

CITY OF GROVE CITY, OHIO

COUNCIL MINUTES

February 27, 2024

Special Meeting

The special meeting of Council was called to order by President Houk at 6:00 p.m. in City Hall, 4035 Broadway.

Roll was called and the following members were present:

Jodi Burroughs, Melissa Anderson, Mark Sigrist, Christine Houk, Randy Holt, Ted Berry, Rodney Dew

1. The Chair read the agenda items and they were approved by unanimous consent.

The Chair recognized Mr. Dew, Chair of Service, for discussion and voting under said Committee.

1. Ordinance C-08-24 (Direct the City Administrator to Cause the Closing of Broadway for Arts-In-The-Alley and the Wine and Arts Festival) was given its special discussion and Mr. Dew recognized Mr. Holt, originator of the ordinance, to direct the special discussion.

Mr. Holt began by reading the ordinance in its entirety. He announced that the second reading and vote will take place at the March 04, 2024 Council meeting.

Mr. Chuck Boso, City Admin., shared the impact that closing Broadway would have and the routes that could be used to redirect traffic. He shared the number of residents that would be impacted by each detour. He said the challenge is semi-truck traffic. Signage is ignored and trucks end up in residential neighborhoods that are difficult for the trucks and the roads aren't meant to handle them. He said it can be done, but there are inconveniences and effects on neighborhoods.

Mr. Vedra, Deputy City Admin., stated that safety is a top priority. The closing of the Grant Avenue railroad crossing is what eliminated the least disruptive detour when closing Broadway. He said there is local traffic and school buses to consider also.

Police Chief Scott explained that the Safety Division supported moving events off Broadway to minimize risk. He said they receive calls from residents about truck traffic and deal with road rage. He said this ordinance is not preferred by police and fire.

Ms. Shawn Conrad, President of the G.C. Chamber of Commerce, said she appreciates opening this conversation. She said the Chamber respects the City's Safety Team. They want to: provide benefit & value, expand the event and have enough room for their vendors – as last year they turned away over 30; create a connected event; relieve congestion; bring exposure & foot traffic to the Town Center businesses; and have adequate space for each vendor. She said they need a layout that is safe, accessible, integrates all components of the event in a cohesive way, provides tangible value for event investors, draws attention of passersby, and enough space for the event. She shared a map that would layout the event using both Broadway and the Park.

Mr. Holt asked Ms. Kelly, Clerk of Council, to read the e-mails that were received in her office. Ms. Kelly read four (4) e-mails from Amanda Davis, Dir. of Visit Grove City; Lori Johnson, resident; Stacey Kelly, resident; & Marja Keplar, resident, all in support of the ordinance for various reasons.

Ms. Jolene Engleman, Town Center business owner and lifelong resident, voiced support for the ordinance. She said people would come from other communities to attend Arts in the Alley. For business owners, this event helped bring customers into their doors. As a former vendor, she said she feels sorry for the vendors now. The area is muddy, congested, and doesn't have enough room. She said it is just a bunch of tents behind a brick building, blocking the view. She said her business hosts many small businesses inside and they have been affected by the change in location.

Mr. Joe Weber, City Service Manager, said he loves these events, but for him – it is a safety issue. In his position, he wants to make sure everyone can get home safe. Diverting trucks and travelers gets them lost and shared traffic issues that have occurred in the past. He said being off Broadway limits exposure to bodily harm.

Mr. Ray Smolinski, G.C. Brewery & Plum Run Winery, shared the challenges for attendees and vendors by having these events in the park. He said being on Broadway opens up more parking as well.

Ms. Michelle Robinson, Garden Bar owner, said she loves the new area created, but would like to see the event merge the old with the new to help the businesses and the attendees. She said they moved here to be part of a community and a hometown. Moving the events off Broadway has had a negative impact and feels there is a solution that can bring the two areas together for a safe event.

Mr. Tobias Ewing, said, as a resident of the Town Center neighborhood, there is one thing that is a constant – the Town Center. It is a great place to be and it is best served when the people are thought of first and not traffic. Having events on Broadway is the best way to show off this gem.

Mr. Matt Delaone, business owner, said he also has businesses in Westerville and the Short North. He supports moving the events back to Broadway, as both Westerville and High Street in the Short North shut down the street, creating a positive effect for all.

Council Members gave final remarks:

Ms. Burroughs stated that the hardest thing to understand is why we did it in the first place. There is a lack of visibility and accessibility. She said she loves the map from the Chamber, showing how the areas can be combined. She said these events bring dollars into the community and while safety is #1, she believes we can work together to do this.

Ms. Anderson commented that safety is not lost on her. It gives her heartburn trying to cross Broadway when the road is not shut down. She shared concern over large groups of people crossing the street to see all of the event and businesses on both sides of the road. She said people cherish the Town Center and the small-town feel.

Mr. Sigrist said it is hard to hear the experts in the City discuss safety and vote the opposite way. He feels a ground could come together to bring a safe and effective event layout together. He said we have to find a balanced way to overcome the concerns and hold a Broadway event. You just can't ignore safety.

Ms. Houk said this is a complex issue for her. She has been on both sides of this issue. She said stopping events on Broadway was a tough decision and was floated for several years before it occurred. She said she appreciates Mr. Holt bringing up the issue. She said we aren't happy and we need to work to find a solution. However, we have to protect everyone.

Mr. Berry said not only do we have to protect the event, but we also have to protect the whole city

and asked if we had the bandwidth for all of it. He said if we don't, do we bring in State Highway Patrol or other agencies to shut down highway ramps. He said there is a cost and he isn't opposed to paying for it, they just need to understand that cost. He said Circleville does it every year and doesn't see why we can't.

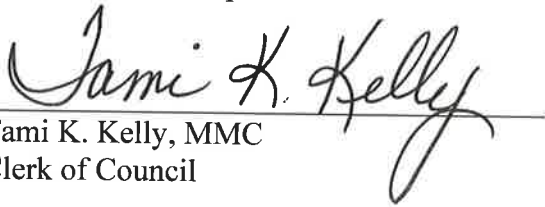
Mr. Dew said if you have never pushed a person in a wheelchair or a stroller on grass you don't realize that it doesn't matter if the ground is level or not – it is difficult. He said safety is a concern, but said if Circleville can do it, we can do it.

Mr. Holt said this issue is the second most comment he hears from residents. They want events back on Broadway. He said this is why he created the ordinance - to address the will of the people. He said we have very smart people working for the city and if other people can figure it out, so can we. He said the value of having events on Broadway exceeds the temporary inconvenience. He said it may be difficult, but we can make it happen and asked the Administration to figure it out.

Ms. Houk thanked attendees of the meeting for their comments. She said community input is what drives good decisions.

3. A motion to adjourn was approved by unanimous consent.

Adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

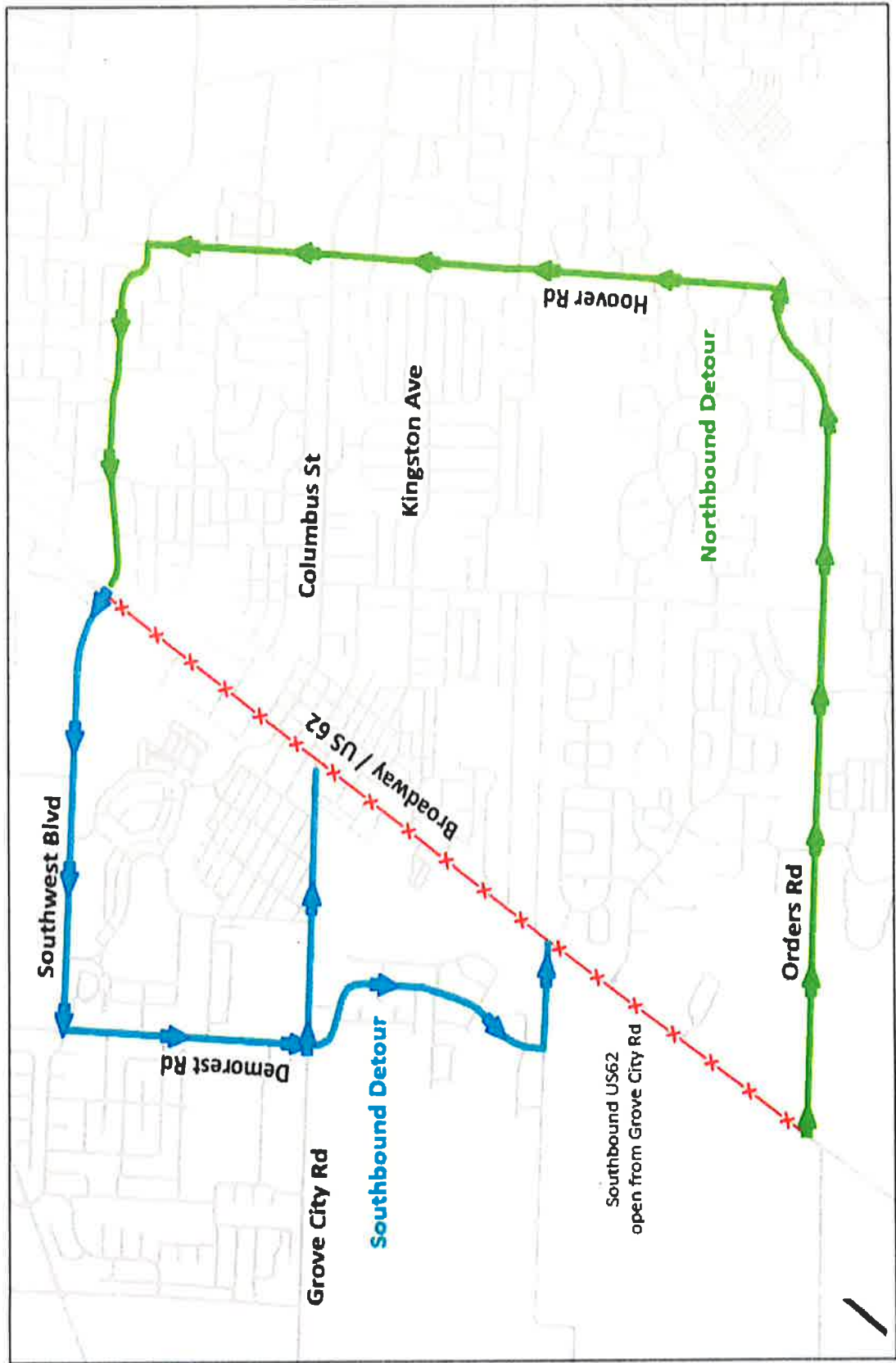

Tami K. Kelly, MMC
Clerk of Council


Christine Houk
President of Council

Closing Broadway Impacts and Detours

Grove City Special Council Meeting

February 27, 2024



Large boundary
detour

Large Boundary Impact to the Residents

Large boundary area: Southwest N, Hoover E, Orders S and Demorest W

- 7,506 residential addresses x 2.43 persons per household = approx. 18,239 residents

Southbound Detour

Northbound Detour

Southbound US 62 open from Grove City Rd

Barricades

Demorest Rd

Southwest Blvd

Kingston Ave

Haughn Rd

Columbus St

Grove City Rd

US 62

Renssch Rd

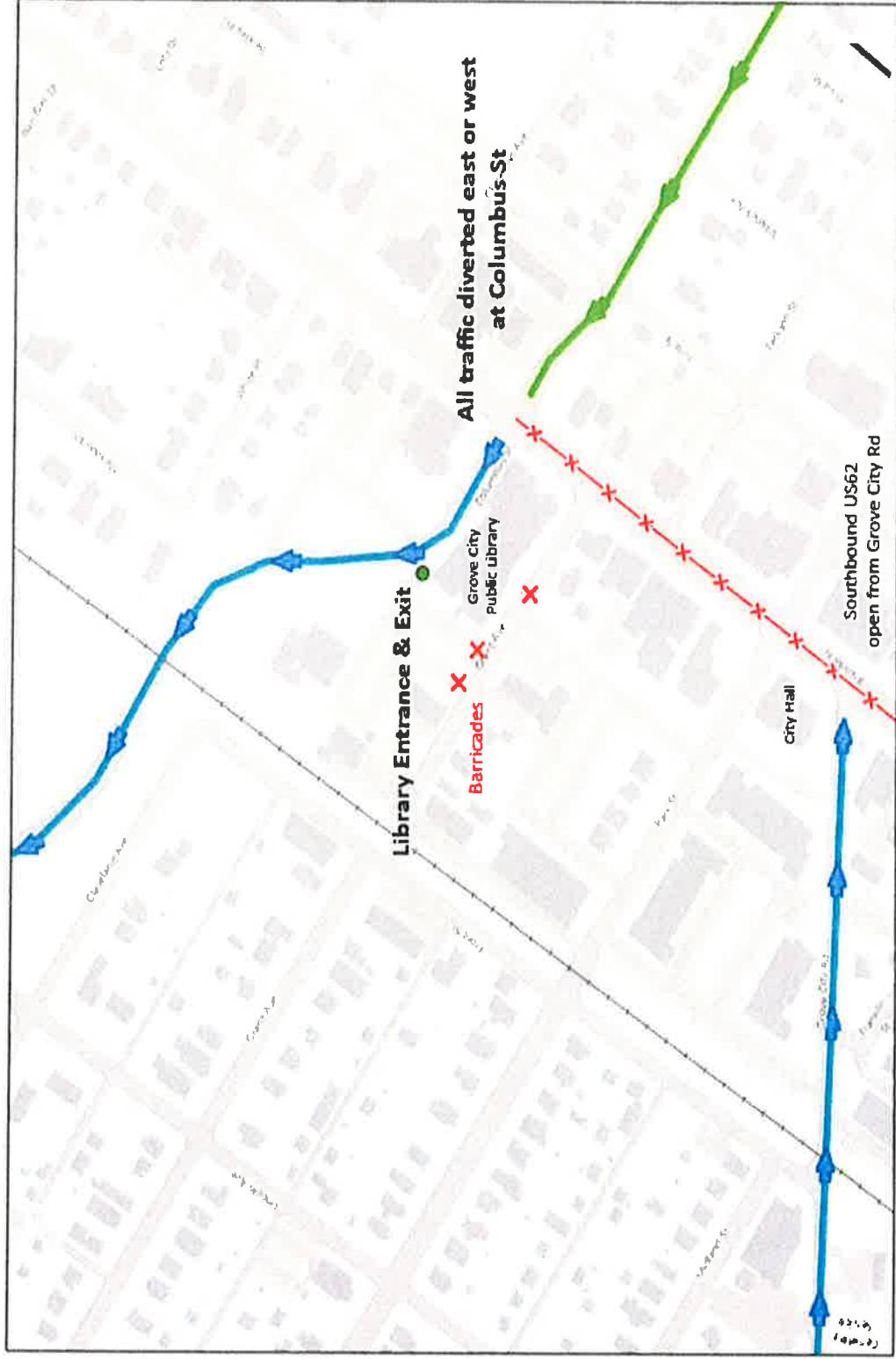
Broadway / US 62

Small Boundary Impact to the Residents

Small boundary area: Columbus/Southwest N, Haughn E, Kingston S and Demorest W

- **2,078 addresses** x 2.43 = approx. 5,049 residents
- **163 intersections** including alleys

Library Detour



Library Detour Impact

- One entrance and exit
- Prevents cut through the Promenade parking lot and City Hall drive
- Maintains access for the businesses and residences on Grant Ave.

Key Points

- **Safety** is the first consideration of special events
- **17,000 vehicles** use Broadway per day (ODOT Traffic Count 2022)
- **The closing of Grant Avenue** eliminated the least disruptive detour
- **Local traffic will look for the shortest** detour, disregarding the marked detours
- **School zone traffic** impacted at JC Sommer, Park St, Beulah, GCHS, GC Christian, Monterey and Highland Park
- **SWCSD Bus Routes**



Arts & Music Festival

CELEBRATING 45 YEARS IN 2024

Goals & Objectives

- Continue to provide benefit & value to GCACC Membership
- Expansion of historic community event
- Introduce tourists, visitors and vendors to the warmth and hospitality of the "Best Hometown" in Ohio
- Grow all event components with excellence
- Introduction of new event features
- Provide fun, safe family oriented destination
- Provide opportunity for increased tourism
- Continue to work collaboratively with City Administration, City Council, Heart of Grove City, Visit Grove City to showcase Town Center, Beulah Park and all of Grove City

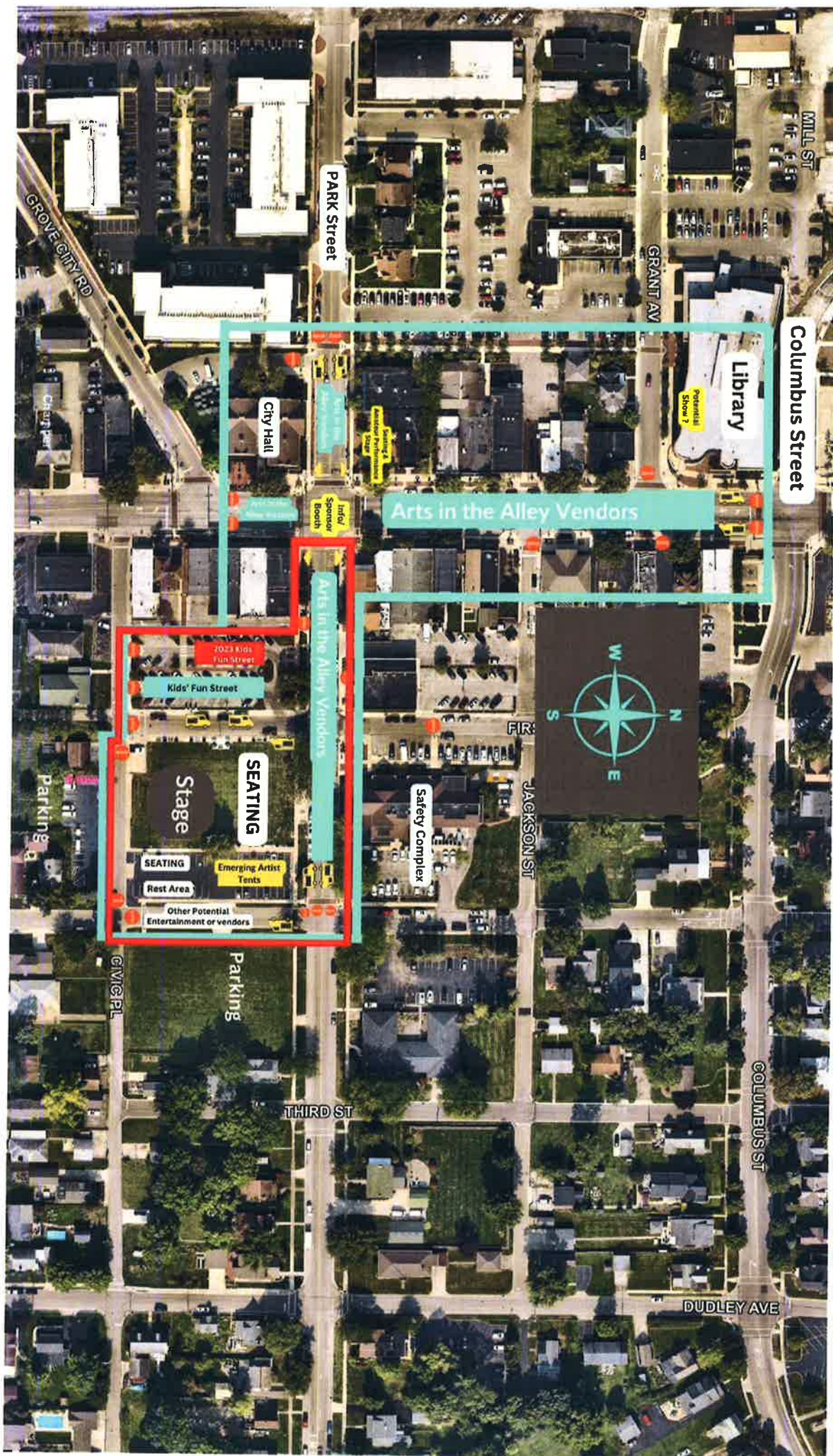


- Bring exposure & foot traffic to event and Town Center merchants
- Bring vendors in and out safely, quickly and efficiently
- Provide adequate space for vendors and visitors
- Reduce congestion throughout event at vendor booths and concession stands
- Increase foot traffic between City Hall art shows and primary event, creating event continuity
- Opportunity for expansion

Safety & Challenges

- A layout that provides a safe and accessible experience
- Integration of all event components and features to create a more cohesive event
- Provide improved tangible value for event investors & Stakeholders: sponsors, vendors, advertisers, etc.
- Draw the attention of passersby to our event, especially those who may be unaware of its occurrence or location
- Space limitation creates congestion and liability i.e. vehicle maneuverability during set up/ tear down





Kelly, Tami

From: Amanda Davis <amanda@visitgrovecity.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 4:34 PM
To: Dew, Rodney; Holt, Randy; Houk, Christine; Anderson, Melissa; Berry, Ted; Burroughs, Jodi; Sigrist, Mark
Cc: Kelly, Tami; Beverly Babbert
Subject: Relocation of events off Broadway

Grove City Council Members,

While I am unable to attend tonight's special council meeting, I wanted send feedback on Visit Grove City's opinion related to hosting large scale events on Broadway.

Large community events, such as Arts in the Alley and the Wine and Arts Festival, once created a vibrancy on Broadway that brought customers into businesses throughout the Broadway corridor. While event goers explored tents filled with art, wine, and hand-crafted goods, they took note of where they might eat; it was typical to see patrons lined up outside of Town Center restaurants, such as the then Lilly's Kitchen Table, as they waited patiently for a table - we had a front row seat to this line directly across the street from our front door.

Curiosity and proximity led attendees into the doors of many shops, the Grove City Museum, and our Grove City Visitor Center. It was typical for Visit Grove City to welcome 900-1,000 guests into the visitor center across a busy event-filled weekend when attendees were right outside our door. Fast Forward to when events were moved off Broadway, and our foot traffic during these two signature events decreased by a drastic 89%, while sales plummeted by an average of 94%.

What's more is that our events became *less accessible* in a world that is growing evermore aware of our lack of inclusivity. We have received several firsthand accounts of the disabled struggling to access amenities of events or forgoing events altogether; in one instance, a man in a wheelchair fell over as he tried to gain access to the grassy area of Town Center park to patronize Arts in the Alley. As a community that prides itself on being welcoming to all, it is imperative to consider accessibility for all event participants.

Visit Grove City supports moving events back onto Broadway to increase the impact of these events on our local business community and improve accessibility for all.

Thank you for hosting this special meeting.

Warm regards,

Amanda

—
Amanda Davis
Executive Director

Kelly, Tami

From: noreply@civicplus.com
Sent: Sunday, February 25, 2024 10:53 AM
To: Kelly, Tami
Subject: Online Form Submittal: Contact City Council

Contact City Council

I would like my message to be sent to the following Council Members

Christine A. Houk (Ward 3), Melissa Anderson (Ward 4), Jodi Burroughs (At-large), Mark Sigrist (At-large)

First Name	Loretta (Lori)
Last Name	Johnson
Email	johnsonlori1990@gmail.com
Phone	614.563.2531
Address	2715 Lori's Way
Subject	Back on Broadway events
Comments	Please do make the necessary changes to bring the Wine & Arts festival and others to the Broadway, Park St back. The last event of Arts in the Alley held on the grassy knoll and only on Park St up to Broadway was crowded, condensed and not enjoyable in any way. The grassy area is uneven and not user friendly to those of age, strollers, people of difficulties or disabilities. I'm convinced the Heart of Ohio business partners lost the ability to showcase their amazing storefronts and restaurants and benefit from the events as currently held. The spirit of these amazingly fun and welcoming community events are lost unless they come back to Broadway. I look forward to your commitment in moving this forward for the good of Grove City. Thank you, Lori Johnson

Email not displaying correctly? [View it in your browser.](#)

Kelly, Tami

From: noreply@civicplus.com
Sent: Sunday, February 25, 2024 10:43 PM
To: Kelly, Tami
Subject: Online Form Submittal: Contact City Council

Contact City Council

I would like my message to be sent to the following Council Members Tami K. Kelly, MMC (Clerk of Council)

First Name	Stacey
Last Name	Kelly
Email	staceykelly@ameritech.net
Phone	6142661068
Address	3680 Casa Blvd
Subject	Ordinance C-08-24
Comments	My husband and I have lived in the area for nearly 9 years. We especially enjoyed all of the events downtown when they would block off Broadway. We were extremely disappointed when they were moved to Park St. There is not enough room or places to sit. It is definitely not stroller or wheelchair friendly. We stopped going to them all. I am excited to hear the city is reconsidering the move off Broadway. We will definitely attend them all once again if it passes.

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Kelly, Tami

From: noreply@civicplus.com
Sent: Monday, February 26, 2024 7:48 AM
To: Kelly, Tami
Subject: Online Form Submittal: Contact City Council

Contact City Council

I would like my message to be sent to the following Council Members

First Name	Marja
Last Name	Keplar
Email	keplar5@yahoo.com
Phone	6143238439
Address	5613 Blue Star Drive
Subject	Closing of Broadway for City Events
Comments	I noticed there is a special meeting in regards to this topic, but I'm not really sure why the City stopped closing Broadway for large events. I've heard safety reasons for traffic, but if the proper signage is put out ahead of time to reroute traffic, why is it an issue. The rumor that I hear when GC residents talk about it, is because the State of Ohio is enforcing this, which I don't believe to be true, since I work for a large municipality in Central Ohio and have asked this question of our Events staff. Grove City is growing so fast and to have the Wine Festival and Arts in the alley in a small restricted area just doesn't seem to accommodate or attract the amount of people in attendance. It's tight and barely room for people to walk around and enjoy the events. I've heard numerous people comment on Grove City events and not wanting to attend because of the space. If the city can close it for the Alumni Homecoming, then they should be closed for other large events to attract more residents to attend. As well, the City should re-evaluate the Grove City Farmer's market. I have attended farmer's markets in Dublin, Hilliard and Worthington and a few other communities. The amount of vendors that are in attendance for other farmers markets is well

above what Grove City gets in participation. Some people don't even realize we still have it because it's so hidden. Put it back on Broadway and still close some side streets, but You don't have to close Broadway to host it on Broadway. Worthington has it a good distance on High Street and their streets remain open but they still get a great flow of walking traffic for their farmer's market.

It is great that the City is re-evaluating Events on Broadway.

Sincerely,
Marja Keplar

Email not displaying correctly? [View it in your browser.](#)