

Independence Day 2024 Events Q&A

Why is the City moving forward with a parade?

The City decided to resume the Highland Park tradition of an Independence Day parade based upon community feedback, ongoing conversations with victims' families and individuals who were injured, recommendations from mental health clinicians serving people impacted by the shooting in Highland Park, and the expertise of the Department of Justice Office of Victims of Crime (OVC). The City understands from mental health clinicians and experts in the aftermath of violence incidents that reclaiming traditions and restoring a sense of familiarity is a benefit to the community's long-term resiliency, particularly as it pertains to holidays.

Why has the City opted for an alternate parade route?

Based upon feedback from participants in the Community Walk and post-event analysis from staff and elected officials, an alternate route was recommended. The new route will still keep the parade in Downtown Highland Park, ensuring that traditional support for local businesses open on July 4 and the community tradition of gathering in Sunset Woods Park continue. Additionally, an alternate route may expand accessibility of the event to individuals who would otherwise not participate if the route remained the same.

Why is the parade being held in the afternoon?

Based upon the recommendation of the Department of Justice – Office of Victims of Crime, in the event a remembrance program is held it is important that it take place at or near the time of the original incident. As such, the remembrance ceremony will be held in the morning at 10am.

Why is registration required to participate as a parade entrant?

The City has always required parade participants to complete an application to participate. The applications include important information and responsibilities that all entrants, including families participating in the children's bike and pet portion of the parade, must acknowledge in order to participate.

Will spectators be able to attend the parade?

Yes. Spectators are welcome to line the route to enjoy the floats, vehicles, and entertainment.

Does my family have to be part of a neighborhood group to participate, or may we enter with friends as our own walking group?

The City encourages neighborhoods or blocks to participate as a group in line with the "Sweet Home Highland Park" theme. Unregistered participants will not be able to walk

in the parade. Children and pets *must* be accompanied by an adult at all times. Please see the parade application form for more detailed information.

Will there be a fireworks or drone display?

No, there is no evening event planned for Independence Day 2024.

What program is planned for the remembrance ceremony?

As in 2023, the remembrance ceremony will include a moment of silence and reading of names, remarks from Mayor Rotering and interfaith clergy, and music.

Why do I need to register in order to attend the remembrance ceremony?

The 2024 remembrance ceremony will take place indoors. Pre-registration allows the City to plan appropriately for the number of attendees. Attendees of the remembrance ceremony will be subject to security measures before entry to the event. Further information regarding the venue and registration process will be available at cityhpil.com nearer to the date.

What support services will be available?

The City recognizes that community members may benefit from professional support in considering participation in the parade. The City's Resiliency Division provides assistance including short-term counseling, resources and referrals, case management and needs assessments, and more. For information about support services available through the Resiliency Division, please contact Resiliency Manager Madeline Kati, LCSW, at mkati@cityhpil.com / 847.926.1036.

During the morning remembrance ceremony, the City will provide on-site support services in English & Spanish in partnership with the Resiliency Division's resource partners.

Please contact the City Manager's Office with any questions at 847.926.1000 or cityhp@cityhpil.com.