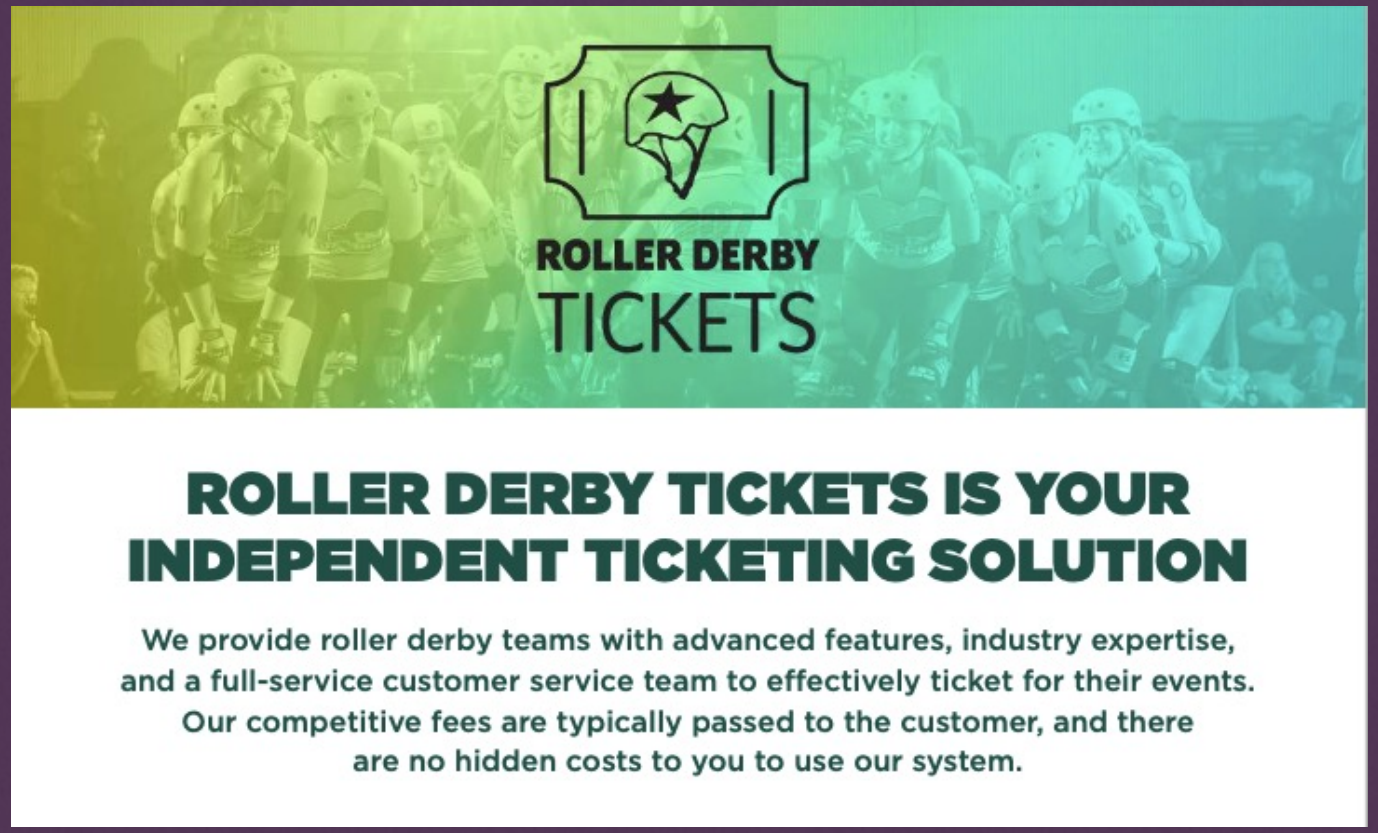
2

You need to file paperwork to hold raffles, bingos and other money making hustles, be prepared to have a point person who is communicating with those offices.

3

Be clear on what your permissions are well before you host your first event, your neighbors in the area might have questions, be prepared with answers.

Event Time – Ticketing (shamless plug)



Questions?