



## **Santa Clara County Association (CA) Helps Elect Pro-Business REALTOR® Champion to City Council – August 2015**

When a seat opened up on the San José, CA City Council last January, the 5,000-member Santa Clara County Association of REALTORS® decided to take action. They saw an opportunity to elect a candidate who would stand up for their issues on a council that was fairly evenly divided between labor and business. And there were a number of significant property-rights issues looming on the horizon.

Adding a grant from the REALTOR® Party to political action funds of their own, they supported REALTOR® Champion Manh Nguyen, a Vietnamese-American businessman, with a powerful and positive independent expenditure campaign. He won a decisive victory in the June election.

The Santa Clara County Association of REALTORS® (SCCAOR) has a successful track record supporting local elected officials whose values align with those of the REALTORS® and homeowners, says Government Affairs Director Vince Rocha. He credits the Campaign Services team at the National Association of REALTORS® for its efficient delivery of top-notch political expertise. In a special election like this one, he explains, the electorate tends to be not as large as in a regular election year, and messaging has to target proven voters in order to be effective. Working with NAR, SCCAOR reached those voters with a direct mail piece and phone calls promoting Nguyen as a candidate. "Over the phone, we sorted out the voting data and what language would resonate in the call script, and between the NAR team's professional understanding and my local knowledge, it was like hand-in-glove. Couldn't have been easier." Rocha notes that the grant application process requires an appropriate level of planning and thought from a local association, and he appreciates that the scrutiny brought to bear results in a judicious distribution of REALTOR® Party funds.

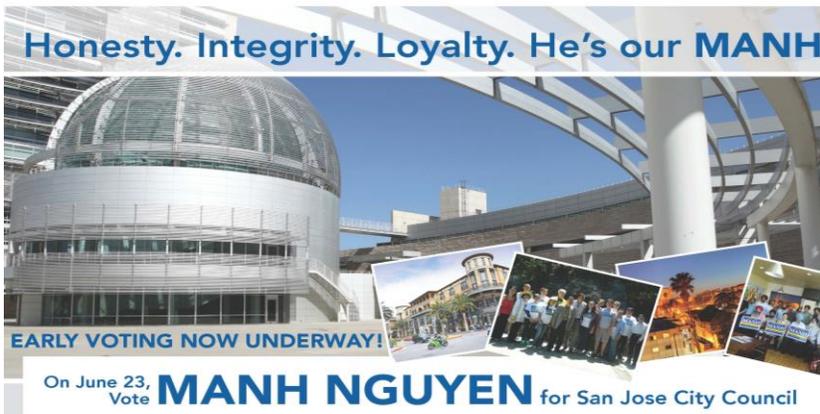
Nguyen was one of the ten candidates who threw their hats in the ring for the vacant seat, most of whom were interviewed by members of SCCAOR's Local Candidate Recommendation Committee. He secured the second highest number of votes in the primary, and won the endorsement of the Santa Clara County REALTORS® in the runoff campaign against a pro-labor candidate. The endorsement reads, in part, "Manh Nguyen has demonstrated a thoughtful and strong commitment to the needs of San José's homeowners and is a proponent of private property rights. His inclusive approach towards both businesses and residents along with his long involvement in the community through his Vietnamese language newspaper and radio program will serve District 4 residents well."

"The key to our success in these races is in having clear direction from our members," says Rocha. "I can always count on the LCRC Committee to make and implement informed decisions." Because independent expenditure campaigns in California cannot be conducted in coordination with a candidate, all decisions are based on an internal analysis of the candidate's own campaign, and on records of the LCRC interviews.



Shortly after the election, Nguyen attended SCCAOR's annual membership picnic, where he expressed his gratitude and took the time to meet with members. "We invite all the local elected officials," says Rocha. "Many of them make a point of coming," he notes, "because they know that REALTORS® understand the needs of the community and our neighborhoods." Going in to the fall, the San José City Council may be working on a restrictive rent control ordinance that is of serious concern to the REALTORS®. "We're glad to have Manh Nguyen on our side," says Rocha. "But really, it's not as black-and-white simple as that. We're trying to work with the whole Council, to find solutions that will work better for everyone. And to their credit, they're trying, too."

*To learn more about how the Santa Clara County Association is helping to elect REALTOR® Champions to public office, contact Vince Rocha, its Government Affairs Director, at [vince@sccaor.com](mailto:vince@sccaor.com) or 408-445-5063.*



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