

Graphic by Scott David Brennan

The newly lengthened United Farm Workers march is planned to begin at 11 a.m. on Sunday from Geiser Field at Watsonville High School. The 2.3-mile march will head north on Lincoln Street to Palm Avenue, west on Palm to Sudden Street, south on Sudden to East Lake Avenue, west on East Lake to Brennan Street, north on Brennan to Freedom Boulevard, south on Freedom to Main Street, south on Main to Maple Street, east on Maple and then converge again upon the high school field for a rally until 3 p.m.

Downtown march route revised at unions' request

By SCOTT DAVID BRENNAN
STAFF WRITER

WATSONVILLE — At the request of AFL-CIO and United Farm Workers organizers, city officials have agreed to extend the length of this Sunday's march through downtown.

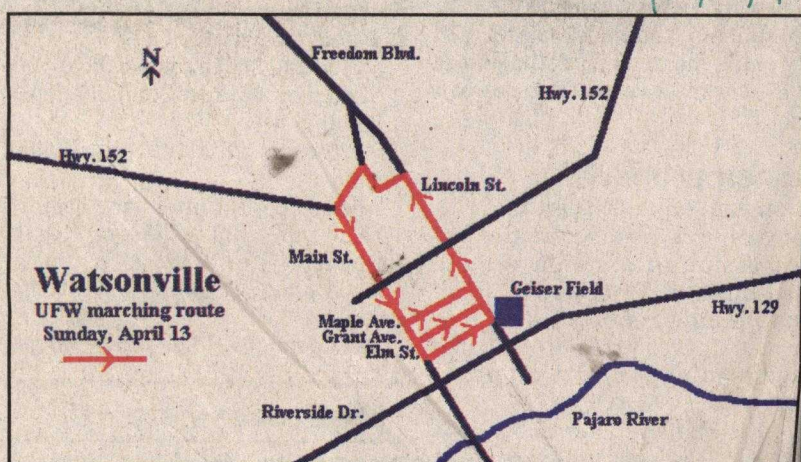
The new route adds a half mile to the march, making it 2.3 miles from start to finish, starting at Watsonville High School's Geiser Field and snaking around the downtown.

"We've added an additional loop because of the amount of people," said Watsonville police Chief Terry Medina at Tuesday night's Watsonville City Council meeting.

Officials were concerned that with an expected 20,000 people on several short sections of streets, the front of the march might crash into the back of the march, or crowd narrow streets.

"We want to prevent backflow in neighborhoods," Medina said.

Union officials, who have mounted an organizing drive among local strawberry pickers for more than a year, say they will be marching for the basic rights of field workers, including job security, bathrooms and



Officials said the original UFW march route, now canceled, might have been too short to accommodate an expected 20,000 marchers. It also called for marchers to walk down three city streets simultaneously.

fresh water in the fields.

The AFL-CIO/UFW march is planned to begin at 11 a.m. on Sunday from the high school field. The march will head north on Lincoln Street to Palm Avenue, west on Palm to Sudden Street, south on Sudden to East Lake Avenue, west on East Lake to Brennan Street, north on Brennan to Freedom Boulevard,

south on Freedom to Main Street, south on Main to Maple Street, east on Maple and then converge again at the high school field for a rally until 3 p.m.

Police barricades will be placed at intersections block outside the march route.

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at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, police said.

The police chief and council assured residents that adequate preparation and safeguards have been made for the march and rally.

"There's a lot of anxiety and fear out there (among residents)," said Mayor Al Alcalá. But the city is ready, he said. "I welcome people coming to our city," Alcalá said.

Councilman Oscar Rios agreed. "It is organized, it is not chaos."

Medina gave the council final details of the agreement between the AFL-CIO/UFW and the city that he has been negotiating.

More than 100 law enforcement officers from around the county will be in town this Sunday and 50 more will be on standby in case of an

emergency.

Additionally, union organizers are expected to provide about 400 "marshals," who will wear green T-shirts, to guide the marchers along their route.

Several parking lots have been reserved around town to accommodate up to 300 buses and 3,000 cars. Food concessions are being arranged by the high school, Medina said.

The union organizers agreed to pay the city \$20,465, in recognition of the added costs of accommodating the marchers, Medina said.

The city has required that the union provide \$11 million in insurance for the event.

Union organizers also must have fresh water supplies, trash cans and portable bathrooms located at various parking lots around the city and at the stadium.