



Proclamation

WHEREAS, Mayor John D. Bridgeman was elected to serve the Citizens of Gastonia as Mayor in 2011 and reelected in 2015, serving a total of six years as Mayor of this great City; and

WHEREAS, He also served 4½ years on City Council during the 1970s and two years in the North Carolina House of Representatives representing parts of Gaston and Mecklenburg Counties; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Bridgeman has also served our City and County in leadership roles in numerous community organizations: as past president of the Gastonia Jaycees and as a board member of the Schiele Museum, United Way, Salvation Army Advisory Board and the Chamber of Commerce, where he also acted as the interim president and CEO for two years. He has also been a devoted member of the Noon Optimist, Gastonia Civitan, and the Gastonia Rotary Clubs. In 1997 he received the Order of the Long Leaf Pine from the Governor, one of our State's highest honors, for his contribution to our City and State; and

WHEREAS, He owned and operated the largest real estate company in Gaston County for more than 30 years; is a past president of the Gaston Board of Realtors, a former Realtor of the Year and served five years on the North Carolina Real Estate Commission in Raleigh including being elected as chairman; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Bridgeman has provided invaluable leadership and guidance on many City projects and issues during his tenure as Mayor. He was instrumental in moving the FUSE project ahead with the purchase of the Sears property, negotiating a price substantially below tax and fair market value, thereby reducing the City's financial commitment to the project. He also led the effort to rename a portion of Marietta Street to honor the memory and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He also led the initiative to right an 80-year-old racial injustice involving a young African American baseball player from Springfield, Massachusetts who was denied the right to play ball with his white teammates in an American Legion game held in Gastonia in the 1930s. Because of his efforts, a decades-old affront to the City of Springfield in the minds of its citizens was erased and the two cities renewed a friendship; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Bridgeman's defining focus has been building relationships: fostering cooperative business relationships that benefit our City; promoting goodwill and encouraging City pride, defined by his familiar declaration, "this is our time."

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that I, Todd Pierceall, Mayor Pro Tem of the City of Gastonia, and the Gastonia City Council, do hereby express our sincere appreciation and gratitude for **Mayor John D. Bridgeman's** dedication and commitment to the City of Gastonia and wish him the best and continued success in his future endeavors.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the City of Gastonia to be affixed, this the 21th day of November, two thousand and seventeen.

Todd Pierceall, Mayor Pro Tem

Attest:

Sherry H. Dunaway, City Clerk