

# **SURJ Nashville's Plan for** **Counter-Protesting the "White Lives** **Matter" Rallies on 10/28**

**\*\*This document is a work in progress. Please continue to check it daily leading up to the protest as it will likely change as new information is gathered and released\*\***

If you can, please consider purchasing supplies via our Amazon Wishlist, but make sure that they arrive by Friday. Help supply your fellow protesters! Please share widely!

<https://www.amazon.com/gp/registry/wishlist/29735ALUXT0NY>

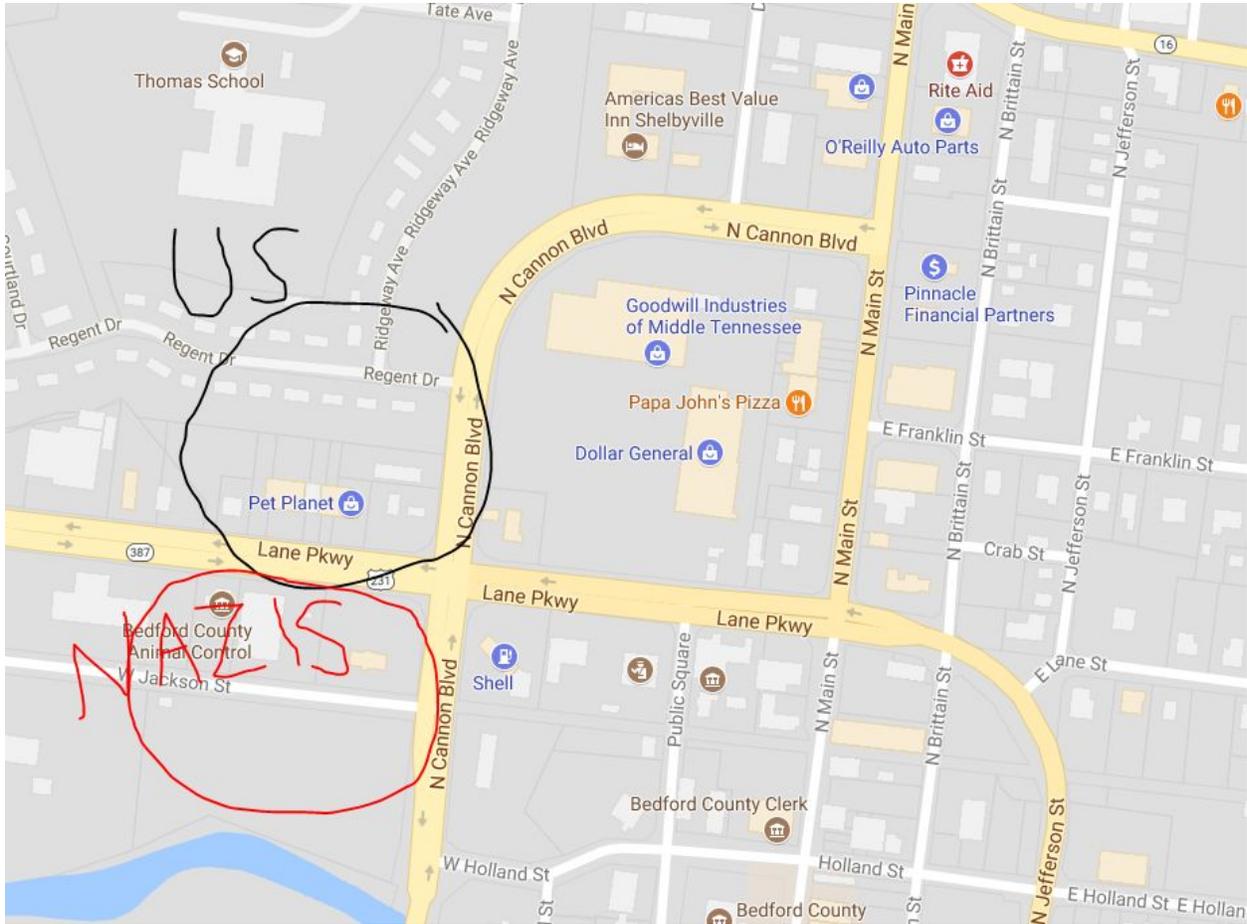
## **Statement from the SURJ Nashville Steering Committee:**

SURJ believes that there is a place in the movement for sharing space and celebrating our diverse community and values by breaking bread and doing what we can to be as far away as possible from these protesters of diversity, in order to have a day together that denies hate. There is also a place to put yourself between your community's most targeted members and those who seek to build a world that is all white and eradicate anyone they don't see fit. *SURJ will be in this space, doing all that we can to make sure white supremacists know they are not welcome in Middle TN and their values are NOT shared by their fellow white people in Tennessee.*

## Shelbyville (10am - 1pm)

- **General Logistics**

- The “White Lives Matter” rally will take place at the intersection of Lane Parkway and Cannon Blvd (Hwy 231). Counter-protesters (us) will occupy the Northwest corner while the White Supremacists will occupy the Southwest corner (picture below). The police have stated that they will shut down roads surrounding the protest area and will set up blockades to separate us from the White Supremacists.
- SURJ Nashville believes that it is important to show up and to not yield these public space to these White Supremacists. Their explicit goal is to grow the movement through outreach, but if we show up, we can deny them that opportunity. That is why we have decided to confront them, face-to-face at the site of their “rally.”
- Since there will be hundreds (maybe thousands?!) of counter-protesters coming to this small town, it is important to arrive early in order to ensure that we have time to organize ourselves before the White Supremacists arrive at 10am. The SURJ Steering Committee will arrive by 8am.

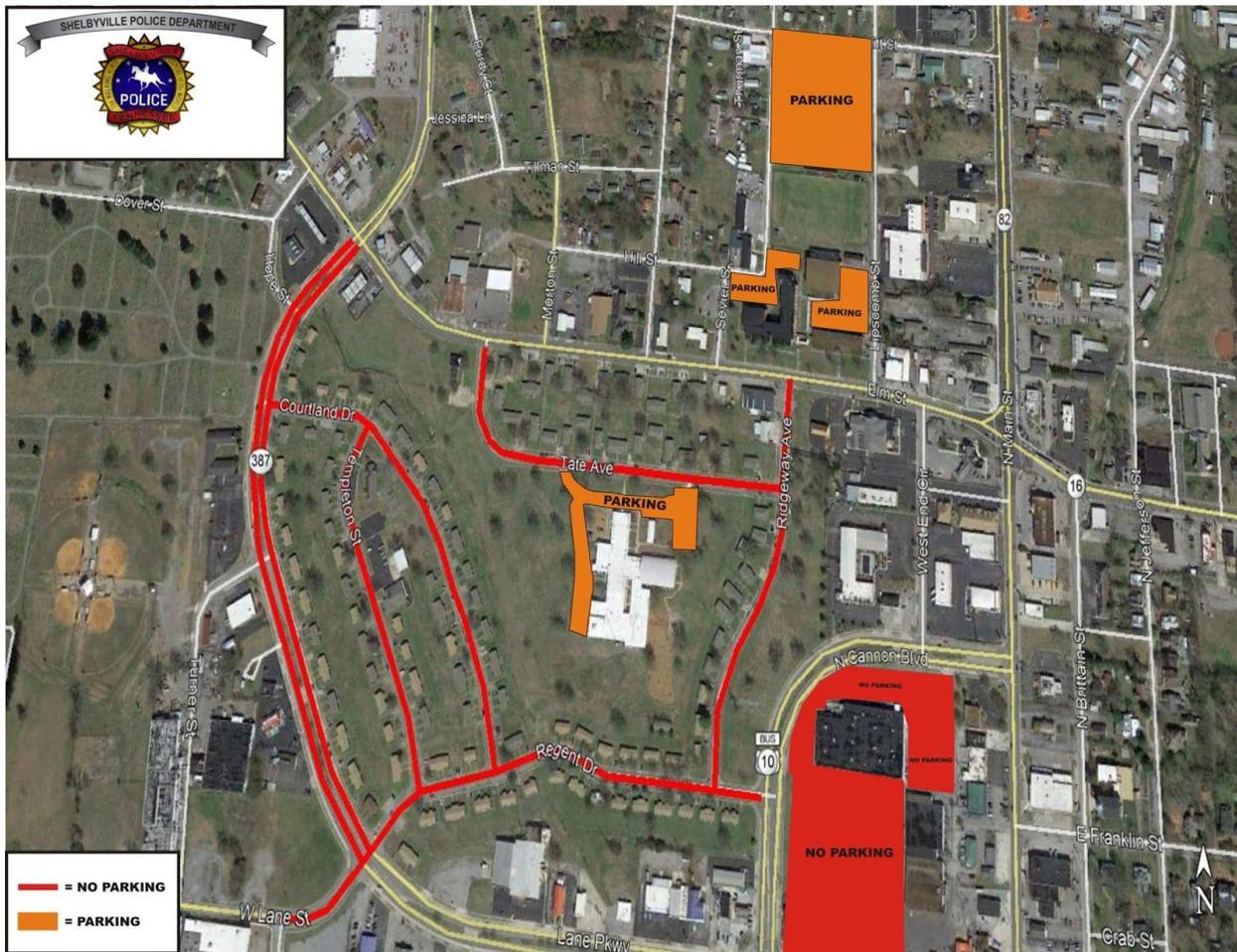


- **Parking**

- Currently, we are urging people to park at the designated parking areas written below. It's important to note however, that as this is all public information, it is important to stay vigilant and stick with a buddy at all times. Though the police have said they will keep us separate, we know that that is an impossible task. Safety teams will patrol the parking areas in order to ensure counter-protesters have safe people to turn to in case of emergency or concern.
- Below are sections taken from the Shelbyville Police press release. The highlighted portion is where they have told us to park. A picture of the designated parking locations (highlighted in orange, locations banned for parking marked in red) is also below
  - “Portions of Lane Parkway and North Cannon Blvd. will be closed before and during the rally. Specific times of road closures will be forthcoming, but the public needs to be aware that closures could occur Friday evening October 27, 2017. Lane Parkway will be closed from the intersection of West Lane Street and Regent Drive to the North Main Street intersection of Lane Parkway. North Cannon Blvd. will be closed from the intersection

of North Main Street to Holland Street. Signage will be posted and citizens and visitors should expect alternate routes.”

- “Parking for counter-protesters has been designated for **Thomas Magnet School, 515 Tate Avenue and the former site of Harris Middle School, 400 Elm Street, Shelbyville, Tennessee**. Surrounding private businesses including Big Springs Shopping Center have indicated parking is reserved for customers only and all others will be towed at the owner’s expense. Protestors are advised to remain on sidewalks to and from their designated parking area. Parking will not be allowed on city streets in the area surrounding the sidewalk rally and areas affected by street closures. This parking restriction will be strictly enforced beginning at 6:00 p.m. on Friday, October 27, 2017. Any vehicles in violation will be towed at the owner’s expense.”

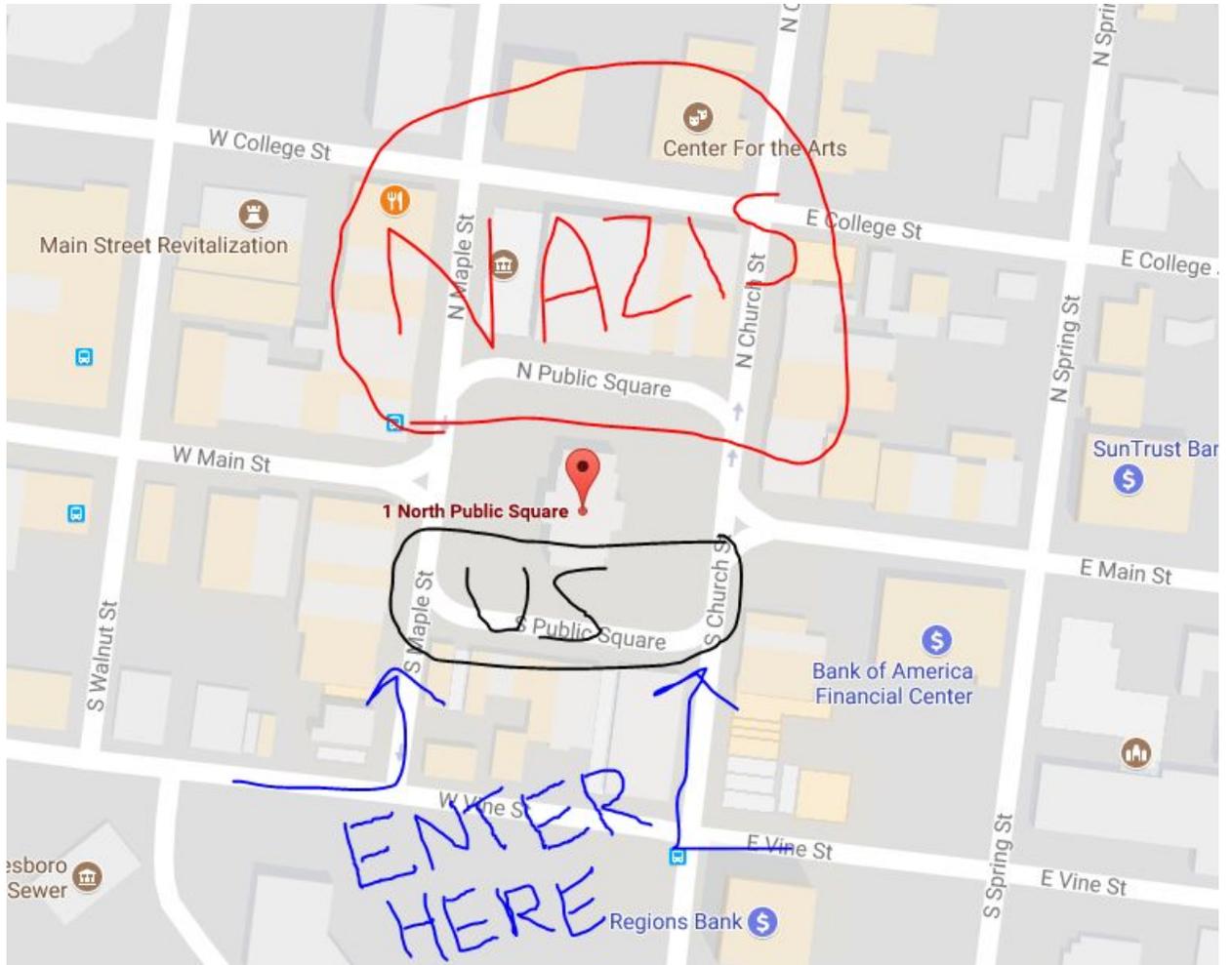


- Link to the Shelbyville Police’s full press release:  
<https://www.facebook.com/ShelbyvillePD/photos/a.311135164113.147717.261310234113/10155875863634114/?type=3&theater>

- We recommend carpooling and buddying up (discussed in more detail in the “Tips” section). There is a Facebook event (<https://www.facebook.com/events/1961295024147361/>) designed to help coordinate carpools. If you choose to carpool with someone you haven’t met before, we recommend that you meet with them before and get to know them (to ensure that they’re not a troll!). Saturday morning should not be the first time you meet. Because this is a public Facebook event, we urge caution about sharing excessive personal information or plans on the event page.
- **Safe Space/Alternative Option**
  - There will also be a Latinx organized community event (<https://www.facebook.com/events/300483720434126>). All are welcome and will be asked to introduce themselves. The Latinx organizers are asking counter-protesters to check in at this event prior to joining the main counter-protest so that we are grounded and connected with the local community we are there to protect. This event will be safe and family friendly.

## **Murfreesboro (1pm - 4pm)**

- **General Overview**
  - The White Supremacists are planning to pack back into their buses at 1pm, eat a catered lunch, then arrive in Murfreesboro in the afternoon. They will be “protesting” in the town square (1 N Public Square). SURJ will be on the front lines against this “protest” alongside others who are directly confronting this white supremacist gathering. Police have announced that counter-protesters should enter the “Public Square via South Church Street and South Maple Street only,” so we will be located on the South Side of the Square, while the White Supremacists will be on the North side.
  - Street closings have been released by Murfreesboro officials. All streets around the square will be closed at 3am on Saturday. More information can be found here: <http://www.dnj.com/story/news/2017/10/25/white-lives-matter-rally-murfreesboro-rutherford-county-announce-details-saturday-october-28/798703001/>
  - Below is a map of where we should enter, where we will counter-protest, and where the White Supremacists will rally:



- **Parking**
  - TBD. We are still looking for free parking around the square.
- **Safe Space/Alternative Option**
  - Murfreesboro Loves: <https://www.facebook.com/events/134541383959860/>

## Relevant Information & Tips

- **Police Behavior**
  - Expect the police to have their backs to the White Supremacists and facing us. This behavior has been exhibited in every recent action we have seen involving White Supremacists. The police in Shelbyville have also explicitly stated that they are more worried about us than the White Supremacists.
  - Though neither police department has released details on what items will not be allowed at these protests, we have heard that there may be metal detectors, bag searches, and bans on flags, shields, etc. Expect searches and keep checking

this document as we will update this section with more details when the police release information.

- Expect that police will misrepresent your right to protest; you are within your rights to counter protest but they are likely to behave in ways that make you feel uncomfortable or like you are breaking the law. If you witness someone being targeted by police, alert a legal observer immediately. Check out more and know your rights:  
<https://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/what-do-if-your-rights-are-violated-demonstration-or-protest?redirect=free-speech/know-your-rights-demonstrations-and-protests>

- **White Supremacist Behavior**

- Some will be loud and hateful; others will be reserved and watchful.
- Expect to witness hazing/violence. These rallies can be a hazing ritual for new recruits to these groups, where new initiates will “prove” their commitment by instigating violence against counter protesters.
- Many will be holding shields or flags; some may have guns or other weapons.

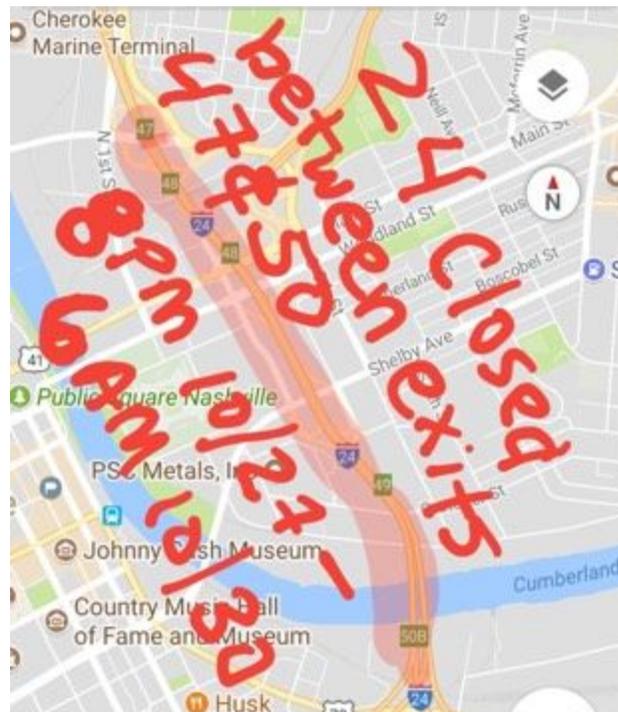
- **Counter-Protest Support**

- Medics from the Nashville Street Medic Collective will be onsite. There will also be
- Legal observers from many organizations including the National Lawyers Guild. They will pay close attention to interactions between police and protesters as well as White Supremacists and counter-protesters. Should anything happen, Legal Observers can act as witnesses in court. Their presence deters police and White Supremacists from harming us.
- There will also be a Safety Team. The team will be present in the parking areas, at the Latinx community event, and the counter-protest. They are trained in de escalation tactics, knife defense, and close quarters defense. If you are interested in joining the safety team, there will be a training on Thursday (link below): <http://bit.ly/2gGmipv>
- A spiritual care team will also be in Purdy Ct Park and at the counter-protest site in Shelbyville. The chaplains on that team are trained in providing interfaith, trauma-informed emotional and spiritual care. They will be wearing purple hats that say “Spiritual Care.” Please seek them out if you need space to re-center, to process your emotions, and/or to receive support and love in community.

- **Relevant Information**

- Dress for bad weather. Expect rain in the morning and cold (mid 40s) temperature all day. We will have some ponchos available or you can bring your own rain gear. It is likely that police will not allow you to bring umbrellas. Closed toe shoes/boots are recommended.

- 3 exits (47 - 50) on I-24 will be closed due to construction on 10/28. These exits are located in downtown Nashville and shown in the picture below:



- The Jack Daniel's BBQ Championship is taking place on 10/28 as well, and commuters will likely drive through Shelbyville on their way to Lynchburg. Please leave early from Nashville and expect heavy traffic.
- **What to bring and wear**
  - Dress for bad weather. Expect rain in the morning and cold (mid 40s) temperature all day. We will have some ponchos available or you can bring your own rain gear. It is likely that police will not allow you to bring umbrellas. Closed toe shoes/boots are recommended.
  - Bring at least 3 bottles of water. Two for drinking throughout the day, and the third for use in the event of contact with tear gas or other chemical weapons. If you do come into contact with a chemical weapon, only use sealed, unopened water bottles to wash out your eyes, face, and affected areas. DO NOT USE MILK.
  - Wear water resistant pants. Avoid cotton or other materials which may soak and keep water and other liquids on your body.
  - If have medication, bring it in the original prescription bottles with your name marked on it
  - Bring a water or vinegar soaked bandana for use in case of chemical weapons. Particle masks will also work, but they must be grade N95.

- UPDATE: Both cities have banned masks
- Wear glasses or bring sealed goggles. If you wear glasses, use a strap. DO NOT WEAR CONTACTS. If any chemical agents are used, having contacts in will trap the chemicals against your eye and cause injury.
- Shelbyville has banned bags of all sorts (backpacks, fanny packs, purses, etc.). Murfreesboro has not detailed the items they will ban.
- Shelbyville restricted items:  
<https://www.facebook.com/ShelbyvillePD/posts/10155897689764114> **Full text coming soon.**
- Murfreesboro restricted items coming soon. Info released so far:  
<http://www.murfreesborotn.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=1844>
- **Tips**
  - Carpool & Buddy Up! It is important that you find a buddy to stick with at all times and to share your plans with in case anything unexpected happens.
  - Write your emergency contact and medical information somewhere on your body (ideally written in sharpie). Make sure to tell your buddy where you have written this information so medics can easily find it.
  - There will be no public bathrooms at either event, so go to the bathroom before and en-route to actions and drink water in small sips rather than all at once.
  - **Please be aware that any gathering has the potential to be targeted by white supremacist groups or individual actors. Vetting at these events will be next to impossible so it is not unlikely that there will be white supremacists attending these events.**