

Form Name:
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Boards and Commission
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By: SB

Shani Zafary
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Applicant Information

Name	Shani Zafary
Are you a Sunnyvale resident?	Yes
How long have you lived in Sunnyvale?	9 years
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	 Sunnyvale, CA 94086-7550
Email	
Phone	
Are you currently a registered voter in Sunnyvale?	Yes
When was the last time you voted? Month/Year	00/0000
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 virtually several meetings during the COVID-19 period. By attending these meetings, I gained insight into how Council members balance diverse community needs, legal requirements, and evolving public health guidance. I saw how public comment and staff reports inform policy decisions. One area I believe could be improved is community communication and engagement. During periods of rapid change, many residents struggled to understand the rationale behind decisions or how to provide timely input. Increasing proactive communication, streamlining agenda materials for clarity, and offering more structured opportunities for community feedback would help build trust and enable more inclusive participation.

Have you attended meetings of the board(s) or commission(s) for which you are applying? No

Board or Commission Selection

First Choice	Human Relations Commission
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Applicant Qualifications

What motivated you to apply for this board or commission?	I am motivated to serve in order to help ensure that the diverse communities in Sunnyvale are meaningfully represented and engaged in civic life. Our city is home to a growing population with a wide range of cultural, religious, and community identities, including long-standing communities whose needs and perspectives are often nuanced and not always well understood. I believe that thoughtful representation, grounded in empathy, lived experience, and active community engagement, is essential to building a stronger, more connected city. I hope to contribute to that effort by fostering dialogue, promoting inclusion, and helping create an environment where all residents feel seen, valued, and supported. Community well-being and social cohesion are foundational to a thriving city, and I am deeply committed to advancing those goals.
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What skills or attributes can you bring to this board or commission?

In my professional career, I have served in operational leadership roles that require strategic coordination, cross-functional collaboration, and the ability to bring stakeholders together around shared goals. I have a strong track record of building bridges across diverse groups, improving communication, and influencing outcomes through partnership rather than authority.

In my personal life, I have been deeply engaged in community service, including serving as the head of the PTA at our children's school. In that role, I helped strengthen community engagement, support the needs of diverse families, and build programs that fostered inclusion and belonging. These experiences have equipped me with the ability to listen, understand nuanced perspectives, and implement practical solutions that serve the broader good.

I bring a combination of strategic thinking, empathy, community building, and operational excellence that I believe will be an asset to the board.

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?

To effectively serve in this advisory role, I would begin by being fully informed and prepared, carefully reviewing staff reports, data, and background materials to ensure my recommendations are grounded in facts and long-term implications. I would actively engage stakeholders and listen to community input to understand diverse perspectives and ensure the board's advice reflects the needs and concerns of residents. I believe in using critical thinking and balanced judgment, considering equity, fiscal responsibility, community impact, and practicality, while remaining objective and solutions-oriented. Collaboration is essential, and I would work constructively with fellow commissioners to build consensus and engage in respectful, thoughtful deliberation.

Throughout the process, I would prioritize transparency, accountability, and clear communication so that recommendations are aligned with the City's goals and provide meaningful advice to the City Council.

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

Bachelor of Law (2004-2009); Reichman University.
Winner of the Society for Medicine and Law in Israel award for outstanding academic research.

Bachelor of Science, Biology (2001-2004); Tel Aviv University

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

I have been actively engaged in community life through both formal and informal participation. Most notably, I served in leadership within our school's PTA, where I helped organize programs, support families, and strengthen community engagement across diverse groups. In addition to my leadership role, I attend City Civic meetings as a listener to stay informed about local issues and decisions impacting residents. These experiences have allowed me to understand community needs, participate in civic dialogue, and contribute to building a more connected and responsive community.

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

Human Relations Commission

Category One: I'm a Sunnyvale resident.

Yes

What do you think are major equity challenges facing the Sunnyvale community?

Sunnyvale is a diverse and rapidly growing community, and with that growth come complex equity challenges. One major challenge is ensuring equal access to resources and services, such as housing, transportation, education, and community programs-across different socioeconomic, cultural, and linguistic communities. Additionally, as our population becomes more multicultural, it is essential that all residents feel represented, safe, and included in civic spaces, regardless of background or identity.

Another challenge is awareness and accessibility. Some community members are not fully informed about available services or do not feel comfortable participating in public processes. Building trust, increasing outreach, and designing programs that reflect the needs of all residents are key steps toward advancing equity. Ultimately, addressing these challenges requires intentional listening, inclusive policymaking, and proactive engagement to ensure that everyone in Sunnyvale has the opportunity to thrive.

Describe your experience working with historically marginalized communities. How have your actions benefited these communities?

In my professional career, I have worked directly to advance equity and bridge socioeconomic gaps through my role as a Project Manager at the Yuvalim Voluntary Association, a nonprofit focused on promoting equal opportunity in education for historically marginalized communities in Israel. In this capacity, I led strategic initiatives aimed at expanding access to educational resources in underserved areas, tripling the organization's reach and impact. I collaborated with community leaders, donors, and partner institutions to secure funding and support services for disadvantaged populations, while also leading outreach programs designed to increase participation from communities that had traditionally been excluded from such opportunities.

Demographic Information

Your age

Your gender

Description Area

LGBTQIA+ Identity (LGBTQIA+ stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, and the "+" is an all-inclusive way to include additional terms used to describe one's gender, romantic, and sexual identities for those who do not identify with heterosexuality or the gender binary.)

LGBTQIA+ Identity

Race or Ethnicity (select all that apply)

Short Answer

Do you speak a language other than English?

Which languages?

Household Income

Residence - Are you a

Do you live in a

Do you have any other identities* you would like to share with us?



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

Shani Zafary

Date

Oct 27, 2025