



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2023.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).


PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: County of Henrico
Program Title: Juneteenth
Program Category: Parks and Recreation

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Brandon Hinton
Title: Deputy County Manager for Administration
Signature: 

Program Overview

In June 2021, the Henrico County Division of Recreation and Parks held the first Juneteenth Celebration special event, created to celebrate and educate the public on the importance of the history related to Juneteenth and to host a celebration in collaboration with community partners and outside groups. Held at Dorey Park (one of the county's largest parks), the event includes relevant stage entertainment such as cultural performances and music, community group performances such as dance teams and drum lines, community art projects hosted by local artists, a local vendor fair, kid's area, and lastly a fireworks finale.

The Henrico County Juneteenth Celebrations connect the past and present through celebrating, acknowledging, and educating the attendees on cultural celebrations of the lesser-known Juneteenth holiday. All of this is accomplished through multiple avenues, such as marketing materials related to historical content and the overall implementation of the event.

In addition to the main event itself, we held two smaller block parties in different areas of the county to give people the opportunity to experience a celebration that may not have the means or opportunity to make it to the large-scale event.

Problem/Challenge/Situation Faced by Locality

Juneteenth is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States. Originating in 1865 from Galveston, Texas, the observance of June 19th as the African American Emancipation Day has spread across the United States and beyond. Today Juneteenth commemorates African American freedom and emphasizes education and achievement. Henrico County has been holding a 4th of July event since 1984 and recognized the need to celebrate "America's second Independence Day." In June 2021, Congress passed a resolution establishing Juneteenth as a national holiday; President Biden signed it into law on June 17, 2021.

How Program Fulfilled Awards Criteria

This event is worthy of an award due to the division seeing the need to plan an event that provides an accessible and safe way for our community to gather and celebrate a portion of our nation's history that was often not celebrated or discussed until recently in Central Virginia. Since the event's inception, we are pleased to say that it has become the largest Juneteenth Celebration in Central Virginia. It has not only given us the opportunity to celebrate, share, educate, and inform

the citizens of Henrico County, but it has also granted many of our staff the ability to grow and learn.

How Program Was Carried Out

This event aimed to create a large-scale special event within Henrico County that commemorates African American freedom with celebrations of reflection and rejoicing.

Planning for this large-scale annual event generally takes a year with all planning steps spread out across that time. There are many pieces of event planning and logistics required to take on an event of this size. The Division of Recreation and Parks Special Events team takes the lead in planning and implementation, while also collaborating closely with multiple county agencies such as Henrico Police and Fire and outside contractors. The events team forms a planning committee which consists of the following:

- Event Manager – Oversees event as a whole, delegates tasks between group members, coordinates efforts with police and fire, along with firework prep
- Production – Responsible for all stage logistics and entertainment. Secures bands, acts, community performers, stage/sound/lighting rentals. Handles contracts and riders for bands.
- Logistics – Responsible for rental equipment (Shuttles, generators, light towers, restrooms), parking, staffing, equipment, set-up and breakdown.
- Kid Zone – Responsible for booking of kid friendly activities and entertainment, examples include inflatables, face painting, balloon artists, community art projects.
- Food Vendors – Communicates and secures approximately 15 food vendors to provide concessions for the duration of the event

The groups work together to provide a fun, safe, celebratory atmosphere for everyone in Henrico County and the surrounding areas to feel welcome. Throughout the planning, the importance of incorporating local community partners, like the Henrico County NAACP, and including the involvement of local youth and teens, through organizations like the Henrico County Public Schools Black Student Union, is emphasized to bring in additional ideas and community support. Their contributions typically include items related to community connections and communication, along with the youth creating a video PSA to promote the event. In addition to community partners to assist with planning, focus is also placed on utilizing local entertainment and food vendors from Henrico County.

By planning and hosting this event, we focus on Black lives and the culture of past and present through a celebration of entertainment, vendors, food, music, history, and fun. This is accomplished through many hours of planning and preparation of tasks within the above committees that also include:

- Booking stage entertainment
- Vendor Fair preparation (Ex. applications, screening, organizing, communication, and implementation)
- Logistical planning (Ex. staffing, parking, restrooms, supplies, shuttles, power, set-up, breakdown)
- Public Safety
- Kid Zone preparation (Ex. inflatables, community art, contracts)
- Food Vendors (Ex. applications, screening, permits, communication, placement)

The vendor fair is a large piece to this event. It gives local vendors opportunities to sell goods, provide information about community resources, and promote local business and government services that the community may not otherwise have the opportunity to learn about. The vendor area committee is responsible for creating the application and screening process, communicating logistics related to set-up, breakdown, parking with the individuals, and overall ensuring they have a positive experience within the event.

In 2021, the first celebration was an all-day event spanning approximately eight hours. Moving into the second year, based on community and staff input, the event was shortened to five hours, where more activities overlap, allowing attendees the opportunity to experience almost everything the celebration had to offer regardless of when they attended during that timeframe.

Throughout the entire planning process each year, leading up to implementation, the division has successfully been able to offer a new style of special event that was not available in the past.

Financing and Staffing

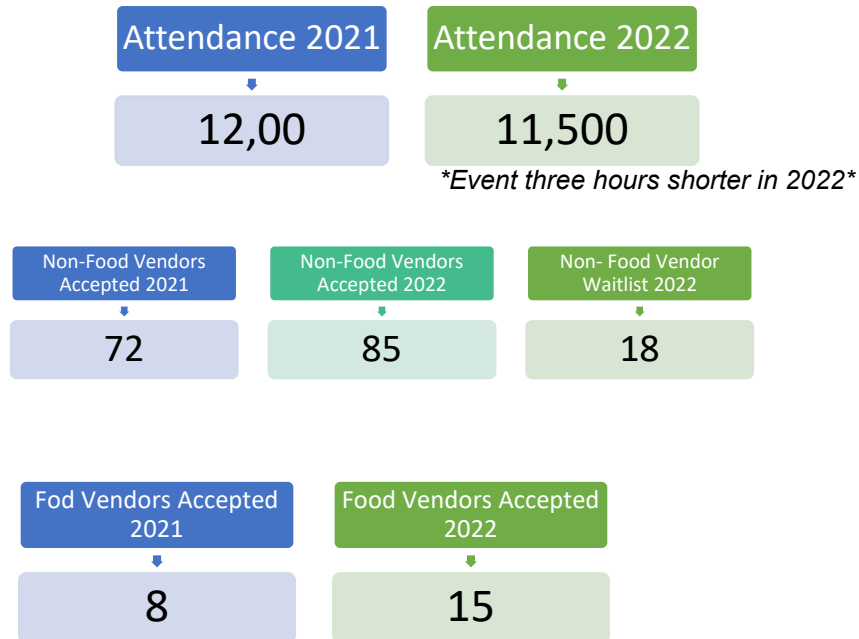
The Juneteenth Celebrations cost a total of \$155,000 each year. Funds are allocated in the recreation and parks annual budget, under the events section. Costs are broken down into four areas: entertainment, staffing, rental fees, and additional supplies.

- \$65,000 – Entertainment: bands, stage performances, kid's area
- \$50,000 – Staffing: Recreation and Parks, Fire, Police, EMTs, parking
- \$30,000 – Rentals: stage, light towers, generators, tents

- \$10,000 – Supplies: staff meals, shirts, giveaways, etc.

Program Results

Throughout the first two years of holding the Juneteenth Celebration within Henrico County, the community feedback about the experience has been overwhelmingly positive and is shown with increases in attendance numbers, non-food vendors, and food vendors. Additionally, for 2022 planning and currently 2023 planning, vendors sent inquiries about being involved the next year immediately after the previous event was held.



Brief Summary

Henrico County's Juneteenth event acknowledges the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States, focusing on Black lives and the culture of both past and present through a celebration including entertainment, vendors, food, music, history, and fun. The event was wildly popular its inaugural year and has grown into the largest Juneteenth event in Central Virginia. It has given us the opportunity to share a portion of our nation's history that was often not celebrated or discussed until recently.

**Juneteenth Celebration
Supplemental Material**





