

## Remarks from the Mayor

Good evening, everyone.

Tonight, it is my great privilege to recognize and honor a true leader and dedicated public servant, **Eric Ray**, for his unwavering commitment, exceptional leadership, and heartfelt service to the citizens of Neighborhood Council District 5.

For the past twelve years, Eric has served as the cornerstone of Neighborhood Council 5, guiding it with wisdom and purpose. His journey with the Council began, as many great stories do, with a neighbor who saw his potential and encouraged him to run for office. Little did anyone know that within just a month of joining, Eric would step up to lead as Chairman—a role he embraced with vision and determination since 2012.

As a longtime resident of Great Falls and a dedicated business owner, Chairman Ray brought a wealth of experience and a deep understanding of the community to his work. Under his leadership, Neighborhood Council 5 was transformed into a model of civic engagement, inspiring residents to take an active role in shaping the decisions that impact their neighborhoods. Eric empowered citizens to raise their voices, attend meetings, and advocate for their needs—building a stronger, more connected community.

The accomplishments of Neighborhood Council 5 under Chairman Ray's stewardship are too numerous to list in full, but a few highlights deserve special recognition:

- Advocating tirelessly for years to install a four-way stop that significantly improved traffic safety in the district.
- Organizing and moderating city and county election forums, giving residents the opportunity to engage directly with candidates.
- Providing critical information to the community about prospective businesses, helping citizens make informed decisions about developments affecting the city and county.
- Collaborating with the City Commission to address construction-related concerns, ensuring dust mitigation to improve residents' quality of life.
- Partnering with a local business to ensure the proper upkeep of vacant properties.
- Leading the campaign to fund and repave the walking path in Russell Park, creating a lasting benefit for the community.
- Bringing neighbors together through annual summer picnics and spring cleanups at Russell Park.

These achievements are a testament to Eric's vision, determination, and heart for service. His impact will be felt not just in Neighborhood Council 5, but throughout our city.

Chairman Ray, your leadership has truly been an inspiration. While your departure as Chairman leaves big shoes to fill, your legacy will undoubtedly continue to guide us. On behalf of the entire community of Great Falls, we thank you for your dedication and service. You have made a lasting difference, and tonight, we celebrate you and all that you have accomplished.

Congratulations, Eric, on a remarkable tenure. We wish you all the best in your future endeavors!