



Special City Commission Meeting Agenda
2 Park Drive South, Great Falls, MT
Commission Chambers, Civic Center
April 01, 2025
4:00 PM

The agenda packet material is available on the City's website: <https://greatfallsmt.net/meetings>. The Public may view and listen to the meeting on government access channel City-190, cable channel 190; or online at <https://greatfallsmt.net/livestream>.

Public participation is welcome in the following ways:

- Attend in person.
- Provide public comments in writing by 12:00 PM the day of the meeting: Mail to City Clerk, PO Box 5021, Great Falls, MT 59403, or via email to: commission@greatfallsmt.net. Include the agenda item or agenda item number in the subject line, and include the name of the commenter and either an address or whether the commenter is a city resident. Written communication received by that time will be shared with the City Commission and appropriate City staff for consideration during the agenda item and before final vote on the matter; and, will be so noted in the official record of the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL / STAFF INTRODUCTIONS

CONFLICT DISCLOSURE / EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS

PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

(Public comment on any matter that is not on the agenda of the meeting and that is within the jurisdiction of the City Commission. Please keep your remarks to a maximum of 3 minutes. When at the podium, state your name and either your address or whether you are a city resident for the record.)

1. Miscellaneous reports and announcements.

NEW BUSINESS

2. ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL – Appeal from Great Falls Subaru on City Staff Decision to issue a Special Event Permit to Scott Paske with Cruisin the Drag for a Street Closure on May 3, 2025. Action: Uphold staff decision and deny the Appeal or Grant the Appeal and reverse staff decision to issue the permit.

ADJOURNMENT

(Please exit the chambers as quickly as possible. Chamber doors will be closed 5 minutes after adjournment of the meeting.)

Assistive listening devices are available for the hard of hearing, please arrive a few minutes early for set up, or contact the City Clerk's Office in advance at 455-8451. Wi-Fi is available during the meetings for viewing of the online meeting documents.

Commission meetings are televised on cable channel 190 and streamed live at <https://greatfallsmt.net>.



Great Falls City Commission

Administrative Appeal Hearing

Great Falls Special Event Permit Issuance

Appellant: Great Falls Subaru

Date: Tuesday April 1, 2025
4:00 p.m.

Table of Contents

City Charter and Ordinance citations regarding Administrative Appeals

Appeal Hearing Outline

Code Citation for Street Closure Permit

Attachments

- Street Closure Application – Cruisin’ the Drag
- Approved permit for Street Closure – Cruisin’ the Drag
- City Manager’s Office notice of permit approval to GF Subaru and Appeal Process Response
- Great Falls Subaru Objection/Appeal Letter
- City’s Street Closure Approval Agenda Report
- Street Closure Process Timeline

City Commission Appeal Process for Special Event Permit Denials

Legal Framework:

City Charter Article II Section 3 - - Administrative Review

On a majority vote of the whole of the City Commission, the City Commission may review, inquire, and investigate any operation, management decision, administrative function or other affairs of the City. The City Commission may compel the attendance and testimony of witnesses and the production of books and records by issuance of a subpoena.

Except for the purpose of inquiry, or investigation, the City Commission shall be involved with administrative and management operations solely through the City Manager.

City Code Section 9.4.050

An applicant denied a special event permit under Section 9.4.040 may appeal the decision to the City Commission. The Commission shall review the application in a public meeting and has the authority to uphold, reverse, or revise the original decision. The City Commission may, by majority vote, review, inquire, and investigate any city affairs, and may compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of documents through the issuance of subpoenas.

Appeal Hearing Procedure:

1. Opening Argument by the Permit Appellant:

The permit appellant or their legal representative shall be allowed ten (10) minutes to present an opening argument. The appellant bears the burden of proving the facts underlying the basis for the appeal.

2. **City Staff Argument:**

The City staff legal representative shall be allowed ten (10) minutes to present an argument in support of upholding staff's decision to grant the permit.

3. **Commission Questions:**

The Mayor will allow members of the City Commission to pose questions to both the appellant's representative and the City staff legal representative, as well as to any other interested parties.

4. **Public Comment:**

The Mayor will open the floor for public comment regarding the appeal asking for those in favor of the appeal and then in opposition of appeal.

5. **Response to Public Comment:**

- The permit appellant or their legal representative shall have five (5) minutes to respond to public comments.
- The City staff legal representative shall also have five (5) minutes to respond to public comments.
- Mayor closes the public hearing and calls for the motion

6. **Commission Deliberation and Vote:**

The Mayor will request a motion from any Commission member to either grant or deny the appeal. This will be followed by:

- Discussion among Commission members;
- A vote on the motion.

9.4.040 Requirements of a special event permit.

- A. Events encouraging community and neighborhood involvement are encouraged and may require the temporary closure of city streets, parks or other public property.
- B. Applications for a procession must comply with the provisions of Title 12, Chapter 14. Organizers of an event, other than a procession, that require the temporary closure of a public property must obtain a special event permit. The application for the permit shall contain the name and contact information of the person or entity requesting the permit, the location of the proposed event, the day(s), time(s), and duration of the event. Applications for closures of public property other than parks, must be turned in a minimum of fourteen (14) days prior to the event to the City Manager's office for review; applications for temporary closure of park land, must be turned in a minimum of fourteen (14) days prior to the event to the Park and Recreation Director.
- C. The City may approve, revise, or deny the application, in consideration of the following factors:
 - 1. Promotion of the community as a whole;
 - 2. Provision of positive civic and economic benefit;
 - 3. Impact on neighboring business and properties;
 - 4. Impact on public uses and services;
 - 5. Consideration of frequency of closures;
 - 6. Consideration of the event's financial impact;
 - 7. The applicant's performance under prior issued permits; and
 - 8. Impact on public safety, including but not limited to, emergency response time.
- D. For events which require a temporary closure of a street closure or parking lot open to the public, the event organizer must submit with the permit application, information as to how property owners, business owners and tenants adjacent to the temporary street closure will be notified of special event or activity. For such an event, the applicant or permit holder must prominently post a sign designating the street or parking lot closure and removal of vehicles, no less than four (4) hours in advance of the event. Parking in an area that has been designated and blocked off for a special event is a misdemeanor and such vehicle may be impounded and towed. The owner or person in control of the vehicle will be responsible for all towing and impounding fees.
- E. During the review of the application, city staff will develop a permit conditions that the applicant must follow. Staff will attempt to make available the necessary street closure equipment and charge a fee set by Commission resolution. If the equipment is not available through the City, the applicant will be required to supply the equipment at the applicant's expense.
- F. A fee for the special event permit shall be set by Commission resolution to cover administrative time and any additional costs incurred by the City to promote event safety and to ensure the area is returned back into the same condition it was prior to the event. The fee must be paid no less than forty-eight (48) hours prior to the event.
- G. If the event involves more than seventy-five (75) people, the person or organization must provide liability insurance, including liquor liability if applicable, providing coverage for their organization and naming the City as an additional named insured under the policy. The liability insurance coverage shall be in the minimum amounts one million dollars (\$1,000,000.00) per occurrence and two million dollars (\$2,000,000.00) aggregate. The City Manager has the authority to waive this requirement or, require insurance for events with fewer than seventy-five (75) people should he determine it necessary due to the type of event. The insurance documentation must be provided to the City no less than seventy-two (72) hours prior to the event.

- H. Applicants for a special event permit shall agree in writing to indemnify, defend, hold harmless the City and its employees and agents for any and all claims, damage or injury to person or property, lawsuits or liability including attorneys' fees and costs arising out of loss, occurring during the course of or pertaining to the special event which are caused by the conduct of the Applicant and/or its employees or agents.
- I. The City Manager, or designee, shall review, revise, approve with or without conditions, or deny the permit application and has the authority to require additional information from the applicant.
- J. The Police Department may revoke the special event permit should those in attendance become disorderly, property is damaged, or for other reasons that adversely affect the public health, safety, and welfare of those attending the event and the citizens of Great Falls.

(Ord. 3158, 2017; Ord. 2949, 2006)



Special Event and Street Closure Application

This Application must be submitted if.....

- You want to use a city street or right-of-way or other public place for an event
- You want to use a city street or right-of-way or other public place for an event and alcohol will be served

Completed applications must be turned in at least 14 days prior to the event at the City Manager’s office—Civic Center— 2 Park Drive South
Call 406.455.8450 for questions regarding this application.

EVENT INFORMATION	
Name of the Event Cruisin’ The Drag Car Show	
Date of the Event Saturday, May 3rd, 2025	
Event Location (be specific) <small>Central Ave-East side of Park Dr to West side of 9th St and side streets to 1st Aves N & S(with some exceptions). See map already provided to the City Manager’s Office.</small>	
Event Start and Ending times	Set up and tear down times
Block off Streets at 0530 hrs.	Unblock streets by 1830 hrs.
Anticipated number of people attending the event approx 800-900 cars on display open to the public. Expect approx 30K attendees	
Describe the event Car Show with Food Vendors	

CONTACT INFORMATION	
Cruisin’ The Drag	
Organization/Individual Name Requesting Permit Cruisin’ The Drag	
Contact Name if Application is for an Organization Scott Paske	
Address PO Box 205, Black Eagle, MT. 59414	
Phone – Prior to event 406-750-2879	Phone – Day of event 406-868-3888

APPLICATION FEE: Application fee is \$35 as adopted through Resolution 10536 on March 19, 2024 and is due at the time application is submitted.

I am requesting a temporary street closure for the event I am planning. List Street and block or other public area: _____

** If requested location is within the Downtown Master Plan area, applicant will need to complete the separate Street Closure Equipment Rental Agreement with Downtown Great Falls Association (Attachment A) or provide their own street closure materials.*

Describe the method(s) that were used to notify the affected residences. _____

We have not notified them as yet. We will discuss proper notification with the City Manager's Office.

- If more than 75 people attend the event, attach a copy of proof of insurance which lists the City as an additional insured. To the extent reasonably possible, liability insurance coverage shall be in the minimum amounts of \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$2,000,000 aggregate. See page 4 for general requirements.
- Sidewalks cannot be obstructed and must remain open to pedestrian traffic.

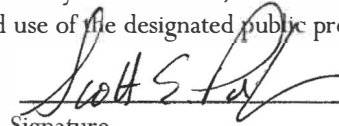
A temporary closure of a street and/or other public property can result in inconveniences to the occupants of the structures nearby. I understand that I am required to notify adjacent property owners and that I will provide information as to how that notification was accomplished. I further understand that:

- The Public Works Traffic Division will design a street closure plan and that I agree to follow that plan. Additionally, if an emergency would occur, I agree to work with all emergency responders to ensure they have access through the closed street and/or public parking area.
- I agree to return the affected area to the same condition it was prior to the event.
- I have provided all the necessary information including proof of insurance listing the City as additional insured.

For and in consideration of the use of the above named location for the purpose identified, I agree to indemnify, defend and hold the City of Great Falls, Montana, harmless from any and all claims, demands or liability for personal injury or property damage arising out of the aforesaid use of the designated public premises.

12-1-24

Date


Signature

I am requesting a temporary street closure for an event I am planning and request permission to consume, serve and/or sell alcohol at the event.

Describe the plan you will use to control underage drinking and purchase of alcohol? _____

Will alcohol be: Sold _____ Given away _____ Consumed _____
Describe the types of alcohol that will be available _____

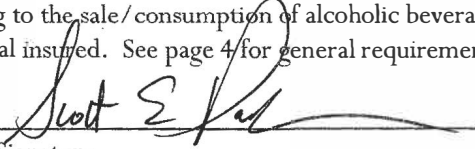
Attach a copy of all State and local permits which allow for the sale and/or consumption of alcohol as well as proof of insurance which lists the City as an additional insured. To the extent reasonably possible, liability insurance coverage shall be in the minimum amounts of \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$2,000,000 aggregate. Contact 455-8414 for alcohol permit information.

Not only do I agree with the terms and conditions as outlined above pertaining to a temporary closure of a street and/or other public property, I also agree and understand that selling and consuming alcohol is a special privilege granted to me and my group.

I further understand that:

- The Police Department may revoke the special event permit should those in attendance become unruly, property is damaged or for other reasons that adversely affects the public health, safety and welfare of those attending the event and the citizens of Great Falls.
- NA The point-of-sale for the alcohol must have a substantial enclosure around that area. i.e. snow fence, portable corrals, or substantial barricades. Pennants or streamers will not be allowed to define the enclosure. The outside perimeter of the street closure must also be barricaded with signage indicating that no alcohol is allowed beyond that point.
- NA I have provided all the necessary information pertaining to the sale/consumption of alcoholic beverages including proof of insurance listing the City as additional insured. See page 4 for general requirements.

12-1-24
Date


Signature

For office use only:

This Application is:

Approved _____ Denied _____ Insurance Provided _____ Alcohol Permits Provided _____

Comments:

The Application Fee is \$35 Paid Not Paid

_____	Date	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Denied
Public Works	Date	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Denied
State/Transit District	Date	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Denied
Fire Department	Date	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Denied
Police Department	Date	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Denied
City Manager	Date	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Denied

STREET CLOSURE EQUIPMENT

Street closure equipment may be rented from either the Park and Recreation or Public Works Street Department. See the chart below for the current fees as adopted through Resolution 10536 on March 19, 2024. **

Barricades & Candles	<u>Adopted</u>	<u>Details</u>
Candles and Barricades	\$1/daily Per Candles \$3/Daily Per Barricade	any damage or loss of barricades or candles will result in full replacement cost at renters expense
Trailer of Barricades/Candles	\$150/Daily - Barricades/Candles	trailer of 64 (2 5/16 ball hitch)
Staff Setup	\$500	charge per trailer for any delivery or setup of barricades or candles by city staff

*Subject to availability. Not available during Ice Breaker, 4th of July or other Park & Rec Events.

** If requested location is within the Downtown Master Plan area, applicant will need to complete the separate Street Closure Equipment Rental Agreement with Downtown Great Falls Association (separate agreement) or provide their own street closure materials.

Summary of the City Ordinances Pertaining to Alcohol in Public Places and Temporary Street Closures

For complete ordinance text see:

https://www.municode.com/library/mt/great_falls_/codes/code_of_ordinances

Except under certain circumstances, it is unlawful for any person to engage in public drinking, public display or exhibition of malt beverage, beer, wine, hard cider or liquor within the City limits. See 9.4.020

Individuals, members of groups or organizations who wish to consume, sell or give away alcoholic beverages in public places may do so provided they obtain a special event permit or are otherwise excluded from that requirement. The Civic Center, Centene Stadium, Eagle Falls Golf Club, Anaconda Hills Golf Course, designated areas of the "State Fair" grounds and the Multi-Sports Complex Grounds shall be exempt from the 9.4.020 prohibition. See 9.4.030

Organizers for special events held on any public place must clean up the to a state at least as clean as when they arrived and permit holder shall be solely responsible for the immediate and timely picking up and removal or proper disposal of garbage at the location where the permit is issued. See 9.4.030

For temporary closure of a public property other than parks, or closure of parking lots open to the public, submit application to the City Manager's office. See 9.4.040

The event organizer must submit information regarding notification of owners or tenants of adjacent properties regarding the special event and prominently post a sign designating the street or parking lot closure no less than four hours in advance of the event. Staff will attempt to make available and charge for necessary street closure equipment. If equipment is not available, the applicant will be required to supply the equipment at the applicant's expense. A fee for the special event permit shall be set by the Commission resolution to cover administrative time and any additional costs incurred as a result of the event. See 9.4.040

If applicable, the event organizer must demonstrate that all state and local liquor control regulations pertaining to the sale and consumption of alcohol have been complied with and provide copies of all liquor permits. If the event involves more than 75 people, it must be covered by liability insurance, including liquor liability if applicable, naming the City as an additional insured. To the extent reasonably possible, liability insurance coverage shall be in the minimum amounts of \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$2,000,000 in aggregate. Some events with less than 75 people may be required to provide insurance. See 9.4.040

Applicants for a special event permit shall agree in writing to defend, hold harmless and indemnify the City and its employees for any and all claims, lawsuits or liability arising out of loss, damage or injury to person or property occurring during the course of or pertaining to the special event. See 9.4.040

The Police Department may revoke the special event permit for reasons that adversely affect the public health, safety and welfare of those attending the event and the citizens of Great Falls. See 9.4.040

Under 9.4.040, the City may approve, revise, or deny the application, considering:

- 1. Promotion of the community as a whole;
2. Provision of positive civic and economic benefit;
3. Impact on neighboring business and properties;
4. Impact on public uses and services;
5. Consideration of frequency of closures;
6. Consideration of the event's financial impact;
7. The applicant's performance under previous issued permits; and
8. Impact on public safety, including but not limited to, emergency response time.

Applicant may appeal a denied permit to the City Commission, which shall review the application in a public meeting and uphold, reverse, or revise the decision on the application. See 9.4.050

Street Closure Application - from Cruisin the Drag

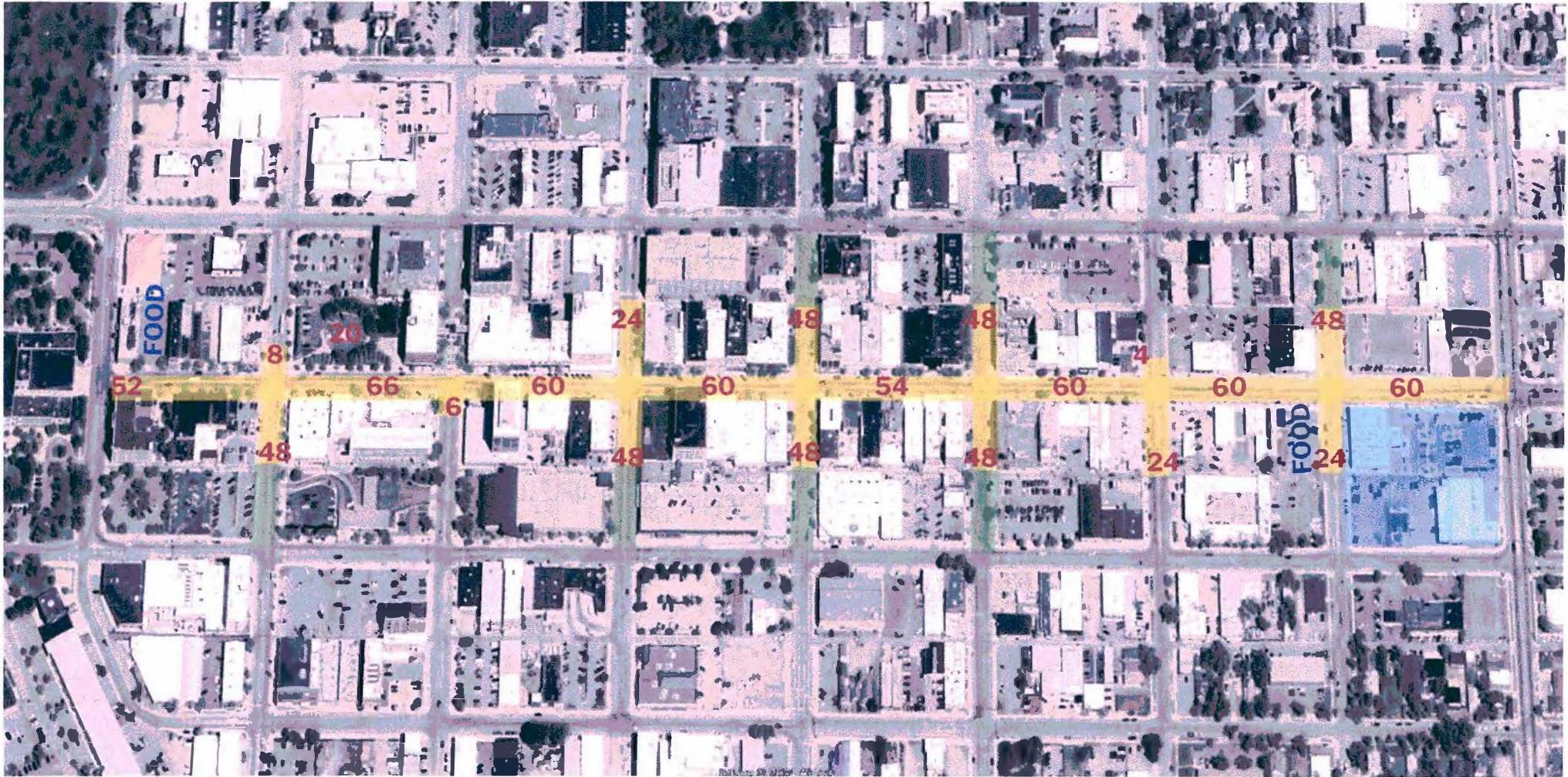


With Food Court on 4th Street

- 472 - On Central
- 344- On Side Streets
- 30 - At Kellergeist
- 20 - At DA Davidson
- 26 - Lot West of Subaru

894- Total

Street Closure Application - from Cruisin the Drag

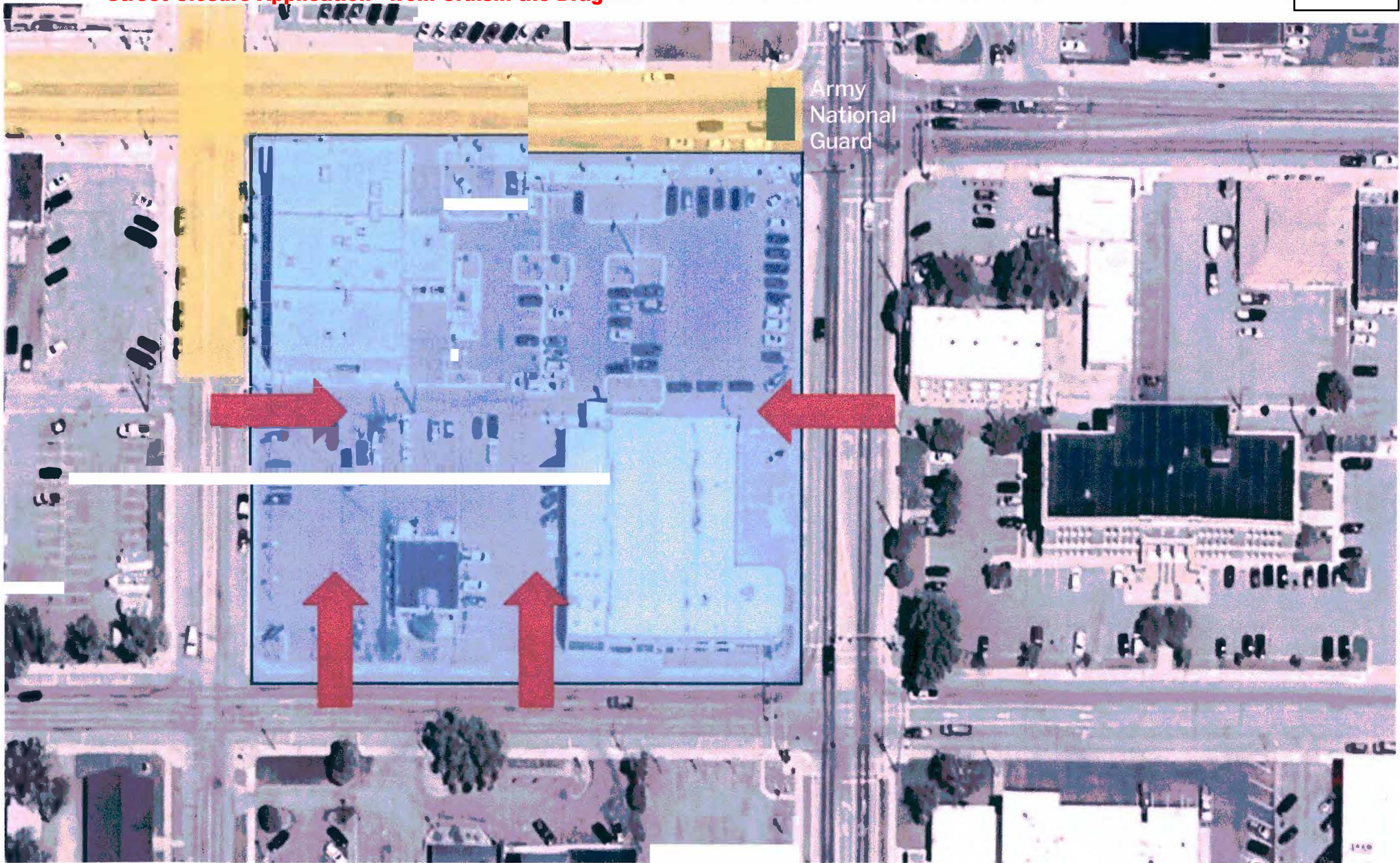


With Food Courts on each end - Kellergeist & 8th/Central
Registration on site.

- 472 - On Central
- 416 - On Side Streets
- 20 - At DA Davidson

910 - Total

Street Closure Application - from Cruisin the Drag



Great Falls Subaru

- Owns entire block with entry on all 4 sides of the block during normal business hours.
- There are two entrances on the South side of the block off of 1st St. South, one off of 9th Street, and one on the West side all with ample parking at the entry points.

SPECIAL EVENT STREET CLOSURE PERMIT



This entitles

Scott Paske with Cruisin the Drag

to

Close Central Avenue from

Park Drive to 9th Street including the side streets to the alley for a car show.

(Closed Area is identified in yellow/green on the attached Map)

on May 3, 2025 during the hours of: 5:30 a.m. — 6:30 p.m.

An Emergency Access Lane must be maintained. While barriers to block the street can be in place all equipment, carts, vehicles, vendor booths shall be placed in such a way as to maintain a 20' Emergency Access Lane for Police, EMS and Fire vehicles.

This permit must be available at the event and produced if requested.

Permit issued by: *Kusha Curtis*
Date: December 30, 2024
Permit # 25-1

For events requiring Barricades, please contact Park and Recreation at 406-771-1265 and Kellie Pierce with the BID at 406-727-5430 to make final arrangements.
If police assistance is needed, please contact 727-7688 or for an emergency call 911.
For all other inquiries, call the City Manager's Office at 455-8450.

CITY OF GREAT FALLS

Summary of the City Ordinances Pertaining to Alcohol in Public Places and Temporary Street Closures

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Organizers for special events held on any public place must clean up the to a state at least as clean as when they arrived and permit holder shall be solely responsible for the immediate and timely picking up and removal or proper disposal of garbage at the location where the permit is issued. See **9.4.030**

For temporary closure of a public property other than parks, or closure of parking lots open to the public, submit application to the City Manager's office; or for temporary closure of park land, submit application to the Park and Recreation office. See **9.4.040**

The event organizer must submit information regarding notification of owners or tenants of adjacent properties regarding the special event and prominently post a sign designating the street or parking lot closure no less than four hours in advance of the event. Staff will attempt to make available and charge for necessary street closure equipment. If equipment is not available the applicant will be required to supply the equipment at the applicant's expense. A fee for the special event permit shall be set by the Commission resolution to cover administrative time and any additional costs incurred as a result of the event. See **9.4.040**

If applicable, the event organizer must demonstrate that all state and local liquor control regulations pertaining to the sale and consumption of alcohol have been complied with and provide copies of all liquor permits. If the event involves more than 75 people, it must be covered by liability insurance, including liquor liability if applicable, naming the City as an additional insured. To the extent reasonably possible, liability insurance coverage shall be in the minimum amounts of \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$2,000,000 in aggregate. Some events with less than 75 people may be required to provide insurance. See **9.4.040**

Applicants for a special event permit shall agree in writing to defend, hold harmless and indemnify the City and its employees for any and all claims, lawsuits or liability arising out of loss, damage or injury to person or property occurring during the course of or pertaining to the special event. See **9.4.040**

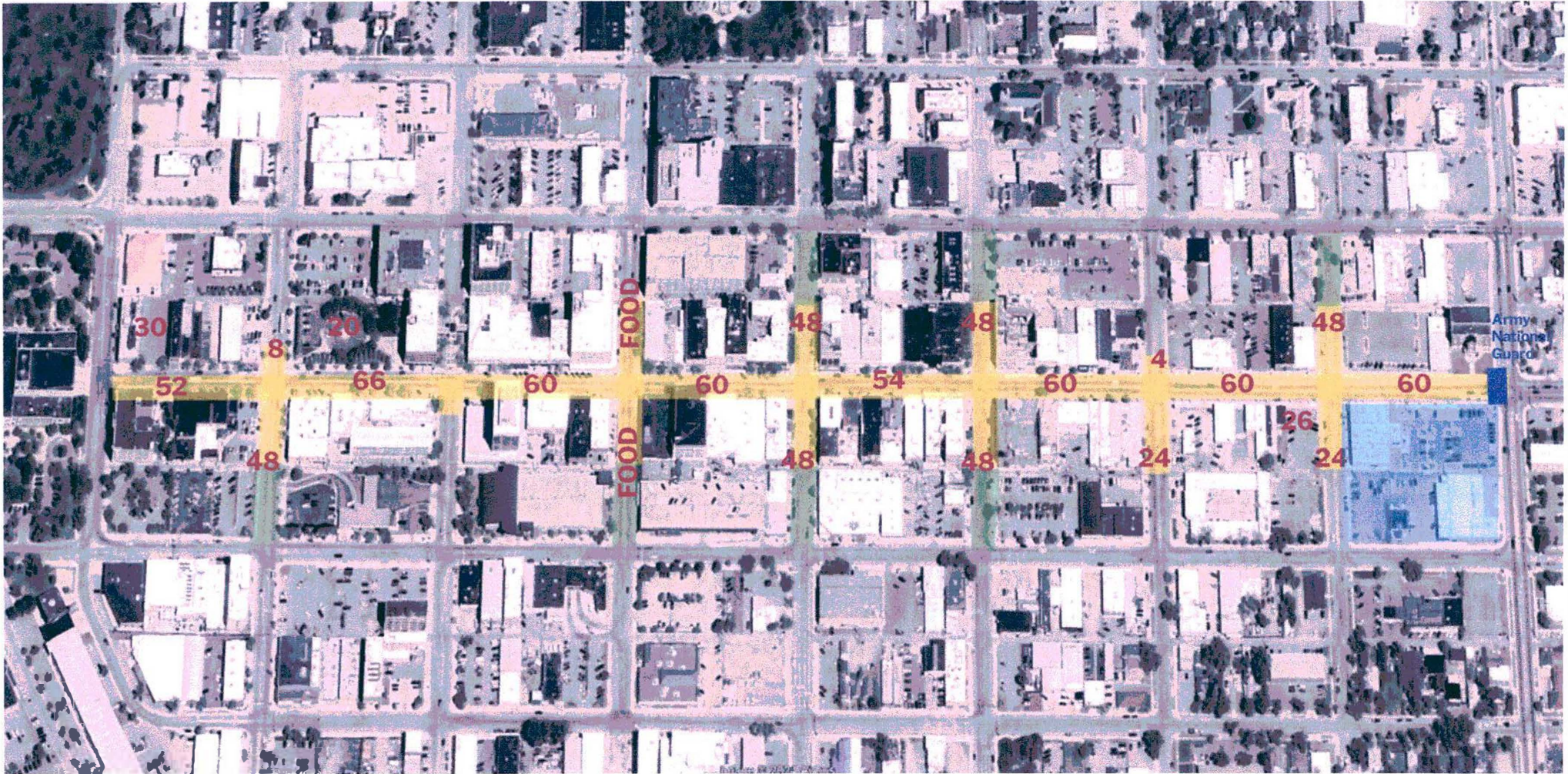
The Police Department may revoke the special event permit for reasons that adversely affect the public health, safety and welfare of those attending the event and the citizens of Great Falls. See **9.4.040**

Under **9.4.040**, the City may approve, revise, or deny the application, considering:

1. Promotion of the community as a whole;
2. Provision of positive civic and economic benefit;
3. Impact on neighboring business and properties;
4. Impact on public uses and services;
5. Consideration of frequency of closures;
6. Consideration of the event's financial impact;
7. The applicant's performance under previous issued permits; and
8. Impact on public safety, including but not limited to, emergency response time.

Applicant may appeal a denied permit to the City Commission which shall review the application in a public meeting and uphold, reverse, or revise the decision on the application. See **9.4.050**

Approved Permit for Street Closure Cruisin the Drag



With Food Court on 4th Street

- 472 - On Central
- 344 - On Side Streets
- 30 - At Kellergeist
- 20 - At DA Davidson
- 26 - Lot West of Subaru

894- Total

Central Ave Park to 9th St Closure



City Manager's Office Notice of Permit Approval to GF Subaru and Appeal Process Response

From: [Krista Artis](#)
To: ["Abby Waggoner"](#)
Subject: RE: Street Closure for Cruisin the Drag
Date: Friday, January 3, 2025 3:32:22 PM
Attachments: [9.4.040_Requirements_of_a_special_event_permit.docx](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[image007.png](#)
[image008.png](#)
[image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)

Abby,
 The permit was approved using 8 factors as identified in City Code.

- C. The City may approve, revise, or deny the application, in consideration of the following factors:
1. Promotion of the community as a whole;
 2. Provision of positive civic and economic benefit;
 3. Impact on neighboring business and properties;
 4. Impact on public uses and services;
 5. Consideration of frequency of closures;
 6. Consideration of the event's financial impact;
 7. The applicant's performance under prior issued permits; and
 8. Impact on public safety, including but not limited to, emergency response time.

The full section of the City Code can be found at:
https://library.municode.com/mt/great_falls_/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT9PUPEMOWE_CH4OFAGPUPE_9.4.040RESPEVPE

If you would like to appeal the permit decision please provide your basis of objection to the City Clerk at: PO box 5021, Great Falls MT 59403 or you can email to: lkunz@greatfallsmt.net. You can also send it to me and I can get the process started for the appeal.

Thanks, Krista

From: Abby Waggoner <admin@greatfallssubaru.com>
Sent: Friday, January 3, 2025 8:32 AM
To: Krista Artis <kartis@greatfallsmt.net>
Subject: Re: Street Closure for Cruisin the Drag

Hi Krista,

Thank you for this update! Great Falls Subaru is committed not only to the safety of the community during this event, but also the success of this event. Can you please provide me with the name, email, and phone number of the individual we could appeal this decision with?

Thank you for your continued assistance and Happy New Year!

Abby Waggoner
 Administrative Assistant

T: (406)727-2100 ext. 7105
admin@greatfallssubaru.com

City Manager's Office Notice of Permit Approval to GF Subaru and Appeal Process Response

800 Central Ave.
Great Falls, MT 59401
www.GreatFallsSubaru.com



From: Krista Artis <kartis@greatfallsmt.net>
Sent: Tuesday, December 31, 2024 9:39 AM
To: Abby Waggoner <admin@greatfallssubaru.com>
Subject: Street Closure for Cruisin the Drag

Abby,

Good morning. I wanted to provide you an update on the permit for the Cruisin the Drag event scheduled for May 3, 2025. The City has reviewed the application request, met with the event planners and has heard the concerns from Great Falls Subaru on the closure. Based on this information, we have decided to issue the street closure for the entire length of Central Avenue from Park Drive up to 9th Street including the side streets. Attached to this email is a map of the closed areas and a copy of the permit. This decision was not made lightly but the major deciding factor was the safety of the public during the event.

Please let me know if you have further questions.

Krista Artis

Executive Assistant
Great Falls City Manager's Office
(406)455-8450
2 Park Drive South, Room 201

City of Great Falls e-mails may be subject to Montana's Right To Know law (Article II Sec 9, Montana Constitution) and may be a Public Record (2-6-1002, M.C.A.) and available for public inspection.

Appeal for Consideration Regarding Road Closures During Cruisin' The Drag Event

To: City Council Members,
Great Falls, Montana

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to formally appeal the recent ruling regarding the road closures starting at 9th and Central during the Cruisin' The Drag event in Great Falls. We would like to ask for the road closure to begin at 8th and Central. As a business owner of Great Falls Subaru, I would like to address the concerns outlined in the decision, as well as provide further insight into the significant economic impact the event has had on both my business and the greater Great Falls community.

1. Promotion of the Community as a Whole

While I understand that the city aims to promote community events, it is crucial to consider that Great Falls Subaru has consistently been an active contributor to the community's economic health. The road closures starting at 8th and Central during Cruisin' The Drag, in 2023, provided an opportunity for us to contribute to local businesses through increased sales, as well as raise the profile of Great Falls Subaru as a community-focused business. The influx of visitors created a vibrant atmosphere that benefited surrounding businesses and created more opportunities for local economic growth.

2. Provision of Positive Civic and Economic Benefit

In 2023, Great Falls Subaru experienced record-breaking sales during the event. This surge in business not only benefited our company but also resulted in Great Falls Subaru being able to donate over \$50,000 to the local community. Our success contributed to the broader economic vitality of Great Falls, which is integral to the city's long-term sustainability. Our customers also reported that they visited multiple local establishments, further enhancing the event's overall positive economic impact.

3. Impact on Neighboring Businesses and Properties

The road closures, although challenging, provided a unique opportunity for foot traffic and visibility to local businesses, including Great Falls Subaru. Our sales data from 2023 strongly suggests that the presence of the event had a direct and positive correlation with the increased business activity. The closures did not negatively impact neighboring businesses but instead helped to drive awareness of the offerings in our area, making the event mutually beneficial.

4. Impact on Public Uses and Services

I understand that road closures can sometimes limit public access. However, during the 2023 event, the closures were well-managed and communicated, with adequate detours provided to ensure that emergency services and public transportation were not obstructed. Furthermore, the event encouraged responsible public behavior, promoting an atmosphere of safety and community engagement.

5. Consideration of Frequency of Closures

While we acknowledge the frequency of events in the downtown area, it is important to highlight that the road closures for Cruisin' The Drag happen on a limited, annual basis. In 2023, the positive impact of the event far outweighed the inconvenience of temporary closures. We believe that the periodic nature of this event allows us to plan appropriately and mitigate potential disruptions.

6. Consideration of the Event's Financial Impact

The 2023 event had a substantial and positive financial impact on Great Falls Subaru,

contributing not only to our business growth but also to the local economy through job creation and increased demand for local services. We are proud to be part of this success and believe that continuing to support such events will yield long-term benefits for both businesses and residents of Great Falls.

7. The Applicant’s Performance Under Prior Issued Permits

Great Falls Subaru has a history of compliance with all city ordinances and regulations, and we have consistently worked to ensure that our business operations support the city’s goals of growth and development. In the past, we have maintained a strong relationship with city officials, demonstrating our commitment to the well-being of the local community.

8. Impact on Public Safety, Including Emergency Response Time

The city’s focus on safety is highly valued, and during the 2023 event, we did not experience any issues with emergency response times. We have worked closely with event organizers and city officials to ensure that all safety protocols were followed, including clear access for emergency services, which was never obstructed during the event.

9. Impact of 2024 Event on Sales and Service

Unfortunately, the 2024 event had a significantly negative impact on both our sales and service departments. The road closures at 9th and Central blocked our entrances, resulting in no sales for Great Falls Subaru on the day of the event. In addition, our service department had to cancel all appointments due to restricted access. This not only directly impacted our revenue but also diminished our ability to serve the community. Furthermore, this lost business meant that we were unable to donate the level of financial support to local causes that we typically provide. As a business that prides itself on supporting the community, the inability to serve our customers and contribute financially was a serious setback.

Conclusion

In light of the above points, I respectfully request that the City Council reconsider its ruling on the road closures during the Cruisin’ The Drag event, by moving the barricades from 9th and Central to 8th and Central. The event has proven to be a vital component of both the success of Great Falls Subaru and the broader economic health of Great Falls. By working together, we can continue to balance community engagement with economic growth, ensuring that all local businesses, including ours, can thrive while still maintaining the safety and well-being of the public.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to discussing how we can continue to collaborate for the benefit of the entire Great Falls community.

Sincerely,
Jeremy Day
Dealership Principal
Great Falls Subaru
801-657-1609
jeremyhday@gmail.com



Special Commission Meeting Date: April 1, 2025

**CITY OF GREAT FALLS
COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT**

Item: ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL – Appeal from Great Falls Subaru on City Staff Decision to issue a Special Event Permit to Scott Paske with Cruisin the Drag for a Street Closure on May 3, 2025.

From: City Manager’s Office

Initiated By: Jeremy Day, Great Falls Subaru

Presented By: Gregory T. Doyon

Action Requested: Consider Appeal and Uphold the Permit as issued, Revise or Reverse Staff Decision on the Permit approval.

Suggested Motion:

1. Commissioner moves:

“I move that the City Commission uphold staff decision and deny Great Falls Subaru’s appeal of a City issued Special Event Permit and Street Closure for the Cruisin’ the Drag Event scheduled for May 3, 2025.”

Or

“I move that the City Commission grant Great Falls Subaru’s appeal and reverse staff decision of a City issued Special Event Permit and Street Closure for the Cruisin’ the Drag Event scheduled for May 3, 2025.”

2. Mayor requests a second to the motion, public comment, Commission discussion, and calls for the vote.

Staff Recommendation: Deny the appeal and uphold staff decision. Staff acknowledges the event will limit traditional access to GF Subaru. However, the overall benefits to event logistics, safety, and community participation justify denying the request. The temporary nature of the closure (one day, Saturday) further minimizes its impact on regular business operations.

Background: As established through the Official Code of the City of Great Falls OCCGF 9.4.040, the City Manager’s Office has the responsibility to review all applications for Special Events and Street Closure Applications.

On November 13, 2024 Abby Waggoner, Administrative Assistant for GF Subaru stopped into the Manager's office to voice concerns about the Cruisin' the Drag Event. She stated Great Falls Subaru preferred that Central Avenue between 8th and 9th Streets to remain open to traffic during the event and requested the street closure start at 8th Street and head west on Central.

This is the 25th anniversary of the event and has been a long standing Downtown event involving the same street closure setup on Central Avenue from Park Drive to 9th Street and the side streets. Past events were promoted and sponsored through the previous owners of the appellant's property.

At the time GF Subaru expressed its concern, staff had not formally received the application for the street closure request for the event. The event was not scheduled until May. Staff preemptively reached out to the event planner, Darrin Schreder, President of Cruisin' the Drag, to discuss the concerns and requested that they submit their application for review.

Mr. Schreder voiced concerns about reducing the street closure parameters. He indicated that for the past several years, turnout has increased. He also indicated that since the event was celebrating its 25th anniversary, the event organizers anticipated even more attendees. City staff advised that Great Falls Subaru offered that they would be willing to donate their parking lot on the northeast corner of Central, if the street could remain open to help accommodate some of the participant entries.

Staff met with Mr. Schreder, Dan Zent and Scott Paske about the plans for the event. They explained that the 2024 event had over 800 cars displayed. For the 2025, 25th Anniversary event, event organizers anticipated 1000 cars. The organizers provided a comprehensive summary of needs to accommodate the larger event; including a layout of needed spaces along Central Avenue and side streets. The proposed layout showed the need to close Central Avenue from Park Drive to 9th Street. They also provided a map of the GF Subaru property showing that the property owner has four (4) other access points to the dealership. The applicants indicated they met with several other businesses downtown to make sure they had access to their businesses including three (3) downtown hotels. Using the donated northeast parking lot would not be useful because it would be difficult to tie into the event if they were not able to close the 8th Street intersection.

Event organizers also expressed safety concerns about vehicular traffic turning onto Central off of 9th Street. They planned to place a National Guard vehicle as a barricade at this intersection for traffic control and pedestrian safety.

As with all street closures, requests are routed to Assistant Fire Chief Jeremy Virts, Police Patrol Captain Doug Otto, Street/Traffic Manager Eric Boyd and Park Manager Kevin Vining for review. These Departments approved the application as requested.

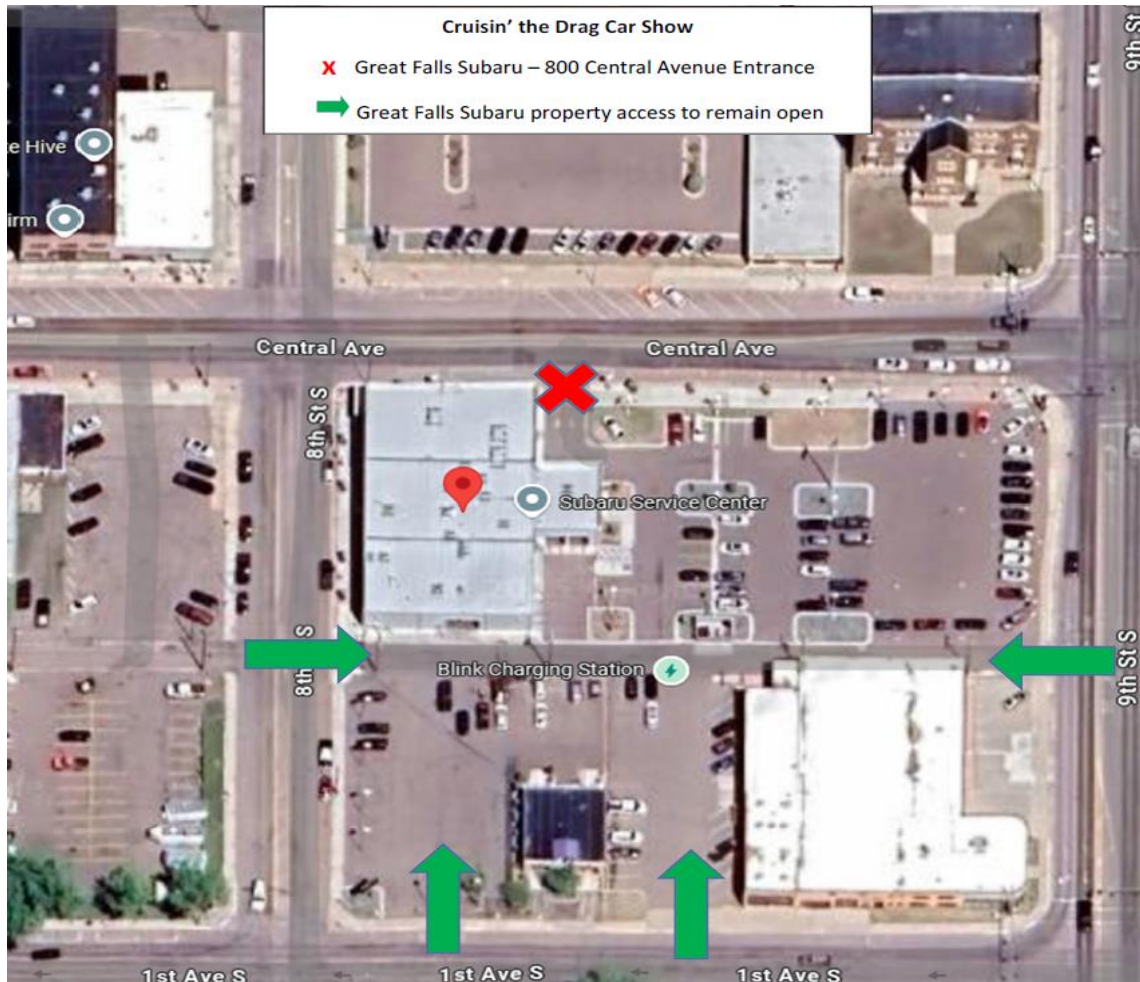
When Event/Street Closure Permits are reviewed, the City may approve, revise, or deny the application, in consideration of the following factors:

1. Promotion of the community as a whole;
2. Provision of positive civic and economic benefit;
3. Impact on neighboring business and properties;

4. Impact on public uses and services;
5. Consideration of frequency of closures;
6. Consideration of the event's financial impact;
7. The applicant's performance under prior issued permits; and
8. Impact on public safety, including but not limited to, emergency response time.

Staff approved the event as requested based on the items identified below:

- The number of entries projected for this event will require the full space. This is the 25th Anniversary event expecting over 1000 car show entries. This block is needed to accommodate the increased vehicles. The area of concern allows for up to 156 vehicles depending on how the street closure is set up.
- Great Falls Subaru will still have 2 alley access points along with 2 entrances on the south side of their property that will not be affected by the closure.



- Staff was informed that the Great Falls Masonic Temple on the North of Central across from GF Subaru is planning to participate in the event and would prefer the 800 block to be closed to traffic for their activities for the day.

- By closing Central Avenue at 9th Street it would allow for a simple closure without additional street closure materials.
- If Central Avenue is not closed at 9th Street it would allow traffic flow from a busy route onto a street being closed within a very short distance. Traffic would need to be detoured either left or right onto 8th Street. This requires additional barricades and signage setup. It further reduces the event closure space as a portion of 8th Street would not be available for event vehicles.
- Due to the amount of vehicle traffic on 9th Street, the Event planners plan to have Army National Guard vehicle be the barricade on the west side of the intersection of 9th and Central Avenue to provide a security traffic measure.
- The City has not received complaints from other businesses regarding this annual event.
- The event is scheduled for one day (Saturday). Staff believes the event will help draw both car enthusiasts and car shoppers to the area for the day, minimizing the reduced access to the dealership for the duration of the event.

It is important to recognize and consider that the City provided a last minute accommodation to Great Falls Subaru in 2023. The day before the Cruisin' the Drag event, GF Subaru owner Jeremy Day called and requested that the event organizers keep open the portion of Central in front of the dealership because he had a big sale scheduled. City Staff worked with the event planner and the group to quickly rearrange their event setup to close Central Avenue starting at 8th Street and detoured westbound traffic left onto 8th Street South. The event organizers also moved their registration and main staging areas away from the dealership at Mr. Day's request (from 8th St S to 7th Street S).

This last minute adjustment created confusion for drivers and event attendees. For the 2024 event, it was requested and permitted to return back to the original closure starting at 9th Street.

This has been a long standing event involving the all Downtown businesses and the current event planners have been expanding to make the event better each year.

Alternatives: The City Commission could approve the appeal and ask staff to amend the permit to allow for GF Subaru's requested closure modifications. This would require a more complex traffic plan with additional traffic and detour signage and may require the event organizers to turn away participant entries due to the reduction in event space. The Masonic Lodge would need to modify their coordinating event that day due to the possible vehicular traffic on that block.

Concurrences: GFFR, GFPD, PWD – Streets, P&R departments support the street closure.

Supplemental Timeline

Prepared by Krista Artis, Executive Assistant

11/13/24 – Abby Waggoner, Administrative Assistant for GF Subaru stopped in to voice concerns about the Cruisin the Drag Event. She mentioned that they preferred that the street closure start at 8th street and head west on Central. They wanted Central Avenue between 8th and 9th to remain open to traffic. They would be willing to donate their parking lot on the northeast corner of Central if the street could remain open.

This has been a long standing event involving Central from Park Drive to 9th street and the side streets in that same area. I have records going as far back as 2007 for this event and closure set up. I hadn't received the permit request yet but the event isn't scheduled until May so I reached out to the event planner.

In 2023 GF Subaru owner Jeremy Day called the Friday of the Car show and requested that we not close this portion of Central because he had a big sale planned for that day. I worked with the event organizer and they rearranged their event to keep the area open for traffic into GF Subaru They also moved their Registration and main staging areas away from the dealership at the owner's request. It was moved from 8th St S to 7th Street S. This did cause traffic concerns and confusion for drivers turning on to Central so we went back to closing this area for the 2024 event. This has been a long standing event involving the all Downtown businesses and the current event planners have been expanding to make the event better each year.

11/13/24 – I called Darrin Schreder with Cruisin the Drag event to discuss what was being proposed by GF Subaru. He was concerned about the number of cars that participated last year and was expecting a larger turnout for the upcoming year. He would need to talk to the rest of his group and get back to me.

11/22/24 – I met with Darrin, Dan Zent and Scott Paske about their plans for the event. They explained that for the 2024 event they had over 800 cars and with 2025 being the 25th anniversary of the event they are planning for 1000 cars. They provided a breakdown of the requested street closure area and a layout for the number of cars/participants for the event and the need for the full closure to accommodate. They also provided a map of the GF Subaru property showing that the property owner has 4 other access points into the property. They said they have communicated with several other businesses downtown to make sure they had access to their businesses including the 3 hotels downtown. They also had safety concerns about vehicle traffic turning onto Central off of 9th Street and were planning to place a National Guard vehicle as a barricade at this intersection for traffic control.

Because I hadn't received the Street Closure application I asked that they submit it for review.

Application was received December 1st.

12/2/24 - Application was routed to departments for review and approval. Received department approvals.

12/30/24 - Issued the permit for the full closure area. Permit was emailed to Applicant/Event organizers. Staff Justification for Permit approval

I approved the event as requested based on the items identified below from the applicant:

- *Great Falls Subaru will still have 2 alley access points along with 2 entrances on the south side of their property that will not be affected by the closure.*

- *I was informed that the Great Falls Masonic Temple on the Northside of Central across from GF Subaru is planning to participate in the event and would prefer the 800 block to be closed to traffic for their activities for the day.*
- *By closing the street at 9th it allows for a simple closure without additional street closure materials. Event planners are planning to have Army National Guard vehicle be the barricade to block off the closure at 9th to provide a security traffic measure.*
- *The number of entries projected for this event will need the additional space. This is their 25th Anniversary event and they are projecting over 1000 vehicles. Last year's event brought in over 800 entries. They need that block to accommodate the increased vehicle entries. The area of concern allows for up to 156 vehicles depending on how the street closure is set up.*
 - *If we close Central at east side of 8th street and close 8th street up to 1st Avenue N it would allow for utilization of the intersection and 8th St N but would require additional detour signs and a more complex closure. This requires all vehicles coming west on Central to turn right (South) on 8th or enter GF Subaru main business lot to exit. **NOT RECOMENDED BY STREET OR OTHER PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENTS.***
 - *If we close on the west side for the intersection of 8th and Central we also lose the use of 8th Street to 1st Avenue North. Loss of a 156 spots for car show entries. But alleviates some of the concerns for vehicle traffic confusion. West bound traffic could exit off Central by turning left or right at the intersection.*
- *I have not received complaints from other businesses regarding this annual event.*

12/31/24 – I Emailed Abby with GF Subaru and let her know the City had approved the permit for the full closure of Central from Park Drive to 9th Street.

1/3/2025 – I received an email from Abby inquiring on who she could appeal the decision to. I provided her with the applicable section of City Code referencing the eight factors to approve, revise or deny an application. I asked that they send a written basis of their objection to the Street Closure Permit to either the City Clerk or me in the Manager's office so we could start the formal appeal process.

1/15/25 – Received an email from Commissioner Wolff stating she had been invited to a meeting with GF Subaru. Once understanding the topic, Commissioner Wolff reached out to Kellie with DGFA, received the organizers information and gave it to GF Subaru staff. Summary of GF Subaru concerns as discussed in that meeting:

The background is prior to 2023, the show ended at 8th Street, which did not impact business at the dealership. In 2024 and now they are hearing in 2025, the show will go to 9th Street again, which basically shuts off the dealership and their customers from doing business. They also have citizens parking in the Subaru lot on the south side of Central and there has been damage when people are coming and going and back into the dealership display cars or customer cars.

1/15/25 -- I emailed Commissioner Wolff to advise that GF Subaru has been provided information on how to file a formal appeal that would be heard and decided on by the City Commission. Commissioner Wolff was going to respond back to GF Subaru about the formal process.

1/27/25 – Received the formal appeal from Abby with GF Subaru.