



CITY OF COACHELLA

COMMISSION APPLICATION

NAME: Elizabeth Aguilar

ADDRESS: [REDACTED]

TELEPHONE: [REDACTED] E-MAIL: [REDACTED]

COMMISSION:

- ☒ **Planning**
- ☐ **Cultural and Arts**
- ☐ **Parks and Recreation**
- ☐ **Utilities User Tax Citizen Oversight (UUT)**
- ☐ **Youth Advisory** (To be eligible for appointment to the Commission you must be enrolled in high school. Please state your age and high school you currently attend in the "other comments" in section 5.)
- ☐ **Social Justice & Public Safety**

To be eligible for appointment to any Commission you must be a resident of the City of Coachella. Members may only serve on one commission/committee.

Note: In the event a member of the commission has three (3) consecutive unexcused absences from meetings of the Commission, the City Council may declare the office of such member vacant.

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PLEASE FURNISH BRIEF RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONS BELOW:

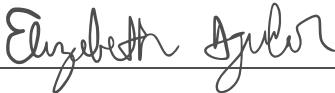
1. Why do you think you should be appointed? What is there specifically in your background, training, education and interests that qualifies you as a candidate?

2. What do you see as the goals and objectives of the Commission? How would you help achieve these objectives and goals?

3. What special qualities can you bring to the Commission?

4. Do you have any questions or comments about the Commission's structure or functions?

5. Other comments and/or ideas as to how you as a member of the selected Commission could benefit the City of Coachella.

Signature 

Date 1/4/25

Note: Members of commissions shall be appointed for four-year terms or less. The term of each commission member shall continue for the term of the nominating council member and automatically terminate when the council member's term ends. If a council member is reelected, that council member is entitled to make all new nominations or may choose to re-nominate the council member's previous nominee.

Youth Advisory Commission Note: The term of a Commissioner is one year from August to June; mirroring the local school district's school year.

PLEASE RETURN THIS COMPLETED APPLICATION TO:

Deputy City Clerk
City of Coachella
53-462 Enterprise Way
Coachella, CA 92236

cityclerk@coachella.org

(Revised 10-30-2023)

1. Why do you think you should be appointed? What is there specifically in your background, training, education and interests that qualifies you as a candidate?

I believe I should be appointed to the planning committee because of my deep-rooted passion for building a stronger and more inclusive community and my unique blend of professional experiences, education, and ongoing personal development. Having worked closely with underserved populations through John Muir Charter School (continuation high school; students age 18-25), I've seen firsthand how access to thoughtful planning and resources can transform lives. This experience has given me a strong sense of responsibility to contribute to shaping a city where every resident feels supported and heard.

One of my proudest achievements has been connecting underserved populations to important resources such as healthcare, immigration support, and job training through collaborative partnerships with local organizations. This has not only strengthened my understanding of community needs but also reinforced my belief in the power of equitable urban development. Academically, my bachelor's degree from UC Riverside and current pursuit of a GIS certificate reflect my commitment to equipping myself with the tools needed to make data-driven decisions. I'm excited about the opportunity to bring these skills into practice, especially as GIS plays a critical role in identifying patterns and creating efficient, sustainable urban spaces.

Born and raised in Coachella, I have admired the progress of Coachella's rich potential. Joining the planning committee would be a meaningful way for me to give back and ensure that Coachella continues to grow in a way that benefits all its residents. My ability to communicate effectively, navigate complex challenges,

and bring people together makes me confident in my ability to contribute to this role.

2. What do you see as the goals and objectives of the Commission? How would you help achieve these objectives and goals?

I see the goals and objectives of the planning commission as fostering responsible urban development, ensuring equitable access to resources and services, and maintaining a balance between growth and sustainability. The commission plays a role in shaping the community by addressing housing, transportation, land use, and public spaces. Its work must reflect the needs of all residents while prioritizing inclusivity, environmental stewardship, and economic vitality.

To help achieve these objectives, I would draw on my experience in community engagement, education, and resource coordination. At John Muir Charter School, I've worked to connect underserved populations to essential resources by fostering partnerships with local organizations. This ability to understand and address diverse community needs would allow me to contribute meaningfully to inclusive planning decisions. Additionally, I am eager to bring my growing expertise in GIS to the commission. GIS tools enable data-driven analysis that can inform sustainable development, such as identifying areas that need improvement with accessibility in public resources. By integrating these insights into decision-making, we can create a city that grows responsibly while preserving its environmental assets.

Collaboration is key to achieving these goals. My ability to engage with stakeholders from various backgrounds, communicate effectively, and prioritize shared objectives ensures that I can help the commission create an inclusive and sustainable community for all residents.

3. What special qualities can you bring to the Commission?

I bring a unique combination of skills, experiences, and perspectives that would contribute to the commission's work. One of my key strengths is my ability to foster collaboration across diverse groups, a quality I've honed through my work at John Muir Charter School, where I facilitated partnerships between the school and local community organizations. I'm adept at navigating different interests and building bridges to ensure all voices are heard, especially those of underserved populations.

Additionally, my background in international engagement with the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA) has provided me with a broader perspective on global development, diplomacy, and the importance of inclusive decision-making. While at WFUNA, I helped organize youth events and coordinated with a variety of international stakeholders, which sharpened my ability to work in diverse, multicultural environments. This experience has made me value considering different viewpoints and integrating a wide range of ideas to inform decision-making, especially in complex planning contexts. I am also committed to learning and self-improvement, currently pursuing a GIS certificate to strengthen my analytical and data-driven approach to planning. I see GIS as an important tool for informed, sustainable urban development, and I'm excited to integrate this knowledge into the commission's work.

These qualities, collaboration, a global mindset, and a passion for learning and sustainability, are what I would bring to the commission, ensuring that decisions are inclusive, data-informed, and focused on creating a thriving community for all.

4. Do you have any questions or comments about the Commission's structure or functions?

One question I have is about the commission's process for engaging the community, especially underrepresented groups, during the planning and decision-making stages. How does the commission ensure that all voices are heard and that diverse perspectives are incorporated into planning proposals?

Also, I'd be interested to learn more about how the commission integrates new technologies and data tools, like GIS, into its decision-making processes. Given my interest in using GIS for urban planning, I'd love to understand how such tools are currently being utilized or if there are opportunities for incorporating them further.

Lastly, I'm curious about the commission's approach to sustainability and how it is prioritized in long-term planning. Are there specific sustainability goals or initiatives the commission is focusing on that I could potentially contribute to with my background in environmental science and community outreach?

5. Other comments and/or ideas as to how you as a member of the selected Commission could benefit the City of Coachella.

As a member of the Planning Commission, I believe I can bring a unique and valuable perspective to benefit the City of Coachella. My background in community engagement, education, and resource coordination will allow me to help ensure that planning decisions are inclusive and reflect the needs of all residents, particularly those from underserved communities. I am committed to creating spaces where everyone's voice is heard, and I would work to build stronger connections between the commission and local organizations, ensuring that planning efforts align with the community's needs.

Furthermore, my ongoing pursuit of a GIS certificate and my interest for sustainable urban development position me to contribute meaningfully to long-term planning initiatives. I am excited to use GIS tools to inform decisions, improve resource distribution, and ensure that growth happens in a way that respects the environment and promotes sustainability.

Additionally, my experience in international collaboration with the World Federation of United Nations Associations has broadened my understanding of how different regions tackle urban planning challenges. This global perspective will allow me to approach local issues with creative solutions and the ability to think beyond the immediate context, considering broader trends in development and sustainability.

Ultimately, I believe my combination of local community work, international experience, and commitment to continuous learning can help ensure that Coachella's growth is thoughtful, inclusive, and sustainable for years to come.