

Applicant Information

Name	David Kesting
Are you a Sunnyvale resident?	Yes
How long have you lived in Sunnyvale?	11 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	[REDACTED]
Email	[REDACTED]
Phone	[REDACTED]
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?	Yes
Check all that apply	Currently serving
Name of board or commission currently serving	Parks and Rec
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?

At the Sunnyvale City Council meeting I attended in December 2024, the discussion around traffic calming was particularly instructive in understanding how policy ideas evolve into actionable city programs. The meeting built on several prior study sessions and staff reports, which had already outlined data on vehicle speeds, collision patterns, and neighborhood feedback across the city. By the time the item reached the council, it was clear that traffic calming is not a one-size-fits-all solution, but rather a layered strategy involving engineering measures, enforcement, and community engagement. The council's deliberation highlighted how competing priorities-such as emergency access, traffic flow, and neighborhood safety-must all be balanced carefully in policy decisions.

During that meeting, I made public comments emphasizing the need to calm Washington Avenue, noting its role as a residential corridor that experiences higher-than-desired vehicle speeds and cut-through traffic. My comments were informed not only by personal observation but also by the broader context established in earlier meetings, where similar concerns had been raised across multiple neighborhoods. Speaking at the meeting reinforced how important it is for residents and professionals alike to engage in the process, as firsthand input helps shape how city staff and councilmembers prioritize specific corridors for intervention. It also demonstrated how sustained discussion over multiple meetings can refine both the technical approach and the policy framework for addressing traffic safety in a growing city like Sunnyvale.

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

Yes

How many meetings have you attended?

watched several of them online

Board or Commission Selection

First Choice

Planning Commission (R)

Applicant Qualifications

What motivated you to apply for this board or commission?

My motivation to serve on the Planning and Zoning Commission for the City of Sunnyvale is grounded in a genuine desire to contribute to the long-term well-being of the community. Sunnyvale's adopted Housing Element calls for the creation of nearly 12,000 new housing units over the current planning cycle, reflecting both a significant state mandate and a real, local need. At the same time, housing costs-now approaching \$1,700 per square foot-continue to put homeownership and stable housing out of reach for many residents. I see this as one of the most pressing issues facing the City, and I am motivated to be part of the solution.

I am particularly interested in helping implement the Housing Element in a way that leads to real, built results. The plan calls for removing constraints, aligning zoning, and identifying sites that can realistically support new housing at all income levels. As a licensed architect who works directly within these systems, I understand how policy decisions translate into actual projects-and where well-intended regulations can unintentionally limit housing production. My goal in serving would be to help bridge that gap, supporting thoughtful planning decisions that make it possible to build more housing while maintaining the character and livability of the community. My interest in this role is fundamentally altruistic, rooted in a commitment to public service and a belief that Sunnyvale can and should evolve in a way that is more inclusive, accessible, and sustainable.

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

I would bring a combination of technical expertise, public service experience, and a demonstrated commitment to thoughtful, community-focused decision-making to the Planning and Zoning Commission for the City of Sunnyvale. As a licensed architect specializing in residential construction, I offer a strong working knowledge of zoning, permitting, and how policy translates into real, buildable projects. This allows me to evaluate proposals not just at a conceptual level, but with an understanding of feasibility, constructability, and long-term impact on the built environment.

Equally important is my six years of service on the Sunnyvale Parks and Recreation Commission, including three years as Chair. In that role, I developed a deep familiarity with City processes, public engagement, and the responsibility of making balanced decisions that reflect both community input and broader policy goals. Serving as Chair strengthened my leadership skills, my ability to guide complex discussions, and my commitment to maintaining a fair and respectful decision-making process.

During my time on the Parks and Recreation Commission, I also took an active role in shaping policy by drafting approximately 30 study issue proposals. This experience reflects my ability to identify emerging community needs, research solutions, and translate ideas into actionable policy initiatives. It also demonstrates a proactive approach to governance—one focused not just on reacting to proposals, but on helping to set direction and priorities for the City.

Together, these experiences position me to contribute meaningfully to the Planning and Zoning Commission with a practical, solutions-oriented mindset, strong leadership experience, and a clear commitment to public service

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 an advisory role to the City Council, I would take a structured and policy-driven approach grounded in the City's adopted plans and community priorities. I would begin by carefully reviewing staff reports, applicable codes, and long-range planning documents such as the General Plan and Housing Element to ensure that any recommendations are consistent with Sunnyvale's broader goals. This foundation is critical to providing advice that is not only well-informed, but also aligned with the City's obligation to plan for additional housing and accommodate future growth.

From there, I would apply both my professional expertise and policy perspective to key issues facing the City. In particular, I would focus on opportunities to thoughtfully increase residential density in the urban core and along transit corridors, where infrastructure and access can support additional housing in a sustainable way. I would also advocate for policies that improve the safety and usability of public spaces, such as traffic calming measures along streets adjacent to City parks. These are practical, place-based strategies that can enhance quality of life while supporting broader planning objectives.

In exercising this role, I would also place a strong emphasis on listening-to community members, staff, and fellow commissioners-and working collaboratively to develop balanced recommendations. My experience serving six years on the Parks and Recreation Commission, including three as Chair, has prepared me to lead discussions, weigh competing priorities, and build consensus. I would bring that same approach here, along with my experience drafting numerous study issue proposals, to help identify policy opportunities and provide clear, actionable guidance to the City Council that reflects both community values and long-term planning goals for Sunnyvale.

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

I hold a professional degree in architecture from the University of California, Berkeley, where my academic work included a focus on housing and modular construction systems. My graduate thesis explored the use of modular design as a scalable solution to address housing shortages, an area that continues to inform my professional perspective on housing policy and development.

In addition to my formal education, I am a licensed architect in the State of California, which reflects extensive training in building codes, zoning regulations, construction methods, and project delivery. My professional experience includes preparing permit-ready construction documents, coordinating with city planning and building departments, and navigating entitlement and review processes across multiple Bay Area jurisdictions, including Sunnyvale.

I have also developed a working knowledge of local planning and zoning codes through direct project experience, particularly in residential design, additions, and remodels. This includes familiarity with land use regulations, setback requirements, density considerations, and the practical constraints that influence whether a project can be successfully built.

Beyond formal education and licensure, my six years of service on the Sunnyvale Parks and Recreation Commission-including three years as Chair-have provided meaningful, hands-on experience in public policy, governance, and community engagement. During that time, I authored approximately 30 study issue proposals, further strengthening my ability to research, analyze, and present policy recommendations. Together, this combination of academic training, professional licensure, and civic experience provides a strong foundation for effectively serving on a board or commission in Sunnyvale.

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

I have been actively involved in community service and civic engagement in Sunnyvale through a combination of formal commission work, youth sports leadership, and volunteer coaching. For the past six years, I have served on the Sunnyvale Parks and Recreation Commission, including three years as Chair. In that role, I have worked closely with City staff and fellow commissioners to review policies, guide public investment in parks and facilities, and engage with residents on community priorities. My service also included authoring approximately 30 study issue proposals, reflecting a proactive approach to identifying and addressing community needs.

In addition to my commission work, I have been involved in youth sports as both a board member of Sunnyvale National Little League and as a coach with Sunnyvale Alliance Soccer. These roles have allowed me to contribute directly to programs that support youth development, teamwork, and community connection. Serving on the Little League board provided experience in organizational leadership, program management, and working collaboratively with parents, volunteers, and local stakeholders. As a coach, I have had the opportunity to work closely with children and families, reinforcing the importance of positive mentorship and community engagement at a grassroots level.

Together, these experiences reflect a strong and ongoing commitment to public service, community building, and civic participation.

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

Planning Commission

Sunnyvale has limited vacant land for new development. This could increase pressure for redevelopment of existing developed areas. How can Planning respond to this situation?

The reality that Sunnyvale has limited vacant land means that future growth will need to be accommodated primarily through thoughtful redevelopment. Planning can respond to this in a proactive and strategic way by focusing on where and how additional density is appropriate, while ensuring that redevelopment enhances-not detracts from-the character and livability of the community.

One key approach is to direct higher-density housing toward the urban core and along transit corridors, where infrastructure, access to jobs, and public transportation can support additional residents. By concentrating growth in these areas, the City can create more walkable, mixed-use environments while reducing pressure on established low-density neighborhoods. This also aligns with broader goals around sustainability, reducing vehicle miles traveled, and supporting transit use.

Planning can also play an important role in removing barriers to redevelopment by updating zoning standards, streamlining approvals, and ensuring that development regulations are clear and achievable. In many cases, existing zoning or design requirements unintentionally limit the feasibility of new housing. By aligning regulations with the City's housing goals, Planning can help ensure that redevelopment opportunities are actually realized.

At the same time, it is important to maintain a strong focus on quality of life. Redevelopment should incorporate thoughtful design, open space, and infrastructure improvements, including traffic calming measures-especially near parks and community-serving spaces-to ensure that increased density results in more livable, not more congested, neighborhoods.

Finally, Planning should take a long-term, area-based approach by identifying key opportunity sites and creating clear visions for their evolution over time. This allows redevelopment to occur in a coordinated way, rather than on a piecemeal basis, and helps ensure that growth supports a more connected, sustainable, and inclusive city.

Planning Commissioners are often asked to consider social, economic and environmental issues when reviewing proposals. How do we achieve a balanced community?

The limited availability of vacant land in Sunnyvale means that future growth will need to be accommodated through strategic redevelopment of existing sites. Planning can respond by clearly identifying where increased density is most appropriate-particularly in the urban core and along transit corridors-where infrastructure, access to jobs, and transportation options can support additional housing. Focusing growth in these areas allows the City to meet housing goals while preserving the character of established neighborhoods.

In addition, Planning should work to remove barriers that make redevelopment difficult to achieve. This includes updating zoning standards, streamlining the approval process, and ensuring that regulations are practical and aligned with the City's housing objectives. In many cases, well-intentioned requirements can unintentionally limit the feasibility of new housing. By refining these standards, the City can create a regulatory environment that encourages redevelopment and results in actual, built housing.

At the same time, redevelopment must be approached with a strong emphasis on livability and community benefit. This includes thoughtful site planning, integration of open space, and improvements to the public realm such as traffic calming near parks and pedestrian areas. By pairing increased density with high-quality design and infrastructure improvements, Planning can help ensure that redevelopment enhances the overall quality of life while supporting a more sustainable and inclusive future for the city.

What do you see as the greatest land use challenges facing the City? How do you propose addressing them?

The greatest land use challenge facing Sunnyvale is accommodating significant housing growth in a city that is largely built out. With limited vacant land, the City must rely on redevelopment and increased density to meet its housing goals. This creates a fundamental tension between the need to add housing-particularly in accessible, transit-oriented locations-and the desire to maintain the character and scale of existing neighborhoods. Planning must carefully balance these competing priorities while ensuring that infrastructure, public services, and open space keep pace with growth.

A related and very real challenge is community resistance to increased density, often reflected in a "Not In My Back Yard" mindset among existing homeowners. These concerns are understandable-they often relate to traffic, parking, neighborhood character, and perceived impacts to quality of life. However, they can also limit the City's ability to meet its housing obligations and address broader affordability issues. I believe Planning can respond by focusing growth in appropriate areas such as the urban core and along transit corridors, while also improving communication and transparency around the benefits of well-planned density. Clear design standards, strong project quality, and visible community benefits-such as improved public spaces and traffic calming near parks-can help build trust and demonstrate that increased density can be an asset rather than a detriment.

Ultimately, addressing these challenges requires both policy alignment and thoughtful implementation. Updating zoning standards, streamlining approvals, and reducing unnecessary constraints can make it more feasible to build housing where it is most needed. At the same time, investments in infrastructure, pedestrian safety, and neighborhood amenities are essential to ensure that growth enhances livability. By taking a balanced approach-one that acknowledges community concerns while still advancing the City's long-term housing and sustainability goals-Planning can help guide Sunnyvale toward a more inclusive, functional, and resilient future.

Description Area	View the Housing Element
Have you read the Housing Element?	Yes

What are your thoughts on the Housing Element? How should it be implemented?

Sunnyvale is:
Shifting from suburban to urban planning patterns
Using targeted density instead of citywide upzoning

Moffett Park:
Absorbs a large share of future growth
Reduces pressure on existing neighborhoods
Demonstrates how planning can proactively shape growth instead of reacting to it

Fair Political Practices Commission Statement of Economic Interests

Description Area

If you are appointed to the Arts Commission, Heritage Preservation Commission, Housing and Human Services Commission or the Planning Commission, you must electronically file the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) Statement of Economic Interests (Form 700), which will be a public record. Statement of Economic Interests - Form 700 Understanding of Filing Requirement I understand and agree that if I'm appointed to the Arts Commission, Heritage Preservation Commission, Housing and Human Services Commission or Planning Commission I must electronically file the Fair Political Practices Statement of Economic Interests (Form 700). This form reports my economic interests and those of my spouse or domestic partner, if applicable. I understand this will be a public record.

Radio Button

Yes

Voter Registration Requirement

Description Area

If you are applying for the Board of Library Trustee, Heritage Preservation Commission, Parks and Recreation Commission, Personnel Board or the Planning Commission, you must be a registered voter in Sunnyvale.

Are you currently a registered voter in Sunnyvale?

Yes

When was the last time you voted? Month/Year

NOV 2025

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

David Kesting

Date

Apr 14, 2026
