

1 [Resolution of Intention - Street Name Change - Oakdale Avenue East of Third Street to
2 James Richards Way]

3 **Resolution declaring the intention of the Board of Supervisors to rename Oakdale**
4 **Avenue between Third Street to Newhall Street.**

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6 WHEREAS, As a young man, James Richards was mentored by the legendary Big
7 Five of Hunters Point, women who led efforts to deliver positive change for disadvantaged
8 youth and families of Southeast San Francisco, including Ms. Elouise Westbrook; and

9 WHEREAS, James formed the organization Young Men for Action as a way to bring
10 together youth to fight for change and through his work with the San Francisco Housing
11 Authority in the 1970's, James not only advocated for improving housing conditions, but for
12 employment opportunities for young people; and

13 WHEREAS, James formed close relationships with the building trade unions and
14 established his own union electrical contracting company, Southeast Electrical, in 1984,
15 James was able to partner with the IBEW Local 6 and Laborers Local 261 to hire local
16 residents on local construction projects; and

17 WHEREAS, By the early 1990's, James seized upon the opportunity to put hundreds of
18 local residents to work breaking down old naval ships at the Hunters Point Shipyard and to
19 maximize jobs for neighborhood residents, particularly Black jobseekers, James formed a new
20 organization: Aboriginal Blackman United, or ABU; and

21 WHEREAS, During the peak of the Great Recession in 2010, James organized
22 hundreds of unemployment Hunters Point residents, in coalition with community partners from
23 around the City and non-profit civil rights attorneys, to support the 2010 San Francisco Local
24 Hiring Policy for Construction, which made local hiring a requirement on all city-funded public
25 works; and

1 WHEREAS, Not only was James the driving force on the ground to push local hiring
2 over the line, but he and ABU have been critical to the policy's success over the past 14
3 years; ABU now works with CityBuild, community-based organizations, and building trade
4 unions to recruit, train, and support the next generation of local hires; James also founded
5 ABU's GED Training and Scholarship Programs to make sure that high school completion is
6 not a barrier to economic opportunity; and

7 WHEREAS, In addition, James has been a lifelong advocate for violence prevention
8 and ABU's efforts to provide employment opportunities for the community is linked to James's
9 vision that "there's nothing that stops a bullet like a job;" and

10 WHEREAS, Every Thanksgiving, James and ABU distribute hundreds of turkeys to
11 disadvantaged families and during the holidays, ABU hosts a coat drive to help keep children
12 of low-income families warm throughout the winter; and

13 WHEREAS, For 60 years, James has been a positive force in the lives of thousands of
14 San Francisco, not only in our Black community where James has focused much of his life
15 reversing the economic injustices of racism against Black San Franciscans, but for men and
16 women of all backgrounds, age, languages, and
17 neighborhoods who have benefitted for the doors to local employment and positive
18 community impact that James Richards had created; now, therefore, be it

19 RESOLVED, In recognition of the very same location of the tragic shooting of his friend
20 outside of the Bayview Opera House, as well as the longtime headquarters of ABU for many
21 years, we propose to commemoratively rename one block of Oakdale Avenue, east of Third
22 Street to "James Richards Way;" and, be it

23 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors directs Public Works to initiate
24 the City's Street renaming procedures, expeditiously process the required actions related to
25 renaming, coordinate with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors' Office regarding posted and

1 published notice for the street renaming, report to the Board on its findings so that the Board
2 may officially rename the street.

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