

From: [Brian Quan](#)
To: [Walton, Shamann \(BOS\)](#); [Waltonstaff \(BOS\)](#); [Sherrill, Stephen \(BOS\)](#); [SherrillStaff](#); [Mandelman, Rafael \(BOS\)](#); [MandelmanStaff \(BOS\)](#); [Wong, Alan \(BOS\)](#); [Chen, Chyanne \(BOS\)](#); [Dorsey, Matt \(BOS\)](#); [DorseyStaff \(BOS\)](#); [Chan, Connie \(BOS\)](#); [ChanStaff \(BOS\)](#); [Melgar, Myrna \(BOS\)](#); [MelgarStaff \(BOS\)](#); [FielderStaff](#); [Fielder, Jackie \(BOS\)](#); [Sauter, Danny \(BOS\)](#); [SauterStaff](#); [Mahmood, Bilal \(BOS\)](#); [MahmoodStaff](#); [Young, Victor \(BOS\)](#); [Calvillo, Angela \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: Letter of Recommendation: Re-Appointment of Planning Commissioner, Former President, Lydia So
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July 20, 2026

Chair Supervisor Walton
Vice Chair Supervisor Sherrill
Supervisor President Mandelman
Rules Committee
San Francisco Board of Supervisors
1 Dr Carlton B Goodlett Pl, City Hall, Room 244
San Francisco, CA 94102

Letter of Recommendation: Re-Appointment of Planning Commissioner, Former President, Lydia So

I am writing to express my wholehearted support for the re-appointment of Commissioner Lydia So to the San Francisco Planning Commission. My core focus is always on ensuring San Francisco remains a welcoming, livable, and vibrant place for families and everyday residents. Lydia stands out because she approaches urban planning not through a lens of politics, but through a genuine care for the daily lives of the people who make up our communities.

A Dedication to Family-Friendly Neighborhoods

Through my involvement with various non-profit organizations, I look for leaders who prioritize the safety, stability, and well-being of local families. Lydia has consistently shown that she understands what makes a neighborhood a true home.

- **Supporting Growing Families:** She advocates for housing options that allow multi-generational families to stay together and thrive in the city they love.

- **Livability and Safety:** Her planning perspective emphasizes walkable streets, safe parks for children, accessible public transit, and spaces where seniors feel secure and included.

As an architect, Lydia brings a practical, human-centered approach to the Commission. She looks past abstract zoning maps to see the actual families, small businesses, and community spaces that will be impacted by the city's growth.

Giving a Voice to Our Diverse Communities

As the founder of Asian Urbanist, my goal is to ensure our diverse neighborhood voices are heard and included in the conversation about San Francisco's future. Lydia plays an irreplaceable role as the only Chinese American currently serving on the Planning Commission. Her presence ensures that our community is represented thoughtfully and authentically.

Lydia is exceptionally accessible to everyday residents. She uses her cultural understanding and language skills to break down complex city processes so that immigrant communities, monolingual residents, and small business owners aren't left out of the loop. She listens to the anxieties and hopes of neighbors, ensuring that community feedback directly shapes planning decisions.

Lydia So is a compassionate leader who leads with listening. She balances her deep professional expertise with a profound love for San Francisco's neighborhoods and its people. Our city's communities are stronger and better heard with her serving on the Planning Commission. I urge you to support her re-appointment.

Sincerely,

Brian Quan

Board Member, Westside Family Democratic Club

Founder, Asian Urbanist

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Letter of Recommendation: Re-Appointment of Planning Commissioner, Former President, Lydia So

As the President of the San Francisco Arts Commission and a long-time colleague of Commissioner Lydia So, I am writing to offer my enthusiastic, unconditional support for her re-appointment to the San Francisco Planning Commission.

Throughout her tenure, Lydia has been invaluable to our city, uniquely connecting community culture with urban development. Most notably, she serves as the Arts Commission's Ex Officio representative. Far from treating the role as merely honorary, Lydia actively participates in and consistently attends our meetings, ensuring that the voices of San Francisco's cultural and artistic communities are reflected in the city's broader growth strategies.

Lydia serves as an indispensable conduit between our two bodies. Following our sessions, she meticulously reports back to the Planning Commission on critical matters relevant to land use, public design, and urban planning. This cross-commission synergy ensures that our physical development remains deeply connected to neighborhood identity and architectural heritage.

A Proven Record of Public Service

Lydia's significant impact on the Planning Commission is shaped by her exceptional experience across San Francisco oversight agencies:

- San Francisco Arts Commission (SFAC): Brought rigorous examination to the Civic Design mandate and served on the Executive Committee.
- Historic Preservation Commission: Effectively utilized her professional expertise as an architect to protect our city's physical history.
- SFMTA Board: Appointed by Mayor Breed, bringing a design-forward perspective to our public transportation and infrastructure.

Integrity, Fairness, and Vision

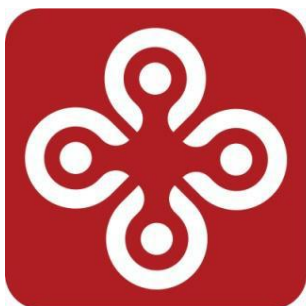
The vast jurisscope of the Planning Department requires leaders with unwavering integrity and ethical fortitude. Having watched Lydia navigate complex civic challenges as both a close friend and a fellow commissioner, I know she approaches every decision with absolute fairness. She consistently upholds the highest values of our city, and San Francisco is undeniably better off with her continued service. I urge you to move forward with her re-appointment.

Sincerely,

o/s

Charles M. Collins

President, San Francisco Arts Commission



舊金山華埠商戶聯會

CHINATOWN MERCHANTS

United Association of San Francisco

July 18, 2026

Chair Supervisor Walton
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Lydia So

On behalf of the [Chinatown Merchants United Association of San Francisco](#), I write to express our full and enthusiastic support for the re-appointment of Commissioner Lydia So to the San Francisco Planning Commission. Having worked closely with her, our association knows firsthand that Lydia is a balanced, common-sense leader who understands the vital needs of our neighborhood economies.

Proven Leadership and Professional Expertise

As the former President of the Planning Commission, Lydia brings unmatched stability and technical insight to the city's development goals:

- **Fairness and Balance:** She has a proven track record of leading complex public hearings with absolute transparency, structure, and accessibility for all residents.
- **Architectural Expertise:** Her background as a professional architect ensures she evaluates large-scale master plans and individual zoning rules with technical rigor and practical insight.

Deep Cultural Understanding and Rare Literacy

What truly sets Lydia apart—and what is exceedingly rare at City Hall—is her profound, authentic connection to the grassroots community:

- **Empathy for Immigrant Families:** Lydia deeply and culturally understands the everyday realities of hardworking, struggling, monolingual Chinese immigrants who often face immense barriers navigating complex municipal processes.

- **Advanced Native Literacy:** She is not merely conversational; Lydia possesses advanced, native advanced level literacy in both spoken and written Cantonese. This allows her to read local feedback, review community documentation, and communicate technical planning policies directly with residents.

A Champion for Small Businesses and Local Merchants

Our mission is to serve and protect the local merchants who form the bedrock of our communities. Lydia has consistently been an invaluable partner in achieving this goal:

- **Supporting Local Neighborhoods:** She recognizes that neighborhood small businesses are the economic and cultural lifeblood of San Francisco, actively advocating for mom-and-pop shops across both Chinatown and the Sunset.
- **Cutting Red Tape:** She approaches land use with business-minded pragmatism, focusing on sustainable growth while minimizing bureaucratic obstacles for local entrepreneurs.

Lydia So has earned the deep respect and trust of our neighborhood merchants and community leaders. San Francisco needs her experience, her design expertise, and her irreplaceable linguistic and cultural connection to our monolingual community. We strongly and unqualifiedly urge you to approve her re-appointment.

Sincerely,

Edward Siu

[Chinatown Merchants United Association of San Francisco](#)

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