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July 25, 2013

Mayor Jean Quan  
One Frank Ogawa Plaza  
Oakland, CA 94612

Re: Planning Commission nomination of Adhi Nagraj

Dear Mayor Quan:

It is with great enthusiasm that I write to encourage you to appoint Adhi Nagraj to the City of Oakland's Planning Commission. Adhi has demonstrated a commitment to our community in a number of ways over the past several years which, taken together with his professional and volunteer experiences, makes him uniquely qualified to serve.

For the past 25 years, I have worked as an attorney, public policy advocate, organizational consultant, community builder, minister and cultural artist here in Oakland as well as cities around the country. I served as an elected official on the Oakland Board of Education for 8 years, as well as a member of several non-profit boards, including the Restoration Association for the Historic 16th and Wood Train Station. I worked to help launch the Freedom Schools program in partnership with the Children's Defense Fund and Urban Strategies Council, which has served thousands of African American youth around the country. I also served as the executive director of the Oakland Child Health and Safety Initiative, originally funded by Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, (currently known as Safe Passages).

My work assignments in the last few years have ranged from working with the Marguerite Casey Foundation's Equal Voice for America's Families campaign as the national content director for a 10,000 plus person convention to working to create a learning community with the program officers worldwide of the Media, Arts and Culture division of the Ford Foundation, to the 2025 Campaign for Black Men and Boys.

In my work life, I have had the opportunity to meet hundreds of people from the community development, public health, arts, community activism, and political communities. In all of my experiences, I have rarely met and worked with anyone as committed to the overall prosperity, health and well-being of our community than Adhi. He is indeed a special asset to our city, region and nation.

I met Adhi in 2006 when he joined the Train Station Partnership, a community coalition dedicated to restoring the Southern Pacific station in West Oakland. We have served together on the RAILS board since 2009. From the time I became acquainted with him until today, I have found him to be one who listens to all perspectives, weighs the options carefully, applies sound analysis to the challenges at hand and then respectfully proposes his solution or

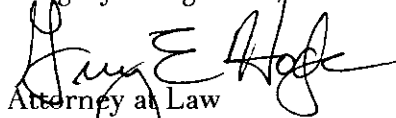
point of view. His approach to public discourse and civil decision making processes make him an ideal candidate for public service. He has demonstrated a passion for community work as reflected in his service with AmeriCorps; his tenure in Johannesburg where he worked to promote economic development and his advocacy in the San Francisco City Attorney's office related to the same sex marriage litigation there.

Adhi brings a keen intellectual curiosity to every thing he engages with. He is personable, has a great sense of humor and demonstrates compassion to others who are less fortunate than himself. He is a pleasure to work with and would be a marvelous addition to the planning commission. We need his leadership in our city more than ever. As an emerging public servant, it would be a missed opportunity not to select this bright, well-informed and qualified citizen of our city to amplify his contribution to the public space.

Again, it is with great energy that I unequivocally recommend Adhi Nagraj to serve on the planning commission.

Thanks for your consideration.

Gregory Hodge



Attorney at Law  
Owner, Khepera Consulting