

WAYNE STATE  
UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS  
AND SCIENCES

Department of Urban Studies and Planning

*To whom it may concern*

December 2012

**Letter of Support**  
**John Cruz**

I am pleased to have this opportunity to write this letter of reference for Mr. John Cruz. In my capacity as Chair of the department of Urban Studies and Planning at WSU and as Director of the Master of Urban Planning program I had the pleasure of working with John over the past four years. I had direct involvement with John in three courses and indirect engagement when he served on WSSUP, the graduate student planning society.

What first struck me about John was that he came to the world of urban planning from an entirely different academic and professional arena—that of computer science and web development. Not only was he an “outsider” in academic terms but he also held a somewhat contrary view about the field of urban planning and what it might/could achieve. I found that view very refreshing and in some respects challenging as a professor.

As a student entering a new field, he performed admirably, quickly grasping and developing new concepts, ideas and techniques. His first applied work in my class was on “shrinking cities” and the value of pursuing a “village” strategy as a response to the challenges of urban depopulation and decline in Detroit. Towards the end of his studies he played a leading role in the Capstone project where a team of students worked with the Woodbridge Citizens District Council on a plan for their community.

Throughout his time as a graduate student in the MUP at Wayne State John was consistently involved with student affairs and particular with WSSUP. He played a key role in the organization of the 2012 Michigan Student Planning Conference held at WSU, employing his computer skills to assist the promotion and delivery of the event.

Recently, John has held an internship with one of the new consulting agencies in Detroit (Global Detroit). This has brought him into direct contact with professionals outside of his computing experience and offered him a bridge across to a professional position in planning. I am sure he will make a successful transition and forge a successful career in his newly chosen field.

In conclusion, John Cruz was a pleasure to work with and I fully and wholeheartedly support his search for a full-time appointment in planning.

Sincerely,

Robin Boyle,  
Professor and Chair

