RESOLUTION NO. 141-2004

Adopted December 7, 2004

COMMENDING AND EXPRESSING APPRECIATION TO EDMUND W. ONG, CHIEF OF ARCHITECTURE, FOR HIS 39 YEARS OF DEDICATED PUBLIC SERVICE ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

BASIS FOR RESOLUTION


2. In September 1974, Mr. Ong became the Chief of Architecture with overall responsibility for directing all of the architectural and design review processes for the Agency’s development program. In January 2003, he assumed additional responsibilities becoming the Supervisor of the combined Architecture and Engineering Division.

3. Mr. Ong has had major involvement with every redevelopment project area in the City and County of San Francisco (“City”). During his tenure, the Agency oversaw the development of nearly 14,000 market-rate and affordable housing units, over 3,300 hotel rooms, 11.7 million square feet of office space as well as schools, cultural facilities and public parks.

4. Mr. Ong has been an essential participant in developing urban design studies that have influenced the urban character of the City, including studies for sections of the Western Addition, Hunters Point, Yerba Buena Center, Rincon Point-South Beach and Mission Bay in addition to the emerging Transbay and Hunters Point Shipyard Redevelopment Project Areas.

5. In directing the design review process, Mr. Ong worked closely with developers and their design teams. He advocated for urban appropriateness and architectural excellence and also ensured that projects - independent of building type or project scale - were not only responsive to the larger urban context but also maximized their design potential.

6. Beginning in 1972 with the Redevelopment Plan adoption studies through the completion of construction in 1982, Mr. Ong co-managed the development of the first affordable housing project to have been built in the Chinatown area in over fifteen years, the Stockton-Sacramento development known as Mei Lun Yuen.
7. For the Yerba Buena Central Blocks project, he managed the worldwide architectural search process that led to the selection of Fumihiko Maki, James Stewart Polshek and Romaldo Giurgola to design the major elements of Central Block Two and subsequently directed a similar search process resulting in the selection of Adele Naude Santos to design a children's center, including an interactive art and technology space, theater, child care facility, bowling center and ice skating rink on Central Block Three.

8. Mr. Ong had primary responsibility for all of the technical aspects of the development of the public facilities on Central Blocks Two and Three in the Yerba Buena Center Redevelopment Project Area. In particular, he was responsible for the architectural programming for the facilities, design coordination of the individual projects by the different architects as well as coordination and integration of the project with the below grade Moscone Convention Center.

9. In recognition of his achievements, Mr. Ong has received a number of awards from the American Institute of Architects (AIA). They include:

a) On November 14, 2002, the AIA, California Council awarded Mr. Ong a Presidential Citation. The citation in part reads “Your influence on building affordable housing that forms communities, your influence on creating beautiful open spaces for major public assembly and your ability to foster dialogue through engagement are recognized by many and give honor to public service.”

b) On May 7, 2003, the AIA conferred Mr. Ong with the 2003 Thomas Jefferson Award for Public Architecture at its national convention in San Diego. The AIA Thomas Jefferson Award for Public Architecture is the highest award given to public sector architects and was created to recognize excellence in architectural advocacy and achievement. It is conferred on public-sector architects who by their skill, professionalism, dedication, ability and commitment have consistently fostered quality in the built environment and have managed or produced quality design within government agencies. Sara Elizabeth Caples, in her sponsoring statement said, “As is typical of public servants who perform to the highest standards of their calling, the rewards of Mr. Ong’s career are not so much personal as an on-going benefit to the citizens of his city. He has a very strong sense of the city being a place for all people to lead lives of dignity and delight.” In conferring the award, the AIA found Mr. Ong responsible for commissioning and bringing to reality an extraordinary range of work that has helped to define San Francisco as one of America’s most livable and civilized cities.

c) On June 11, 2004, Mr. Ong was invested as a Fellow of the AIA. Fellowship represents the highest membership honor that can be bestowed on an Architect member and reflects the member’s significant contribution to the profession as a whole. He was cited for being a catalyst for the intelligent, remarkable design that distinguishes the City’s urban fabric.
RESOLUTION

ACCORDINGLY, IT IS RESOLVED that the Redevelopment Agency of the City and County of San Francisco, on behalf of its past and present Commissioners, Executive Directors and employees, commend Edmund W. Ong for his outstanding accomplishments in advocating architectural excellence for Agency development projects, express the Agency’s appreciation for his many contributions and a sincere wish for success in his future endeavors.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

James B. Morales
Agency General Counsel