



PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, on June 19, 1865, enslaved people in Galveston, Texas heard the words that changed everything: that they were free. A moment long overdue, it ignited a flame of liberation that still burns today; and

WHEREAS, the story of Juneteenth is inseparable from the story of Black and African American people who endured unimaginable suffering, yet preserved their culture, dignity, and humanity, laying the moral foundation upon which a more just America is still being built; and

WHEREAS, for generations, Black communities celebrated Juneteenth long before it was a national holiday, gathering in parks, churches, and family yards, keeping memory alive through joy, food, music, and prayer, a testament to a people who refused to let their freedom be forgotten; and

WHEREAS, the contributions of Black and African Americans are woven into every thread of this nation, including our music, medicine, literature, labor, and laws, and their ongoing fight for full and equal belonging is not separate from the American story, but central to it; and

WHEREAS, Governor Jared Polis formally acknowledged the historical significance of this day by signing legislation on May 2, 2022, establishing Juneteenth as Colorado's eleventh state holiday, affirming our state's commitment to honoring this pivotal moment in American history; and

WHEREAS, the City of Fort Collins remains steadfastly committed to advancing inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility in all aspects of community life, recognizing that the promise of freedom requires ongoing dedication to creating a city where all people can thrive; and

WHEREAS, this year's theme of Belonging calls us to affirm that the voices and leadership of Black and African Americans must be heard and centered in every aspect of American life, including our civic institutions, workplaces, schools, and neighborhoods, because a nation cannot belong to all if it silences any; and

WHEREAS, our Fort Collins community will gather at Foothills Mall on June 19-20, 2026, to honor this significant day through celebration and joy, remembrance, and community connection.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Emily Francis, Mayor of the City of Fort Collins, do hereby proclaim June 19, 2026, as

JUNETEENTH INDEPENDENCE DAY

and invite all residents to gather in celebration and solidarity, honoring the enduring spirit of freedom and our commitment to a community where everyone belongs.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and the seal of the City of Fort Collins this 16th day of June, 2026.

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Clerk