Resolution urging the Department of Public Works to designate the public right-of-way between Fort Mason and Visitacion Valley as eligible for installation of commemorative plaques, pursuant to Public Works Code, Section 789.2(a), in order to identify and mark points of interest along the African-American freedom trail.

WHEREAS, It is essential that the significant contributions, culture and history of San Francisco's African American population be recognized and highlighted; and

WHEREAS, A trail has been identified by the Carlton B. Goodlett Institute from the northernmost part of San Francisco to the southernmost part to recognize the significant and globally important contributions of the African-American freedom struggle in San Francisco from the 1800s through the United San Francisco Freedom Movement; and

WHEREAS, The trail will be known as the African-American Freedom Trail, consistent with similar trails in 30 states across the United States and in other major metropolitan areas. However, it would be the first such trail in the Western states; and

WHEREAS, Five African-American organizations founded in 1852 are still active today Third Baptist Church, Bethel A.M.E., First A.M.E. Zion, Hannibal Lodge No. 1 and Victoria Lodge No. 3, A 2012 scholarly conference at each of those institutions established their historical significance; and

WHEREAS, Captain William Alexander Leidesdorff and James Douglass have made important contributions to the geography and built environment of Yerba Buena and the establishment of civil society in San Francisco; and

WHEREAS, San Franciscans played a catalytic and practical role in the development of the Emancipation Proclamation through the activities of black and white abolitionists in the
National Underground Railroad, described in Public Law 105-203 as the most important social
movement of the 19th century; and

WHEREAS, The abolitionist movement turned its attention in the late 19th century to
ending segregation in transportation and public accommodations, obtaining the right to vote
and the end of school segregation; and

WHEREAS, The integration of the labor movement nationally occurred in San
Francisco through the initiatives of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, and
the speech of A. Philip Randolph for the recognition of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car
Porters by the American Federation of Labor at the Hotel Whitcomb in 1935 and the role of
the San Francisco NAACP in the integration of the workforce of the National Youth
Administration; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Howard Thurman, W.E.B. DuBois, and Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett
mentored and welcomed African liberation movement leaders to the opening conference of
the United Nations as local families hosted them for the duration of the sessions, creating
enduring ties between the anti-colonial movement and local leaders; and

WHEREAS, New migrants in the 1940s opened war industry jobs at the Hunters Point
Naval Shipyard, ended auxiliary unions, utilized the Fair Employment Practices Committee to
establish standards in equal opportunity, organized the Church-Labor Coalition and created
pioneering middle class neighborhoods through the financial resources assembled in
Transbay Savings and Loan and other black-owned lenders; and

WHEREAS, African-American scientists and medical practitioners in San Francisco
broke through professional barriers and devoted their resources to the broader civil rights
struggle by providing medical services, business investment, and led such organizations as
the Bay Area Urban League and San Francisco NAACP; and
WHEREAS, The popularization of African-American literature to mass audiences was hastened by the books of local writers and filmmakers such as Melvyn Van Peebles, Maya Angelou, Ernest Gaines and Alex Haley; and

WHEREAS, There are more than 150 current markers, works of public art, museums and streets recognizing the accomplishments of African-Americans in San Francisco; and

WHEREAS, There are multiple public benefits to be realized from the African-American Freedom Trail and these attractions are little known to visitors and even to most residents; and

WHEREAS, To visually communicate the significance of centrality of African-American contributions to the development of San Francisco, California and the United States, permanent plaques should be placed at strategic points of view along the trail; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Public Works should work to with community groups for an inclusive implementation of the African-American Freedom trail; and

WHEREAS, Public Works Code, Section 789.2 was developed to provide a procedure for the City to authorize the installation and placement of such plaques; and

WHEREAS, There is planned to be approximately 400 of such plaques installed in public rights of way or private property along the African-American Freedom Trail throughout San Francisco, the design and composition of which will be subject to review by the Department of Public Works and the Board of Supervisors; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors, pursuant to Public Works Code Section 789.2 does hereby designate the public right of way existing in the areas to comprise what will be known as the African-American Freedom Trail; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That along the public rights of way in the area known as the African-American Freedom Trail, commemorative plaques designating significant and unique events or periods in San Francisco history may be installed and maintained.

Supervisors Cohen, Breed, Chiu, Mar, Campos, Farrell, Wiener, Avalos, Kim, Tang and Yee

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
File Number: 140712   Date Passed: June 24, 2014

Resolution urging the Department of Public Works to designate the public right-of-way between Fort Mason and Visitacion Valley as eligible for installation of commemorative plaques, pursuant to Public Works Code, Section 789.2(a), in order to identify and mark points of interest along of the African-American freedom trail.

June 24, 2014 Board of Supervisors - ADOPTED

Ayes: 11 - Avalos, Breed, Campos, Chiu, Cohen, Farrell, Kim, Mar, Tang, Wiener and Yee

File No. 140712

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED on 6/24/2014 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

Angela Calvillo
Clerk of the Board

7/1/2014

Date Approved