



THE GREAT MIDWEST HEMP FESTIVAL

2024 AREA
IMPACT REPORT

TABLE OF CONTENTS



01

FESTIVAL
INTRODUCTION

02

TRAFFIC,
TRANSPORTATION
& NOISE IMPACT

03

ENVIRONMENTAL
& COMMUNITY
IMPACT

04

CULTURAL,
HISTORICAL &
ECONOMIC IMPACT

05

PUBLIC HEALTH
& SAFETY

06

PERMITTING &
COMPLIANCE

07

CONCLUSIONS

FESTIVAL INTRODUCTION

The 2024 Great Midwest Hemp Fest will take place on September 28th and 29th in historic James Madison Park (Madison, WI) and is expected to draw upwards of 15,000 attendees over these two days.

1) FESTIVAL HISTORY & OBJECTIVES:

The Great Midwest Hemp Festival, active since 1971, is the longest running hemp festival in the United States, and aims to educate, motivate and advocate for cannabis law reform in the state of Wisconsin by fostering community and activism among our fellow citizens.

Our two-day festival seeks to reinvigorate Wisconsin's once thriving relationship with hemp by bringing cannabis and hemp-friendly politicians, activists, industry leaders, businesses, artists and musicians together to celebrate and educate the public about the holistic benefits of hemp for our state.

2) EVENT DETAILS:

The active hours of the festival are **Saturday, September 28th from 11am to 9pm, and Sunday, September 29th from 11am-4:30pm.**

3) FESTIVAL SET-UP:

Set-up for the festival, however, will begin on Friday, September 27th, at approximately 9:30am. This set-up will entail moving in equipment our two stages, running power cables to vendor sites, placement of our portable toilets, raising the 12-ft high perimeter fencing, and set-up of our beverage vendor sites and a non-alcoholic 360 cocktail bar.

On Saturday, September 28th, set-up for food and retail vendors will begin at 7am and run until approximately 10am, one hour before the start of the festival.

4) FESTIVAL BREAKDOWN:

On Sunday, September 29th, the festival will conclude at 4:30 pm, with gates closing at 5pm; an activist-led march to the Capitol from the festival grounds will begin at 4:20pm and conclude at 4:45pm on the steps of the Capitol building, effectively clearing the festival grounds of all attendees. Vendors are expected to break down from 5-8pm. Breakdown of the stages, power, and portable toilets will also take place during this time.

5) FESTIVAL ATTRACTIONS:

The festival will include a variety of hemp and cannabis-friendly vendors (all products will comply with Wisconsin State Law), as well as vending makers/artists and live musical performances from regional and national performers. Interactive art and crafting experiences will be offered at the SE corner of the festival grounds, while vendors offering items for sale will be stationed at the center of the festival grounds.

Our main stage for entertainment will be stationed at the NE corner of the festival grounds, while a small side stage will be positioned further E at the opposite end of the festival grounds. Between these two stages, along the lake, we'll offer food from 5-6 participating food truck vendors.

6) FESTIVAL AMENITIES:

Facilities include: portable restrooms along the SE perimeter fencing, artist and staff hospitality tents on the W side of the festival grounds.

TRAFFIC, TRANSPORTATION, & NOISE IMPACT

As we continue moving forward with planning and preparations, the Great Midwest Hemp Festival aims to avoid negatively impacting Madison's residents throughout its duration, especially in regards to daily traffic, commutes and business dealings. Here, we'll detail what ideas we currently have in place to make this goal a reality, but are more than happy to take directives from the City of Madison's officials and experts on all matters related to helping business continue as usual on both September 28th and 29th.

1) TRAFFIC IMPACT & STREET CLOSURES:

As the festival will be taking place at James Madison Park, we will require no street closures for the festival to commence. There will be some impact to traffic around James Madison Park, as some attendees that choose to carpool may drop off people before looking for parking nearby. However, we expect this impact to be minimal, and would be happy to allow for traffic directors if necessary.

2) TRANSPORTATION GUIDANCE:

For local residents attending the festival, we'll encourage our attendees to make use of Madison's efficient public transportation system to get to the festival. This aligns with our values regarding sustainability, and will also minimize car traffic and congestion around James Madison Park.

For those traveling from outside of the city, we'll encourage our attendees to first consider making use of nearby parking structures (Capitol Street North, 700 East Parking, Dayton/Pickney Ramp) before reverting to occupying street parking near James Madison Park. This will hopefully lessen the impact on residents' ability to park in the surrounding area, as well as leave these parking spots available for those that may not be able-bodied enough to park a number of blocks away. We will be maintaining street parking on E Gorham St closest to event entrances/exits as designated ADA parking, which will cause some impact to parking for residents..

3) NOISE IMPACT:

The festival will host a number of musical performances and public speakers throughout its duration. Our goal is to amplify these performances only as loudly as is necessary for the attendees of the festival within James Madison Park to clearly hear. This should not in any way negatively impact surrounding businesses, and we are happy to comply with city ordinances regarding daytime noise levels within this area.



ENVIRONMENTAL & COMMUNITY IMPACT

It is important to our festival organizers that we are maintaining a positive and prosperous relationship with the community leading up to and during the Great Midwest Hemp Festival. Here, we'll highlight whom from the community we've reached out to thus far, as well as how we plan to uphold our ideals surrounding sustainability and environmental conscientiousness.

1) ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT:

The Great Midwest Hemp Festival firmly believes in environmental conscientiousness and sustainability as one of our guiding principles. For this reason, we'll be encouraging all of our attendees to adopt this mindset in how they carry themselves while at our festival. As detailed in the TRAFFIC IMPACT section, we'll ask as many of our attendees as possible to take public transit to the festival grounds, not only to lessen congestion, but to also lessen pollution through fossil fuel use.

In addition to what receptacles are already provided by the Parks Department in James Madison Park, we will be renting 8 additional trash receptacles and 8 additional recycling receptacles for attendees to make use of. It is our expectation that our attendees have the utmost respect for James Madison Park, and littering will not be tolerated. Our organizers are committed to not only posting signs to remind our attendees of this, but they are also committed to calling out this behavior if it is seen.

We will also be implementing ground protection mats where heavy traffic is expected, particularly during setup and breakdown of the festival.

2) COMMUNITY OUTREACH:

Throughout the planning stages, our festival organizers have been in contact with several officials and leaders in the community. We are committed to continuing this trend to lessen negative impacts and heed advice when necessarily given. Below is a list of city organizers we have already been in contact with regarding this festival.

- Amanda Hornung - *Fire Prevention Officer*
- Jim Verbick, - *WCMC Deputy Clerk*
- Kelly Post - *Park and Street Use Supervisor*
- Dave Vetrovec - *Central Parks Supervisor*
- Meghan Blake-Horst - *Street Vending Coordinator*
- Juliana Bennett - *District 2 Alder*
- Michael Ott

3) COMMUNITY IMPACT:

Though we will be implementing perimeter fencing to guide festival traffic, this is a public festival and should not greatly impact residents from being able to visit the James Madison Park as normal. The only detriment to the community will be a temporary inability to use the basketball courts, as well as using this area to stage artist and staff respite areas during the festival.

CULTURAL, HISTORICAL, & ECONOMIC IMPACT

As the longest running hemp festival in the United States, it's not lost on us that we also live in the only upper-Midwest state to have not fully legalized cannabis. While it is our commitment to operate within the laws of the land, it is also a priority of our festival to spread awareness about how we can fundamentally change our State's laws and its culture for the prosperity and health of all people. Here, we will outline the cultural, historical and economic impact we hope to make in our great state, both short-term and long term.

1) CULTURAL IMPACT:

It's no secret that hemp and cannabis are surrounded with stigma and misinformation. Our festival seeks to rely on industry experts and science-based evidence to educate Wisconsin residents about what hemp is, and how it can improve the lives of everyone when used responsibly and advocated for legally. By sharing this information in good faith with our communities, we hope to turn the tide in positive ways that will dismantle stigma and empower individuals to use this plant for generations to come.

2) HISTORIC IMPACT:

In no uncertain terms, we believe in a future Wisconsin that has fully legal hemp and cannabis. We believe that this is not only within reach, but imminent. As such, it's important to us that we be a part of making history by making this festival



all that it can be: a successful, safe and positively-viewed event driven by equity, education, and community involvement.

3) ECONOMIC IMPACT:

Hemp and cannabis are a part of an incredibly profitable industry, one that Wisconsin has yet to fully take advantage of. Our festival believes that access to this industry in the future could greatly, positively change our economic future, both for individual citizens as well as our State's access to funds as a whole.

In the short-term, traffic to this festival will drive patronage to surrounding businesses in Madison, such as parking structures, coffee shops, and bars. In the long-term, however, our goal is much more vast! Advocating for cannabis law reform will eventually drive a great deal of profit back into our economy, in Madison and beyond!

PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY

It is of paramount importance to the festival's organizers that we keep both attendees and Madison residents safe for the duration of this event. Here, we will detail our calculation for capacity and our plan for security/Police Department Presence. Our Emergency Action Plan and Emergency Weather Plan have already been submitted to the City per Event Permit requirements.

1) MFD GUIDANCE & CAPACITY :

We are currently working with the Madison Fire Department to complete our MFD Work Permit for Outdoor Places of Assembly Events. We've also consulted the document "Calculating Capacity for Outdoor Events", and our calculations are listed below for your convenience. As a summary, after subtracting space for stages, portable restrooms, and vendor tents/trucks, ***the designated festival space can responsibly accommodate up to 19,785 people.***

27 HEMP VENDOR TENTS: -2,700 SQ. FT.
6 CRAFT VENDOR TENTS: -600 SQ. FT.
6 FOOD TRUCK VENDORS: -600 SQ. FT.
HQ + MERCH TENTS: -400 SQ. FT.
5 STANDARD/ 2 ADA RESTROOMS: -130 SQ. FT.
98,925 AVAILABLE SQ. FT.
19,785 MAX. CAPACITY

TOTAL
FESTIVAL
GROUNDS
AREA

**103,355
SQ. FT.**

This far and away exceeds the number of daily attendees we expect this year (we expect a total of 15,000 attendees split over 2 days).

2) SECURITY & POLICE PRESENCE:

The Great Midwest Hemp Festival seeks to have a friendly and enriching partnership with the Madison City Police force, not only for the success of the festival, but also to keep our attendees and Madison residents safe. We have prioritized room in our budget to hire the recommended number of police officers (2) to be present for the duration of the festival.

In lieu of additional police presence, we will also be employing a private security firm to maintain a presence at the festival for its duration. This security firm's objective will be monitoring for an suspicious activity and, if and when intervention is necessary, alerting the police officers on-site



PERMITTING & COMPLIANCE



Of course, we want to have this festival by appropriately meeting all of the City's requirements, including filing all necessary permits. Here, we'll list all of the permits we have filed for, as well as the permits we plan to file for. We'll also detail any other requirements we are aware of needing to meet. If there are any requirements we have not listed here, we will happily add them to our agenda to complete.

1) CURRENTLY FILED PERMITS:

We have already filed:

- Event Permit

2) FUTURE PERMIT FILINGS:

We plan to file for:

- Temporary Beer Selling License (Class B License to sell fermented malt beverages)
- Parade Permit - this will be for our march to the Capitol building on September 29th

3) OTHER COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS:

We will submit our COI to the City for this event by the deadline (at least 60 days before event)

We will file the City of Madison MFD Work Permit Application by the deadline (at least 60 days before event)

4) VENDING/SELLER'S PERMITS:

The Great Midwest Hemp Festival will not, ourselves, be in need of filing in sellers/vending permits. However, all vendors that are accepted to vend at the festival, whether food, beverage or retail, will be required to have the appropriate permits in compliance with the State of Wisconsin and the City of Madison.



CONCLUSIONS

THE GREAT MIDWEST HEMP FESTIVAL wants to make a lasting, positive impact in the State of Wisconsin

We believe in a brighter future for Wisconsin; we believe that future begins with supporting and encouraging the production of hemp and educating our fellow Wisconsin residents about the many benefits that continued cannabis law reform would bring economically, culturally, and socially.

We thank you for your support and consideration throughout this application process and eagerly await to hear your feedback.

Please know that we greatly appreciate and respect any and all input that the committee can offer to help us make this festival a success, hopefully *year after year!*

The Great Midwest Hemp Festival
Brought to you by R&R Productions Group

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