

PRESS RELEASE

Michael J. Nicholson

Mayor of the City of Gardner

I am writing today to provide you all with the latest information regarding the upcoming Centennial Celebration Parade that will take place on Sunday, September 17th, 2023.

The Administration met with members of the Parade Committee yesterday to discuss and finalize the logistics for the day. An updated map of the event is attached.

This past week, the Department of Public Works weed-wacked and trimmed any growth impeding the sidewalks along the parade route, staging area, and breakdown area. This process began last week with any growth being sprayed and then the remnants being cut this week. Per MassDEP regulations, we are restricted in what we can use for weed killer, requiring us to utilize a mixture of white vinegar and dish detergent.

Parking:

No parking will be allowed along the parade route itself (Elm Street, Central Street, Parker Street, and Waterford Street) beginning at 7am. Any cars still remaining parked along the route will be towed beginning at 7:15am. This is so the street sweepers can take one last run through the route before the parade. Additionally, the entire length of Cherry Street, Cross Street from Chestnut Street to Lawrence Street, the entire length of Bond Street, Graham Street from Parker Street to Richmond Street, and Church Street from Waterford Street to Marquette Street will also have no on-street parking beginning at 7am that morning.

On Street Parking will open back up at 4pm.

Public parking will be allowed at the Gardner Veterans Skating Arena on Veterans Drive, Park Street Park, and the municipal lots on Knowlton St, Nichols St, and Connors St. Please note that the West Street Parking Lot will be unavailable due to its only entrance being on the parade route.

Vehicular Traffic:

Elm Street will close to ALL traffic beginning at 11:30am to allow for acts to begin staging. There are 7 divisions in the parade and each of the 70 participants have been notified of where their respective staging locations are.

The streets that are located on the parade route will be closed to ALL traffic beginning at 12:30pm. These streets are Central Street, Parker Street, and Waterford Street. Please note that the parade ends at the intersection of Waterford and Parker and Waterford Street itself will be used as a breakdown area for performers and NOT for parade viewing.

The following streets that are ancillary to the parade route will be CLOSED TO THROUGH TRAFFIC beginning at 12:30pm – Temple Street from Chestnut to Elm, Cross Street from Chestnut to Elm and Elm to Lawrence, Walnut Street from Chestnut to Elm, Chestnut Street from Walnut to Central, Edgell Street from Westford to Elm, Woodland Avenue from Heywood to Central, Parker Street from Cottage to Veterans Dr., Maple St from Lynde to Central, Pine Street from Cross to Central, Connors Street from City Hall Ave to Parker, Main Street from City Hall Ave to Parker Street, Nichols St from City Hall Ave to Parker, Reagan St from Moran to Parker, Greenwood St from Moran to Parker, Marquette St from Moran to Parker, Church St from Marquette to Waterford and Leamy to Waterford, Parker from Leamy to Waterford.

Pleasant Street from City Hall Avenue to Parker Street will be closed to all traffic beginning at 12:30pm.

These streets will all open back up at 3:30pm.

Public Safety:

Due to the parade route cutting the City in half and as a result of the large amount of people expected to be along the parade route, the following actions will be put into place.

All 30 Gardner Police Officers and the Chief and Deputy Chief have been called into duty and will be spread throughout the parade route. Additional support has been secured from the Massachusetts State Police. Officers will be on foot patrol, bicycles,

and unmarked throughout the route as well as in cruisers at certain intersections. The K-9 and Drone units will also be in operation at the event.

The Monty Tech Marine Corps Jr. ROTC cadets will be manning the road closures along the route to direct traffic out of the area.

The Gardner Fire Department will have two that day with one stationed at Gardner Fire Headquarters on City Hall Avenue and a second unit of apparatus stationed on Richmond Street on the North Side of the parade to cover any calls coming from the North of the City.

Woods Ambulance will have an Paramedic ATV unit patrolling the parade route should any medical issues occur with either the performers or with any of the spectators along the route. Additionally, an ALS ambulance will be stationed at the Gardner Fire Headquarters to provide services if any calls come in from the South side of the City, and an ALS ambulance will be stationed at Heywood Hospital should any calls come in from the North. Police, Fire, and EMS personnel will also coordinate that if a major call comes in, the parade will halt at Conners Street in order for the intersection to be opened for the emergency apparatus to get through. This is why there will be no parking allowed on Graham Street, to ensure that any emergency vehicle can get through as easily as possible.

Our Emergency Dispatch Center will have Director Rossi and 3 additional dispatchers stationed on duty. Director Topolski from the City's Emergency Management Department will have our City Radio System Command Post set up on the island of the Uptown Rotary with additional stations set up at the former Chamber of Commerce Parking Lot and at Waterford Street School. These additional radio transmission stations should ensure that even with the increased radio communications expected that day, all public safety communications should be operational on the City and State's 200hz system for Police, Fire, EMS, and DPW, rather than relying solely on our current radio tower transmissions.

Food Trucks:

The Centennial Celebration Committee has secured 6 food trucks for the event. At 11am on Sunday, all 6 trucks will report to the Knowlton Street Parking Lot at City Hall for inspection by the Gardner Fire and Health Departments. After the inspections are completed, the trucks will be dismissed to their respective locations along the parade route – two on Cottage Street behind the Monument Park Bandstand, the former Bank of America parking lot on Parker Street, the West Street Parking lot, and the parking lot for GFA Federal Credit Union on Parker Street.

Restroom Facilities:

Portable restroom facilities (Port-o-Potties) will be located in the following locations:

- 10 at Elm Street School for performer set up
- 3 at Monument Park (1 additional to the 2 already there)
- 1 in the West Street Parking Lot
- 2 at Waterford Street School for performers in the breakdown area

Trash Cans:

Aside from 22 trash garages already stationed throughout the downtown, additional trash totters will be spread along the parade route on Central Street from Woodland Avenue to Cottage Street, Parker Street from Nichols St to Waterford Street. Director Baczewski from the Transfer Station will place these on the streets beginning at 11am on Sunday.

Broadcast and Announcing:

GETV and the Announcing Review Stand will be set up in Orpheum Park on Parker Street. GETV will also be recording the band performance at Watkins Field after the parade as well.

Band Performance:

The UMass and GHS bands will be rehearsing in the morning at Watkins Field beginning around 9am. They will then bus from Catherine Street to Lawrence Street then to Cross Street which is their staging area.

Following the parade's completion, our police department motorcycle unit (2 bikes) and 2 cruisers will escort the 8 busses of the UMass Band and the 1 bus of the GHS band from Waterford Street School to Gardner High School.

The show is scheduled to start at 3pm, but is flexible depending on the parade time.

Free food (burgers and hot dogs) will be provided at the newly completed concession stand by the Montachusett Suicide Prevention Taskforce. Free ice cream products will also be provided by Fidelity Bank.

The GHS Band will perform their show, The Music of Stevie Wonder, followed by the UMass Marching Band. There will be a brief presentation between acts.

UMass will conclude their show with their traditional playing of Frank Sinatra's My Way. For this, any Gardner Music Students or any UMass Band Alum in the crowd will be allowed onto the track on the field. All band and choral students from Gardner High, Gardner Middle, Gardner Elementary, and Holy Family Academy have been invited to the event. Currently the GMS Band has approximately 150 students enrolled and as of this morning, the Gardner Elementary School Band enrollment is at 201. I don't know how many of them will be in attendance, but we want to make it special for those of them that are.

Clean Up:

The City's Street Sweepers will be the last act in the parade after the UMass Band's busses. They will go back out across the route for any additional clean up on Monday morning.

Please let me know if you have any questions on any of the above information, and I look forward to seeing you on Sunday.

Best,

Mike

Michael J. Nicholson

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