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Victory Corley
Lisa DiChiera
Kristy Enoex
Eric Fazzini, AICP
Willene Green

City of Detroit
CITY COUNCIL
LEGISLATIVE POLICY DIVISION
208 Coleman A. Young Municipal Center
Detroit, Michigan 48226
Phone: (313) 224-4946 Fax: (313) 224-4336

Christopher Gulock, AICP
Marcel Hurt, Esq.
Sandra L. Jeffers
Kimani Jeffrey
Anthony W. L. Johnson
Phillip Keller, Esq.
Edward King
Kelsey Maas
Jamie Murphy
Dolores Perales-Lara
Analine Powers, Ph.D.
W. Akilah Redmond
Renee Short
Floyd Stanley
Thomas Stephens, Esq.
Theresa Thomas
Janice Tillmon
Ian Tomashik
Emberly Vick

TO: The Honorable Detroit City Council

FROM: David Whitaker, Director
Legislative Policy Division Staff 

DATE: February 27, 2026

RE: RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Council Member Angela Whitfield-Calloway and President Pro Tempore Coleman Young II have requested that the Legislative Policy Division provide a resolution recognizing Black History Month.

**COUNCIL MEMBER ANGELA WHITFIELD-CALLOWAY AND PRESIDENT PRO
TEMPORE COLEMAN A. YOUNG II**

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

- WHEREAS** Black History Month, also known as African-American History Month, was first recognized by the United States in 1976 during the United States bicentennial celebration, where President Gerald Ford urged all Americans to “seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history;” and
- WHEREAS** Since that time many other nations have also joined in highlighting the history, achievements, and impact of people from the African diaspora including Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, Panama, The Netherlands, Australia, Costa Rica, and others; and
- WHEREAS** Black History Month may not exist without the efforts of individuals like Carter G. Woodson, the second African American to receive a PhD in history from Harvard after W.E.B. Du Bois, who founded Negro History Week in Washington, D.C. in February 1926 and made it his life’s mission to broaden the exposure of Americans to black history as a way to promote racial equality; and
- WHEREAS** It is indisputable that African Americans have been central to the history of the U.S. since its founding and have made momentous contributions across all fields including law, science, technology, medicine, politics, and all trades while also playing a crucial role in many of the nation’s progressive movements and producing some of the finest art, poetry, writing, and music in the history of the world; and
- WHEREAS** One function of highlighting black history is to challenge the ignorance and prejudices of outside groups by humanizing and uplifting African Americans, as African Americans have broadly been made largely invisible or portrayed negatively for the majority of U.S. history; and
- WHEREAS** Another essential function of black history is to inspire African Americans in the present, particularly the youth, by using the past to contextualize the current moment and highlighting examples of what can be achieved through strength, community, and resilience, even in the face of great opposition; and
- WHEREAS** In addition to uplifting the accomplishments of notable African American figures, Black History Month should be a time for African Americans to reflect on their own personal family histories and the stories of their ancestors, which can create a much more impactful connection to the broader history and greatly inform their personal relationship to the world; and
- WHEREAS** Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. warned that “Nothing in the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity,” and in a time where the federal government is making concerted efforts to erase black history from schools and institutions in opposition to things like Critical Race Theory (CRT) and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), it is more important than ever for individuals and institutions to continue to preserve and promote black history across the U.S.; and

WHEREAS It is incumbent on every individual to educate themselves in black history and to preserve it through telling stories, learning their family history, preserving historical family artifacts, supporting institutions that teach and preserve black history, and protecting spaces that are significant to black history from being erased; **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED That the Detroit City Council hereby recognizes the month of February as Black History Month; **NOW, BE IT FINALLY**

RESOLVED That the City Clerk provide a copy of this resolution to Mayor Sheffield.