



## **NEWS RELEASE**

**FROM SEATTLE DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOODS**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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NOTE: Candidate information in Chinese and Vietnamese will be available soon.

### **International Special Review District Board announces candidates for annual election**

**SEATTLE** (November 4, 2021) – Due to continued impacts of COVID-19 and ongoing public health concerns, the 2021 [International Special Review District \(ISR D\)](#). Board election will be held by mail-in ballot only. There will be no in-person voting this year. Ballots must be received by the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods by Tuesday, November 30, 2021. Community members who are registered for this [election](#) will receive a ballot and self-addressed stamp envelope by mail. Voters are encouraged to return their ballots early to make sure they are received by the 30th.

Five board positions are up for election:

- Position #1 for a Business Owner, Property Owner, or Employee
- Position #2 for a Resident, Tenant, or Community Participant
- Position #3 for a Business Owner, Property Owner, or Employee
- Position #4 for a Resident, Tenant, or Community Participant
- Position #5 for At-Large

Nominations closed on Tuesday, November 2 and nine candidates were nominated. Candidate information is provided below, and brief candidate biographies will be mailed with the ballots.

One candidate is seeking Position #1 for a Business Owner, Property Owner, or Employee

**Ryan B. Gilbert** is the Chief Operating Officer of the Seattle Indian Health Board, an indigenous community health center located in the Chinatown International District (CID). He believes it is important to be part of the vital work put forth by the ISR D Board.

#### Two candidates are seeking Position #2 for Resident, Tenant, or Community Participant

**Matt Chan** has worked and volunteered with many community-based organizations and non-profits, including CISC, ICHS, International Examiner, InterimCDA, and Wing Luke. This work has increased his awareness of the needs of the community. He is dedicated to helping make sure the CID is more livable and continues to be a place where all Asian Americans can celebrate and honor their cultures, for current and future generations. Matt is currently seated on the ISRD Board and is interested in a second term to provide continuity as projects come before the Board.

**Ming Zhang** is an architect who worked with three community organizations to fundraise and assist in the design and construction of the Chinatown Gate. He is also a participant in Chinatown Chamber of Commerce events. He views the CID as a strategic part of Seattle and a south gateway to downtown. His heritage is deeply rooted in the community, and by serving on the Board he hopes to contribute more to make the community a better and proud place for all people.

#### Two candidates are seeking Position #3 for a Business Owner, Property Owner, or Employee

**Brian Chinn** is a property owner with family ties to the neighborhood that go back four generations. He has a strong desire to help guide future development in a way that preserves its cultural character and makes it economically viable. He believes his engineering and science background, combined with working with the City on land use and permitting issues, will provide a unique perspective on many issues that come before the ISRD Board.

**Michael Le** and his family own multiple businesses within the CID. He wants to see policies that respond to the City's growth, help employees and customers feel safe to enjoy the CID, address the homelessness crisis, and the preservation of culture.

#### Two candidates are seeking Position #4 for Resident, Tenant, or Community Participant

**Dean Kumiko Ninja Kawena Kubota** is a resident of the CID who would like to bring his knowledge of the neighborhood and passion about the community to the Board. He is passionate about protecting the community and giving the community the tools needed to protect itself. This is manifested in his work with domestic violence advocacy and vaccination outreach. He has experience in housing, disability and transgender activism, and a passion for historic restoration, preservation and senior citizens' rights.

**Andy Yip** has served in a leadership capacity in organizations such as the Greater Seattle Chinese Chamber of Commerce, the Greater China Hong Kong Business Association of Washington, International Examiner Board, ICHS Foundation, and Seniors in Action. He is currently seated on the ISRD Board, where he serves as Vice-Chair. He would like to serve one more term to support the community and bring his understanding of real estate development to the complex projects that come before the Board.

#### Two candidates are seeking Position #5 for At-Large

**Nella Kwan** has been a volunteer with the Greater Seattle Chamber of Commerce since 2013. She has helped host and serve as master of ceremonies for community events and family associations. She is a board member of Kin On, a representative for Seafair and member with the Seattle Center's Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month. She considers

the CID her second home and wishes to apply her knowledge, understanding of the community, and unbiased insight and perspectives to her work with the ISRD Board.

**Tanya Woo** grew up in the CID community and wishes to carry on her family's long tradition of service to the neighborhood. She has background in media and spent the last ten years working on the redevelopment of the Louisa Hotel, which is owned by her family. She recognizes the importance of honoring the past while helping to make historic buildings useful for the future. She is a member of the Gee How Oak Tin Family Association and lead volunteer with the CID Community Watch. She is currently seated on the ISRD Board, appointed by the Mayor's Office to serve the remainder of a term for a seat that had become vacant.

The special character of the Chinatown International District is recognized and protected by City Ordinance. In 1973, the International Special Review District Board was created to preserve, protect, and enhance the cultural, economic, and historical qualities of the District. The Board is made up of seven members - five elected by the Chinatown International District community and two appointed by the Mayor. Board members' terms are typically for two years, and members may serve up to two consecutive terms. Since the election could not be held in 2020, candidates elected to Positions #3 and #5 will serve only one year to retain staggered term limits. To learn more about the election and the International Special Review District, please visit [seattle.gov/neighborhoods/preservation/id.htm/](https://seattle.gov/neighborhoods/preservation/id.htm/).

The current board members are Lizzy Baskerville, Matt Chan, Matt Fujimoto (Chair), M. Faye Hong, Russ Williams, Andy Yip (Vice-Chair) and Tanya Woo. The terms for Ms. Woo and Mr. Yip expired in 2020. Due to the pandemic, an election could not be held in 2020. The City Charter allows Ms. Woo and Mr. Yip to continue to serve until their replacements are elected. Messrs. Chan, Hong and Williams terms will end November 2021.

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*The International Special Review District is coordinated by the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods [Historic Preservation Program](#).*