



SAINT MARK'S
UNIVERSITY PARISH
ISLA VISTA, CALIFORNIA

17 March 2025

Dear Ms. Campos,

Greetings from St. Mark's University Parish! We have recently heard that Mr. Mike McDevitt is under consideration for a post on the Parks and Recreation Commission for the City of Goleta, and it was our hope to be able to offer a recommendation of Mr. McDevitt for that same position. Indeed, I have had the privilege of knowing Mr. McDevitt in both a professional and personal capacity for several years, as he is the Facilities Manager and a long-time parishioner here at St. Mark's University Parish where I now presently serve. Since my own appointment to the parish in 2021, I have come to know Mike, his family, and his character quite well, all of which inspires this present letter.

Sports have been a major part of Mike's life, as seen in his successful career as a hockey referee at the collegiate, national, and international levels—a career which extends to his continued refereeing at the college-level now and to his participation in local adult leagues as well as national tournaments. With such a background, he would obviously be a desirable candidate for such a committee, as experience is so very valuable in these types of roles. But what commends Mike even more is that his dedication in this arena, literally and figuratively, is not a love of sports for sports' sake, but because of the way in which sports—even at the highest of levels—is ultimately a metaphor and a preparation for life, which demands discipline, teamwork, and perseverance, a point which we have discussed together many times.

Those greater values are much needed in society, and it would seem that a city would want someone with just such a vision for this sort of role, someone who saw sports as related to a larger goal for the civic community. There is no doubt in my mind that Mr. McDevitt would serve well in this regard and in many others too. And so, insofar as I may, I write now in order to offer my own recommendation for Mr. McDevitt to be appointed to the Parks and Recreation Commission for the City of Goleta.

Sincerely,

Fr. Ryan Thornton, OFM, PhD
Pastor