



Gene Strowd Community Rose Garden Wedding/Event Planning Guide



Photos: In His Image Photography

ABOUT STROWD ROSES, INC.

Strowd Roses, Inc. is a private charitable foundation established in 2001. Strowd Roses funds local nonprofits and projects that improve the quality of life for residents of Chapel Hill and Carrboro. We also provide for the on-going maintenance and care of the Gene Strowd Community Rose Garden. Our grants serve a broad spectrum of issues and populations. To date, Strowd Roses has awarded more than \$6.3 million to local nonprofits.

ABOUT THE GARDEN

The Gene Strowd Community Rose Garden is located in the Town of Chapel Hill Community Center Park at 120 South Estes Drive and contains over 450 rose bushes of 130 different varieties.

In 1987, Gene Strowd proposed his idea for the community rose garden. Construction began the following year. Along with the Chapel Hill Rose Society and the Town of Chapel Hill Parks and Recreation Department, Gene designed the layout of the garden. The community garden was dedicated and named in honor of Gene in September of 1990. With the support of the Chapel Hill Rose Society and the Strowd family, the Gene Strowd Community Rose Garden was renovated in 2000. In 2023, a fence was added to the garden to protect the roses from the deer who were eating more than 30% of the roses every year. The garden is maintained by Strowd Roses with the help of Witherspoon Rose Culture and the Town of Chapel Hill. Funding for garden maintenance and upkeep is provided solely by Strowd Roses.

RESERVATIONS

The garden is a public space open to serve the community, however, the garden may be reserved for private functions such as weddings, photography sessions, baby showers, etc. Reservations for up to eight hours can be made at no charge.

Requests to reserve the garden are honored on a first-come, first-served basis. Applicants should be 21 or older (if the reservation is for an activity primarily involving persons under 18, the sponsor signing the reservation agreement will be responsible for providing one adult chaperone for every ten participants under the age of 18).

Neither the Town of Chapel Hill nor Strowd Roses, Inc. assumes any liability for renters' use of the facility or for their guests.

Requests should be submitted to:
Keith Dodson, Recreation Supervisor
Parks and Recreation Department
Town of Chapel Hill
120 S. Estes Drive
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
(919) 969-5543, kdodson@townofchapelhill.org

You may also submit a reservation request on this form found [here](#).

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

When are the roses in bloom?

The roses are typically blooming between mid-May and the end of November, though this may vary depending on weather and temperatures.

What are the reservation fees?

No fees are charged for reserving the garden but a refundable \$100 damage deposit is required. The deposit will be refunded within 2-3 weeks if no damage has occurred and the area is left in a clean and orderly condition. Reservations will not be confirmed until the damage deposit has been received.

What is the maximum occupancy?

This depends upon seated vs. standing room only events. An estimated 50 people could be seated without visual or noise obstruction of the gazebo. A maximum of 100 people could be accommodated for a standing room only event.

Is catering allowed?

Yes; however, no alcohol or tobacco products are permitted.

Is parking available?

A facility use reservation covers the rose garden only. It does not include reservation of the parking lot. The parking lot in front of the community center is used by everyone visiting the community center, the playground, and the basketball court, and is often crowded, especially on the weekends. It is advised that your guests plan to park and carpool from the public lots at nearby University Place on Estes Drive or that you hire a shuttle bus or van to transport guests.

Is music allowed?

Yes, acoustic music is permissible. There is no access to an electrical outlet to accommodate amplified music or microphones.

Is the garden wheelchair and walker accessible?

Yes, the garden is wheelchair and walker accessible. The front gate is accessible, however the back gate is not wheelchair or walker accessible at this time. Persons needing an accessible entrance should use the front gate. At times, there may be loose bricks or debris on the walkways as often happens in outside environments. Persons using the garden should exercise reasonable caution.

May we rent table and chairs?

Neither the Parks and Rec Department nor Strowd Roses can provide chairs or tables. However, you are welcome to rent from an outside vendor. The renter is responsible for identifying a vendor and being on-site for delivery, pickup and setup. Rentals must be delivered and picked up on the day of the event within the reserved time.

May we set up tents?

No.

May we hang decorations or signs?

If you would like to hang or display materials, please discuss appropriate display methods with one of the Parks and Rec staff. Please do not use staples, nails or tacks to hang signs or decorations.

May we use candles or fireworks?

No open flames can be used in the garden. Battery or solar operated candles are allowed.

What if it rains?

Unfortunately, we cannot accommodate you and your guests indoors if it rains, as our indoor spaces are reserved for other uses. You may wish to secure a back-up indoor location elsewhere in the local community in the event of inclement weather.

What hotels are nearby?

The Chapel Hill/Orange County Visitors Bureau provides this great list of local accommodations: <http://www.visitchapelhill.org/plan-a-visit/accommodations/c/hotels-and-motels>

What else should we consider?

No rose bushes may be cut for flower arrangements. No benches or garden signage can be moved or removed. Consider an alternative plan for inclement weather and reserving an additional day or time for professional photography sessions.

Please also be aware that other activities may well be going on at the same time as your event, including children playing on the playground, walkers and bikers using the trail behind the garden, and people playing on the nearby basketball court, all of which may generate noise.

How can I learn more about the garden or donate to Strowd Roses, Inc.?

To learn more about the garden or the nonprofits, issues and populations Strowd Roses, Inc. supports, visit strowdroses.org or email hfuller@strowdroses.org