



OFFICE OF THE  
CITY REPRESENTATIVE



25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary *Wawa Welcome America*: "Everyone is a History Maker!"

## CITY OF PHILADELPHIA MAYOR'S OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

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### City and Festival Officials Announce Plans for Upcoming Wawa Welcome America! Events

Details on entertainment, transportation, parking, security and other activities  
prior to and on July 4th.

**PHILADELPHIA** – Philadelphia is rolling out the red-white-and-blue carpet at the Wawa Welcome America! festival with more than 50 events over six days to observe Independence Day, beginning Thursday, June 29 through Tuesday, July 4.

**Philly is at its finest on the Fourth** – from Independence Hall in the historic district to Eakins Oval in America's greatest cultural corridor. The Independence Day activities feature 12 hours of non-stop celebrations citywide including fireworks displays from river to river -- Penn's Landing on the Delaware River and at the Philadelphia Museum of Art on the Schuylkill River.

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**The day of holiday partying ends with a spectacular concert (7 p.m.) and grand fireworks that will light up The Parkway skies like a giant pinball machine (approximately at 9:30 p.m.).**

“When you think of July Fourth, you think of Philadelphia first,” said Mayor Jim Kenney. “With our history and iconic beauty, Wawa Welcome America! showcases our nation’s birthplace -- **from the patriotic pageantry on the most historic square mile in America at Independence Mall to the fantastic fireworks over the Rocky steps of the Benjamin Franklin Parkway. I am also happy to announce the return of the Mayor’s Magis Award in 2017 honoring Ralph Galati – a Vietnam War veteran who is director of the Office of Veterans Services at St. Joseph’s University -- as our ‘everyday citizen hero’.**”

**City officials and Welcome America! organizers are encouraging the public to come and enjoy the festival activities through July 4<sup>th</sup>. Here are operational details for the citywide festival:**

### **Festival Activities**

**Celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the 2017 Wawa Welcome America festival is a fabulous fusion of Philadelphia’s culture, humanitarianism, heritage and hospitality. The schedule recently announced by Welcome America, Inc. and Live Nation Philadelphia highlights free, family-friendly celebrations -- major concerts featuring Mary J. Blige and The Philly POPS® BIG Band, a hometown Boyz II Men tribute, Philly-style block parties, giant patriotic sand sculptures, art exhibitions, military commemorations, movie screenings, Wawa hoagie giveaways and kids’ educational events. For more information, visit [www.welcomeamerica.com](http://www.welcomeamerica.com) or stay connected at:**

**[www.facebook.com/WawaWelcomeAmerica](http://www.facebook.com/WawaWelcomeAmerica) or follow the festival on [www.twitter.com/July4thPhilly](http://www.twitter.com/July4thPhilly) or [www.instagram.com/July4thPhilly](http://www.instagram.com/July4thPhilly).**

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## **Road Closures**

**Areas across the city including streets near Independence Mall and the Benjamin Franklin Parkway will be impacted by Wawa Welcome America! activities. Expect delays. Motorists are advised to use alternate routes, avoid areas near festivities, allow for extra driving time and proceed with caution near these events. Due to increased activity and security surrounding the Wawa Welcome America! events, parking and traffic regulations will be strictly enforced. Many roads adjacent to event sites will be posted with no-parking signage for the public. The following are the scheduled road closures, including set-up and deconstruction of staging/event equipment, on Independence Mall in the historic district and on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway:**

**Thursday, June 29**

**Wawa Hoagie Day**

**Event begins at noon on the lawn of the National Constitution Center.**

**Arch Street, between 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> streets, will be closed, as necessary, for crowd safety, between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.**

**Friday, June 30**

**Pops Concert stage construction**

**Chestnut Street, between 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> streets, will be closed, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.**

**Saturday, July 1**

**Pops Concert ongoing stage construction**

**Chestnut Street, between 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> streets, will be closed, from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.**

**Monday, July 3**

**Philadelphia Historic District Block Party and The Philly POPS on**

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## **Independence**

**Noontime event activity on July 3rd until 10 p.m., including televised Pops on Independence concert, beginning at 7 p.m.**

**Chestnut Street, between 5th and 6<sup>th</sup> streets, from 6 a.m. through the post-event break-down of the festivities on July 4 at about 5 p.m.**

**5th Street, between Market and Walnut streets Including Ranstead and Ludlow Streets, between 4th and 5th streets, from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.**

**6th Street, between Arch and Chestnut streets, from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.**

**6<sup>th</sup> Street, between Market and Chestnut will remain closed overnight until the post-event break down of the festivities on July 4<sup>th</sup> at about 5 p.m.**

**For preparation of July 4<sup>th</sup> activities on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway (Party on the Parkway and Wawa Welcome America July 4<sup>th</sup> Concert & Fireworks)**

**The inner lanes of the Parkway, between 20<sup>th</sup> and Eakins Oval, will be closed, from 9:30 a.m. until July 5<sup>th</sup> at 5 a.m. (Outbound lanes will reopen for evening rush hour on Monday, July 3rd).**

**Tuesday, July 4 / Independence Day**

**Celebration of Freedom Ceremony, United States of America's Independence Day Parade, and related Wawa Welcome America activities on Independence Mall. Activities take place throughout the day, beginning at 10 a.m.**

**Chestnut Street, between 5th and 6<sup>th</sup> streets, from the prior-day closures will be in effect until 5 p.m.**

**6th Street, between Market and Chestnut streets, from prior day until 5 p.m.**

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The following streets will be closed or effected by the parade (all times are approximate):

- Chestnut Street, from 5<sup>th</sup> to Front streets, and Front Street, from Market to Dock streets, will be closed on July 4<sup>th</sup>, from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m., for the set-up of the parade.
- Chestnut Street, from 6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> Street; 9<sup>th</sup> Street, from Walnut to Market streets; and Market Street, from 10<sup>th</sup> to Front streets, will close at about 10:45 a.m. until about 2 p.m. All cross streets (9<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>) will be closed during the parade -- one block back from the parade route (Arch or Walnut), to allow traffic to be diverted around the parade.

All streets affected by the parade will be cleaned before being re-opened to vehicular traffic.

The Sons of the Revolution Parade will require the closure of Walnut Street, from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> streets, for about 20 minutes while the parade moves to its dispersal point on the 500 block of Walnut Street on the south side of Independence Hall. The parade is scheduled to start at 12:15 pm.

#### **Wawa Welcome America July 4<sup>th</sup> Concert & Fireworks in The Parkway Vicinity**

All lanes and the entire width of the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, from 18<sup>th</sup> to the Art Museum, will be closed beginning at 5 a.m. until clean-up is completed early on July 5<sup>th</sup>. The Parkway, from 15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> streets, may be closed, depending on the volume of pedestrian traffic. Activities include three events; the first one begins at noon.

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A limited-access perimeter (event participants and Parkway-area residents only) will be established, from 18<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> streets, and from Arch to Spring Garden streets, beginning at 5 a.m. until the clean-up is complete in the early hours of July 5<sup>th</sup>.

The Parkway, from 20<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> streets, will be closed for extensive cleanup overnight until about 5 a.m. on Wednesday, July 5<sup>th</sup>.

For maps of street closures:

<https://beta.phila.gov/documents/wawa-welcome-america-2017-road-closures/>

### **Public Transit**

City officials urge the public to either walk to the events or take SEPTA. Public transportation is an easy way to get in and out of Center City or around the historic district. SEPTA will run extra service on July 4<sup>th</sup> to get people to and from the Wawa Welcome America activities. Additional trains will be deployed on the Market-Frankford and Broad Street lines, both of which stop near the festival sites. There will be extra service on City Trolley Routes 10, 11, 13, 34 and 36 after the evening fireworks on July 4<sup>th</sup>, as needed.

Bus routes that operate on The Parkway and other areas in Center City will be detoured to accommodate road closures. Detour routing will be posted on SEPTA's website closer to the holiday. Check SEPTA's website, [www.septa.org](http://www.septa.org), for full details on transit options. For information on NJTransit routes and schedules on July 4, visit [www.njtransit.org](http://www.njtransit.org)

The Philly PHLASH Downtown Bus Loop will operate a special holiday service on Monday, July 4<sup>th</sup>. For only \$2 per ride or \$5 per day, the PHLASH is the quick, convenient, and affordable way to access 22 key destinations across the city. Purchase passes (with exact change) onboard, at any Visitor Center location, or online. For updated holiday route detour and schedule information,

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visit [www.PhillyPHLASH.com](http://www.PhillyPHLASH.com), or call 800-537-7676.

### **Parking Information**

For-pay parking lots and garages conveniently are located on or near the Parkway. Call individual facilities ahead for parking options, prices and availability, or visit the Philadelphia Parking Authority website for information on some of these parking facilities at <http://philapark.org/>. In the historic district, there are many options including the AutoPark garage underneath the Independence Visitor Center at 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> streets, between Market and Arch streets: <http://www.philapark.org/autopark-at-independence-mall/>

### **Venue Rules and Public Safety Information**

The vicinity of the Parkway and concert (a boundary from at least 20<sup>th</sup> & the Parkway to the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and adjacent areas), will be secured and protected for a safe and fun celebration. Throughout July 4<sup>th</sup>, the City will provide enhanced law-enforcement and emergency medical services. The City and Welcome America! are coordinating with local, state and federal public safety authorities to ensure everyone can enjoy the Fourth of July.

Those attending the July 4<sup>th</sup> activities can do their part by making a plan regarding driving, public transit, parking, supervision of children and wearing comfortable, seasonal attire.

City officials are urging the public to refrain from bringing alcohol, coolers, open containers or cooking equipment to ensure a safe and fun festival experience. Barbecuing on the Parkway, contraband and illegal substances (firearms or fireworks) are absolutely prohibited.

Keep possessions and bags with you always, and do not leave them unattended.

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In emergencies or to report a suspicious person, activity or item (a backpack, package, or container), notify a police officer immediately or call 9-1-1. Do not try to open, move, cover or touch a suspicious item.

Information booths on the Parkway and EMS first aid stations are located on the north and south sides of 23<sup>rd</sup> Street and the Parkway

Take missing or lost persons, including children, to the Red Cross Tent, next to north First Aid Tent at 23<sup>rd</sup> and the Ben Franklin Parkway/ Art Museum Drive.

During the Party on the Parkway event, from noon to 7 p.m., lost items can be dropped off at various Wawa Welcome America Information Booths. During the July 4<sup>th</sup> concert, beginning at 7 p.m., take lost items to the Operations Trailer at 22<sup>nd</sup> Street and The Parkway.

“Location markers” will be posted to easily identify a location on the Parkway and Eakins Oval (by letter and number, for example: K-1) to facilitate communicating during the activities, especially in the event of an emergency.

### Weather

#### Emergency Weather and Alerts:

In the case of severe weather, listen for announcements and sign up online ahead of time to receive emergency texts or e-mail alerts at ReadyPhiladelphia: [www.phila.gov/ready](http://www.phila.gov/ready). Plan for a safe informed holiday.

- Heat-related precautions Information:

With potential high temperatures, there is a risk of heat-related health issues. City Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel will be on duty all day at accessible First Aid Stations and will be on patrol to monitor activities. Many

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heat stress or heat exhaustion issues can be avoided by taking simple precautions.

- Follow all proper precautions to protect yourselves and your families against the heat elements.
- All festival-goers should stay hydrated by drinking lots of water; avoid non-alcoholic liquids, caffeine and excessive layers of clothing.
- Consider the Three L's Rule: light-colored, lightweight and loose-fitting. Wear garments made of natural fibers like cotton.

For more tips to beat the heat, visit [www.welcomeamerica.com](http://www.welcomeamerica.com) and [www.phila.gov/ready](http://www.phila.gov/ready)

### Cultural and Historical Institutions

Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell Center will be open, [from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.](#), through [September 4](#), and open [until 8 p.m.](#) on [July 1](#), 2 and 4. The West Wing, Old City Hall and Congress Hall will be open, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., on July 4.

For information about free events celebrating Independence Day in Independence National Historical Park and Historic Philadelphia, visit the Independence Visitor Center at 6<sup>th</sup> and Market Streets (open 8:30 a.m. to 8 p.m., from July 1 to July 4), or online at [PHLvisitorcenter.com/July4](http://PHLvisitorcenter.com/July4) (<http://www.phlvisitorcenter.com/july4>). Share your experience enjoying America's Birthday in its Birthplace on social media using #HistoricPhilly.

The July 4<sup>th</sup> schedules for cultural institutions in the Benjamin Franklin Parkway area vary; some museums will maintain normal Tuesday hours for the holiday, while others are closed. For more information, visit [parkwaymuseumsdistrict.org](http://parkwaymuseumsdistrict.org) or the museums' individual websites.

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### **Accommodations**

Portable toilets, including ADA-compliant units, will be available for activities throughout the Ben Franklin Parkway, from 21 Street to Art Museum Drive.

### **ADA Information**

Most buildings in the historic park district are accessible including Benjamin Franklin Museum, Congress Hall, Declaration House, Great Essentials Exhibit, Independence Visitor Center Independence Hall, Liberty Bell Center, Old City Hall and Portrait Gallery in the Second Bank. Accessible restrooms are available in the Independence Visitor Center, the Portrait Gallery in the Second Bank and in the Benjamin Franklin Museum. Wheelchairs are available for borrowing at the Independence Visitor Center for use while in the park. All park ranger-led outdoor tours are on paved walks and use curb cuts. Most cover only 3-to-4 blocks, and are suitable for people of all abilities.

### **Trash Removal**

All streets will be cleaned after each event and trash containers will be emptied during and after near Wawa Welcome America! festivities. Trash and recyclables citywide will not be collected on Tuesday, July 4. Most City offices will be closed while many City services will be curtailed on July 4 -- a legal holiday.

### **Live Concert Broadcast & Digital**

NBC10 will broadcast the Wawa Welcome America July 4<sup>th</sup> Concert and Fireworks in its entirety, from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m., and in Spanish on Telemundo62, from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. NBC10's concert coverage -- hosted by Vai Sihakema and Tracy Davidson on NBC10 and, on Telmundo62, Christian Cazares and Violeta Yas -- will be simulcast on Cozi TV and TCN, as well as in Spanish on TeleXitos, from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. The free concert will be live-

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streamed on [www.nbcphiladelphia.com](http://www.nbcphiladelphia.com) and [www.telemundo62.com](http://www.telemundo62.com) -- and can be viewed on any screen – TV, iPad or tablet, or smartphone. Comcast NBCUniversal is the festival's presenting media partner.

**Wawa Welcome America!** is a multi-day festival that celebrates America's birthday in America's birthplace, Philadelphia. Wawa joined the festival as the title sponsor in 2010. For more information, visit [www.welcomeamerica.com](http://www.welcomeamerica.com).

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