

Chinatown Transportation Research Improvement Project  
July 6, 2023



Transportation  
Research and  
Improvement  
Project

Supervisor Dorsey  
Supervisor Walton  
Supervisor Safai  
Rules Committee  
San Francisco Board of Supervisors  
1 Dr Carlton B Goodlett Pl, City Hall, Room 244  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Subject: Recommendation for Lydia So as Board of Directors of the SFMTA

Dear Supervisor Dorsey, Supervisor Walton and Supervisor Safai,

We are writing to express our strong support and recommendation for Lydia So to serve as a Board of Directors of the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA). Chinatown Transportation Research Improvement Project (Chinatown TRIP) advocates for the betterment of San Francisco, we believe that Lydia's extensive experience in public service, her unwavering dedication to the community, and her exceptional qualifications make her an outstanding candidate for this crucial position.

Lydia has a proven track record of advocating for cultural equity and sustainable urban growth in San Francisco. Her previous service on the Arts Commission is a testament to her ability to provide visionary leadership in city planning, enhance the design quality of City-owned properties, and effectively regulate the 1%-for-art program. Her commitment to fostering a vibrant and inclusive city shines through her work and accomplishments during her tenure.

In her role as a liaison to the Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development, Lydia has been a staunch supporter of affordable housing production for all San Franciscans. She understands the pressing need for accessible housing options and has consistently championed initiatives that promote equitable development and address the housing challenges faced by our residents.

Lydia's involvement in the Better Market Street improvement plan demonstrates her dedication to enhancing the city's main thoroughfare and improving the safety and accessibility of our transportation system. Her focus on Vision Zero, aiming to eliminate traffic-related deaths in San Francisco, is commendable and aligns perfectly with the SFMTA's mission to prioritize the safety of all road users.

Furthermore, Lydia's accomplishments as a Historic Preservation Commissioner and Portsmouth Square Parking Corporation Board Member highlight her commitment to preserving the city's heritage and enhancing its cultural richness. Her diverse experiences and expertise in

architecture and engineering, including her trailblazing role as the first AAPI woman architect promoted to Technical Associate at Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, make her a highly qualified candidate to contribute to the development of inclusive and respectful transportation policies.

Lydia's practice as an architect, her work in regional urban growth, transit-oriented developments, and sustainability, as well as her global experience in designing world-renowned structures, showcase her unique skill set and deep understanding of the critical role that transit plays in maintaining the vitality of unique environments. Her perspective on places, land use, and the built environment will be invaluable in shaping the SFMTA's policies and initiatives.

As a longtime resident of San Francisco's Mission neighborhood and a Chinese American, Lydia is deeply connected to our community and understands the diverse needs of our residents. Having an AAPI representation on the SFMTA Board is long overdue, and Lydia's exceptional qualifications, combined with her city governance experience, make her the ideal candidate to build bridges and ensure that the voices of all communities are heard.

In conclusion, we wholeheartedly endorse Lydia So's appointment to the Board of Directors of the SFMTA. Her extensive experience, proven track record, and dedication to public service make her an exceptional candidate who will bring valuable insights and positive change to San Francisco's transportation policies and services. We strongly urge you to vote in favor of her appointment and provide her with the opportunity to serve our city.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we are available for any further discussion or clarification. Please consider Lydia So's candidacy with the utmost seriousness and support her appointment to the SFMTA Board for the betterment of our city and its residents.

Sincerely,

Jon Hee  
Chinatown TRIP Co-Chair

cc: Clerk of the Rules Committee, Victor Young  
President of the Board of Supervisor, Aaron Peskin  
Supervisor Connie Chan  
Supervisor Catherine Stefani  
Supervisor Joel Engardio  
Supervisor Dean Preston  
Supervisor Myrna Melgar  
Supervisor Rafael Mandelman  
Supervisor Hillary Ronen  
Clerk of the Board, Angela Calvillo  
Deputy Clerk of the Board, Alisa Somera



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Rules Committee

San Francisco Board of Supervisors

1 Dr Carlton B Goodlett Pl, City Hall, Room 244

San Francisco, CA 94102

Subject: Recommendation for Lydia So as Board of Directors of the SFMTA

Dear Supervisor Dorsey, Supervisor Walton and Supervisor Safai,

The San Francisco Latinx Democratic Club (SFLDC) is writing to express our support for Lydia So to serve as a Board of Directors of the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA). Our organization's membership of the club unanimously voted to support Lydia because of her extensive experience in public service and her unwavering dedication to the AAPI community.

Commissioner So has a proven track record of advocating for cultural equity and sustainable urban growth in San Francisco. Lydia's practice as an architect, her work in regional urban growth, transit-oriented developments, and sustainability, as well as her global experience in designing world-renowned structures, showcase her unique skill set and deep understanding of the critical role that transit plays in maintaining the vitality of unique environments. Her perspective on places, land use, and the built environment will be invaluable in shaping the SFMTA's policies and initiatives.

As a longtime resident of San Francisco's Mission neighborhood and a Chinese American, Lydia is deeply connected to our community's needs and understands the diverse needs of our residents. Having AAPI representation on the SFMTA Board is long overdue, to and Lydia's exceptional qualifications, combined with her city governance experience, make her the ideal candidate to build bridges and ensure that the voices of all communities are heard.

In conclusion, we wholeheartedly endorse Lydia So's appointment to the Board of Directors of the SFMTA. Her extensive experience, proven track record, and dedication to public service as both an Arts Commissioner and Historic Preservation commissioner make her an exceptional candidate who will bring valuable insights and positive change to San Francisco's transportation policies and services. I strongly urge you to vote in favor of her appointment and provide her with the opportunity to serve our city.

Thank you again for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

The San Francisco Latinx Democratic Club

**From:** [Mary Miles](#)  
**To:** [Young, Victor \(BOS\)](#)  
**Subject:** PUBLIC COMMENT, RULES COMMITTEE 7-10-23, AGENDA ITEM 2, OPPOSING NOMINATION OF LYDIA SO TO MTAB, FILE 230755  
**Date:** Sunday, July 9, 2023 7:57:55 PM

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**FROM:**

Mary Miles

Attorney at Law

364 Page St., #36

San Francisco, CA 94102

**TO:**

Victor Young, Clerk, and

Members of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors Rules Committee

BY E-MAIL TO: [victor.young@sfgov.org](mailto:victor.young@sfgov.org)

**PUBLIC COMMENT OPPOSING NOMINATION OF LYDIA SO TO MTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS, RULES COMMITTEE AGENDA ITEM 2**

**[BOS FILE NO. 230755]**

This Comment opposes the appointment of Lydia So to the Board of Directors of the Municipal Transportation Agency (“MTAB”). Please distribute this Comment to all Members of the Rules Committee and place it in all relevant Board of Supervisors files.

The MTA Board consists of seven directors appointed by the Mayor who control a two-billion- dollar annual budget and the transportation system of San Francisco.

The Charter requires that least four directors must be regular riders MTA’s transit. At least two must “possess significant knowledge of, or professional experience” in “the field of public transportation.” All directors must also have significant knowledge and/or experience in government finance or labor relations. (SF Charter, § 8A.102(a).)

According to her resume and other file documents, Ms. So would bring **no** transportation experience to the MTA Board.

The record shows only Ms. So's advocacy for the "Better Market" bicycle project, a *billion-dollar* (including bonds) City Project, which has banned cars on Market Street from Octavia Blvd. to the Embarcadero, will remove existing trees and historic streetlamps, and will **construct more** bicycle lanes on new 40-foot-wide sidewalks on Market Street.

So advocates for "Vision Zero," a project heavily lobbied for by the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition ("SFBC") and "Walk San Francisco" that receives millions in public funding to remove traffic lanes and street parking and create obstructions to driving on City streets, claiming 13% of those streets are in SFBC's "high injury corridors." Vision Zero is a slogan, not a credible safety project.

Those anti-car projects already receive millions from the MTA Board, while MTA Director Tumlin complains about a looming "fiscal cliff" caused by the Agency's reckless deficit spending on anti-car projects like those that Ms. So supports.

Ms. So's Form 700 shows that she is an affluent person who makes *no claim of transit ridership as required by the Charter*. Her private investments are not those of a typical transit rider. Further, her advocacy for bicycling and against cars does not represent the interests of City travelers.

As MTA's data shows, bicycling is the travel choice of fewer than 3 percent of San Franciscans. (Corey, Canapary, & Galanis Research: SFMTA Travel Decisions Survey 2021 Summary Report, page 5; see also, "MTA, 4/19/22, Maia Moran, "How People Traveled Through San Francisco in 2021.") Yet the lopsided MTA Board has unanimously supported that small special interest lobby with millions in bicycle and anti-car Projects such as "Better Market" and "Vision Zero."

With a 2-billion per year budget, MTA complains that its own foolish expenditures have caused a "fiscal cliff" (deficit), while demanding additional state and City funding for more of the same.

Meanwhile, the state of San Francisco streets is among the worst of any city in the United States. (<https://www.teletracnavman.com/teletracnavman/images/infographics/cities-worst-maintained-roads-11.pdf> )

Why should the public have to put up with another unelected bicycle advocate on the MTA Board? IT SHOULD NOT! Objectivity is lacking in every MTA Board decision (nearly always unanimous) that ignores the vast majority of city residents, workers and visitors who

travel in cars and trucks. The Ethics Code (CGC secs. 3.200 *et seq.*) requires objective representation, not another yes vote for anti-car, anti-people measures. Government decisions must be impartial and eliminate “both the actual and perceived undue influence, favoritism or preferential treatment.” (CGC, sec. 3.200(e).)

Work toward meeting that worthy goal by getting the MTA Board closer to the proportional representation of City travelers with members who will represent the vast majority of constituents that travel in vehicles.

Please reject the nomination of Lydia So to the MTA Board.

Mary Miles

STEVEN LEE  
250 Clara Street #1  
San Francisco , Ca. 94107  
[Steven.lee.ventures@gmail.com](mailto:Steven.lee.ventures@gmail.com)  
415.720.4208  
7/10/2023

Supervisor Matt Dorsey  
BOS Rules Committee - Chair  
San Francisco Board of Supervisors  
1 Dr Carlton B Goodlett Pl, City Hall, Room 244  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Subject: Letter of Support for Lydia So to serve on the SFMTA Commission

Dear Rules Committee Chair Supervisor Dorsey,

In case I cannot make the Rules Committee hearing in person. I like express my support for appointee Lydia So to serve on the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) Commission, that you will consider this morning. I have had the privilege of knowing Lydia for her work on the SF Arts, and Historic Preservation Commission. I also had a chance to serve with her for a year on Portsmouth Square Garage Corporation in Chinatown.

I am very impressed with her exceptional dedication to public service and her unwavering commitment to the betterment of San Francisco and its communities. Lydia has already worked on significant transportation projects, such as the Better Market Street improvement plan, that highlights her dedication to sustainable urban growth and her focus on Vision Zero, aimed at eliminating traffic-related fatalities in our city.

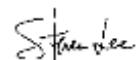
As a longtime resident of San Francisco and now self-employed business owner, Lydia intimately understands the challenges and opportunities that our small business and diverse communities need after the pandemic. It is important that they is AAPI representation on this Commission, and Lydia's exceptional qualifications, coupled with her proven track record in city governance, make her the perfect candidate to bridge gaps and accomplish tangible results.

In conclusion, with Lydia's extensive planning and architecture, combined with her exceptional public service and her independent business experience. She is a really good choice to serve on the SFMTA Board. I wholeheartedly endorse Lydia So's candidacy to continue to serve the City and Country of San Francisco.

I do not think you can do wrong by supporting her appointment.

Thank you, Supervisor.

Sincerely,



Steven Lee  
Small Business Owner & Advocate

cc: Clerk of the Rules Committee, Victor Young  
Clerk of the Board, Angela Calvillo  
Deputy Clerk of the Board, Alisa Somera

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250 Clara Street #1  
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[Steven.lee.ventures@gmail.com](mailto:Steven.lee.ventures@gmail.com)  
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7/10/2023

Supervisor Shamann Walton  
BOS Rules Committee  
San Francisco Board of Supervisors  
1 Dr Carlton B Goodlett Pl, City Hall, Room 244  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Subject: Letter of Support for Lydia So to serve on the SFMTA Commission

Dear Supervisor Walton,

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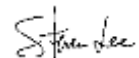
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I do not think you can do wrong by supporting her appointment.

Thank you, Supervisor.

Sincerely,



Steven Lee  
Small Business Owner & Advocate

cc: Clerk of the Rules Committee, Victor Young  
Clerk of the Board, Angela Calvillo  
Deputy Clerk of the Board, Alisa Somera

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7/10/2023

Supervisor Ahsai Safai  
BOS Rules Committee  
San Francisco Board of Supervisors  
1 Dr Carlton B Goodlett Pl, City Hall, Room 244  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Subject: Letter of Support for Lydia So to serve on the SFMTA Commission

Dear Supervisor Safai,

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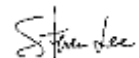
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I do not think you can do wrong by supporting her appointment.

Thank you, Supervisor.

Sincerely,



Steven Lee  
Small Business Owner & Advocate

cc: Clerk of the Rules Committee, Victor Young  
Clerk of the Board, Angela Calvillo  
Deputy Clerk of the Board, Alisa Somera

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Supervisor Matt Dorsey - Chair  
Supervisor Shamann Walton  
Supervisor Ashai Safai  
BOS Rules Committee  
San Francisco Board of Supervisors  
1 Dr Carlton B Goodlett Pl, City Hall, Room 244  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Subject: Letter of Support for Lydia So to serve on the SFMTA Commission

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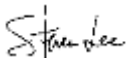
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I do not think you can do wrong by supporting her appointment.

Thank you, Supervisor.

Sincerely,



Steven Lee  
Small Business Owner & Advocate

cc: Clerk of the Rules Committee, Victor Young  
Clerk of the Board, Angela Calvillo  
Deputy Clerk of the Board, Alisa Somera

**From:** [Gee, Natalie \(BOS\)](#)  
**To:** [Young, Victor \(BOS\)](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Lydia So--MTA Commission  
**Date:** Friday, July 7, 2023 1:54:54 PM

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**Natalie Gee** 朱凱勤, Chief of Staff  
**Supervisor Shamann Walton, District 10**  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Pl, San Francisco | Room 282  
**Direct:** 415.554.7672 | **Office:** 415.554.7670  
**District 10 Community Events Calendar:** <https://bit.ly/d10communityevents>

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**From:** Betty Louie <bjlouie@att.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 06, 2023 4:11 PM  
**To:** Dorsey, Matt (BOS) <matt.dorsey@sfgov.org>; Safai, Ahsha (BOS) <ahsha.safai@sfgov.org>; Walton, Shamann (BOS) <shamann.walton@sfgov.org>  
**Subject:** Lydia So--MTA Commission

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Rules Committee

**RE: Lydia So**

July 6, 2023

Dear Members of the Rules Committee,

**I would like to support the nomination of Lydia So to the MTA Commission.**

Lydia has proven that she is very community oriented having served on the Historic Preservation Commission and most recently, as a fellow Board Director for the Portsmouth Square Garage.

She is knowledgeable regarding the City and its rules and regulations. I am sure she will serve as a dedicated member of the Commission. She has invested much of her time and energy as a volunteer to help make our City a better place. She is able to grasp the

details of any project quickly and efficiently.

Please allow her nomination to this Commission to go forward.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Betty Louie

667 Grant Ave.

San Francisco, CA 94108