

Cars buffs ready to take over Hines Drive for fourth annual cruise

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If you're a cruiser, Hines Park will be the place to be next Sunday as classic, hot rod and custom cars take over the parkway for the fourth annual Cruisin' Hines.

Last year, more than 50,000 car lovers turned out to motor along Hines Drive from Outer Drive in Dearborn to Ann Arbor Trail in Westland. Thousands more line the road to watch in what has become Wayne County's version of the Woodward Dream Cruise.

"The numbers are pretty high for the first three years, making this a phenomenal event," said organizer Don Nicholson of Westland. "This cruise is about the car culture and the cars are representative of their owners. I've been approached by bands that say we need to have a concert. I did that in the past and found that the cars are the [entertainment](#)

at the cruise."

Food and auto-related vendors and spectators will line the 7½-mile cruise, which will officially open at 9 a.m. and run through 6 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 24, although cruisers, especially "Cruisin' Eddie," will be in line by at least 3:30 a.m. to be the first to drive the parkway.

New entrance

In a switch from previous years, cars will enter Hines Drive off of Ford Road in Dearborn. The approach provides a more than one-mile staging area that, hopefully, will resolve problems with traffic flow that have been issue in past years, Nicholson said.

Cars will be allowed to leave the park at Telegraph, Merriman and Ann Arbor Trail, but will have to go to Ford Road to re-enter.

"Our biggest goal is to get more [efficiency](#)

in getting the cars on to Hines Drive," he said. "With the approach off Ford Road, cruisers have the ability to come straight in with no turns. If cruisers try to enter at Outer Drive, they'll be sent to Ford Road."

Wayne County Sheriff deputies will be at the intersection for the cruise. Outer Drive traffic will be open going north and south, but will not be allowed to turn on to Hines Drive.

Nicholson did an informal survey about where cruisers would like to enter the park – at Ford Road or Ann Arbor Trail. Ninety percent said Ann Arbor Trail. That wouldn't solve the problem with congestion and traffic backing up on to other thoroughfares.

"The only way to fix the problem is by changing the entrance to Ford Road," he said.

Nicholson is asking cruisers to not enter the park early, but to wait until vendors are in their spots. Cars enthusiasts could end up setting up camp in a spot reserved for a vendor; having to move one to make room for the other can delay the opening of the park, he said.

Yet to be determined is where WOMC-FM (104.3) will set up. The radio station will [broadcast](#)

live on 4G for the event.

“The sooner we get the vendors set up, the sooner we can get the cars in,” Nicholson said, adding the popular spot for car watching is between Merriman and Ann Arbor Trail.

'Good people'

Nicholson has worked closely with Wayne County Parks in staging the Hines Drive cruise. It had been tried in the past, but with little success. He describes the relationship as like a marriage made in heaven.

“They’ve been supportive of this from the start,” he said. “They’re good people to work with.”

And while Nicholson will be the first in the park Sunday morning, he won’t be the last to leave. He’s generally out of there by about 9 p.m.

“When I do my last drive through, there still a few hundred cruisers in the park,” he said.

For more information about Cruisin’ Hines, visit the website at cruisinhines.com or its [Facebook](#)

page at www.facebook.com/CruisinHines.