



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2025.** Please include this submission form as the first page of your 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: Chesterfield County

Program Title: Chesterfield Restaurant Week

Program Category: Customer Service & Community Outreach

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: J.C. Poma

Title: Executive Director of Sports, Visitation & Entertainment

Signature: J.C. Poma

Title: Chesterfield Restaurant Week

Category – Customer Service & Community Outreach

Executive Summary

Chesterfield Restaurant Week (CRW) was created to highlight Chesterfield County as a burgeoning haven for foodies. In partnership with the Chesterfield Chamber of Commerce, thirty-nine local restaurants took part in the inaugural event, which took place from March 29 through April 7, 2024 and served as a showcase for the high-quality cooking being done across Chesterfield. Year 2 in April 2025 brought even more success with 60 participating restaurants participating. CRW raised enough money in the first two years to provide over 100,000 meals to residents in need through the Chesterfield Food Bank Outreach Center.

According to County Administrator Dr. Joe Casey, events like CRW are part of an ongoing effort to “make the county’s already great quality of life a notch or two better for those who live here or visit”. Quality of life is something we focus on every day in Chesterfield and with the development of our new Sports, Visitation, and Entertainment Department we are focusing on initiatives that move the needle for resident perception and help create Chesterfield as a thriving community and destination. Using excess lodging tax, which is restricted for programs and initiatives that have tourism implications, programs like CRW are changing the perception of how a local government is involved in community outreach.

Problem/Challenge/Situation Faced

The food and beverage industry is a significant contributor to a community’s economy and often an indicator of positive perception of quality of life. Chesterfield Restaurant Week (CRW) was created to bring awareness to the first-class food and beverage establishments that help shine a spotlight on Chesterfield as a premier community and destination. When our food and beverage scene is thriving, it plays an important role in community development and quality of life. When residents are proud of the community they live, work, and play in, they then invite their friends and family to visit. Event based tourism also thrives in a welcoming hospitality community. It’s an ecosystem that in-turn drives more revenue to our business community and continues to help diversify our economy. Chesterfield County’s obligation is to showcase quality of life to residents and visitors alike and in an era where “foodie features” etc. are few and far between, CRW fills a story-telling void while also raising money for an important community need.

Fulfillment

When Chesterfield Restaurant Week (CRW) was created, the goal was an extensive marketing and communications plan to generate public enthusiasm and promote participation from non-chain, independent restaurateurs that provide a diverse culinary experience. As with any restaurant week, participation from the restaurant community is vital. We often said, this culinary showcase is for the restaurant community and thus was designed through parameters and feedback from the community themselves. CRW did not dictate a certain price point, type of menu, or even require a buy-in. CRW was simply a way to market the County’s thriving food and beverage scene to the masses. All that was required was a special dish, menu item, or a once in an opportunity ‘special’ created especially that will help attract patrons. This led to almost immediate buy-in from

restaurants and the challenge in year one was getting in front of restaurants and nailing down their commitment to participate, menu etc. A local organizing committee was created that consisted of Chesterfield County's Sports, Visitation and Entertainment Department, the Chesterfield Chamber of Commerce, and staff from the Chesterfield Food Bank Outreach Center, the beneficiary of the event. Recruitment was a collective community engagement effort, but Chesterfield's goal was simply to story-tell. The success of year one and two came with a well-thought-out communications strategy and asset development that will only need to be replicated in future years.

Cost and Funding

As with any marketing initiative, what can be created in-house vs out-of-house, and the amount of paid marketing can vary greatly and impact costs. As mentioned in the executive summary, every dollar for CRW was funded through excess lodging tax that is restricted for programs and initiatives that have tourism implications. Year one costs were also much higher to create assets needed for annual usage. In year two, all these assets created in year one just needed slight tweaking with date, sponsors, etc.

Asset development (website, logo/brand, marketing materials, marketing tool-kit etc.): \$6,000

Marketing/advertising: \$18,000

Notes: Chesterfield had an extensive list of in-kind and trade partners that significantly extended the reach of CRW)

Printing (posters, flyers, in-restaurant assets): \$2,500

Total Year One Cost: \$26,500

Total Year Two Cost: \$20,000

Results

The inaugural Chesterfield Restaurant Week (CRW) was an overwhelming success with 39 participating restaurants that raised enough money to provide 40,000 meals to residents in need. Year two took the results up a notch with 60 participating restaurants and over 60,000 meals to residents in need. The more important success measures came through participation sentiment (post-event survey) and the story-telling reach of content, marketing, and advertising. Highlights include:

- 88% of participating restaurants were "very satisfied" or "satisfied" and 12% were "neither satisfied nor dissatisfied" with 0 respondents saying "dissatisfied" or "very dissatisfied".
- 88% of participating restaurants were "very likely" or "likely" to participate again in the future and 12% were "neither likely nor unlikely" with 0 respondents saying "unlikely" or "very unlikely".
- 83% of restaurants saw significant marketing/advertising outside of their own.
- 76% of restaurants said this was their first time participating in a restaurant week.
- 105 news articles and 45 tv/radio segments were organically covered

- Testimonial from owner of 2 participating restaurants: “Our sales were higher (15% at one restaurant and 12% at the other) and the media coverage, both on social and print/TV were far more than anything we could have done on our own.”
- Testimonial from owner of 1 participating restaurant: “CRW was beneficial for my little shop. It was a good show of community support for smaller businesses or less known businesses and of course the Food Bank...Overall, we noticed that it brought it more traffic and new customers who were surprised how long we'd been there or that we were even there.”
- Testimonial from local resident on social media: “I thoroughly enjoyed dining at many restaurants throughout the week - some new to me, and some long-time favorites. It's a wonderful thing to support local businesses who are also supporting the CFBOC!”