

# 3

## 促進中國城的商業發展

# PROMOTE CHINATOWN BUSINESSES

## Create a Diverse and Successful Asian-Themed Business District

Promoting business in Chinatown means retaining existing businesses and expanding the marketplace to include a diverse array of new businesses that increase the concentration of Asian-themed offerings. Washington DC, the nation's capital city with its established ties to Asia, has the potential to become a dynamic place to experience contemporary Asian culture. This fortifies existing and future small business ventures and strengthens Chinatown's identity as an international district and its attractiveness for domestic tourists and, increasingly, foreign visitors who want to see Asian culture in the United States.

Chinatown needs new Asian-themed businesses, particularly unique specialty goods and services that establish market niches, such as Chinese medicinal arts, fitness, and spa treatments, contemporary household and culinary products, Asian clothing boutiques, toys and technology, and top quality Asian cuisine. Supporting the entrepreneurial growth of Asian businesses requires the identification, packaging, and marketing of vacant space and securing 'incubator' space in which small new businesses can grow and develop. The vacant first and second floor space in Chinatown, currently available due to the economic downturn, provides a chance for small-scale Asian-themed retailers to try space on a trial basis.

In addition, developing organized vending and other temporary markets provides opportunities for cultivating small business in a low overhead environment.

Property owners in and near Chinatown have the potential to benefit from a strong and revitalized Chinatown and the vitality and cultural allure a refocused and reenergized cultural destination creates. An increase in the concentration and diversity of Asian offerings and cultural outlets in Chinatown calls for partnerships between property owner/developers, Chinatown business owners, and local, national, and international organizations.

The CCDS process developed leadership skills and created new partnerships, positioning some individuals to cultivate both national and international partners to work with them to build the business side of Chinatown. In addition, public-sector involvement, support, and coordination utilizing various existing economic development tools and incentive programs may be necessary to create a compelling themed destination and a rich and attractive neighborhood.





Micro retail spaces characteristic of independent merchants

### Key Actions

- 3.1 Vending Development Zone
- 3.2 Designate Chinatown as a Special Cultural District

### Additional Actions

- 3.3 Attract signature Asian themed eating establishments to Chinatown
- 3.4 Develop a space or storefront that can house many small shops or “micro retail space” for small Asian businesses to allow them develop and grow
- 3.5 Strategically redevelop and package second floor spaces of Chinatown buildings to lease to Asian cultural professionals, practitioners and specialty goods and service providers
- 3.6 Develop a small retail space to act as an incubator or showcase for unique international Asian goods and retailers
- 3.7 Organize a “moving feast” event to promote Asian American cuisine and Chinatown restaurants
- 3.8 Develop collective and coordinated marketing support for small Chinatown merchants
- 3.9 Organize a task force that will be in charge of bringing in Asian investments and retailers
- 3.10 Partner with Washington DC Economic Partnership to add a neighborhood profile for Chinatown which can be used for marketing to attract new Asian businesses





## KEY ACTION #1: **Vending Development Zone**

### **What is it?**

Asian street vendors in Chinatown could immediately change the look and feel of Chinatown, creating the busy street feel typical of Asian cities and providing opportunities for existing Chinatown businesses to expand and new business to develop. Currently street vending is not allowed in most parts of Chinatown because of restrictions based on sidewalk widths and physical spacing requirements. The Office of Planning (OP), Department of Transportation (DDOT), and Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) are currently working on revising vending regulations to allow the creation of Vending Development Zones that will provide greater flexibility in where vendors can locate and provide greater coordination in determining the mix of goods and services that they can offer.

The proposed process for establishing a Vending Development Zone would allow the community and business owners to work with OP, DDOT, and DCRA to develop a vending strategy for incorporating vending into Chinatown. Potential vending strategies for Chinatown could include promoting Asian goods and services, coordinating the sale of products with those that are already sold in Chinatown, and placement of vendors in locations that do not block or screen existing stores.

### **Why It's Important**

- Creates opportunities for expanding existing businesses and helping new small businesses to develop and grow
- Provides additional venues for Chinatown businesses to sell their goods and services and helps expand the downtown shopping scene for the 93,000

downtown employees in the area who spend \$229 million annually in downtown.

- Adds activity and life to the streets and creates a unique cultural offering
- Provides a way business and property owners can advise on the type and location of vendors in Chinatown

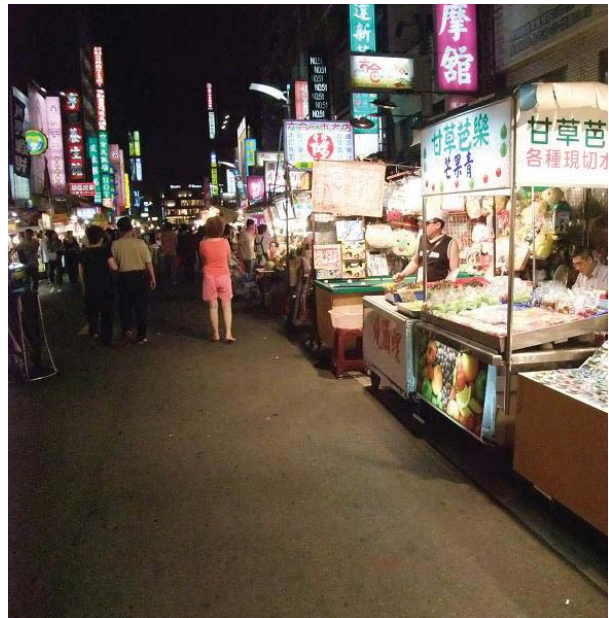
### How to make it happen

To make this happen special legislation needs to be passed by the DC Council to authorize Vending Development Zones. Chinatown businesses could play an active role promoting this legislation and ensuring it makes it through the legislative process by doing the following:

1. Talk to businesses in and around Chinatown to inform them, answer concerns, and build support for a Chinatown Vending Development Zone.
2. Express support to DC Council members to help encourage passage of the legislation to establish Vending Development Zones
3. When legislation has passed, work with DCRA to develop guidelines and rules for the Chinatown Vending Development Zone

### Timeframe:

The legislation for formally establishing Vending Development Zones is currently making its way through City Council, but it could take from several weeks to months to pass. Once legislation has passed, regulations for its implementation will also have to be approved. Regulations could take from 3 to 6 months to complete and approve. Once regulations have been written it could take 3 to 6 months to establish a Vending Zone in Chinatown.



Seattle Chinatown Market. Photo credit: Joe Mabel





## KEY ACTION #2: Designate Chinatown as a special cultural district

### What is it?

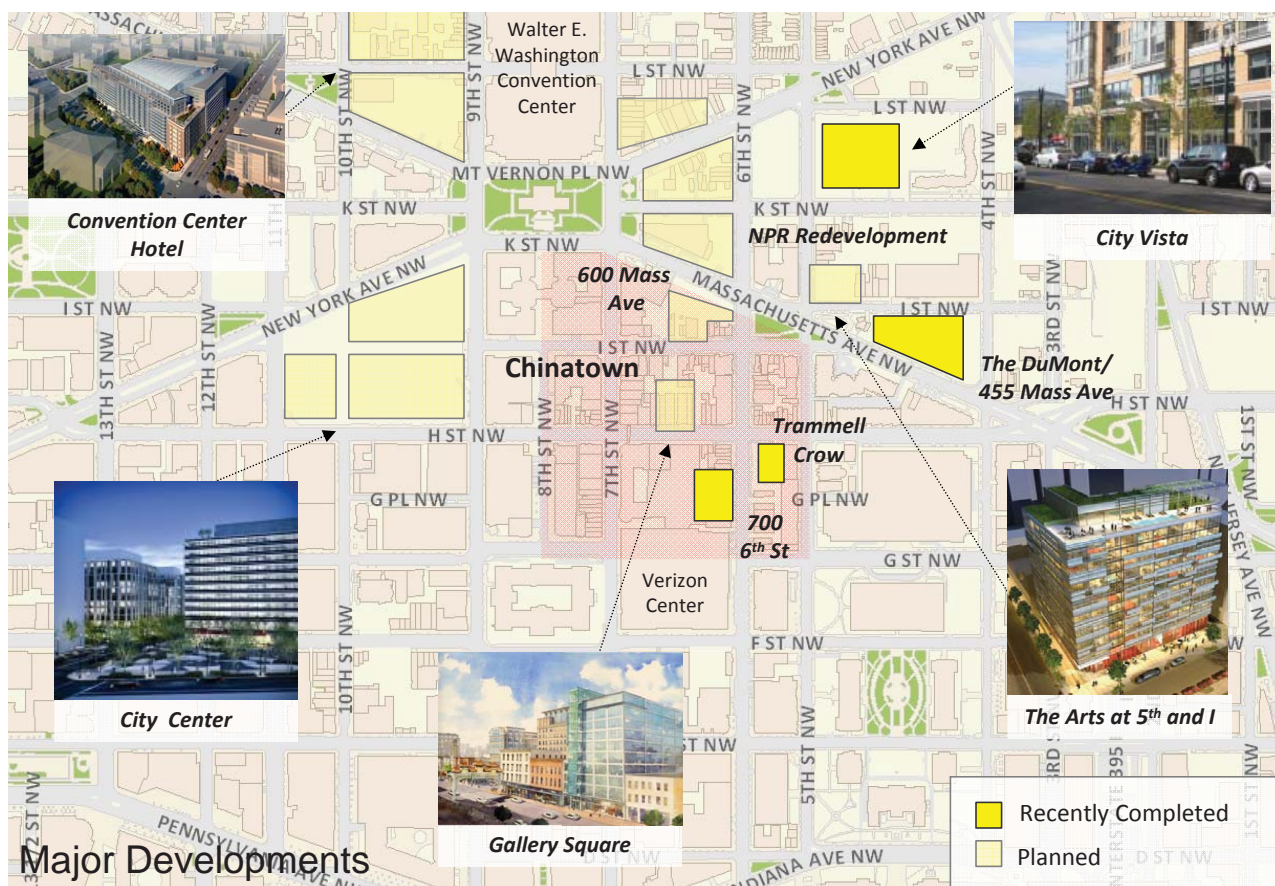
A Chinatown Cultural District will distinguish Chinatown by establishing a city council-approved designation that recognizes its special cultural significance. A Cultural District would be a funded effort that would promote Chinatown's cultural assets through advertising and other promotions, as well as key investments in cultural venues and businesses. It would designate Chinatown to visitors by creating special way finding signage as well as publications and maps. It would also assist in the planning and of cultural events and festivals in Chinatown. The organizational structure would ideally take the form of a coordinated, professionally run public private partnership similar to the Downtown BID. Such a partnership would match contributions from Chinatown's property owners with District resources.

Chinatown Cultural District would help target Chinatown as an investment opportunity for Asian cultural businesses and institutions interested in marketing to tourists and regional visitors to Chinatown. Currently visitors spend around \$2.08 billion a year in the District of which Chinatown only captures \$59.7 million. There exists tremendous potential for Chinatown to increase its share of this market, however it will require a coordinated offering of cultural venues and premier offerings such as international shopping experiences which can draw unique visitor and tourist spending.

Reestablishing the connection between regional population of Asian American residents and Chinatown is a major focus of this Strategy. Currently most regional Asian Americans have few reasons to visit Chinatown since most of the ethnic based goods and services are already provided near their suburban homes. Regional Asian Americans currently spend \$1.9 billion a year at food and beverage establishments. However, Chinatown's share of this market is extremely small at less than ¼ of one percent. Attracting greater spending from this market will largely depend on creating unique regional offerings such as destination dining experiences which give people reasons to travel 20 – 30 minutes to seek out eating and drinking establishments.



Creating and attracting premier cultural venues will require significant investment both from private developers as well as public economic stimulus. Developing new Asian cultural



There are several major recently completed and planned new developments in the immediate vicinity of Chinatown. Two major new office building in Chinatown are unoccupied and provide an opportunity for temporary installations, incubator space, or other economic endeavors to expand Asian-themed business clusters.





businesses and institutions in Chinatown can happen by promoting a variety of measures: tax incentives to Asian cultural businesses, marketing and promotion of Chinatown investment opportunities, and promoting zoning regulations/ incentives to create space for Asian businesses and institutions. There are numerous examples of successful economic development efforts to draw from in Washington, including Columbia Heights, the Great Streets Project, and NoMa.

Creating space for new Asian cultural uses in Chinatown is difficult given the lack of undeveloped land, however there are real opportunities in many new developments with empty ground floor retail spaces. Currently, a total of 11 vacant ground floor spaces exist in Chinatown today, totaling almost 25,000 sq. ft., ranging in size from 858 to 10,446 sq. ft. These spaces could be converted for cultural businesses or uses, however asking rates for triple net space are generally prohibitive from \$35 to 55/sq. ft. per year. Rental rates this high prevent any cultural business or institutions from occupying these spaces. Tax credits or abatements are successful tools that have been used in other areas. These could be given to property owners who lease space to Asian themed retail/cultural operations. The Retail Incentive Program (RIP) is also available, it too benefits owners and not tenants directly, but tax credits made available to the owner will help offset tenant costs by providing owner subsidies for tenant improvements and fit out, and lower lease rates.



### Why It's Important

- Helps to focus and coordinate Chinatown businesses promotion and development efforts
- Critical to attracting unique Asian retailers who can make DC Chinatown a top Asian cultural shopping destination but cannot afford to compete in Chinatown's high rent environment
- Creates business and job opportunities for Asian themed business in Chinatown by highlighting and promoting Chinatown's cultural status
- Attracts investors that can bring unique Asian products and significant capital to help create an international presence

## How to make it happen

1. Chinatown businesses and community organizations will be responsible for organizing a coalition of property owners, developers, businesses, cultural institutions, residents, and development agencies to support the creation of a Chinatown Cultural District
2. Chinatown businesses and community organizations will work with the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development to develop a business plan for the Chinatown Cultural District
3. Chinatown businesses and community organizations will work with elected officials to introduce and help ensure passage of Council legislation
4. Once established, the Chinatown Cultural District would develop a two-year work plan to begin in 60 days with visible and easily implemented projects. One of the initial action items would be to get an Asian retail/cultural use in vacant space.

## Timeframe:

The process of establishing a Chinatown Cultural District can begin immediately, however Council approval of the cultural designation could take 1 to 2 years. The establishment of a professionally staffed Chinatown Cultural District office could take 2 to 3 years.





# Promote High Quality Asian Shopping and Dining Experiences and Opportunities for Authentic Small Asian Business

## 3.3- Attract signature Asian themed eating establishments to Chinatown

### What is it?

Food and dining is a major part of Chinatown today comprising over 50% of the retail sales in the area. However, one major piece missing from Chinatown are signature restaurants which provide a dining experience with an international reputation for unique high quality food. They often feature guest chefs which are flown in from Asian countries and exotic food that is truly one of a kind. This could take many forms from a major restaurant that is large enough to hold a series of major events and banquets throughout the year to a series of small unique Asian themed eating establishments, each specializing in a particular cuisine or delicacy that could be housed in a single location to serve again as an anchor for creating a world-class destination. A variety of concurrent cultural and entertainment events will likely interface with this unique Asian themed culinary center.

### Why it's important

- It helps make Chinatown a world-class destination which will attract regional, domestic and international visitors to experience unique high quality Asian themed dining.
- Ethnic retail generates up to \$18 million annually but only 33 out of the 84 retail spaces in the Chinatown area are ethnic. A signature restaurant could increase the demand for high quality Asian food in Chinatown and also the number of Asian restaurants.

### How to make it happen

1. Begin marketing to identified/ targeted restaurant operations and/or overseas Asian themed culinary centers.
2. Identify a specific facility and site and locate funds for tenant improvements (including full build out for necessary furniture, fixtures and restaurant, equipment). The facility should be part of the overall program to create unique Asian themed retail, cultural, recreation, and entertainment attractions. It will likely be funded through the proposed Cultural District financial incentives and funding programs. The costs could vary depending upon the size of the facilities, the level of improvements required, and the necessary marketing and promotion budget.

## 3.4 - Develop a space or storefront that can house many small shops or “micro retail space” for small Asian businesses to allow them develop and grow

### What is it?

One of the defining qualities of Chinatowns is that the very vibrancy of the street retail, including small shops, sidewalk vendors, etc. Authentic Asian small businesses are the expression of economic opportunity for new immigrants and entrepreneurs. A coordinated retail incubator program, not necessarily in one singular location, in Chinatown would reinvigorate the retail environment by attracting new customers to existing businesses and providing new opportunities for small Asian-themed cultural businesses.

### Why it's important

- Provides an inexpensive place for small Asian retailers to establish in Chinatown
- Brings in new Asian businesses into Chinatown

### How to make it happen

1. Create an inventory of prospective spaces for a incubator/micro retail program
2. Identify and encourage potential Asian-themed small or specialty business services -
3. Develop a business plan for the program
4. Identify program management capacity or hire program management staff

## ADDITIONAL ACTIONS

# Develop the Asian Cultural Offerings of Chinatown Businesses and Appeal to New Niche Markets for Cultural Experiences and Services

## 3.5 - Strategically redevelop and package second floor spaces of Chinatown buildings to lease to Asian cultural professionals, practitioners and specialty goods and service providers

### What is it?

Many of the second floor spaces of Chinatown's historic buildings are vacant or used for retail storage. While these spaces are not well suited to most retail businesses, they are appropriate for Asian cultural businesses which may have little or no walk in customers. Such businesses include; medical practitioners such as acupuncturists, service industries such as Asian tailors, and professional businesses such as lawyers. These businesses appeal to small but specialized niche markets that can give Chinatown specialized appeal to a large variety of consumers. By redeveloping these second floor spaces Chinatown can offer affordable space to house and grow dozens of these cultural businesses.

### Why it's important

- Cultural businesses appeal to specialized needs which are hard to service and give Chinatown a unique offering
- Cultural businesses have a hard time surviving in Chinatown, since their sales are much smaller than food or beverage businesses who are able to outbid them on expensive 1st floor retail space.

### How to make it happen

1. Survey property owners and identify potential second floor spaces that could be redeveloped
2. Property owners using incentives will renovate second floor spaces and lease them to cultural businesses

## 3.6 - Develop a small retail space to act as an incubator or showcase for unique international Asian goods and retailers

### What is it?

Many new products featuring fresh design, bold innovation, and exceptional quality are being developed in Asia today. Many of these brands and products have yet to be introduced to the United States, or are in only limited locations. Chinatown given its place in our Nation's capital could serve as a product display and launch pad for many of these new and exciting companies to showcase their goods. As a first step to promoting the development of retailers like these in Chinatown, Chinatown groups could work to provide space in Chinatown to display goods by modern Asian retailers and manufacturers. This could be organized in a single retail space which would rotate its contents on a periodic basis. A first step before providing a storefront space could be creating temporary exhibit space at events and festivals for Asian companies to showcase product displays.

### Why it's important

- This action is the first step to developing more permanent retail locations for Asian stores and retailers in Chinatown
- Provides Chinatown with unique international shopping experiences and products which draw in new visitors such as international tourists and high end shoppers.

### How to make it happen

1. Begin by providing free space at Chinatown events for Asian retailers to have product displays
2. Work with local property owners to locate a retail space with incentives from the Chinatown Cultural District (Key Action 3.2).
3. Work with international brokers to program retail space with Asian retailers.

## ADDITIONAL ACTIONS



# Develop Promotion and Marketing Efforts for Chinatown Businesses to attract new, Regional, National, and International Markets

## 3.7 - Organize a “moving feast” event to promote Asian American cuisine and Chinatown restaurants

### What is it?

A ‘Movable Feast in Chinatown’ event will showcase the cuisine of Chinatown restaurants in an outdoor festival format. Participating restaurants will serve small bites at designated tasting stations for \$1-\$2. They may also open their dining rooms and kitchens up to the public, allowing for special demonstrations. New York Chinatown provides a successful precedent for a Taste of Chinatown event involving over 50 Chinese restaurants, bakeries and tea houses serving food from Canton, Shanghai, Beijing, Taiwan and Hong Kong, Malaysia, Vietnam, Thailand, Singapore and Japan. A Moveable Feast celebrates Chinatown’s unique culinary offerings and promotes neighborhood restaurants

A variation of this may be a “chef’s competition” in which the public casts votes on which chef or restaurant offers the “best of ...” Different categories of food may be defined (e.g., rice dishes, noodle dishes, appetizers, soups, desserts, etc.) to allow each restaurant more than one opportunity to win a blue ribbon.

### Why it’s important

A ‘Movable Feast in Chinatown’ event will not only encourage wider consumption during the event (and generate more revenue), but also challenge Asian proprietors to promote better restaurants and higher quality cuisine in Chinatown.

### How to make it happen

1. Work with sponsors of existing festivals such as the Penn Quarter Neighborhood (Arts on Foot) and Asian Women in Business (Taste of Chinatown New York) to plan an event of similar scale
2. Work with Chinatown merchants, or create a coalition of Chinatown restaurants to coordinate and fundraise

## 3.8 - Develop collective and coordinated marketing support for small Chinatown merchants

### What is it?

Authentic small businesses give Chinatown much of its character; however they are often the least capable of marketing and promoting themselves. An association of merchants can pool resources and fund joint marketing efforts. Such an association can help develop underrepresented market segments by publishing a tourism brochure featuring Asian businesses in Chinatown, designing a DC Chinatown website that posts features on local merchants, and capturing the potent Washington convention market.

### Why it’s important

Marketing support for independent merchants will increase demand for small specialty businesses in Chinatown.

### How to make it happen

1. Encourage Chinatown merchants to pool resources and fund marketing efforts, and enlist area hotels to participate
2. Conduct a study to identify underrepresented market segments and demands to target
3. Work with the convention center and hotels to distribute hospitality packages

## ADDITIONAL ACTIONS

## 3.9 - Organize a task force that will be in charge of bringing in Asian investments and retailers

### What is it?

A task force of individuals who are responsible for actively working with local government and the community to identify and bring in community approved Asian themed businesses and investors to Chinatown. The taskforce would be composed of various individuals with experience in real estate, Asian businesses, development, downtown retail issues, international business, and regional business relationships.

### Why it's important

- Would help attract new investment and businesses to grow Chinatown
- Increase number of Asian themed businesses and investors will help strengthen Chinatown's business environment.
- New investments and Asian themed retail will increase the Asian cultural experience for Chinatown residents and tourists/visitors.

### How to make it happen

1. A few designated Chinatown members create a task force plan with clear goals and vision for the task force that lead to achievable outcomes
2. Initiate meeting with Mayor's staff. Provide the Mayor with a short list of strong candidates for the task force who have a proven track of strong local DC political and business experience and diverse Asian country contacts and connections.
3. Establish the task force and carry out key priorities.

## 3.10 - Partner with Washington DC Economic Partnership to add a neighborhood profile for Chinatown which can be used for marketing to attract new Asian businesses

### What is it?

A Chinatown neighborhood profile serves as a marketing tool to provide detailed information about the area's statistics and demographics.

### Why it's important

- It highlights the most important facts about Chinatown that are helpful to attracting potential Asian businesses or future residents.
- It highlights business opportunities available in Chinatown area.

### How to make it happen

1. Partner with Washington DC Economic Partnership (WDCEP) to plan and apply for funding the project.
2. Plan the timeline of the project with WDCEP.
3. Provide WDCEP with a list of local organizations that will be included in the profile and serve as contacts for any inquiry about Chinatown.
4. Create the neighborhood profile.
5. Provide a marketing plan to distribute the materials to the public.



## Improve services and amenities in Chinatown to create a great Center City neighborhood

Chinatown is about people. No neighborhood can exist without active, caring residents who support businesses, advocate for government services, and look after the qualities of the neighborhood and each other. Like the entire downtown neighborhood, attracting new Chinese and non-Chinese residents depends on having a high quality of life which can compete with popular DC and suburban options, and that means an amenity-rich neighborhood that includes various types of parks and green spaces, schools, shops, and housing options for senior citizens, families, and young professionals. Creating a healthy urban neighborhood also means ensuring that Chinatown continues to offer affordable housing options and an inviting environment for new immigrants with little English proficiency.

A strong market for housing in Center City and Chinatown requires the availability of services that meet the everyday needs of residents. The life of the neighborhood takes place at all the typical places: the library, drug store, grocery, bank, café, and post office, to name a few. Convenient services are critical to Chinatown, as well as other neighborhoods; this produces walkers rather than drivers and encourages patronization of local businesses and the opportunity to meet face-to-face in the community.

Chinatown overlaps several other Center City neighborhoods, including Mount Vernon Triangle and Penn Quarter. Each person's image map of where one ends and the other begins differs, yet all are part of the Downtown Neighborhood Association, an organization that facilitates connection between residents, business owners, and workers and provides the foundation for working together to ensure the health of the 'living' downtown.



Parks and plazas represent another important aspect of residential life in any urban area because they reinforce the sense of community, the uniqueness of place, and they provide a common space for residents. Access to quality open space and greenery consistently ranks as one of the chief criteria residents cite when they choose a neighborhood. The absence of these amenities is an oft-heard frustration associated with living in Center City DC and Chinatown, yet Chinatown has several open spaces within walking distance. They are, however, disappointing in terms of design, they lack proper maintenance, and permits are difficult to get for events and festivals. The National Park Service-controlled reservation at Chinatown Park 6th and I Streets (Chinatown Park) offers potential for reinvigoration with Chinese-influenced design and proper maintenance and the promise of a place for neighborhood gatherings and events.

Neighborhood primary schools are important to all neighborhoods and increasingly so to families reconsidering urban areas as an optimal place to raise children. A distinctive high-caliber public school that promotes Chinese culture through a dual language education and Chinese cultural offerings and lessons is within reach for Chinatown DC and could be an essential element in reinforcing Chinatown as a cultural destination and as a viable neighborhood.



### **Key Actions**

- 4.1 Transform Chinatown Park into a great neighborhood park
- 4.2 Locate a space for a Chinese charter school or satellite campus in Chinatown

### **Additional Actions**

- 4.3 Work with the city and property owners to install lighting on buildings and in alleyways
- 4.4 Create safer bus loading areas in Chinatown
- 4.5 Work with retail/pharmacy chains (e.g., CVS) about having Chinese bilingual staff or doctors during regular business hours
- 4.6 Work with DC government agencies to provide more interpretation services for critical services
- 4.7 Work with intercity Chinatown bus companies to provide regular free transportation to suburban Asian grocery stores for the seniors
- 4.8 Seek investors with national and international resources to create cultural specific retirement care facility
- 4.9 Explore affordability incentives for families to live in Chinatown
- 4.10 Work with Downtown BID and the Downtown Neighborhood Association to beautify the streets through planted tree/flower boxes, lamp posts, and swept streets





## **KEY ACTION #1: Transform Chinatown Park into a Great Neighborhood Park**

### **What is it?**

The Chinatown Park, located at the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue, between I and 5th street, is currently poorly maintained and under-used by local residents or downtown office workers even though it is the only existing public open space in Chinatown. With adequate design and maintenance, the park could better accommodate the everyday needs of area residents, including: shaded seating for Chinatown's elderly; grassy, open areas for residents to play and exercise; play equipment for children; and plantings and gardening space for the use and enjoyment of everyone. A well-designed Chinatown Park will also foster a sense of ownership among residents so that the community 'adopts' and cares for the park.

The park marks an important gateway to Chinatown from Massachusetts Avenue and points north in the city. The park could also serve as an important landmark in Chinatown and a place in which the Chinatown community and visitors could gather. On special occasions such as Chinese New Year, the park could provide ceremonial space in which the parade could begin or conclude. On a more regular basis, the Park could work in concert with a weekly street market along the stretch of I Street between Fifth and Sixth Streets NW. Since the street would be temporarily closed to automobile traffic, it would function as a pedestrian plaza, and the park would provide overflow space where shoppers could pause to enjoy their purchases and observe the market crowds.

The Downtown BID currently has a plan to do a basic rehabilitation of the park.



Longer term, renovating the park to incorporate a Chinese design theme will create a true landmark for Chinatown and a place that local Asian residents and visitors can identify with.

### Why It's Important

- Provides a usable green space for the enjoyment of downtown residents who currently lack parks
- Acts as a gateway symbol for Chinatown along Massachusetts Avenue.
- Provide a space for special outdoor events and programs
- Bolsters property values in the neighborhood
- Renovating the park and creating programming for the new park is a visible and high impact way for the community, working together, to implement immediate, positive changes

### How to make it happen

1. Work with the Downtown BID on the first phase rehabilitation of the park
2. Work with the Office of Planning (OP) on the Mount Vernon Square District planning initiative to develop a comprehensive design for the Chinatown Park
3. Work with the National Park Services and other partners to negotiate for local control and maintenance of the park
4. Develop relationships with potential sponsors:
  - American Society of Landscape Architects, whose headquarters are located in Chinatown, could sponsor the renovation of Chinatown Park
  - IBEW, whose headquarters are located in Chinatown, could sponsor distinctive lighting designs and installations for the Chinatown Park to make it a unique destination and dynamic space for residents and visitors

### Timeframe:

Upgrades to Chinatown Park will likely be incremental. Minor improvements can begin immediately, but redesign of the park will require support from the National Park Service and funding sources. Redesign will likely take two years or more.







Calligraphy workshop, National Cherry Blossom Festival

## **KEY ACTION #2: Locate a space for a Chinese charter school or satellite campus in Chinatown**

### **What is it?**

In order to retain families living in Chinatown and Downtown as a whole, and attract new residents, we need to provide a high-quality public education option for school-age children. The Washington Yu Ying Public Charter school is a new DC public charter school that provides Chinese language immersion education for both Chinese and non-Chinese students. The school and Chinatown stakeholders have expressed strong desire to find a permanent home for the school in Chinatown. By being located in Chinatown, the school would be a unique asset to Downtown and help draw in new residents looking for a special educational experience for their children, as well as a powerful source of energy for Chinatown itself by being center for Chinese education in the region.

A Chinese School in Chinatown would most importantly help neighborhood children to maintain their traditions of language and culture in the community. A school provides a center in the neighborhood where social exchange between children and parents occurs every day, and where parents collaborate in support of their children's' education. A school will also provide opportunities for interaction

between the next generation and the elderly currently living in Chinatown. The transfer of knowledge, culture, and experience through oral history and face-to-face activities would enrich the spectrum of generations.

The biggest hurdle to finding a home for the Yu Ying Public Charter School in Chinatown is a lack of available sites and the cost of leased space in Chinatown. Solving these two issues will require partnering with developers and property owners to find space at reasonable rates and working with the District government to assist in subsidizing the cost of leasing space in Chinatown.



### Why It's Important

- Provides a high quality educational option for downtown residents.
- Adds additional institutional resources and people dedicated to DC Chinatown
- Brings more young people into DC Chinatown
- Enhances the character of a residential neighborhood
- Provides a new role for the elderly currently living in Chinatown

### How to make it happen

1. Work with Chinese school partner to develop a program and space requirements for a Chinatown school facility
2. Work with developers and property owners to identify potential space for a school facility in existing or proposed development projects
3. Work with DC Government to ensure adequate funding is in place

### Timeframe:

Establishing a Chinatown campus is a long-term goal that will likely take several years to realize. But developing an educational presence in Chinatown can occur sooner. By increasing the capacity of established language programs in Chinatown, we can achieve results immediately.





# Promote Strategies that Ensure Chinatown is a Safe and Friendly Neighborhood for Living, Shopping and Playing

## 4.3 - Work with the city and property owners to install lighting on buildings and in alleyways

### What is it?

Ensuring the safety and comfort of Chinatown's residents is vital to sustaining a strong community. Many alleys in Chinatown are not well lighted and have become places where criminals can hide, and where crimes are frequently committed. Well-lit streets, sidewalks and alleys make Chinatown a safer environment for residents by making it easier for police to see what happening.

### Why it's important

It will help reduce crime in alleyways by making them easier to police

### How to make it happen

1. Set up a meeting of property owners and city government to establish zones in which lighting should be improved
2. Look for grants and other sources funding to install lights

## 4.4 - Create safer bus loading areas in Chinatown

### What is it?

The Chinatown buses are an important part of the Chinatown economy. They have become a major regional and intercity transportation choice for many people, and bring in many tourists and visitors directly into Chinatown everyday. If we lose these intercity Chinatown buses, the result will be fewer Asian people frequenting Chinatown. One major problem however is many criminals have begun to prey on the passengers and committing robberies in Chinatown, and have become a major source of crime in Chinatown. Especially troubling is the fact that much of the crime is targeted toward Asian passengers.

### Why it's important

- It will help reduce a major source of crime in Chinatown by deterring crimes that target Chinatown bus passengers

### How to make it happen

1. Bus companies can work with the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) to develop handouts or other notifications to passengers about the security concerns in Chinatown.
2. DC Department of Transportation (DDoT), working with the Chinatown Bus Companies should find visible, accessible, easily policed bus loading areas in Chinatown

## ADDITIONAL ACTIONS

# Develop and Promote Neighborhood Stores and Community Services that Support Residential Living

## 4.5 - Work with retail/pharmacy chains (e.g., CVS) about having Chinese speaking bilingual staff or doctors during regular business hours

### What is it?

Chinese bilingual staff or doctors in pharmacies and clinics provide residents, who have limited English proficiency, with greater accessibility to their prescription drugs and decrease misuse of these drugs. Currently many businesses have bilingual employees; however their hours are often not regular and thus create a barrier to receiving care.

### Why it's important

It helps the Chinatown non-English speaking residents, especially the seniors; communicate more effectively with pharmacy staff and other medical professionals for their medical needs.

### How to make it happen

1. Coordinate bilingual job fairs with CVS for Chinatown location and help recruit bilingual applicants.
2. Work with local pharmacy schools to help identify bilingual Asian student groups and other groups who can help identify applicants.

## 4.6 - Work with DC government agencies to provide more interpretation services for critical services

### What is it?

Many important government services such as building permits, police, and low income programs have few or no staff with bilingual capabilities. Language Line Access provides basic legal required interpretation, but more technical interpretation is often not easily available. To increase language access for Chinese Americans, as well as other non native English speakers, the government could look into creating incentives in both hiring and increase pay for bilingual speakers in jobs where it there is a demonstrated need.

### Why it's important

- Chinatown residents, who have limited English proficiency, are able to better access critical government programs and services, unemployment benefits, food stamps and etc, when that have information available in their language.
- It helps give equal access of government services to the Chinatown non-English speaking residents
- It helps further promote Washington DC as an international and immigrant friendly city

### How to make it happen

1. Identify critical services that are currently not accessible to limited English proficient residents.
2. Identify critical government information/services that need translation
3. Obtain a list of Language Access Coordinators for each government agency and maintain regular contact with them for updates and advocacy purposes
4. Begin lobbying effort with other minority groups for increased language access in key government services

## ADDITIONAL ACTIONS



#### **4.7 - Work with intercity Chinatown bus companies to provide regular free transportation to suburban Asian grocery stores for the seniors**

##### **What is it?**

Asian seniors need access to affordable fresh Asian produce and other groceries which are currently unavailable in DC Chinatown. Currently there are only a few shuttles which provide this service and they often have to turn people away. The community can partner with intercity Chinatown buses in the neighborhood to provide weekly transportation for seniors in order to meet this need.

##### **Why it's important**

- It helps address the needs of the seniors
- It helps foster community partnership between businesses and residents

##### **How to make it happen**

1. Initiate contact with bus companies to discuss the idea
2. Plan the logistic coordination with Asian Services Center and Wah Luck House property manager

## **Expand Affordable Residential Opportunities for Seniors, Young Professionals, & Families**

#### **4.8 - Explore affordability incentives for families to live in Chinatown**

##### **What is it?**

Chinatown stakeholders demonstrated strong interest for incentives to bring families to live in Chinatown. While currently the District does not offer incentives for families in Downtown, the CCDS recommends that they explore this issue further. In order to attract a larger Asian population base, a series of targeted activities needs to be undertaken in addition to the incentives including special Asian themed cultural, recreation, entertainment, retail, educational activities and amenities.

##### **Why it's important**

- A strong Asian American population in Chinatown helps sustain it as a cultural neighborhood
- Having increase number of families in Chinatown provides stronger neighborhood stability, as well as, a richer and fuller community complete with individuals from all age groups

##### **How to make it happen**

1. Work with regional and national Asian groups to identify potential target Asian populations that could be attracted to living in Chinatown.
2. Identify necessary and appropriate financial incentives which could be provided to families

#### **4.9 - Seek investors with national and international resources to create cultural specific retirement care facility**

##### **What is it?**

Chinatown is an attractive place for Chinese seniors. This fact can easily be seen by viewing the long waitlist for the Wah Luk house. Just as other Chinatowns have experienced, empty-nesters and the growing attractiveness of living in cities, have created market demand for housing suitable for retirees. Providing additional residential options for Chinese retirees is both potentially profitable as well as culturally significant. Continuing care retirement communities (CCRC) are facilities where retirees, typically starting as early as 55, can live out their retirement with other people from their culture, in an environment with services, programs, and staff that promote their culture and speak their language. Within the DC region, this concept has proven viability as evidenced by such projects as the Burtonsville Retirement Home, in Maryland.

##### **Why it's important**

- Attracts more Asian residents into Chinatown, increase diversity and inclusiveness of Center City and Chinatown
- Will provide Chinatown with a unique residential product that is currently not offered anywhere in the region

##### **How to make it happen**

1. Conduct a market study for a continuing care retirement communities in the greater Washington DC region
2. Conduct a feasibility study to determine parameters for a continuing care retirement communities in or near Chinatown

#### **4.10 - Work with Downtown BID and the Downtown Neighborhood Association to beautify the streets through planted tree/flower boxes, lamp posts, and swept streets.**

##### **What is it?**

Streetscape improvements will make a measurable difference in the perception of Chinatown as a neighborhood. But without regular maintenance and care, improvements like trees, lampposts, flower boxes, and clean streets and sidewalks will not last. Chinatown residents can collaborate with the Downtown BID and the Downtown Neighborhood Association to coordinate and share in maintenance responsibilities.

##### **Why it's important**

- Make Chinatown a more attractive neighborhood to live in
- Will make Chinatown more attractive to visitors and tourists and help Chinatown businesses

##### **How to make it happen**

Establish a meeting to coordinate with Downtown BID and Downtown Neighborhood Association (DNA)