

*City of*  
**SHELBYVILLE**  
*Tennessee*

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**October 11, 2017**

**PUBLIC SAFETY, FREEDOM OF SPEECH PRIORITIES FOR CITY AT SATURDAY OCTOBER 28<sup>TH</sup> RALLY**

The City of Shelbyville Administration and Police Department are taking steps to provide for public safety during a planned demonstration scheduled for Saturday, October 28, 2017. Last week the City of Shelbyville received notice from the League of the South through its representative Michael Hill that the group was holding a sidewalk rally in Shelbyville on that Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00p.m. at the intersection of U.S. Highway 231 (N. Cannon Blvd.) and Lane Parkway. Such a gathering does not require a permit from the City of Shelbyville, nor any official approval from City Administration or the City Council. It is the understanding of the City that other groups affiliated with League of the South also plan to attend, and that the focus of the rally is on the issues of the recent church shooting in Antioch, Tennessee, illegal immigration, and refugee settlement in Middle Tennessee.

From news outlets and social media reports, the City is aware that there are multiple groups who are organizing rallies in counter-protest. At this time, City Administration has received no official contact from any group that plans to counter protest.

The City of Shelbyville has a responsibility to protect free speech rights, the people who seek to exercise those rights, and the broader community in which they exercise their rights. Given the recent incidents in our country surrounding protest and counter-protests, the City is taking very seriously multiple concerns regarding the safety of expected protesters, counter-protesters, the public, and the protection of public and private property from damage. In order to meet our obligations, the City requests clear and direct communication with organizers, as well as their cooperation and that of our citizens and the general public.

The City has been assessing and preparing safety measures since last week and will continue to do so as additional information is received. The City is committed to ensuring public safety and will utilize as many resources as are necessary to carry out those safety plans.

At this time, the City deems it necessary to secure and designate separate areas at the intersection of Highway 231 (N. Cannon Blvd.) and Lane Parkway for the rally and those who wish to counter-protest. These separate areas will be strictly enforced. The sidewalks on the southwest corner of the intersection will be designated for the League of the South rally. The sidewalks on the northwest corner of the intersection will be designated for counter-protests. The public should expect street closures which will be announced at a later date. The City regrets the inconvenience these temporary restrictions will create for the residents and businesses of Shelbyville; however, we believe it is in the best interest of public safety to do so.

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The City emphasizes that the rights of assembly and free speech protected by our great Constitution are coupled with a responsibility to exercise those rights peacefully. Violent acts, threats, and intimidation are not protected rights. Our federal, state, and local laws will be enforced and criminal conduct will not be tolerated. The City Administration requests that all those who come to our great city to engage in these rights make a commitment to do so in a non-violent manner as well as to fully cooperate with the City and law enforcement authorities. Anyone who is planning or organizing a protest either in support or in counter-protest to the rally planned by the League of the South is asked to contact Shelbyville Police Chief Jan Phillips at (931) 684-5811.

The public should expect additional details to be forthcoming.