



## Proclamation of the City of Richfield

**WHEREAS**, Black History Month is for celebrating the achievements of African- Americans who shaped the history of our city, state and nation and to pay tribute to their struggles for freedom and equality; and

**WHEREAS**, the origin of Black History Month goes back to 1925. In that year, the Harvard-trained historian Carter G. Woodson created Negro History Week to increase awareness of African- Americans' contributions to the United States. The week included the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln (February 12) and Frederick Douglass (February 14); and

**WHEREAS**, Rosa Parks Day is celebrated on February 4 in honor of Rosa Parks, who in 1955 challenged an Alabama bus driver's demand for her to give up her bus seat to a white man and move to the back of the bus. Her refusal, and subsequent arrest, sparked the Montgomery Bus Boycott. This became the first mass protest against racial segregation in the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1976, the United States' bicentennial year, President Gerald Ford expanded Negro History Week to a month by proclaiming February as Black History Month, urging Americans to "seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history;" and

**WHEREAS**, African-American families have lived in the city of Richfield since the early 1800s and have contributed to the community. For example, African-American achievements in the Richfield Schools system have been recognized since the late 19th century. At that time, William E. Patrick was an African-American teacher at East School in Richfield, and, in 1967, John L. Peterson was captain of the Richfield High track team and is in the Richfield High School Athletic Hall of Fame; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1967, Richfield churches set an example for us all by banding together and declaring in full-page newspaper ads: "We wish to make it known that Richfield churches welcome citizens of all races, colors, and creeds"; and

**WHEREAS**, African-Americans have been involved in Richfield city government since at least the 1960s, when Robert Worthington was hired as the Richfield planning director in 1969; and


**WHEREAS**, Black or African-American residents represented 11.8 percent of the Richfield city population in 2022; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Richfield, its City Council and staff identifies celebrating diversity and being equitable as core values, recognizing that our diverse culture is one of our greatest strengths and assets, striving to promote an environment of equity and inclusion; and

**WHEREAS**, the Richfield Human Rights Commission supported this proclamation at its February 2, 2023, meeting and recommended the Richfield City Council do the same; and

Now, **THEREFORE**, I, **Mary Supple**, mayor of Richfield, on behalf of the Richfield City Council, do hereby proclaim the month of February 2023 as **Black History Month** in the City of Richfield and call on the people of Richfield to observe this month with appropriate programs, activities, and ceremonies, and continue to honor the contributions of Black Americans throughout the year.

**PROCLAIMED** this 14<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2023.

  
Mary Supple, Mayor

