



AWARD OF THE KEY TO THE CITY OF BOZEMAN

In medieval times cities were walled and gated for security. Those that wished to enter through the gates were carefully screened for security. However, trusted and valued members of a community were granted the right to enter by bestowing the key to the City upon them. While this tradition has become symbolic, it is not to be considered insignificant. Thus, in our City, the Key to the City of Bozeman shall be awarded to citizens who have become trusted and valued members of our community.

It is, therefore, with great pleasure that I award the Key to the City of Bozeman to Jeffrey K. Rupp. The Key is given because his professional and personal lives have been devoted to the betterment of his community, our community.

Jeff has been the Chief Executive Officer of the Human Resource Development Council for 35 years. As we know, HRDC has been built from an underfunded federal community action agency to a significant non-profit organization that plays a crucial role in the political, cultural and social life of our City. HRDC, under Jeff's leadership, has been a major factor in sheltering the homeless, feeding the poor, providing pre-school education through Head Start, housing the less fortunate, providing free public transportation for the entire City and free transportation for the elderly. HRDC has been instrumental in creating educational and self-help programs that have helped many escape the chains of poverty. All of this has been done with an apparent ease that encourages each of us to give and do what we can to help others.

The building of HRDC was accomplished by Mr. Rupp's recognition that partnerships with public and private entities could leverage dollars to the benefit of all. We know that HRDC has been a willing partner in many endeavors with the City, often using HRDC's expertise where the City was less equipped. This is seen in Road to Home classes and active participation in the City's affordable housing efforts.

It would be enough to say that Jeff Rupp is a valued member of our community because of his work with HRDC. But, he has also given of himself by serving as a Bozeman City Commissioner, where he further advanced the community's efforts in housing and transportation. He has also served on numerous local, state, and national boards in the areas of community development, housing, poverty, workforce development, and conservation, including Montana Board of Housing, Bozeman Historic Preservation Board, Gallatin Valley Land Trust, and Montana Conservation Corps.

If anything, Jeff has taught us that we all need help from others at one time or another and that we can all help ourselves to be contributors to the good of community life.

Every community needs people that model the kind of behavior to which all should aspire. So, now, as Jeff lets loose the reins of HRDC and ceases his full time work. We award him the Key to the City of Bozeman so as to forever memorialize him as the model citizen that we would all like to be.

Jeffrey K. Rupp you inspire us to be better community members. And we thank you for that inspiration and for your years of dedicated work to our community.

Carson Taylor, Mayor
December 19, 2016

