

Form Name: Boards and Commissions Application  
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Voter registration verified:  
Or:  
By: MH

## Applicant Information

<b>Name</b>	Ananya S Bhai
<b>Are you a Sunnyvale resident?</b>	Yes
<b>How long have you lived in Sunnyvale?</b>	10 years
<b>Description Area</b>	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.
<b>Current Main Residence</b>	[REDACTED]
<b>Email</b>	[REDACTED]
<b>Phone</b>	[REDACTED]
<b>Description Area</b>	Employment NoticeCity of Sunnyvale employees may not serve on a board or commission.
<b>I am a current City of Sunnyvale employee.</b>	No
<b>Have you ever served on a City of Sunnyvale board or commission?</b>	No
<b>Have you attended a meeting of the City Council, or a board or commission?</b>	No
<b>Have you attended meetings of the board(s) or commission(s) for which you are applying?</b>	No

## Board or Commission Selection

<b>First Choice</b>	Arts Commission
<b>Apply for another board or commission?1</b>	Yes
<b>Second Choice</b>	Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission
<b>Apply for another board or commission?2</b>	Yes

## Applicant Qualifications

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### What motivated you to apply for this board or commission?

I am applying because I'm growing up in the city these policies are shaping. As a high school student, I do not experience these issues as abstract policy categories. I experience them in the places where I spend my time: in arts spaces, on the walk home from school, and in watching how instability affects people around me. The arts matter to me because writing and theater have been two of the biggest parts of my life. I write poetry and stories, I am involved in theater and performance, and I have also attended community events like Hands on the Arts, so I understand how public arts programs can make a city feel creative, welcoming, and alive. Walkability matters to me because I have walked home from school for years, and I notice the details adults sometimes tune out, including rough, bumpy pavement that makes everyday movement harder not just for students, but also for older relatives like my grandmother when she visited. Housing and human services matter to me because I have seen instability up close through a friend whose family is moving because of housing. That made the issue feel immediate, not theoretical. I would be proud to contribute to the Arts Commission through my background in writing, theater, and community arts; to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission through my lived experience as a student pedestrian; and to the Housing and Human Services Commission through my concern for stability, belonging, and the everyday effects these issues have on young people and families.

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

I would bring strong communication skills, real leadership experience, and a perspective that is often missing from local decision-making: the perspective of a student who is directly affected by these choices. I currently serve as Vice President of my freshman class council at Wilcox High School, where I have helped lead major class activities, and I previously served as ASB President at Peterson Middle School, where I represented a large student body and helped organize schoolwide events. I also serve as Secretary of my school's Speech and Debate Club and previously founded and led a 60-plus-member Speech and Debate Club in middle school. Those experiences taught me how to prepare, listen, speak clearly, represent others, and contribute seriously in group settings. I also bring creativity and discipline from theater, writing, and performance. I know how to show up prepared, work with different personalities, and communicate ideas in a way that is clear and persuasive. Those strengths would help me contribute to the Arts Commission by bringing both literary and performing arts experience, to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission by offering an on-the-ground student view of accessibility and safety, and to the Housing and Human Services Commission by bringing empathy, thoughtfulness, and a strong sense of community impact.

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**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?**

I would take the role seriously from the start by doing the work before I entered the room. That means reading agendas, staff reports, and background materials carefully, learning the commission's scope, and understanding the practical tradeoffs behind each issue so that my comments are informed and useful rather than just reactive. During meetings, I would listen closely to staff, fellow commissioners, and members of the public, because strong advice to City Council should be both well-reasoned and grounded in real community experience. I would ask questions, look for what might be missing from the conversation, and try to connect policy decisions back to how they affect actual residents day to day. As a student, I would also bring a point of view that is easy to overlook but important: how these decisions land on young people who use public spaces, rely on safe streets, benefit from arts access, and feel the ripple effects of housing instability. In practice, that means I would focus on cultural access and public engagement for the Arts Commission, everyday usability and accessibility for the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission, and stability, dignity, and support for residents for the Housing and Human Services Commission.

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

I am currently a student at Wilcox High School in Sunnyvale, where I have maintained a 4.0 GPA. Although I do not yet have college degrees, I have developed relevant experience through leadership, civic engagement, communication, and the arts. My student government experience includes serving as Vice President of my freshman class council at Wilcox and previously serving as ASB President at Peterson Middle School. I have also built strong communication and analytical skills through speech and debate, where I currently serve as Secretary of my high school club and previously founded and led my middle school club. In addition, I participated in the Silicon Valley Youth Climate Action Youth Summer Leadership Academy and the Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety Youth Leadership Academy, both of which gave me exposure to public service, teamwork, and civic leadership. My theater experience, including stage management and performance, has further strengthened my discipline, collaboration, and appreciation for how arts programs build confidence and community. Altogether, these experiences have prepared me to contribute thoughtfully to the Arts Commission, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission, and the Housing and Human Services Commission.

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

My community involvement has centered on student leadership, youth civic engagement, speech and debate, and the arts. At Wilcox High School, I serve as Vice President of the 9th Grade Class Council and Secretary of the Speech and Debate Club. Earlier, I served as ASB President at Peterson Middle School and founded the school's Speech and Debate Club, which grew into a large student-led organization. I have also participated in the Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety Youth Leadership Academy and the Silicon Valley Youth Climate Action Youth Summer Leadership Academy, both of which strengthened my interest in public service and local issues. In the arts, I have been involved in theater both onstage and behind the scenes, including stage management and performance through school theater and Bay Area Drama Company, and I have attended community arts events like Hands on the Arts. What ties all of this together is that I like building things that bring people in, whether that is a club, an event, a performance, or a stronger community. That is why the Arts Commission, Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission, and Housing and Human Services Commission all genuinely appeal to me, each in a different but connected way.

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**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.

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

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

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**Board or Commission-Specific Questions**

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**Arts Commission**

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**What role do you think public art plays in a city?**

Public art helps turn a city from a place people simply live in into a place they actually feel connected to. It gives public spaces personality, creates shared points of memory, and reflects what a city values beyond efficiency and development. In a city like Sunnyvale, public art can also help make diversity visible by showing that different cultures, stories, and forms of expression belong in public life.

That matters to me because my own experience with writing and theater has shown me that art is not just decoration. It is how people process emotion, identity, and community. Public art brings that power into everyday spaces. Instead of creativity being hidden inside schools, stages, or private settings, it becomes part of daily life. I think that is especially important for young people, because public art can make a city feel more imaginative, welcoming, and human.

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**How might the City strengthen art programs in the community?**

I think Sunnyvale can strengthen its art programs by making them more visible, more participatory, and more connected to the people already creating art here. One reason community events like Hands on the Arts stand out to me is that they make art feel public and accessible rather than distant. They invite families and residents to experience art together, which is very different from treating art as something separate from everyday community life.

The City could build on that by expanding opportunities not only for residents to view art, but also to take part in it. That could mean more community festivals, youth showcases, literary events, performances in public spaces, and partnerships with schools and local arts groups. I think this is especially important because many students in Sunnyvale are already writing stories, performing in plays, speaking competitively, creating music, or making visual art, but much of that stays invisible outside school. Strong art programs should not just display finished work; they should also create pathways for community members, including young people, to contribute to the city's cultural life.

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**The Sunnyvale Public Art collection includes sculptures and other physical art. As an Arts Commissioner, how would you prioritize the inclusion of visual, literary, interactive and performing arts to embody the cultures of our diverse community?**

I would prioritize a balanced approach, because a diverse community should not be represented through only one kind of art. Visual art is important because it gives public spaces lasting identity and can become part of how residents recognize and remember the city. But if public art is limited mostly to sculptures and physical objects, it misses other ways culture is expressed and experienced.

That is why I would also strongly value literary, interactive, and performing arts. Literary art matters because stories, poetry, and language carry culture in a very direct way. That is especially meaningful to me as someone who writes poetry and stories, because I know writing can express identity and emotion in ways that physical art sometimes cannot. Performing arts also deserve a real place because theater, music, and live performance bring people together in a shared experience rather than asking them to observe from a distance. Interactive art matters for a similar reason: it invites participation and makes public culture feel open rather than passive.

If I were serving as an Arts Commissioner, I would want Sunnyvale's public arts strategy to reflect the full range of how people experience culture: through what they see, but also through what they read, hear, perform, and take part in. That would better reflect both the diversity of the community and the many different ways people connect to art.

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## **Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission**

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**Category One: I am a bicyclist or pedestrian residing in Sunnyvale.** Yes

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**Like many Santa Clara County cities, Sunnyvale is faced with problems stemming from traffic congestion and air pollution. Suggest ways the City can improve facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians. Also, how might the City improve education and safety programs for motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians?**

I think Sunnyvale should focus on making walking and biking feel safer, smoother, and more normal for everyday trips. The Active Transportation Plan already points in the right direction by recommending infrastructure changes such as bike lanes, crosswalks, sidewalk-gap closures, intersection improvements, protected facilities, and more low-stress routes. I would especially support improvements that students and families feel right away: better crossings near schools, smoother and more accessible sidewalks, stronger shade and comfort features, and routes that connect neighborhoods to schools, parks, libraries, and transit in a way that feels continuous rather than fragmented. The plan also notes the importance of more Class I, IIIB, and IV facilities and protected intersections, which I think is important because many people will not walk or bike regularly unless the network feels truly safe and low-stress.

One thing I notice personally is pavement quality. I have walked home from school for years, and even something as simple as rough or bumpy pavement changes how comfortable and accessible a route feels. When my grandmother visited, I noticed those same surfaces stood out even more for her. So I think facility improvements should not only focus on major projects, but also on the basics: smooth sidewalks, curb ramps, crossings that feel visible and direct, and infrastructure that works for older adults as well as students. That is part of what makes a city truly walkable.

On education and safety programs, I think Sunnyvale should continue and expand practical, recurring education rather than treating safety as a one-time message. The City already highlights tools like pedestrian scramble education and bicycle box education, and the Active Transportation Plan includes teaching walking and biking safety skills. I would build on that with more school-based safety education, clearer outreach for drivers about yielding and turning behavior, and simple public-facing materials that explain how to use newer street designs. For students and families, Safe Routes to School education is especially valuable because it connects infrastructure with real daily habits. For motorists, I think education should emphasize that streets are shared spaces and that slowing down, yielding properly, and paying attention at crossings are not minor courtesy issues; they are core safety behaviors.

**Have you read the Active Transportation Plan?**

Yes

**What are your thoughts on the Active Transportation Plan?**

I think the Active Transportation Plan is strong because it is trying to do more than just add disconnected bike lanes or isolated sidewalk fixes. What stood out to me is that it brings the bicycle, pedestrian, and Safe Routes to School plans together into one strategy focused on creating a safe, connected, comfortable, and low-stress network for all ages and abilities. I also like that it prioritizes projects using factors like collision reduction, equity, access to key destinations, community-identified need, and whether a project is part of the Safe Routes to School network. That makes the plan feel thoughtful rather than random. From my perspective as a student, one of the best parts of the plan is that it takes school access seriously. For students, walkability is not theoretical. It affects whether getting to and from school feels independent and safe or stressful and uncomfortable. If I had one overall reaction, it is that the plan's vision is strong and practical. The challenge is implementation. A good plan only matters if residents can actually feel the difference on the ground.

**Description Area**

[View the Vision Zero Plan](#)

**Have you read the Vision Zero Plan?**

Yes

**What are your thoughts on the Vision Zero Plan?**

I think the Vision Zero Plan is compelling because it starts from the right principle: traffic deaths and serious injuries are preventable, not inevitable. I also think it is important that Sunnyvale explicitly uses the word "collision" instead of "accident," because that reflects a mindset of responsibility and prevention instead of treating harm as unavoidable. The plan sets a goal of reducing fatalities and serious injuries by 50% by 2029 and continuing toward zero after that, which gives the City a clear standard to work toward.

What struck me most is how clearly the data shows that people walking and biking are at greater risk. The plan says over half of traffic-related deaths from 2012 to 2017 involved people walking or bicycling, and that pedestrians and bicyclists involved in collisions in Sunnyvale are 13 times more likely to be killed or seriously injured than drivers involved in collisions. That makes it clear that safety improvements for non-drivers are not optional extras; they should be central.

Overall, I think the Vision Zero Plan is strong because it treats safety as the first priority and recognizes that the transportation system should be designed around human vulnerability, not just vehicle movement.

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**Housing and Human Services Commission**

**Evaluate the quality and adequacy of the housing programs that serve the Sunnyvale community.**

Sunnyvale is making a real effort to address housing through affordable housing development and below-market-rate rental programs. The City is not only recognizing affordability as a problem, but also funding nonprofit developers and creating programs meant to make housing more accessible to lower-income residents. That shows seriousness and intention.

At the same time, the scale of the housing challenge still seems larger than the current response. In a place where housing costs are so high, even strong programs can feel inadequate if they are not reaching enough people. What stands out to me is that housing instability is not abstract. One of my friends is having to move because of housing, and seeing that instability up close made me think more deeply about how much housing affects whether people can stay rooted in their schools, friendships, and community. Because of that, I think Sunnyvale's housing programs are thoughtful, but they still need to keep growing in scale and impact.

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**Evaluate the quality and availability of the human services programs that serve the Sunnyvale community.**

The human services programs seem compassionate, practical, and centered around real needs. I think programs like street outreach, case management, temporary hotel shelter, safe parking, and hygiene services are important because they respond to people as human beings rather than treating the issue only as a public problem to manage. I also think the City's partnerships with local organizations are a strength, because services are usually more effective when they are connected and coordinated.

My main question is whether the availability and reach of these programs are enough for the level of need. Even good services can fall short if too few people can access them or if people do not stay connected to help over time. From my perspective, the quality seems strong, but the challenge is whether the City can provide enough continuity and capacity for people facing real instability.

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**Share your thoughts on how the City might better improve housing affordability, prevent displacement and serve our unhoused residents.**

I think the City should focus on three connected priorities: increasing affordable housing, preventing displacement earlier, and making sure support for unhoused residents leads to real stability rather than only short-term relief.

To improve affordability, Sunnyvale should continue expanding affordable housing and below-market-rate opportunities, while also looking for ways to make it easier for working families to remain in the community. To prevent displacement, I think the City should act earlier, before people reach a crisis point. Seeing a friend have to move because of housing made this issue feel very real to me. Once instability reaches that point, a lot has already been lost, including community ties and a sense of belonging. Prevention matters because it protects people before they are pushed out.

For unhoused residents, I think the City should continue investing in outreach, hygiene access, temporary shelter, and supportive services, but these efforts should connect to a long-term pathway toward housing and stability. The goal should not just be to respond to visible crisis, but to help people rebuild security in a lasting way.

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**Description Area**

[View Homelessness Response](#)

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**Have you read Homelessness Response?**

Yes

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**What are your thoughts on Sunnyvale's support for the unhoused community?**

I think Sunnyvale's support for the unhoused community is strongest when it combines compassion with structure. The City's current approach includes immediate services like street outreach, temporary hotel shelter, safe parking, hygiene services, and case management, while also investing in affordable housing and a broader long-term strategy. That seems thoughtful to me, because homelessness is not something that can be addressed by one program or one kind of response alone.

I also appreciate that the City is trying to balance support for unhoused residents with the well-being of the broader community. Those goals should not be treated as opposites. In my view, the strongest homelessness response is humane, practical, and focused on helping people move from instability toward stability. Seeing housing instability affect someone I know has made me take these issues more seriously, and it reinforces for me that homelessness and housing insecurity are not distant problems. They affect real people's safety, dignity, and ability to stay connected to their community.

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**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.

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**Radio Button**

Yes

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**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.

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**I agree**

Yes

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**Your full name**

Ananya Siddharth Bhai

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**Date**

Apr 16, 2026

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