

Aloha Commissioners,



Following the discussions that occurred during the May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025, hearing regarding the Executive Officers performance evaluation for fiscal year 2025, I voluntarily submit this testimony/ review in support of Dan Orodener evaluation.

Dan has been serving as the Executive Officer since 2012, with that time of service comes understanding of the role, relevant statutes (e.g., HRS 205), constitutional requirements, and historic understanding of Dockets, Commission function, and Commission policies. If Dan is ever unsure about statutes, rules, court cases outside of his expertise, Dan reaches out to the appropriate subject matter experts to further educate himself, and his team. Lastly, Dan has a history of being able to execute Commission policies, when unified positions are taken and openly communicated.

When the Commission identifies and communicates positions and operations, Dan is able to align those positions with statewide planning frameworks, statutory and constitutional mandates.

Dan has high expectations of staff and himself regarding timeliness, communication, and high-quality work, which is reflected in timely follow ups, staff submittals, memos, decision and orders, and testimony. Further, Dan aligns Staff function and ensures Commission processes are transparent, timely, and accessible to the public, pursuant to HRS 205, Chapter 15-15, and the Sunshine Law.

Dan's ability to manage his staff is notable, Dan effectively, fairly, responsibly, and evenly assigns duties among staff, and makes sure staff is not overburdened. Dan truly cares about staff, he maintains an open door policy for communication and problem-solving purposes, he understands that personal lives and experiences often impact performance and communications. Dans open door policy has provided staff with the opportunity to share concerns, frustrations, and come up with solutions to issues that staff may be experiencing professionally or personally. The office has vacancies, but Dan has been making efforts to fill them, in the meanwhile Dan encourages a supportive environment, which results in shared assignments and collaborative work to offer different perspectives and ideas.

As we know hearing move fast, during those hearings when Commissioners ask questions, Dan has been able to respond based on his knowledge and information available, however, when information is not available Dan differs. Dan has the has the integrity, composure, and professionalism to admit when more information is needed, and follow up in a timely and detailed manner on differed matters. As Dan has been serving as the Executive Officer for about 13 years, Dan has professional experience to exercise good judgment in job responsibilities, use appropriate lines of authority, and when to refer questionable matters to the

LUC chair. Additionally, Dan takes the time to provide clear and sound guidance to Commissioners in quasi-judicial and administrative matters. Staff has witnessed his dedication to this process through his marathon Commission calls before hearings to provide the opportunity to gather input from Commissioners and answer any questions from the Commissioners regarding proceedings and submittal.

Ultimately, Dans leadership, integrity, composure, and professionalism sets a good example to staff, through his ability to persist through opposition, navigate and adopt to differences. Dan is an exceptional manager who promotes a supportive environment, encourages professional development, and maintains staff morale.

Mahalo,

LUC Staff



**TO:** Land Use Commissioners

**RE:** Commissioner's Evaluation of Executive Officer's Performance for FY25

Aloha Commissioners,

As you conduct the performance evaluation for the Executive Officer, Daniel Orodenker for FY25, I voluntarily and respectfully submit this letter in strong support of his continued leadership and service to the Land Use Commission.

Dan possesses a deep and comprehensive understanding of land use law, administrative rules, and the Commission's operations. He's able to make sense of complex and shifting legal issues, and he uses that knowledge to keep the Commission grounded and well-prepared. Dan consistently upholds the principles of transparency and public trust. He's approachable and open during public meetings. When it comes to decision-making, Dan brings balance, legal grounding, and good judgment. He knows when to be firm, when to listen, and how to adjust when circumstances change. He also handles challenges with professionalism and care—whether dealing with public pressure, difficult personalities, or time-sensitive issues. He treats everyone with respect and keeps the work focused and constructive. He's also great at building and maintaining strong relationships across State and County agencies. His ability to coordinate with others ensures the Commission's work is well-integrated and effectively represented. Even in the face of staffing shortages, Dan stays calm, supportive, and engaged. He leads by example, encourages staff development, and ensures workloads are distributed and managed efficiently. Lastly, Dan is always looking for ways to improve how we work. Whether it's streamlining internal processes or tackling administrative hurdles, he's resourceful and solutions-oriented—even when resources are tight.

I respectfully urge the Commission to recognize Dan's performance continues to be a tremendous asset to the Commission and the State.

Mahalo,  
LUC Staff

Land Use Commission  
235 South Beretania St.  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813



Dear Chair and Commissioners:

Re: Evaluation of Daniel Orodener, Executive Officer

I the undersigned, would like to provide my comments to Mr. Dan Orodener's Evaluation by the Land Use Commission.

I would like to state for the record our sincere appreciation for his leadership and guidance during his tenure as Executive Officer for the State of Hawaii Land Use Commission. I have constantly benefitted from his support. He acknowledges my individual strengths and works with me to communicate the needs of the organization.

Without Mr. Orodener's strength and guidance our office would be rudderless and unable to perform at a level equal if not better than private firms (per a former commissioner). One example is his position to protect the staff from outside influence so I can perform my duties without undue influence.

Another example is Mr. Orodener's ability to create a synergistic approach to allow me to work on complex issues in a more manageable process. His ability to create a systematic process so I can work on each area of the problem in a controllable fashion. He listened to each of my issues and understood the problem and worked on finding a solution to the problem.

I am very appreciative of Mr. Orodener's guidance and leadership that creates positive morale and guidance in our office. I look forward to working with him in the future.

Sincerely,  
LUC Staff



Aloha,

Throughout my career with the Land Use Commission, I have had the privilege of working alongside Dan Orodener and witnessing his exceptional development as our Executive Officer. Dan has demonstrated remarkable growth as a leader, consistently exhibiting fairness and integrity in his approach to complex land use matters.

His comprehensive understanding of Chapter 205 HRS and Administrative Rules 15-15 has proven invaluable to our commission's work. Dan's thoughtful interpretation and application of these laws consistently reflects the principles embodied in Hawaii's state motto, "Ua Mau ke Ea o ka 'Āina i ka Pono" - "the life of the land is perpetuated in righteousness."

What particularly stands out about Dan's leadership is his commitment to ensuring that all decisions honor both the letter of the law and the spirit of protecting Hawaii's precious land resources for future generations. His balanced approach has strengthened our commission's ability to serve the people of Hawaii effectively.

Sincerely,

Staff of Land Use Commission

Dan Giovanni, Chair  
Land Use Commission



Re: Public Testimony

Aloha Chair:

During the LUC meeting on May 7, 2025, the Commission began discussion of its evaluation process for the Executive Officer. Several commissioners requested that the LUC staff complete the performance evaluation worksheet for the Executive Officer and submit that to the Commission. My following observations are intended to generally assess and follow the performance tasks identified in the Confidential Performance Evaluation worksheet provided to each commissioner.

Dan Orodenker was recruited and chosen to co-teach the Land Use Law course at the University of Hawai`i Richardson Law School this past year; taking over those duties from Dr. David Callies, long recognized as one of the experts in Hawai`i land use law. I have over 35 years of professional planning experience in Hawai`i and would consider Dan to be one of a small handful of people with a broad and deep understanding of the constitutional, statutory, and administrative framework relevant to the Land Use Commissions duties and responsibilities. His experience has been demonstrated over more than a decade of successfully guiding the Commission's work at hearings, addressing statutory changes proposed at the State Legislature, working on legal actions with the Attorney General's staff, and updating the Commission's administrative rules.

Dan has fostered an extremely positive environment for his staff. We continue to evolve as a team that cross-trains in order to support each other and fill-in when necessary. Dan encourages and supports staff training to upgrade skills and for staff to generate ideas to solve problems. He has supported and championed several staff-generated recommendations to improve process improvements to more efficiently handle land use application review and analysis.

He continues to lead by example, holding himself to high standards and expecting the same level of professionalism from his staff. Dan continuously cultivates strong working relationships between LUC staff, outside agencies at all levels, and the private sector stakeholders. Dan and staff are consistently consulted for guidance in navigating the county and state regulatory process.

Dan has instituted a comprehensive commissioner training program that is run each year and as needed for new commissioners upon appointment. These training sessions are run as public meetings and allow for the interested public to learn about the process along with commissioners. The training provides the laws, policies, and procedures in place to guide Commission decision-making.

Dan has been an advocate and supporter of Commission staff using technology to improve our delivery of services to both the Commission, applicants, and general public. Under his guidance we continue to improve our ability to serve out via our website: archival documents, status of applications under consideration, staff analyses, regulatory laws and procedures, transcripts and video of Commission meetings, district boundary maps, and applications for public search for records.

Dan has been committed to the job of providing the Commission with the best staff analysis to support their decision-making process. He's also been consistent in explaining the role of Commissioners and the necessary legal procedure required so that Commission decisions are less likely to be subject to legal challenges. Keeping Commission decisions out of court is incredibly important to ensure that worthy projects can continue towards completion. Dan works closely with our deputy Attorneys General on all decisions coming before the Commission.

In summary, I'll go on the record to state that, in my opinion, Dan more than meets expectations and often exceeds them with respect to each of the 9 performance tasks in the performance evaluation. As a boss he's at the top of his profession, supportive of staff, innovative in approach to problem-solving, looks for ways to make things happen, promotes ever greater transparency in Commission activities, and believes (and makes others believe) that public service is a greater good. I've been offered outside job promotions and other opportunities during the last 10 years, all of which I've decided against, primarily because of type of manager Dan is and the team he has assembled at the Commission. I expect and look forward to continue working with Dan into the future.

Me ka `oia`i`o,



Scott A.K. Derrickson, AICP

LUC Chief Planner





Outlook



## New Public Testimony

From webmaster@hawaii.gov <webmaster@hawaii.gov>

Date Thu 5/29/2025 9:08 PM

To DBEDT LUC <dbedt.luc.web@hawaii.gov>

### Name

RILEY HAKODA

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### Representing

self

### Agenda Item

Executive Officer's Performance Evaluation FY2025

### Position

Support

### Testimony

5. Commissioner's Evaluation of Executive Officer's Performance for Fiscal Year 2025 (July 2024 – June 2025)

As a retired LUC staff member, I feel it is important that the current group of appointed Commissioners support the current Executive Officer's position and allow the LUC staff to continue its mission of serving the State of Hawaii and to address important unfinished issues such as the Waimanalo Gulch Sanitary Landfill and Important Agricultural Lands.

Many of the unresolved cases still confronting the LUC will require the current Executive Officer's institutional knowledge, keen familiarity with all the issues and the Parties involved, and all their positions and historical backgrounds presented and discussed during past hearings.

The LUC Executive Officer's guidance and insight in posturing the LUC's position will strongly assist the Commissioners in deciding on matters more intelligently and thoroughly while achieving the LUC's State



mission.

The real challenging matters that will confront the Commissioners still lie ahead in the months and years to come. This past fiscal year was relatively quiet and the current LUC Executive Officer and Staff have taken measures like Orientation briefings, ensuring that Commissioners gain familiarity with Urban and Regional Planning issues by enrolling them in informational classes and conferences both locally and nationally.

The LUC Executive Officer position requires a unique background/skill set and having personally participated in the search process for a suitable candidate back around 2011, I can assure you that losing the current LUC Executive Officer would severely cripple the Commission and impede the progress that the LUC has achieved for over a decade. It is in the best interest of the Commission to securely retain the LUC Executive Officer to sustain itself.