

1 Introduced by Council Members Johnson, Peluso, Gay, and Pittman:
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4 **RESOLUTION 2025-199**

5 A RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF
6 INTERNATIONAL STAR OF STAGE, SCREEN AND FASHION
7 PADRICA MENDEZ, RECOGNIZING HER CONTRIBUTIONS TO
8 THE ARTS, EDUCATION, AND THE PRESERVATION OF
9 JACKSONVILLE'S HISTORY; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE
10 DATE.
11

12 **WHEREAS**, Padrica Mendez, a Jacksonville native, was born in
13 the LaVilla area of downtown Jacksonville to Rev. Jamie Crumley Mendez
14 and Pedro Mendez, Sr. an emigrant from Santiago, Cuba who operated
15 P. Mendez Cuban Tailors in the historic Masonic Temple building; and

16 **WHEREAS**, Ms. Mendez earned degrees from Bethune-Cookman
17 University and Columbia University and used her knowledge and passion
18 for music to teach in the Duval County public school system before
19 embarking on her international career; and

20 **WHEREAS**, Ms. Mendez became an internationally acclaimed opera
21 singer, actor, and fashion designer, who was a recipient of a
22 Fulbright Scholarship, studying under some of the world's most
23 renowned musical minds including Mariano Stabile at the Accademia di
24 Santa Cecilia in Rome and the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena;
25 and she brought to life the powerful roles of Violetta in Verdi's *La*
26 *Traviata*, Cio-Cio San in Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*, and electrified
27 audiences across Europe in *Carmen Jones*, touring with the legendary
28 Alvin Ailey; and

29 **WHEREAS**, Ms. Mendez was also celebrated in European cinema,
30 appearing in *7 Donne D'oro Contro Due 07* (Seven Golden Women et. al.,
31 1966), *Missione Apocalisse* (1966), and *Il Sergente Rompiglioni*

1 (1975); and on the popular Italian television show *La Fiera dei Sogni*
2 with Josephine Baker, and performed in Dream Fair, dazzling
3 international audiences with her unmatched artistry; and

4 **WHEREAS**, even with her global success, Ms. Mendez remained
5 deeply connected to her hometown of Jacksonville, where she dedicated
6 herself to uplifting the community and preserving its rich cultural
7 heritage; returning to Jacksonville at the height of her fame to care
8 for her ailing mother; and

9 **WHEREAS**, Ms. Mendez was a lifelong member of Bethel Baptist
10 Institutional Church and a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority,
11 Inc., having been personally recruited to Bethune-Cookman University
12 by Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune, who also sponsored her membership in the
13 sorority; and

14 **WHEREAS**, Ms. Mendez was a fierce advocate for preserving
15 Jacksonville's historic LaVilla neighborhood and worked tirelessly
16 to ensure housing stability for longtime residents, leaving a lasting
17 impact on Downtown Jacksonville; and

18 **WHEREAS**, until her recent passing Ms. Mendez lived in her
19 childhood home, the Shad House, on West Monroe Street, one of the
20 last residential structures still standing in LaVilla, which holds
21 historic designation; and

22 **WHEREAS**, on February 27, 2025, Padrica Mendez passed away,
23 leaving behind an extraordinary legacy of artistry, advocacy, and
24 community service that continues to uplift and inspire generations;
25 now therefore

26 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of the City of Jacksonville:

27 **Section 1.** The City Council hereby honors the life and
28 legacy of Padrica Mendez, recognizing her remarkable contributions
29 to the arts, education, and historic preservation, and extends its
30 deepest condolences to her brother Pedro, Sister-in-Law Gloria, and
31 her entire family, friends, and all those who were inspired by her

1 work.

2 **Section 2. Effective Date.** This Resolution shall become
3 effective upon signature by the Mayor or upon becoming effective
4 without the Mayor's signature.

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6 Form Approved:

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8 /s/ Shannon MacGillis

9 Office of General Counsel

10 Legislation Prepared By: Nayeli Jimenez, City Council Research

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