

1 [Street Name Change to Willie L. Brown, Jr. Boulevard.]

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3 **Resolution initiating the process to change the name of Third Street to Willie L. Brown,**
4 **Jr. Boulevard in recognition of Willie L. Brown, Jr.'s many contributions to**
5 **San Francisco and the State of California.**

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7 WHEREAS, Willie L. Brown, Jr., born into abject poverty in rural east Texas, rose to
8 become arguably the most influential African American in the history of the State of California;
9 and,

10 WHEREAS, Arriving in San Francisco at age 17 with no more than a suitcase and a
11 diploma from Mineola Colored High School, Willie Brown put himself through San Francisco
12 State College and Hastings College of the Law, before launching a small law practice in the
13 basement of a Fillmore district church; and,

14 WHEREAS, Establishing himself as a rising star in the civil rights and anti-war
15 movements, Brown challenged San Francisco's Republican political establishment in 1962
16 and narrowly lost his first race for the state Assembly; and,

17 WHEREAS, Having helped build a progressive coalition to fight workplace and housing
18 discrimination, new freeway construction and the Vietnam War, Willie Brown was elected to
19 the California State Assembly in 1964 and ultimately served there for more than 30 years;
20 and,

21 WHEREAS, Through his efforts to elect Robert Kennedy in 1968, his fiery speech as
22 chair of the California delegation at the 1972 Democratic convention, his campaign to end
23 Apartheid in South Africa and his tireless efforts on behalf of women, gays and lesbians,
24 ethnic minorities and the poor, Assemblyman Brown soon became a national figure in
25 Democratic politics; and,

1 WHEREAS, Assemblyman Brown fought for more than five years and ultimately
2 secured passage, in 1975, of the Consenting Adults Act, which decriminalized homosexuality
3 in the state of California; and,

4 WHEREAS, After proving to be one of the most popular, intelligent and politically adroit
5 members of the Legislature, Willie Brown was elected California's first African American
6 Speaker of the Assembly in 1980 and served for nearly 15 years, longer than any other
7 speaker in state history; and,

8 WHEREAS, Just as a terrifying new epidemic was taking hold of the community,
9 Speaker Brown secured the first funding for AIDS research and treatment in the United
10 States; and,

11 WHEREAS, Speaker Brown led the fight to divest all ties to South Africa during
12 Apartheid and later hosted Nelson Mandela on his first visit to California upon release from
13 prison; led the effort to establish the Martin Luther King Holiday in California, the nation's first
14 such recognition; and served as national chairman of Jesse Jackson's historic campaign for
15 president in 1988; and,

16 WHEREAS, As a champion of the environment, public education, health care and
17 human rights around the world, Speaker Brown's long record of achievements include striking
18 a landmark deal to save thousands of acres of ancient redwood trees, earning him Sierra Club
19 Man of the Year honors; securing passage of California's first assault weapons ban; saving
20 public kindergartens from elimination in 1992; and helping to elect more women and ethnic
21 minorities to public office than any other single politician in state history; and,

22 WHEREAS, In 1995 Willie Brown returned home to San Francisco and was elected to
23 two terms as the city's first African American mayor; and,

24 WHEREAS, Taking the reins of a drifting and often unruly city, Mayor Brown set out to
25 rebuild San Francisco's infrastructure; revitalize its waterfront, parks, libraries and great

1 buildings; and reconnect a long-neglected southeastern quadrant of the city through jobs,
2 housing and a new transportation system; and,

3 WHEREAS, Mayor Brown took on the entrenched, bruising challenges of city
4 government, such as addressing homelessness, fixing Muni and providing health care for all,
5 and has the scars to prove it; and,

6 WHEREAS, As one of America's most high-profile mayors, "Da Mayor" used his
7 formidable clout in Washington to secure more HOPE VI funding than any other city in the
8 nation, completely transforming a half-dozen dangerous and decrepit public housing
9 developments into attractive, decent places to live; and,

10 WHEREAS, Mayor Brown established a number of "firsts" in San Francisco, including
11 the Equal Benefits (Domestic Partners) Ordinance; the Department of Children, Youth &
12 Families; the Department of the Environment; the Department of Telecommunications; the
13 Precautionary Principle; the conveyance of Treasure Island and Hunter's Point Shipyard to
14 the City; universal health care for children; the MBE/WBE Ordinance; the nation's first
15 affordable housing bond; the city's first Asian police chief, first black fire chief, first black police
16 chief and first Latino fire chief; and the tearing down of a central freeway; and,

17 WHEREAS, Under his leadership the Third Street Light Rail; BART to the airport; the
18 Excelsior Youth Center; the F-Line to Fisherman's Wharf; Wetlands at Pier 98; the Hyde
19 Street Commercial Fishing Harbor; the International Terminal at SFO; the LGBT Community
20 Center; the Mission Bay development; the city's first disabled access children's playground;
21 the Bay Ridge Trail at Crystal Springs; the Museum of the African Diaspora; the Nate
22 Thurmond Basketball Courts; the North Beach Garage; the Queer Youth Homeless Shelter;
23 the OMI Library; Pier 1 Offices; the Pink Triangle Memorial Garden; Bayview Police Station;
24 Tenderloin Police Substation; Rincon Park; Rich Sorro Very Low Income Housing; Yerba
25 Buena Commons SRO housing; Bessie Carmichael School and Park; Esprit Park; the Willie

1 Brown Children’s Center at Sunnyside Public Housing; the Emergency Command/911 Center;
2 the Yerba Buena Center Children’s Playground; Moscone West; the Asian Art Museum and
3 what is now known as AT&T Park were all built; and,

4 WHEREAS, Children’s Playground in Golden Gate Park; the Joseph Alioto Performing
5 Arts Piazza; San Francisco Zoo; Harding Park Golf Course; Lotta’s Fountain; Martin Luther
6 King Pool and Park; the Opera House; Piers 1 ½-5; the Conservatory of Flowers; the
7 Japanese Culture Center Peace Plaza; Sunset Reservoir; Crocker Amazon Park; Ocean
8 Avenue; the Ferry Building; Union Square; City Hall; and more than 70 neighborhood
9 playgrounds were all restored; and,

10 WHEREAS, Mayor Brown also built 9,200 units of affordable housing and preserved
11 another 1,889 units; introduced 700 low-emission vehicles to the city fleet; replaced 82
12 percent of Muni’s vehicles and equipped 89 percent of them with bike racks; increased
13 recycling from 35 percent to 52 percent; cut municipal pesticide use by 50 percent; and
14 reduced violent crime by 28 percent over the eight years of his tenure; and,

15 WHEREAS, Mayor Brown hosted five Women’s Summits; two X Games; two 9/11
16 Days of Remembrance; a Breast Cancer Summit; a Summit on Aging; a Summit on Crime; an
17 Economic Summit; two Energy Conservation Fairs; an HIV/AIDS Summit; more than 60
18 Mayor’s Open Door Days; a Lesbian Health Summit; a Youth Summit; and one U.S.
19 Conference of Mayors; and,

20 WHEREAS, Mayor Brown continues to serve the city, state and nation through his work
21 at the Willie Brown Institute on Politics and Public Service as well as his contributions to the
22 Willie Brown Leadership Center at San Francisco State University; and,

23 WHEREAS, With compatriots ranging from Herb Caen, Bill Cosby, the Burton brothers
24 and George Moscone to Desmond Tutu, Bill Clinton, Nancy Pelosi and Sean Penn, Willie
25 Brown has been a pivotal figure in each of the last six decades; and,

1 WHEREAS, Willie Brown remains a vital presence on the local and national scene, with
2 his weekly newspaper column and ubiquitous presence on television and radio as one of the
3 nation’s pre-eminent political commentators; and,

4 WHEREAS, Always engaging, often controversial, reliably irreverent and profoundly
5 dedicated to the state of California and the city of San Francisco – and to the southeastern
6 corner of San Francisco in particular – Willie Brown is without question one of the most
7 significant figures in San Francisco history; and,

8 WHEREAS, The Board desires to initiate the process to change the name of Third
9 Street to Willie L. Brown, Jr. Boulevard; and,

10 WHEREAS, The Board is informed that private funds have been raised to defray costs
11 related to changing the name of the street; and,

12 WHEREAS, Upon approval by the Board, and pursuant to Transportation Code Section
13 2.2, The Municipal Transportation Agency will erect street signs indicating both the new and
14 the former names of the street, with the new street name in large letters and the former name
15 in smaller letters beneath it, and unless the resolution changing the name of a street specifies
16 that the double street name is permanent, the street signs indicating both street names will
17 remain posted for five years and then will be replaced with signs indicating only the new street
18 name, now therefore be it

19 RESOLVED, That the Department of Public Works shall do all things required to
20 process the proposal to change the name of Third Street to Willie L. Brown, Jr. Boulevard;
21 and, be it

22 FURTHER RESOLVED, That upon completion of its process, the Department of Public
23 Works shall bring a report to the Board of Supervisors for public hearing and consideration by
24 the Board on the proposal to change the name of Third Street to Willie L. Brown Jr.,
25 Boulevard.