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### DFW July 4th revelers may face traffic mayhem

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It's that time of year when bombs burst in the air, Willie Nelson plays at Billy Bob's — and traffic grinds to a halt.

Cities across the Metroplex are celebrating Independence Day with multiple festivals and events, most involving elaborate fireworks displays.

The revelry gets into high gear Thursday, when Arlington, Mansfield and Southlake kick off their holiday celebrations. The Fort Worth Botanic Garden's Old-Fashioned Family Fireworks Picnic is scheduled Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

Fort Worth's downtown and Stockyards areas will be seriously happening places on Friday — and the crush of activity will test the patience of motorists and police alike.

Willie Nelson's 4th of July Picnic kicks off at 11 a.m. at the Stockyards — with a day full of music and good times that is sure to clog North Main Street.

Then, in the evening, there will be fireworks at Panther Island Pavilion, movies at the Coyote Drive-In, a baseball game at LaGrave Field and all kinds of partying at Sundance Square.

That's a lot of fun packed into just a couple of square miles. As a result, police are planning to make some fairly major traffic changes, beginning Friday afternoon.

"Visitors to downtown should allow extra time to get to their destination on the Fourth of July," Fort Worth police cautioned on the department's website. "The closer it is to 8:30 pm, the heavier the traffic will be, increasing delays."

Motorists also can expect the usual traffic tie-ups in Southlake and Grapevine, both of which typically draw thousands of visitors to their respective celebrations.

Southlake's Stars & Stripes celebration begins at 6 p.m. Thursday at Town Square, and a fireworks show is scheduled to begin about 9:30 p.m. Most entrances to Town Square will be closed and visitors will be asked to park in nearby lots, including a lot at White's Chapel United Methodist Church with shuttle service.

Grapevine's 32nd annual July 4th Fireworks Extravaganza is expected to begin at 9:30 p.m. Friday at Lake Grapevine and last for 25 minutes. According to the city website, Fairway Drive between Texas 26 and Silveron Boulevard will be shut down at 9 p.m. and stay closed during the show. Revelers who want to avoid traffic but pay for a perch can watch from the Gaylord Texas Resort and Convention Center's parking garage. Most lake parks are free for viewing, although some may charge \$5 or \$10 per vehicle.

For drivers planning to venture into Fort Worth on Friday, here's a rundown of traffic information:

- Emergency lane — The right northbound lane of Henderson Street will be coned off Friday from 2:30



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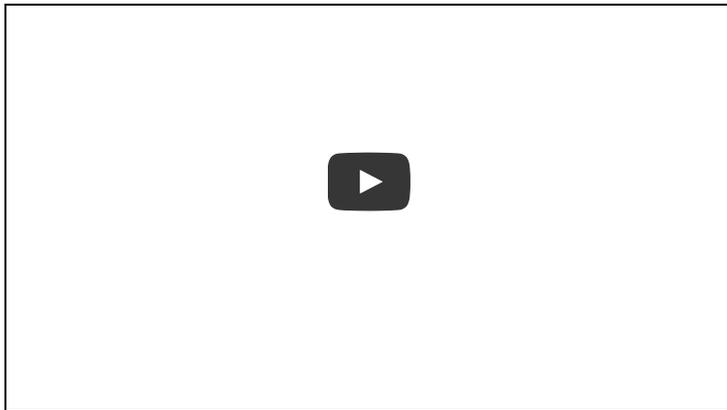
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p.m. to midnight, from I-30 to White Settlement Road. This will be a designated emergency lane for police and ambulances to get in and out of the downtown/Panther Island area, and anyone caught using the lane can expect a traffic ticket.

- For those wishing to attend the fireworks show and other activities at Panther Island Pavilion, parking will be at the northwest corner of White Settlement Road and Henderson Street. Enter from the north at Jacksboro Highway and Northside Drive and go south on Henderson Street to the parking area. Inbound traffic may also use White Settlement Road eastbound to Henderson Street and turn north onto Henderson Street to the parking lots. To exit, northbound traffic will be directed out of the parking lots to Henderson Street, Northside Drive and Jacksboro Highway. Southbound traffic will be able to exit on Henderson Street to White Settlement Road, where vehicles will be directed to University Drive.
- For those either catching a ball game at LaGrave Field or a movie at the Coyote Drive-In, traffic may arrive from the north using Northside Drive then southbound North Main Street. For southbound traffic, it may be a bit trickier. Police say that initially they will allow traffic from the south to use Belknap Street to North Main Street, but that if that area becomes too congested they may close off North Main Street. So if you're planning to go that way, be prepared to use a Plan B (i.e. I-35W to Northside Drive) to get to the game or the movies. After the Cats baseball game, all traffic will be routed northbound on North Main Street to Northside Drive, where traffic will be forced to turn either east to I-35W or west to Jacksboro Highway. By the time the movies and fireworks show are over at the Coyote Drive-In, traffic will be allowed to travel normally on North Main Street.
- In downtown Fort Worth/Sundance Square, police will be at each signal intersection to help keep traffic moving. But motorists should be ready for any barricades that might be set up for safety or traffic flow. For those coming into downtown, consider taking Spur 280 or the Lancaster exit on I-30. From the west, police recommend taking the Commerce/Convention exit and entering downtown from the south. For those leaving downtown, try using Weatherford Street eastbound to I-35W.
- As for the west side of downtown, officers will be at lighted intersections to help with traffic flow, and unlighted intersections may be closed to keep things simple. Inbound traffic may enter on Henderson Street to get to the event parking on Henderson Street and White Settlement Road, as well as the Panther Island Parking lot off Belknap Street and Purcey Street. For outbound traffic, vehicles southbound on Henderson will be routed to I-30. West Lancaster Avenue also will be open for east-west traffic.
- For those wishing to park south of the Trinity River to attend the fireworks show and other Panther Island events, parking will be available at Purcey Street and Forest Park Boulevard. Take Forest Park Boulevard or Summit Avenue to get to the area. Outbound traffic will exit using two lanes on Purcey Street, with the right lane directed south on Forest Park Boulevard while the left lane heads south on Summit Avenue.
- Still not sure about which route to take? Check out the the Fort Worth police [traffic plan page](#).



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