




Form Name:
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Boards and Commissions Application
1443689065

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By: SB

Applicant Information

Name	Gay L Howard
Are you a Sunnyvale resident?	Yes
How long have you lived in Sunnyvale?	20 years on July 1, 2026.
Description Area	Residence Notice:Unless otherwise noted, your principal place of residence must be in Sunnyvale. You must live in Sunnyvale at the time of appointment and at all times during service on a board or commission.
Current Main Residence	
Email	
Phone	
Description Area	Employment NoticeCity of Sunnyvale employees may not serve on a board or commission.
I am a current City of Sunnyvale employee.	No
Have you ever served on a City of Sunnyvale board or commission?	No
Have you attended a meeting of the City Council, or a board or commission?	Yes

Briefly describe what you learned by watching or attending a meeting of the City Council, board or commission. What improvements would you suggest?

I attended several Sustainability Commission meetings in 2023 and thought that the majority of issues they dealt with were only peripherally related to Sustainability and the contents of the Climate Action Playbook, and it seemed that topics of discussion originated by the Council and not the Commission. I was pleased to see, in reviewing the 2026 Annual Work Plan for the Sustainability Commission, that feedback is now solicited from the Commission to the Council on Commission Effectiveness. This will likely improve the direction and focus of the Commission's work.

Specifically, I think the public's involvement in identifying the impacts of Climate Change and devising solutions should be cultivated. This would not only enhance the feeling of community but would contribute to the City's preparedness for its eventual affects.

Have you attended meetings of the board(s) or commission(s) for which you are applying?

Yes

How many meetings have you attended?

I'd estimate, 6 or 7 combined City Council and Sustainability Commission meetings.

Board or Commission Selection

First Choice

Sustainability Commission

Applicant Qualifications

What motivated you to apply for this board or commission?

Honestly, the timing of my application has more to do with my health than anything else. I retired from a career as Professional Engineer in June 2017, due to an illness. Since then, with good medical care, my health has consistently improved and I now feel able to contribute to the community in a meaningful way.

Participating in the Sustainability Commission would put my professional experience to good use, as I spent 27 years and an Environmental Consultant, performing compliance projects for oil facilities, military installations, semiconductor manufacturing facilities, etc. Most of my projects were located in California, but also included sites in the Houston Area, and Delaware / New Jersey locations.

What skills or attributes can you bring to this board or commission?

My career actually happened in three phases: first as a Mathematics Teacher in Pennsylvania (7 1/2 yr); then as a Registered Civil Engineer in California (specialization in Structural Engineering, 5 1/2 yr); and lastly as an Environmental Consultant mainly in California (27 yr).

Having a foundation in knowing how people learn helped me develop the skills to communicate with people in a variety of settings presenting differing perspectives. This skill has allowed me to move discussions forward that otherwise might have resulted in conflict.

My engineering experience exposed me to a broad range of industrial operations including nuclear power plants, military installations, and cement plants that informed my understanding of a variety of equipment types, business motives, and organizational structures. This knowledge assisted me in understanding the needs of a business and enabled me to function within a variety of organizations.

The primary role of a board or commission member is to provide advice to City Council on policy issues that are within the scope of the board or commission. What steps would you take to effectively exercise this specific board or commission role?

In responding to questions from the City Council, I think it's really important that everyone understands the issue in the same way. So, there may need to be questions back and forth to establish the baseline for discussion. There must be established procedures for this, but I think communication is essential; and to that end, I would seek to understand the history of an issue, look up relevant policies, and talk to people knowledgeable about the issue. Some issues, I may have first hand experience with, so that may come into play as well.

Education - List college degrees, majors and any relevant training or experience that demonstrates your ability to effectively serve on this board or commission.

The Pennsylvania State University - BS in Mathematics
San Jose State University - MS in Civil Engineering / Structures
California Registered Civil Engineer - #C33119
Harvard Law School - Summer Negotiations Workshop

Training Certificates

- OSHA HAZWOPER (Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response) Training - 18 years
 - Stormwater Pollution and Prevention Planning
 - Oil Storage Integrity Management Planning
 - Maritime Incident Command
-

Describe your involvement in community activities, volunteer and civic organizations.

I currently volunteer for NoCarbonFuel.org, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that seeks to educate the general public, teachers, students, and government representatives regarding the environmental impacts of carbon fuels and the steps required to transition to renewable energy sources. My role there is primarily to curate articles for weekly publication to the website and Facebook page, and to develop tools and marketing materials to encourage public engagement with this issue.

Rich Parenteau, currently a member of the Sustainability Commission, is the President of NoCarbonFuel.org.

Also, for the past 4 years, I served on the jury that selected human rights documentary films to be shown at the annual United Nations Association Film Festival (UNAFF), founded by Jasmina Bojic, a Stanford Professor of International Relations.

Description Area

The City has a Code of Ethics and Conduct for Elected and Appointed Officials and an Attendance Policy (7.2.19), 2 G (II) that appointed members are required to follow.

Do you have any concerns related to the above code and policy? No

Are you willing to accept a temporary appointment for the remainder of an unexpired term? Yes

Board or Commission-Specific Questions

Sustainability Commission

Category One: I'm a Sunnyvale resident. Yes

Sustainability is a new and emerging concern in many communities. What do you think are the primary sustainability policy issues this commission will be addressing over the next few years?

It concerns me greatly that my neighbors and some friends know very little about the climate impacts that face us, let alone what our City is doing to try to mitigate their affects. I also know that the topic is difficult to discuss; but I feel, we must! I hope the Sustainability Commission can recommend ways to inform and engage Sunnyvale citizens in addressing what are surely inevitable impacts of increasing carbon emissions.

This is something that I am uninformed about, but I worry about the foundational data that the CAP is built on. At first blush, it appears that the VMT are based on 2021 information, which is out-of-date and hopefully being revised. In addition, I worry about how you can estimate miles traveled without involving the public - were actual vehicle surveys done? It would seem that the CAP assumes that people who live in Sunnyvale, also work here. The CAP states that the emission forecasts assume 100% clean electricity construction, which is not realistic since gas appliances are still allowed. Also, I'd like to see some description as to which part of the document was prepared by Rincon, which part by City Staff, and what the qualifications are of the people who prepared the forecasts.

Description Area

View the Climate Action Playbook

Have you read the above version of the Climate Action Playbook?

Yes

What are your thoughts on the Playbook? How might the actions ("Plays") be improved?

I think the average Sunnyvale citizen is unaware of the Playbook, its actions, and what improvements are being made towards achieving its goals. So, I would encourage greater visibility of the update when it is released.

I'm a math major, so the sources of the data, assumptions, and forecasts are foundational to my understanding of the document. These things should be clearly stated and where weak, every effort should be made to strengthen them.

Forecasts should be being made by qualified economists.

Your Agreement

Description Area

IMPORTANT NOTICE - READ BEFORE SIGNING:By selecting both "Yes" and "Submit Form" below I am adding my digital signature to this application. I am also agreeing with the following statements:All statements I have made on this application are true and correct.I authorize the City of Sunnyvale (City) to investigate the accuracy of this information.I release the City from all claims and liabilities arising from such investigation.I acknowledge that any false statement on this application will be grounds for the City to deny my appointment. A false statement discovered later, will be grounds to dismiss me from my appointment at any time.I acknowledge that any false statement on this application could lead to criminal charges. Charges could fall under California Penal Code, Section 115 or other applicable law.

I agree	Yes
Your full name	Gay L Howard
Date	Mar 20, 2026
