

OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO. _____ C.M.S.

INTRODUCED BY COUNCILMEMBER TREVA REID

RESOLUTION COMMEMORATIVELY RENAMING 88TH AVENUE AT INTERNATIONAL BOULEVARD AND 88TH AVENUE AT A STREET AS "TOBIE GENE LEVINGSTON WAY," IN HONOR OF THE LATE FOUNDER OF THE EAST BAY DRAGONS MOTORCYCLE CLUB, PURSUANT TO THE POLICY AND CRITERIA ESTABLISHED BY OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION NO. 77967 C.M.S.

WHEREAS, an application has been submitted by the Office of Councilmember Treva Reid requesting the commemorative street renaming of 88th Avenue at International Boulevard and 88th Avenue at A Street as 'Tobie Gene Levingston Way'; and

WHEREAS, California Government Code section 34091.1 allows a jurisdiction by resolution to name a new public street or to rename an existing public street; and

WHEREAS, the naming of a new public street or the renaming of an existing public street is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970; and

WHEREAS, the City Council will occasionally honor the contributions of an outstanding individual with commemorative street names or by the renaming of a public street, such as Dr. Huey P. Newton Way, Dorothy King Way, Gladys Green Way and Teddie Radford Way; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Oakland City Council Resolution No. 77967 C.M.S. (passed July 15, 2003), the City Council may, on its own motion, consider the renaming of a public street as a tribute to an individual, or as a result of a significant event or activity if one of the following criteria is met: (1) The individual has positively impacted the lives of a nation or the world; or (2) The name change is related to an economic development or redevelopment activity; or (3) The renaming commemorates a significant historical event; and

WHEREAS, the City Council may commemorate a nominee either by: (a) retaining the existing street name and installing commemorative plaques or signs; or (b) renaming the existing street for the individual and installing new street signs; and

WHEREAS, the East Bay Dragons were founded by Tobie Gene Levingston in 1959 as one of the first Black motorcycle clubs in the United States. Originally established as a car club, Levingston quickly transitioned it into a motorcycle club. As a dedicated community advocate

with an unwavering commitment to his Oakland community, Levingston sought to create a space where Black bikers could foster a sense of belonging pride; and

WHEREAS, during a time of widespread racial discrimination, the East Bay Dragons emerged as a significant advocate for civil rights, collaborating closely with the revolutionary Black Panther Party. Through their combined efforts, the East Bay Dragons not only promoted visibility for Black motorcyclists but also became a symbol of resilience and unity in Oakland, championing equal rights both on and off the road; and

WHEREAS, deeply rooted in his community, Levingston was also committed to the public safety of his neighbors. He was well-known for protecting his community during times of chaos, such as looting and civil unrest, often directing the East Bay Dragons to provide necessary protection. Additionally, he tirelessly worked to donate food, toys, and other critical resources to the Oakland community; and

WHEREAS, Levingston is a celebrated author, having published his memoir *Soul on Bikes* in 2003, which became a best-seller; and

WHEREAS, the transformative legacy of Levingston and the East Bay Dragons has been widely recognized, including being featured in the Levi Strauss & Co. Museum and the prestigious National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C.; and

WHEREAS, the City Council intends to honor Tobie Gene Levingston's contributions to Oakland and the world by retaining the existing street name, adding an additional honorary street name, and installing commemorative street signs or plaques;

WHEREAS, the City Council intends that the costs associated with such a commemorative act will be borne by the offices of Councilmember Treva Reid; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Oakland City Council hereby approves the commemorative renaming of of 88th Avenue at International Boulevard and 88th Avenue at A Street as 'Tobie Gene Levingston Way'; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that the Oakland City Council directs the City Administrator to proceed with the commemorative designation of ‘Tobie Gene Levingston Way’ and placement of street sign(s) or plaque(s) to that effect on 88th Avenue at International Boulevard and 88th Avenue at A Street upon payment of costs.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA,

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES- FIFE, GALLO, JENKINS, KALB, KAPLAN, RAMACHANDRAN, REID,
AND PRESIDENT FORTUNATO BAS

NOES –

ABSENT –

ABSTENTION –

ATTEST: _____

ASHA REED

City Clerk and Clerk of the Council of the
City of Oakland, California

