



City of Chester
★At the Center of it All★

Good Evening, Chester Neighbors,

As we prepare for the **Juneteenth Jubilee, June 12–15, 2025**, I want to speak directly to our business owners, residents, and community leaders. This moment is both **exciting and familiar**—because Chester has done this before and done it well.

Think back to events like **LIVE After 5**, the **Breezeway Garden Party**, and especially the **HILLARITY Festival**—a **three-day celebration** that downtown businesses have consistently supported and helped bring to life. Your energy, creativity, and willingness to participate made those events a success. The **Juneteenth Jubilee is no different** in spirit—it's built on the same foundation of **community, celebration, and opportunity**. What's new is the scale and the reach—and with your continued support, we can make it even more impactful.

What You've Asked, and What We're Doing

We've heard your questions and concerns—and we're responding with intention, care, and transparency:

- **Road Closures & Parking Access:**
 - No street closures will occur until **1:00 PM on Thursday, June 12**, to support regular business operations earlier in the day.
 - **Gadsden Street** will close temporarily through Sunday—not continuously—and **church access will be available Sunday morning**.
 - **Pundt Street** will remain open for customers and employees, and we are actively working to provide alternative parking and clear pedestrian pathways.
 - If your business has specific needs, we're open to adjusting closures. All it takes is a conversation.

- **Public Safety:**

The City has developed a detailed **Incident Action Plan and Police Safety Plan**, created in partnership with law enforcement, fire services and first responder services, to ensure safety is never compromised.

- **Fire Code & Event Compliance:**

All event components are in full compliance with **city and state fire codes**, crowd control guidelines, and emergency protocols.

- **Communication & Coordination:**

While the City is not required to seek approval to host public events, we've gone above and beyond—partnering with the CDDA, conducting direct outreach (including door-to-door visits), and providing early notice through City Council meetings.

- **Economic Opportunity:**

Events like this bring visibility and vibrancy to our city's core. With **free activities, regional visitors, and vendor showcases**, the Jubilee offers a prime opportunity for downtown restaurants, shops, and services to increase foot traffic and build new customer relationships.

A Call to Partnership

Let's not forget: **HILLARITY**, one of Chester's most cherished traditions, began as a bold idea too. Every October, we open our historic downtown streets for days filled with food trucks, vendors, music, games, and fun for the whole family. That spirit of community transformed a local event into a regional favorite.

We believe the Juneteenth Jubilee can do the same—**with your support**. We know some are hesitant. Change brings unknowns. But we also know that Chester thrives when we step forward together.

This isn't just about events—it's about **honoring our traditions** while **boldly embracing new possibilities**. For **just four days**, we're asking for partnership, open minds, and shared purpose.

To those already showing support—**thank you.**

To those with questions—**we're here, we're listening, and we're ready to work with you.**

Let's meet this moment as only Chester can—with pride, partnership, and the belief that our best days are built together.

Warmly,

Malik Whitaker,
City Administrator
City of Chester, South Carolina