

CITY OF OLYMPIA

Proclamation

WHEREAS, cooperatives, or “co-ops,” are businesses that are owned and democratically controlled by their members and can range in size from small neighborhood stores to Fortune 500 companies, including grocery stores, restaurants, utilities, and credit unions; and

WHEREAS, cooperatives foster inclusive economic participation by empowering individuals through shared ownership and democratic decision-making, ensuring that community members have a direct stake in the success of their businesses and in the profits of their labor; and

WHEREAS, cooperatives promote entrepreneurship by investing in their workforce, building business and financial skills, and cultivating local leaders who are committed to the long-term success of both their businesses and communities; and

WHEREAS, studies show that cooperatives retain workers longer than traditional businesses, in part due to their provision of higher wages, more flexible working hours, better benefits, and greater responsiveness to employee needs and the evolving workplace; and

WHEREAS, residents of Olympia regularly engage with cooperatives, with dozens of local co-ops representing diverse sectors including food, retail, housing, and financial services; and

WHEREAS, the cooperative sector continues to grow each year through both the creation of new co-ops and the conversion of existing businesses to cooperative ownership; and

WHEREAS, cooperatives offer a valuable model for business succession, allowing employees and community members to assume ownership and management, thereby preserving business viability, local jobs, and community values during periods of transition; and

WHEREAS, local organizations such as the Northwest Cooperative Development Center and South Sound Cooperatives (CoSound) provide essential technical support and leadership for Olympia’s growing cooperative ecosystem; and

WHEREAS, the United Nations General Assembly has declared 2025 the International Year of Cooperatives, recognizing the cooperative model as a tool for sustainable development, inclusive economic growth, and social empowerment, especially for women, people with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, and communities of color; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Olympia City Council hereby declares 2025 as

THE YEAR OF COOPERATIVES

in the City of Olympia and urges all residents to support local cooperative businesses.

SIGNED IN THE CITY OF OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON THIS 4th DAY OF AUGUST 2025

OLYMPIA CITY COUNCIL

**Dontae Payne
Mayor**