

## **ABOUT YOU**

**Please provide your name as it will appear on the ballot:** Margaret Abe-Koga

**What office are you seeking?** Santa Clara County Supervisor, District 5

**Are you an incumbent in this office?** No

**Do you now or have you ever held elected office(s)? *If so, please list title(s), jurisdiction(s), and years in each office:***

Santa Clara County Board of Education Trustee, Area 1 - 2002-2204, Mountain View City Council 2006-2014, 2016, present - Mayor in 2009 and 2020

**Where's your hometown?** San Mateo, CA

**What is your current city of residence?** Mountain View, CA

**What is your highest level of education?** AB 1992 in American Government from Harvard University

**What is your current primary vocation/occupation?** Councilmember, City of Mountain View

**Do you have an arts background of any kind? *If so, please explain.***

I have taken Art courses throughout the years. I played the Koto - Japanese musical instrument and hold an assistant instructor certification. My daughter is studying studio arts in college and interned at Content Magazine which I have been reading and learning more about the San Jose Arts Scene.

## **ABOUT YOUR CAMPAIGN**

**Please share your candidate statement as it will appear in voting materials. (approx. 200 words)**

As Supervisor, I'll ensure safe schools/neighborhoods, champion small businesses, demand responsible management of taxpayer dollars, and work to reduce homelessness in our communities.

I'm a daughter of immigrants, working Mom, breast cancer survivor and former small business owner who has spent over two decades in public service, starting on the Santa Clara County Board of Education and — since 2007 -- as Mountain View's first Asian American woman Mayor and Councilmember. I guided my City through the Great Recession, COVID, and skyrocketing inflation by maintaining balanced budgets, holding the line on taxes and maintaining excellent bond ratings, and will bring the same accountability to the Board of Supervisors.

I'm proud to have increased law enforcement staffing, improved emergency communications for better public safety response, and established Santa Clara County's Clean Energy Authority.

Sheriff Bob Jonsen, District Attorney Jeff Rosen, Deputy Sheriffs,

Correctional and Probation Officers, and Mountain View and San Jose Police Officers all endorse me as the leader to fight increasing property crime and protect our safety.

Santa Clara County, Mountain View and Palo Alto firefighters also endorse my candidacy to fully invest in wildfire prevention and protect our gorgeous coastlines and open spaces. We must ensure future generations have a healthy, sustainable future. Join us! MAK4Supervisor.com.

**What is your campaign budget?** \$250,000 (voluntary expenditure limit)

**How much have you raised to date? *Please specify if you have loaned or contributed any personal funds to your campaign and how much.*** \$285,000 with a \$27,000 loan

**How many doors have you personally knocked to date?** 20,000

### **ABOUT THE ARTS**

**What is your perception of the current state of arts and culture in San José? (250 words)**

San Jose has a thriving multicultural and diverse arts scene. As part of Silicon Valley, San Jose has an opportunity to stake out a niche with digital arts as well. The City should increase its investment in the arts as there is much potential for San Jose to be known as an arts destination but there is a long way to go.

**How would you define the role of arts and culture in San José's economy? (250 words)**

Arts and Culture could play a significant role in San Jose's economy by providing attractions that would generate visitors and boost commerce. Most large world class cities have a strong visual, musical and performing arts scene and San Jose should strive to do the same. It could become a tourist destination with an enhanced arts scene.

Art also helps to foster innovation by challenging us to see the world around us through a different lens. Having a healthy and thriving arts scene helps all of society by fostering a sense of curiosity about the world around us allowing us to see the opportunities that may have been hidden to us. It also allows us to connect to different cultures and lived experiences that are different from our own. This expansion of mind also helps to foster innovation to address the challenges around us.

**Were you familiar with SJAA before receiving this survey?** Yes

**If yes to the above, are you familiar with our current [policy priorities](#)?**

No

### **ABOUT OUR PRIORITIES**

*The following questions are directly related to SJAA's policy priorities. Your direct responses are appreciated!*

**Would you support a policy requiring large private developments to contribute funding and/or space and other resources to public arts and cultural programs in San José — similar to existing policies in**

**Bay Area cities like Sunnyvale and Berkeley? Why or why not? *You can read an overview of SJAA's policy proposal [here](#).***

Yes, Mountain View has a policy that public projects include 1% of its budget towards public art and we have been exploring something similar for private projects.

**Would you support reallocating the current 40% General Fund set aside from the Transient Occupancy Tax (aka TOT or Hotel Tax) to arts, culture, and tourism programs? Why or why not?**

The City of San Jose should consider raising the TOT comparable to neighboring cities, and then allocating a large percentage to the arts.

**Would you support the creation of positions within city departments for artists in residence to coordinate with staff on community engagement and strategic planning — as other municipalities like [Los Angeles County](#) are already doing? Why or why not?**

It would depend on the size of the city and its budget. Certainly, large cities like San Jose could probably accommodate, but a small city like Saratoga may have difficulty. I would be interested in looking further into creating a regional entity that could serve the smaller cities that don't have the resources to dedicate to a full time position.

**OPEN FORUM**

**What are some other ideas you have for increasing City support for arts and culture?**

Promoting more public art- for example in Mountain View, we had a call for artists to paint the utility boxes around the city. We are also encouraging more murals on bare walls.

Public capital projects should always include art and I applaud the County's push to include a percentage of the construction cost to be earmarked for the inclusion of art at the project site. I also think that art should not just be stand alone installations but also included as part of the capital improvement project itself, and as we call it in Mountain View, functional art.

The City of San Jose should also expand its offerings of arts education through its recreation classes. This will allow greater access to arts education for everyone regardless of financial ability. I also applaud the San Jose Recreation department for ensuring that all classes are inclusive and providing online classes for those who are unable to attend in person.

However there should be a comprehensive listing of all arts offering in the City in one location so it is easy to find things to do, classes to take, performances to see, and information about current public art installations, etc.

I would also like to see art included in San Jose sponsored public events.

**What do you wish we had asked but didn't?**

N/A