

# PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, on January 1, 1863, President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, declaring that all persons held as slaves in any Confederate state were “then, thenceforward, and forever free;” and

WHEREAS, it was not until June 19, 1865 – 2 years, 6 months, 2 weeks and 2 days after the Emancipation Proclamation – that General Gordon Granger led the cavalry into Galveston, Texas, where the last people in this land of liberty still lived as slaves, and declared them free forevermore; and

WHEREAS, this unprecedented moment of liberation would over time evolve into an annual celebration in Galveston called “Juneteenth,” commemorating the legacy of our enslaved ancestors and recognizing their resolute courage in times of tribulation, trials, and sacrifice; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth was officially recognized by Montana's state government as a holiday in 2017 and was declared a Federal holiday in 2021 in an effort to celebrate inclusion and to remind us that this freedom, which came at such great cost, continues to require the committed and concerted efforts of all of us to ensure that with freedom come equality, inclusion, and justice.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, CORY REEVES, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF GREAT FALLS, do hereby proclaim June 19, 2025, as

## JUNETEENTH

in the City of Great Falls, and encourage all citizens, present and future, to celebrate this day in events recalling the divisions and struggles of African-Americans in the past, celebrating their achievements in the present, and embracing the hope and promise of the future, not only for the growing appreciation of Black culture in our community, but for a greater acceptance and appreciation of all cultures that have experienced discrimination in the past, including the Indigenous peoples who first called this land home.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City to be affixed this 21<sup>st</sup> day of June, 2025.

Cory Reeves, Mayor