



CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: Thomas Duong

Age: 47

Family: Married to Vien Duong, father to Bella and Nico, ages 10 and 5, and son of Thang The Duong and Hop Tuat Duong

Hometown: San Jose

Lived in San Jose since: 1977

Education: Santa Clara University, Andrew Hill High School

Occupation: Senior Mortgage Consultant

Employer: Synergy One Lending

Political experience: Democrat

Notable affiliations: President of Asian Real Estate of America – Silicon Valley and Captain – US Air Force

1. What do you see as the greatest challenges when it comes to providing residents with a livable, affordable and safe community?

The greatest challenge to ensuring San Jose residents with a livable, affordable, and safe community is the lack of political will to do the right thing.

The skyrocketing cost of living, prevalence of crime, and increasing homeless in a time of economic growth is troubling. However, it takes integrity and coalition building at city hall to make sure we are adopting permanent solutions – not popular shortcuts.

We need permanent, steady increases in our supply of affordable housing by reducing barriers and rezoning of commercial spaces to create the urban villages described in the city's general plan. We need to be permanently staff up our police department to enable them to keep protecting the public. We need permanent supportive strategies to rehabilitate the homeless. We need the political will to do the right thing and stop talking about the problems and actually start fixing them.

2. What is the biggest opportunity for your district or city during the next four years?

I believe the biggest opportunity for our city and for my district is the proposed Google development. It can change the landscape of downtown San Jose and generate much needed revenue for this city. The urbanization of downtown San Jose will revitalize a downtown that has very little commercial activity after 5 pm.

The effort to expand Diridon station into a Grand Central Station has so much promise for the city. It is absolutely necessary in order for our infrastructure to accommodate the additional jobs and housing units proposed for the Google project.

I believe the opportunity for my district is two-fold. My district has transportation corridors on Monterey and Tully Rd that lead directly into downtown San Jose. If we could expand mass transit to my district this would create economic opportunities for the residents and businesses in my neighborhood. The second main opportunity that I see for my district are the job opportunities that a Google development would provide. I would like the residents of my district to seek the high tech jobs and additional jobs that would come with an expansion of Google's presence.

3. Describe your commitment to your district or city leading up to your bid for office.

At the age of 7 my family moved to San Jose in 1977, having just immigrated to America in 1975 after the fall of Saigon. My childhood was a happy one in east San Jose and I owe all the successes in my life to the family values shared by this District.

I grew up here. I have fond memories playing in the neighborhood on Locke Dr. I would spend my summers in Coyote Creek playing paintball and getting into all sorts of trouble. I attended the public school system through high school - Los Arboles, Sylvandale, and Andrew Hill. The friends I made in school are still lifelong friends - they are my family. This community means the world to me because this is where I grew up and learned the importance of family values.

As well as being a product of my district, six years of active duty service in the US Air Force gave me tested experience in leadership and service to my country. My military service has kept me grounded and helped me realize my purpose was public service. It taught me about humility, accountability, and perseverance – all the qualities that I believe would be crucial as a city councilmember. I also served as President of the Asian Real Estate of America Silicon Valley Chapter in 2017,

which promotes home ownership sustainability for the AAPI community. We also devoted much of my term as President to community service, helping with Rebuilding Together and Sacred Heart Charities to provide relief for the flood victims in San Jose.

4. Silicon Valley and the Bay Area are at the center of global, technological advancement. How do you see technology's role in changing the lives of both longtime residents and transplants?

The tech industry is transforming our society as we speak. New technologies can provide ways to increase access to transportation, protect our critical infrastructure, improve healthcare, and solve many other issues.

The Milken Institute ranks San Jose as the #1 high-tech area in North America. High-tech companies make up nearly 12% of private-sector businesses in San Jose, the greatest concentration in the US and almost 3x the national average. In 2016, Silicon Valley's total jobs in its innovation industries jumped 5%, a higher growth than any other competitor region.

Exciting new technologies will transform lives and improve access to resources. I believe that we need to take advantage of being at the center of all this technological advancement. The first step is access. For example, self-driving cars will open doors for the disabled, seniors, children, and lower-income families to have access to transportation.

Expanding the connectivity to underserved communities is another important step to improving access. We have a project with the city of San Jose to bring free wi-fi access to James Lick High School and its surrounding neighborhoods. The same plan is in place for Yerba Buena High school and eventually Andrew Hill High school which are both in my district. These projects are crucial to bringing connectivity to underserved communities.

Additionally, we can harness public-private partnerships to bring a multitude of STEM classes, coding, robotics, and engineering classes to our schools. With the resources within our reach, we should seize the opportunity to tap into the resources that Silicon Valley companies can provide us. I see this as the top priority that we can bring to our residents and transplants. Our education system should work with high tech companies to improve our education system, foster innovation, and develop the next technological advancements through the future of this city - our children.

My goal is to ensure responsible innovation. I don't want our people and public roads to be a testing ground for unsafe technology. But I fully encourage the job opportunities and innovation that tech brings to our city. I'm committed to working with the industry to promote economic growth, solve problems, and create a more equitable society.