



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Letter of Recommendation

c/o State Auditor
Applicant Review Panel
Citizens State Redistricting Commission
555 Capitol Mall, Suite 300,
Sacramento, CA 95814
Email: votersfirstact@auditor.ca.gov
Fax: (916) 319-9295

Applicant ID #: 342 - Gil Ontai

Dear Panel:

My name is William Anderson. I have been Director of the City Planning & Reinvestment Department of the City of San Diego, and Assistant Executive Director of the Redevelopment Agency since Mayor Sanders appointed me to these positions in 2006. Previously, I was a private urban economics and planning consultant, but had also served on the City of San Diego Planning Commission for eight years, the last two as Chair.

I have known Commissioner Ontai for almost seven years, when he was first appointed to the City of San Diego Planning Commission. As a past Chair of the Planning Commission, I met Gil at functions that involved current and past planning commissioners, and was impressed by his interest in the public good as it related to land use and urban design. I've since seen him execute the duties of a planning commissioner from my perspective as Planning Director.

In my current staff capacity, I can attest to Commissioner Ontai's calm and inquisitive demeanor, which has been an asset to Planning Commission deliberations. He seeks to understand the issues and make a decision based on merits, in an impartial manner, which is important for the Planning Commission since it is a quasi-judicial body.

Land use issues can be quite controversial. Commissioner Ontai is respectful of staff, the public, and applicants. He asks pointed but fair questions, and explains his reasoning when making a motion or vote on the Commission. This was particularly important when we took the City of San Diego's General Plan update to Planning Commission in 2008. A General Plan is comprehensive and addresses multiple issues, including land use, urban design, conservation, economics, transportation, and other elements. Due to the fair and professional conduct, and depth of inquiry, by the Planning Commission, including Commissioner Ontai, many of the potentially controversial issues were narrowed when we went to the City Council, who adopted the General Plan unanimously, consistent with the Planning Commission's recommendations.



Commissioner Ontai has demonstrated professionalism, objectivity, and integrity, and he has been an advocate for sustainability, affordable housing, and good city planning and design. The Mayor of San Diego and City Council recognized this when they reappointed him to a second term. I believe he would be an impartial state commissioner based on his actions as a city planning commissioner in San Diego. He strikes me as a person who would seek answers and resolution through careful evaluation, rather than someone who would bring a pre-conceived agenda. Therefore, I would recommend your consideration of his candidacy to the Citizens State Redistricting Commission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William Anderson', written in a cursive style.

William Anderson, FAICP
Director, City Planning & Community Investment
City of San Diego