

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, in February, America recognizes and reflects on the sacrifices, contributions, and achievements made by generations of African Americans in the storied history of our nation and toward the ongoing struggle to keep America's founding promise of a more perfect and more equal union; and

WHEREAS, the African American experience is woven into the historical fabric of the Pacific Northwest: from York's full membership in the Lewis and Clark Expedition, through the first African American pioneer in the Northwest, George W. Bush, who established Bush Prairie, now known as our neighbor, the City of Tumwater, and on through today; and

WHEREAS, the history of the City of Olympia would be far less rich and diverse without the contributions of Olympia's African American residents – such as Rebecca Howard, the beloved 19th Century entrepreneur, who owned and managed the popular Pacific House in downtown Olympia; and

WHEREAS, in 1915, Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson, noted black scholar and son of former slaves, founded the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, and initiated Black History Week on February 12, 1926; and

WHEREAS, in 1976, as part of the nation's bicentennial, Black History Week was expanded and became established as Black History Month, and is now celebrated all over North America; and

WHEREAS, the observance of Black History Month demands our attention to the continued need to battle racism and build a community that lives up to its democratic ideals; and

WHEREAS, our community acknowledges the systemic racism perpetuated by individuals and our nation's government through slavery, segregation, mass-incarceration, police brutality, and economic disparity; and

WHEREAS, African Americans have countless achievements despite these past and present atrocities; and

WHEREAS, the City of Olympia proudly embraces the cultural diversity of our community, and honors organizations, families, and individuals of African American descent in appreciation of their invaluable contributions that continue to enrich the history and culture of our city, and unite and sustain us as a community; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Olympia City Council does hereby proclaim the month of February 2022 as

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

in the City of Olympia and encourage all Olympians to honor and respect the African American experience and work toward a nation where all people have equal opportunity to thrive.

SIGNED IN THE CITY OF OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON THIS FIRST DAY OF FEBRUARY 2022.

OLYMPIA CITY COUNCIL

Cheryl Selby
Mayor