

Introduced by Council Member Johnson:

RESOLUTION 2026-76

A RESOLUTION HONORING THE 100TH YEAR OF THE
CELEBRATION OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH IN THE CITY
OF JACKSONVILLE, RECOGNIZING ITS HISTORICAL
ORIGINS, EVOLUTION, AND ENDURING SIGNIFICANCE,
CELEBRATING THE CONTRIBUTIONS, CULTURE, AND
LEGACY OF AFRICAN AMERICANS IN JACKSONVILLE, AND
AFFIRMING THE CITY'S COMMITMENT TO TRUTH, AND
REMEMBRANCE; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, Black History Month traces its origins to Carter G. Woodson, the distinguished historian and scholar who, in 1926, established Negro History Week to ensure that the achievements, struggles, and intellectual contributions of African Americans were neither erased nor relegated to the margins of American history; and

WHEREAS, Negro History Week was intentionally placed in February to honor the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, symbolizing the intertwined struggles for freedom, education, and democratic participation; and

WHEREAS, through the sustained advocacy of scholars, educators, faith leaders, civic institutions, and community organizers, Negro History Week evolved into Black History Month, officially recognized nationally in 1976, marking a profound expansion from a corrective intervention into a sustained national observance now spanning nearly a century of intentional remembrance; and

WHEREAS, the continued observance of Black History Month remains necessary, not as a ceremonial gesture alone, but as an act of historical accuracy, civic honesty, and moral clarity, particularly

1 in a nation where the full story of African American life has too
2 often been omitted, distorted, or diminished; and

3 **WHEREAS**, Jacksonville, Florida, stands as a city deeply shaped
4 by the labor, leadership, creativity, faith, and resilience of African
5 Americans whose contributions span education, civil rights,
6 literature, business, music, public service, military service, and
7 cultural innovation; and

8 **WHEREAS**, among the City's most distinguished sons are James
9 Weldon Johnson and John Rosamond Johnson, whose creative partnership
10 produced, "Lift Every Voice and Sing," a work born in Jacksonville
11 that transcended geography to become a defining anthem of dignity,
12 perseverance, and collective hope; and

13 **WHEREAS**, Jacksonville's Black legacy also includes generations
14 of educators, entrepreneurs, clergy, artists, journalists, and civic
15 leaders who built institutions, challenged injustice, and expanded
16 opportunity in the face of segregation, exclusion, and systemic
17 inequity; and

18 **WHEREAS**, Black History Month provides an annual opportunity for
19 the City of Jacksonville to recommit itself to telling the full story
20 of its past, honoring those whose shoulders we stand upon, and
21 inspiring future generations to understand history not as static
22 memory, but as living responsibility; and

23 **WHEREAS**, a city that remembers honestly governs more wisely,
24 leads more justly, and builds more inclusively; now therefore

25 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of the City of Jacksonville:

26 **Section 1.** The City Council hereby recognizes and honors
27 Black History Month, acknowledging its origins, evolution, and
28 enduring importance as a cornerstone of American and local historical
29 understanding. The City Council celebrates the immeasurable
30 contributions of African Americans to the growth, culture, and
31 prosperity of Jacksonville, including but not limited to leaders in

1 education, civil rights, literature, music, faith, public service,
2 and economic development. The Council affirms the importance of
3 continued education, dialogue, and institutional remembrance,
4 recognizing that Black history is not separate from American history,
5 but foundational to it. The City Council is committed to truth,
6 equity, and shared civic memory, ensuring that the stories of Black
7 achievement, resistance, innovation, and excellence remain visible,
8 valued, and taught.

9 **Section 2. Effective Date.** This Resolution shall become
10 effective upon signature by the Mayor or upon becoming effective
11 without the Mayor's signature.

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13 Form Approved:

14
15 /s/ Shannon M^{ac}Gillis

16 Office of General Counsel

17 Legislation Prepared By: Colleen Hampsey, City Council Research

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