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BAC-10041

Contact Information

Contact Name	Mary Nguyen	Home Address	
Preferred Phone		Home City	
Preferred Email		Home State	
Other Phone		Home Zip	
Other Email		County	
DOB		Hispanic or Latino origin or Descent?	No
Gender	Female	Race/Ethnicity	Asian
Other Gender		Other Ethnicity	
		Salutation	Ms.
		Pronouns	She/Her/Hers

Application

Status	New	Council Resolution Number	
Notes			

Board Information

Board Name	Downtown Development Authority (DDA)	Original Start Date	
		End Date	
		Other boards or commissions served	

Work Information

Employer	Work Address
Position	Work City
Business Phone #	Work State
Work Email	Work Zip

Additional Information

Are you a registered voter?	Objection to appointment?	No
If so, what county?	Special Information	
Denver City Council District No	Registered Lobbyist	No
Conflict of Interest Explanation	Conflict of Interest	No

Education and General Qualifications

Name of High School	Name of Graduate School
Location of High School	Location of Graduate School
# of Years Attended High school	# of Years Attended Graduate School
Did you Graduate High School	Did you Graduate
	Graduate Major
Name of College	
Location of College	
# of Years Attended College	
Did you Graduate College	
Undergrad Major	

Reference Details

Reference Name #1	Reference Email #1
Reference Phone #1	Reference Address #1
Reference Name #2	Reference Email #2
Reference Phone #2	Reference Address #2
Reference Name #3	Reference Email #3
Reference Phone #3	Reference Address #3
Agree to a background check	
Owner	Created By
Esther Lee Leach	Denver Integration, 5/15/2025, 4:04 PM
	Last Modified By
	Denver Integration, 5/15/2025, 4:04 PM

Notes & Attachments

DDDA Board Letter.pdf

Type	Attachment
Last Modified	Denver Integration
Description	View file

Mary-Standing-Over-Table-Turnips.jpg

Type	Attachment
Last Modified	Denver Integration
Description	View file

Mary Nguyen_Resume_5.15.25.pdf

Type	Attachment
Last Modified	Denver Integration
Description	View file

Mary Nguyen_Bio.pdf

Type	Attachment
Last Modified	Denver Integration
Description	View file

Applicants History

5/15/2025, 4:04 PM

User	Denver Integration
Action	Created.

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MARY NGUYEN

mary@oliveandfinch.com

Skills Summary

Denver-based entrepreneur and chef with proven success at building brands and growing business based upon a constant attention to product quality and guest experience. Chef, founder, president of successful Denver-based concepts since 2001.

Experience

2024 - present Collective Concessions Coffee, LLC

Founder, President - Certified ACDBE, DBE, MWBE, SBE, SBE

2024 - present Collective Concessions Retail, LLC

Founder, President

2023 - present Little Finch, Blake St., LLC

Founder, President - Certified ACDBE, DBE, MWBE, SBE, SBEC

2023 - present Collective Management Partners, LLC

Founder, President - Certified ACDBE, DBE, MWBE, SBE, SBEC

2019 - present Olive & Finch Comm dba Finch, On The Fly

Founder, President - Certified ACDBE, DBE, MWBE, SBE, SBEC

2017 - present Olive & Finch Cherry Creek

Founder, President - Certified ACDBE, DBE, WBE, WOSBE, MWBE, SBE, SBEC

2013 - present Olive & Finch Uptown

Founder, President

2011 - 2015 Street Kitchen Asian Bistro

Founder, President

2005 - 2017 Parallel 17 Restaurant

Founder, President; Denver Business Journal 40 Under 40 winner

2001 - 2005 Blue Fire Catering

Founder, President

2000 - 2001 Northfield Trading

Commodities Trading Advisor

1998 - 2000 Piper Jaffray (now US Bank)

Investment Banking Analyst in Public Finance

Education

University of Colorado, Boulder

1998 BA Economics and International Affairs

Philanthropy / Community Outreach

Asian Chamber of Commerce

Board Member

Asian Chamber Foundation

Board Chair

Asian Girls Ignite

Active Volunteer

EatDenver

Member

Emily Griffith Foundation

Board Member

Give 5

Advisory Board Member

Huntington Bank

Community Advisory Board Member

Visit Denver

Board Member

Young Americans Bank

Mentor



Mary Nguyen Bio

Mary Nguyen is a self-taught chef and a leading figure in Denver’s culinary scene with more than 20 years of experience. From her early career in investment banking and commodities trading to becoming North America’s only female executive sushi chef, Nguyen has built a reputation as a prominent BIPOC chef. She is the founder and president of the Olive & Finch Collective, a diverse portfolio that includes restaurants (Olive & Finch), cafes (Little Finch), a food and beverage production and distribution company (Finch, On The Fly) serving institutional clients and a hospitality management consulting firm (Collective Management Partners) supporting hospitality brands.

Beyond her success in the hospitality industry, Nguyen is deeply committed to mentorship, education, and inclusive community development. She serves as Chair of the Asian Chamber Foundation and sits on the board of the Emily Griffith Foundation—both of which support education and workforce development initiatives. In these leadership roles, she works to remove barriers to entry for historically excluded communities and champion opportunities for growth and meaningful representation in both education and leadership.

Nguyen also sits on the boards of the Colorado Asian Chamber of Commerce and Visit Denver, where she advocates for minority-owned businesses and serves on the chamber’s DEI Task Force, providing diversity training to corporations and nonprofits. Through this work, she helps organizations engage more effectively with the Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) community and ensures their voices are included in key economic and policy discussions. In addition, she serves on Huntington Bank’s Advisory Board, focusing on expanding access to financial resources for small businesses, driving community development, and addressing disparities through fairness and equity. She is also a member of the Give 5 Advisory Board, supporting civic engagement and leadership among experienced professionals. Passionate about educating the next generation of entrepreneurs, Nguyen has worked with Junior Achievement and continues to mentor young business leaders through the Young Americans Bank, helping them develop financial literacy, entrepreneurial thinking, and the confidence to lead.

Mary Nguyen was recently honored with the 2025 Girl Scouts Women of Distinction award, which recognizes exceptional leaders who serve as role models for young women and demonstrate a deep commitment to their communities. Mary has also received the title of Outstanding Woman In Business by the Denver Business Journal, an award granted to innovative women business leaders who contribute significantly to their community. Olive & Finch has also earned widespread acclaim—named a finalist in the *Denver Business Journal*’s Small Business Awards, included in *ColoradoBiz*’s list of the Top 200 private and women-owned businesses, and recognized as a finalist in the Better Business Bureau’s Torch Awards for Ethics. The brand has received multiple accolades from *5280 Magazine*, including Readers’ Choice



awards for Best Chef, Best Bakery, Best Brunch, and Best Cocktail Menu. *Westword Magazine* also ranked Olive & Finch among the Ten Best Places to Eat Breakfast in Denver.

Additionally, she was featured in “The Empowerment Project,” an award-winning film celebrating the achievements of a select group of women across the United States from various fields, and was the featured chef in the Denver episode of “Bizarre Foods with Andrew Zimmern.” She also regularly appears on *Colorado & Company*, Colorado’s longest-running daily show on Channel 9, in a segment titled “Fresh Takes with Chef Mary,” where she discusses culture, hospitality and lifestyle with more than 20,000 daily viewers.

A proud Denver native, Nguyen is a dedicated steward of the city’s growth and development. As an entrepreneur and community advocate, she believes in the power of hospitality to bring people together and strengthen communities. Through thoughtful investments, collaborative partnerships and a shared vision, she works to shape communities that celebrate diverse cultures, vibrant culinary scenes, dynamic city centers and welcoming public spaces.



Mary Nguyen
Founder & President
Olive & Finch Collective



May 15, 2025

Denver Downtown Development Authority:

I am writing to express my interest in serving on the Denver Downtown Development Authority (DDDA) Board. As the founder and president of Olive & Finch Collective, I bring firsthand insight into the economic and operational realities of small businesses and a clear understanding of what is needed to build a vibrant, resilient downtown. I believe this perspective is critical to fulfilling the DDDA's mission and maximizing the impact of its tax increment financing tools.

I am also a proud Denver native who has witnessed downtown evolve through multiple iterations—from periods of economic boom to challenges in activation and accessibility. This lifelong connection to the city has instilled in me a deep sense of responsibility and urgency to help shape a downtown that is inclusive, dynamic, and future-focused.

For over 20 years, I have been an entrepreneur and small business owner across various neighborhoods in Denver. This longevity and breadth of experience give me a unique lens into the broader ecosystem of the city's economy—what drives small business success, what stalls it, and how public-private partnerships can be leveraged to make measurable, meaningful change.

My experience launching and scaling Olive & Finch Collective—across seven locations and various business lines—has given me a nuanced view of what supports business success: thoughtfully activated street-level spaces, consistent foot traffic, diverse and affordable offerings, and strong collaboration between public and private stakeholders. These factors are central to catalyzing the new development, adaptive reuse, and economic opportunities outlined in the DDDA's Amended Plan of Development. Small businesses are more than tenants—they are anchors of community and engines of tax increment growth.

As the DDDA evaluates investments across categories like placemaking, economic opportunity, and arts and culture, I can provide critical input on how these dollars translate to tangible outcomes for small businesses—outcomes that directly influence occupancy, revenue generation, and long-term sustainability. I understand where public investment can unlock private confidence, where infrastructure gaps deter growth, and where intentional strategies can cultivate inclusive economic participation. My perspective can help the Board prioritize investments that truly move the needle in expanding the district's tax base.

Additionally, my background in municipal finance and current civic engagement—including leadership roles with Visit Denver and the executive committee of the 2025 Vibrant Denver Bond initiative—has reinforced my capacity



to work across sectors and interpret the complexities of public funding mechanisms. I deeply respect the principles in the DDDA's Tax Increment Investment Policy, particularly the emphasis on equity, return on investment, and catalytic potential. These values mirror my own approach to sustainable growth.

Downtown Denver is in a pivotal moment of transformation. The DDDA's role in shaping its future—through smart, equitable investment—is more important than ever. I would be honored to bring my lived experience as a small business leader, lifelong resident, and financial strategist to help ensure the Board's decisions are grounded in both impact and insight.

Thank you for considering my application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary Nguyen".

Mary Nguyen
Founder & President | Olive & Finch Collective