



## Pr ocl a m a t i o n

**WHEREAS**, Black History Month is a time to honor and celebrate the achievements, contributions, and rich cultural heritage of Black Americans, whose resilience, courage and unyielding pursuit of justice, have shaped our nation, our state, and our city; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2025 Black History Month theme, *African Americans and Labor*, “focuses on the various and profound ways that work and working of all kinds – free and unfree, skilled and unskilled, vocational and voluntary – intersect with the collective experiences of Black people. Indeed, work is the very center of much of Black history and culture,” and

**WHEREAS**, we recognize the injustices of the past, including the systemic racism that has kept Black Americans at a disadvantage, denying them opportunities, freedoms, and basic rights that should have always been theirs; and

**WHEREAS**, despite these injustices, Black leaders, activists, scholars, civil rights pioneers and everyday citizens have struggled, sacrificed and worked tirelessly to dismantle barriers, standing at the forefront of change and progress to ensure that future generations inherit a more just and equitable society; and

**WHEREAS**, we reject the notion that our challenges lie only in the past and re-affirm our commitment to policies and initiatives that promote justice, equity and opportunity for all and to building a future where diversity is embraced, equality is upheld, and every individual—regardless of race—can thrive in a society free from discrimination and prejudice.

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, MATT COLE, Mayor of Ridgefield, Washington**, do hereby proclaim February as

**“BLACK HISTORY MONTH”**

And I encourage all residents to honor the legacy of Black Americans, to educate themselves on the past and present struggles for justice, and to work together in building a future rooted in equality, inclusion, and hope.

Dated this 17th Day of February, 2025

CITY OF RIDGEFIELD

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Matt Cole, Mayor