CHINATOWN MASTER PLAN 2010

Community Vision for the Future

Chinatown Master Plan 2010 Oversight Committee

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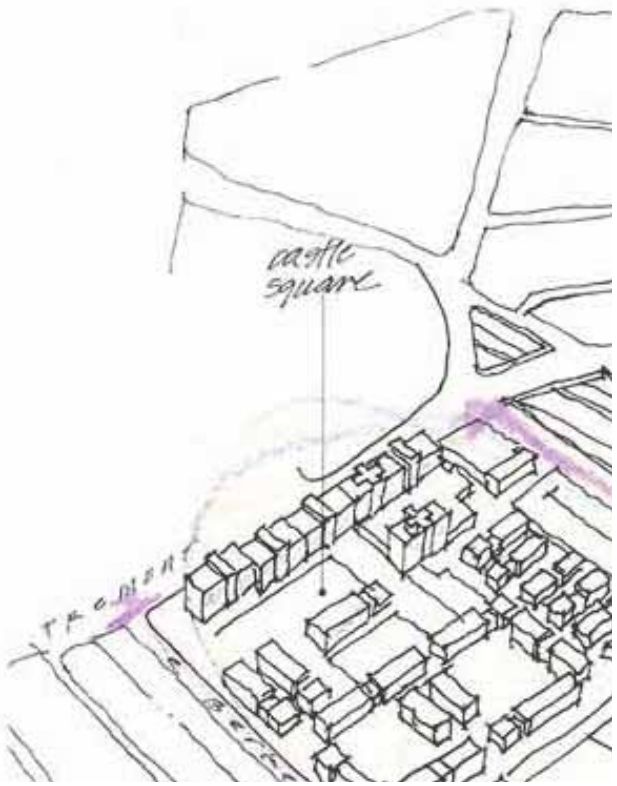
December 2010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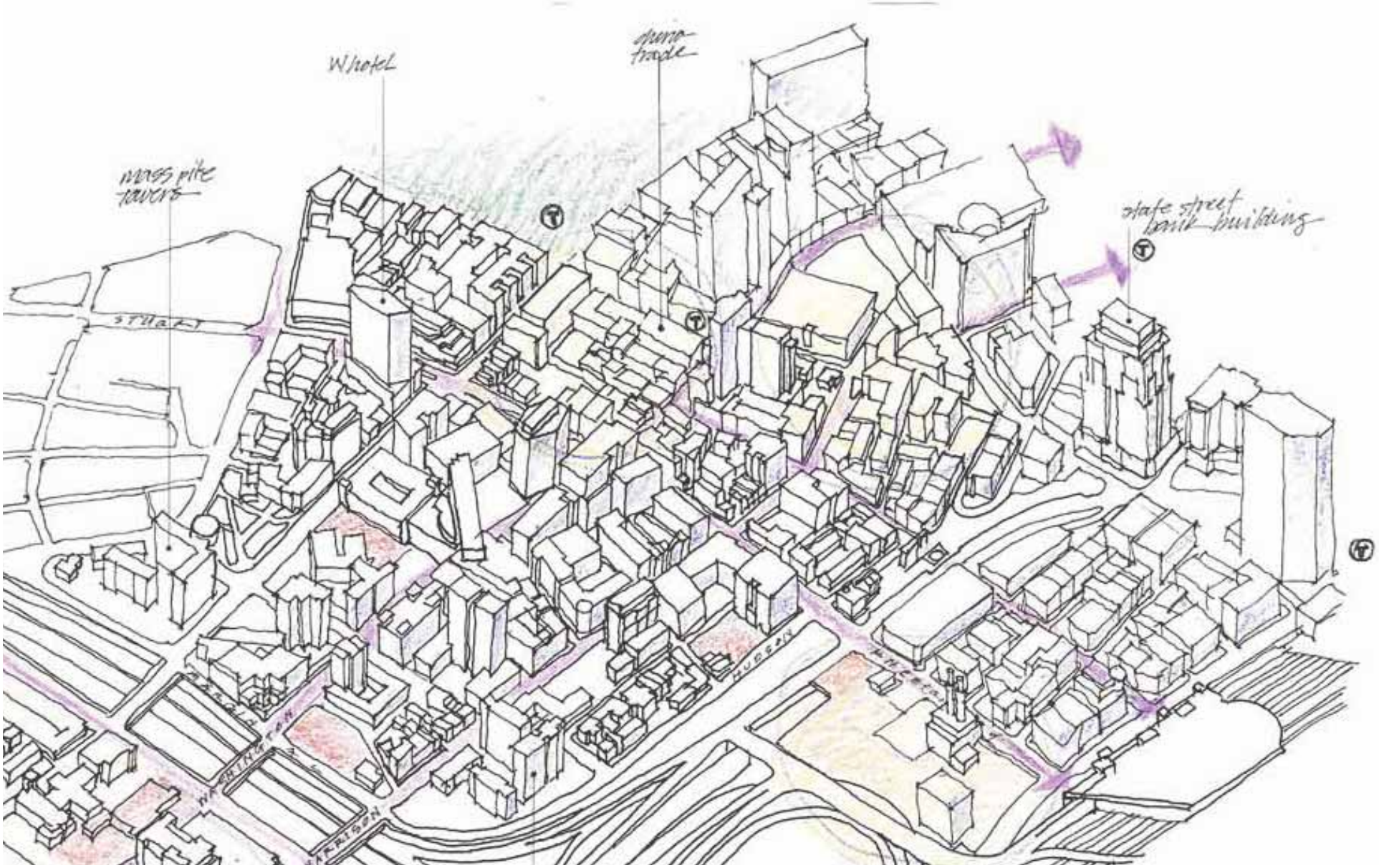
W hotel
marina towers
mass pike towers
state street bank building
STILLMAN
HUBBARD
HARRISON

CHINATOWN MASTER PLAN 2010

Community Vision for the Future

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MASSACHUSETTS SENATE

Dear Friends:

Welcome to Chinatown Master Plan 2010: Community Vision for the Future. This plan has been shaped and strengthened through the active and committed participation of residents, community members, and city and elected officials.

Chinatown Master Plan 2010 is an opportunity for the community to set forth a vision that complements the larger city and the region. Chinatown is a vital social, economic, and cultural center that must be preserved. The plan outlines a vision that includes reinforcing community edges, improving the quality of life, enhancing the public realm, and development of anchor areas. Throughout this plan, the community has given their commitment to the advancement of a more livable community, affordable housing, and the creation of job opportunities.

I want to thank all those who have been part of this two-year effort. As the plan is now published, the need for sustained public participation to implement the vision and the goals of the plan will continue. I look forward to working with you on the continued success of Chinatown.

Sincerely,

Sonia Chang-Díaz
State Senator
Second Suffolk District

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STATE HOUSE, BOSTON, MA 02133-1054

AARON MICHLEWITZ
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
3rd Suffolk District

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Dear Friends:

Welcome to Chinatown Master Plan 2010: Community Vision for the Future. This community-based plan is the product of a two-year partnership with community members, resident groups, and city and elected officials. Chinatown Master Plan 2010 is the community's vision for future growth and sustainability. The plan lays out a framework of strategies to capitalize on the neighborhood's resources, assets, and opportunities.

Strengthening and improving Chinatown will not only serve the community within its boundaries, it will also connect the community to the larger city and the region's Asian American population. By working with the city and elected officials, community members will be involved in advancing the plan's vision such as development of land parcels, creation of economic development initiatives, and provision for affordable housing.

I wish to extend deep appreciation to the numerous residents and community members who participated and contributed to the development of the Chinatown Master Plan 2010. I look forward to our continued work together. Your dedication and continued commitment to building a better Chinatown will assure the growth and sustainability of the neighborhood.

Sincerely,

AARON MICHLEWITZ
State Representative
Third Suffolk District

BILL LINEHAN
BOSTON CITY COUNCILOR
DISTRICT 2

Dear Friends:

As you know, Chinatown is undergoing one of the most impressive transformations in the City of Boston. It is with great pleasure that I present the Chinatown Master Plan 2010: Community Vision for the Future to you. This plan is the product of a two-year partnership with community members, resident groups, and city and elected officials.

The plan lays out a framework of strategies to capitalize on the neighborhood's resources, assets and opportunities. New housing units constructed in the last decade have brought new people and business into the neighborhood. Chinatown is a focal point and cultural center for the larger Asian American community in Boston and New England. People from all over the region come to Chinatown to join in the festivals, eat at the restaurants, shop and visit friends.

Working with the city and elected officials, community members are involved in advancing the plan's vision such as development of land parcels, creation of economic development initiatives and provision for affordable housing.

I would like to thank those residents and community members who participated in the development of this plan for your dedication and commitment. I look forward to your continued support and working with you in building a better Chinatown.

Sincerely,

Bill Linehan

Bill Linehan
Boston City Councilor
District 2

Letter from the Chinatown Master Plan 2010 Oversight Committee

Dear Members and Friends of the Chinatown Community,

In 2008, the Chinatown community came together to create a vision to guide the growth and development of the community. Since the adoption of the 1990 Chinatown Master Plan, the Chinatown community has accomplished many goals identified in that plan.

The Chinatown residential community has increased by 40% from 6,434 residents to over 9,000 residents today; housing inventory has increased by 1,366 new units with 28% being affordable; the economy is more diversified with 300 businesses operating in the Chinatown core district; the quality of life in Chinatown has dramatically improved because of the community's efforts to restrict the adult entertainment district; the cultural and social fabric of the community has been reinforced by the commitment and investment from cultural and social service agencies establishing permanent homes in Chinatown; and institutional expansion has been redirected from Chinatown's core. The community and the institutions have been developing meaningful relationships to shape Chinatown's future. The completion of the Central Artery Tunnel and redevelopment of Lower Washington Street continues the vision of the 1990 Master Plan to build connections and land bridges linking Chinatown to Downtown, the Midtown Cultural District, and the South End.

Chinatown Master Plan 2010: Community Vision for the Future outlines the vision and framework for future growth and expansion and improvements to the quality of life in the community. The City and the community have worked together to prepare this plan. This has meant many long hours of hard work by the Oversight Committee, Technical Committee, and the Boston Redevelopment Authority. Chinatown Master Plan 2010 is the outcome of multiple discussions with many diverse groups, agencies, and institutions – giving Chinatown its identity. This document is not the product of any one person but is a group effort of which we can all be proud.

The Oversight Committee would like to thank everyone that made this plan a reality. A special thanks to Mayor Thomas M. Menino, BRA Director John Palmieri, and BRA Director of Planning Kairos Shen for their continued support of the Chinatown community, and to all of our members and volunteers for their input and dedication to the *Chinatown Master Plan 2010: Community Vision for the Future*.

Sincerely,

Chinatown Master Plan 2010 Oversight Committee

Dan Xin Chen
Chong Chow
Sherry Dong
Jeff Hovis
Kenny Ko
Suzanne Lee
Wingkay Leung
Hua Quan Liu
Marie Moy
William Moy
Reggie Wong
Henry Yee
Min Guang Yu

Acknowledgements

The Chinatown Master Plan 2010 Oversight Committee and the Consulting Team wish to thank the community and all who have contributed to *Chinatown Master Plan 2010: Community Vision for the Future*.

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Lori Wong
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Valerie Wong
Joseph Wu
Tony Yee
Victoria Yue
Fei Ping Zhao

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Chinatown Master Plan 2010: Community Vision for the Future would like to thank the Barr Foundation for their support and generosity to the Chinatown community. The Barr Foundation is a private foundation committed to enhancing the quality of life for all of Boston's residents.

Chinatown Master Plan 2010 would also like to give special thanks to Kairos Shen, Lara Merida-Fernandes, and Sue Kim of the Boston Redevelopment Authority for their time and expertise in making this report possible.

Special thanks to Randall Imai, Chris Johnson, and Junko Yamamoto of Imai Keller Moore Architects for providing their time and expertise. Randall Imai is an architect, artist, and Technical Committee member who provided the urban design illustrations for this report. Chris Johnson is a graphic designer who laid out this report and designed the report cover. Junko Yamamoto volunteered her personal time to complete the final design and report cover.

Special thanks to Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center and Chinese Progressive Association for providing office space and support over the past two years. In addition, we would also like to acknowledge the contribution and support of the Asian Community Development Corporation, Chinatown/South Cove Neighborhood Council, Chinatown Resident Association, Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, Chinatown Main Street, Tufts Medical Center, and Tufts University.

Special thanks to those individuals who went above and beyond the call to make this report possible: Sherry Dong, Jeff Hovis, Kye Liang, Lydia Lowe, and Marrikka Trotter for the tireless hours spent reviewing and editing the report; Beverly Wing for her guidance and counsel; Bill Moy for his advice and edits to the report; Suzanne Lee for moderating meetings; Henry Yee for his advocacy and persistence; and Tunney Lee for his voice of reason.

Special thanks to the Chinatown Gateway Coalition, formed in 2005 to create a community vision for the South Bay/Chinatown Gateway parcels, and eventually led to the creation of the Chinatown Master Plan 2010.

Executive Summary

Purpose and Process

Boston's Chinatown is an historic and culturally rich community with roots that stretch back more than 130 years. Bordered by the City's Downtown and Midtown Cultural District and conveniently accessible by public transportation, the diversity of Chinatown is demonstrated by the multiple roles it serves as a residential neighborhood, economic hub, social service and cultural center, and tourist destination. The purpose of *Chinatown Master Plan 2010: Community Vision for the Future* is to form a vision and plan for a more sustainable and livable Chinatown – and create a vision through consensus and a community spirit of cooperation. The plan reaffirms the neighborhood's cultural heritage and tradition, and envisions the possibility and promise of change for a better future – the future of a unique and important neighborhood that maintains its status as a destination and cultural center for a network of Asian American communities in the city, state, and region.

Chinatown Master Plan 2010 has been a two-year process divided into two phases led by the Chinatown Master Plan 2010 Oversight Committee which consisted of residents, community members, community–based organizations, and local businesses with assistance and support from the Technical Committee and Consultant Team. Throughout the process, the committee came to better understand Chinatown's context, assets, opportunities, challenges, and together, developed a shared vision and goals for Chinatown. From this shared vision and goals, a master plan and action plan was developed to guide implementation.

Community Vision for the Future

The vision and goals for the future of Chinatown was developed in Phase I of the master planning process using input collected at community meetings, focus groups, and interviews, working closely with the Oversight and Technical Committees. The above input laid the foundation for development of the Chinatown Master Plan 2010 which has been discussed and debated extensively. The following represents a collective shared vision and goals that was prepared by consensus during this process and provides the inspiration and the framework for the action plan.

Vision of the Plan

1. Chinatown will be a diverse residential neighborhood anchored by immigrant and working class families.
2. Chinatown will be a sustainable social, economic and cultural hub for a network of Asian American communities in neighboring communities.
3. Chinatown will enhance its history and character as a unique neighborhood and cultural center that is important to the city, state, and region.
4. Chinatown will develop and diversify its economy by building on both its cultural identity and strategic location

Goals of the Plan

1. Preserve and strengthen Chinatown as a gateway for new immigrants and as a regional center for Chinese and Asian American culture and services;
2. Ensure the preservation of existing affordable housing;
3. Expand the number and range of housing options with a priority on low- and middle-income family housing;
4. Identify, create and prepare community members and businesses for economic development opportunities which will serve the needs of local residents, the regional Asian American community, neighboring institutions, and the Downtown and Theater Districts;
5. Increase public safety, improve the pedestrian environment, and engage in transportation planning to address community needs;
6. Foster a more sustainable and greener community;
7. Cultivate a healthier and cleaner environment and promote the health and well-being of its residents;
8. Expand civic spaces and increase the number of open spaces and park;
9. Develop policies that improve the quality of life for community members;
10. Increase community civic participation;
11. Reaffirm Chinatown's connections with its neighbors.

Community Development Plan

The community development plan is a set of recommendations for developing and improving the physical elements of the neighborhood guided by the vision and goals. The plan is comprised of four elements organized into community anchors, potential development sites, connections and open spaces, and urban design. It identifies four anchor areas as key to anchoring Chinatown's future growth and stabilization: Phillips Square, South Bay, New York Streets, and the Hinge Block. The vision is to transform the anchors into vibrant areas for Chinatown to link with Downtown and the South End from north to south; the Midtown Cultural District, Leather District, and South Station from east to west. The catalysts for transforming the anchor areas will be new developments that can provide housing, jobs, services, cultural space, and parks and open spaces for the community.

As the Chinatown core district is almost built-out and available land for development is limited, the plan identifies five public and community-owned parcels with the potential to be developed in the near term: Parcel 12, Parcel A, Parcel R1, 50 Herald Street, and the South Bay *terra firma* parcels.

The quality of life can be enhanced by improving Chinatown's streetscapes, civic spaces, and infrastructures. Working in cooperation with the Boston Redevelopment Authority on the Harrison-Albany Corridor Strategic Plan, the master plan recommends improvements to the Harrison Avenue pedestrian corridor from Phillips Square to the New York Streets in the South End. Similarly, improvements are recommended for Essex Street, Beach Street, and Kneeland Street to link the Boston Common and the Midtown Cultural District to Chinatown in conjunction with the City's Crossroads Initiative.

Conceptual plans included herein are for informational purposes only and shall not indicate an endorsement by the Chinatown Master Plan 2010.

Action Plan

The action plan is a compilation of strategies, ideas, and recommendations on how the vision and goals can be implemented. The successful implementation of the plan will require certain conditions and factors to be present such as resources, finances, city support, and timing as well as cooperation among the community, public agencies, and private sector. The action plan is organized into short-term and long-term strategies. Together, the vision, goals, community plan, and action plan summarizes the core elements of Chinatown Master Plan 2010.

Benjamin Ma, age 16

Introduction

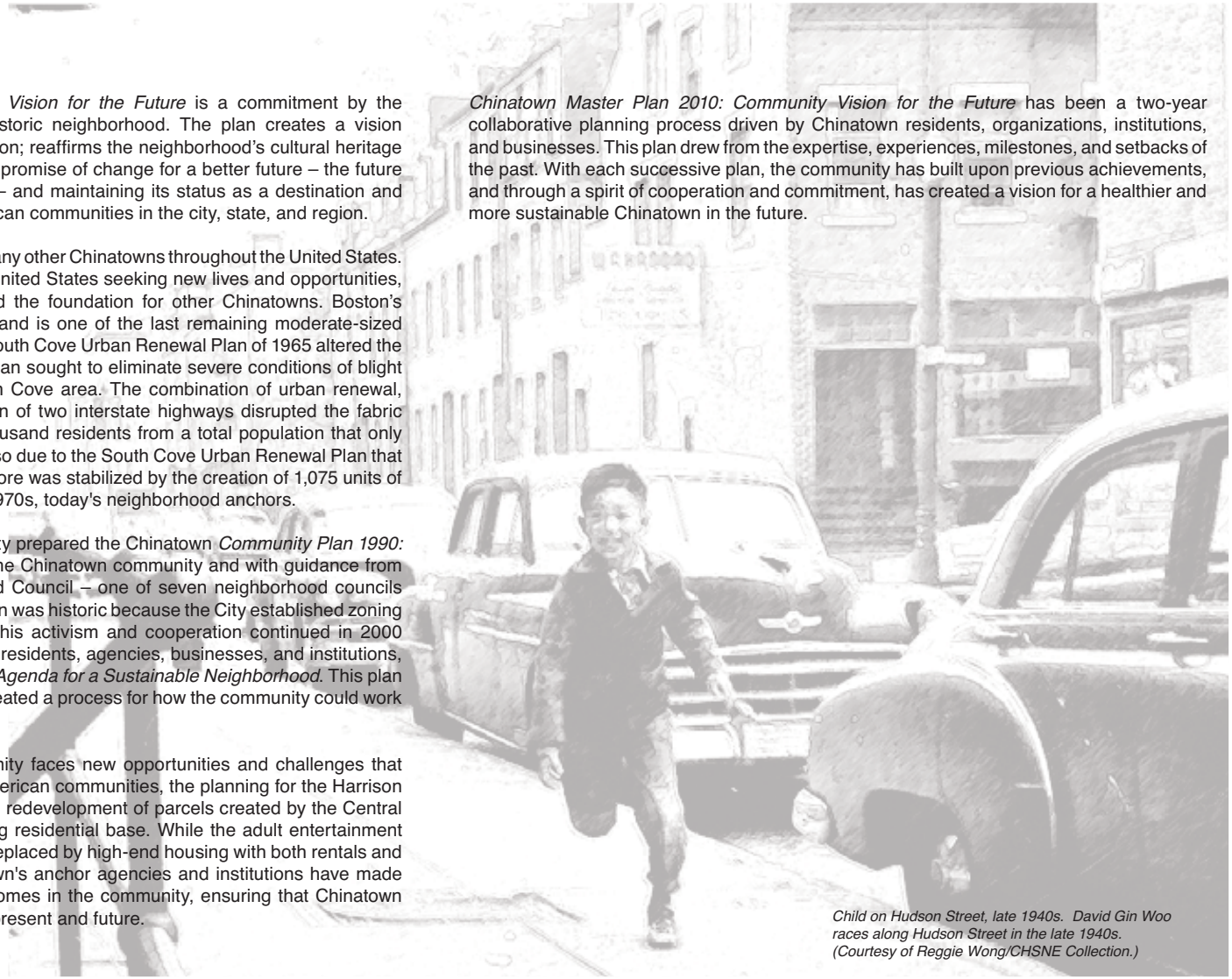
Chinatown Master Plan 2010: Community Vision for the Future is a commitment by the community to preserve and sustain its historic neighborhood. The plan creates a vision through consensus and a spirit of cooperation; reaffirms the neighborhood's cultural heritage and traditions; envisions the possibility and promise of change for a better future – the future of an unique and important neighborhood – and maintaining its status as a destination and cultural center for a network of Asian American communities in the city, state, and region.

Boston's Chinatown history mirrors that of many other Chinatowns throughout the United States. Early Chinese pioneers immigrated to the United States seeking new lives and opportunities, and formed tight-knit communities that laid the foundation for other Chinatowns. Boston's Chinatown was founded in the late 1800s and is one of the last remaining moderate-sized Chinatowns still thriving in the nation. The South Cove Urban Renewal Plan of 1965 altered the community landscape significantly as the plan sought to eliminate severe conditions of blight and to redevelop Chinatown and the South Cove area. The combination of urban renewal, institutional expansion, and the construction of two interstate highways disrupted the fabric of the community and displaced over a thousand residents from a total population that only numbered around 3,000. However, it was also due to the South Cove Urban Renewal Plan that the community's working-class residential core was stabilized by the creation of 1,075 units of low-income and affordable housing in the 1970s, today's neighborhood anchors.

In 1987, the Boston Redevelopment Authority prepared the Chinatown *Community Plan 1990: A Plan to Manage Growth* with input from the Chinatown community and with guidance from the newly formed Chinatown Neighborhood Council – one of seven neighborhood councils formed by Mayor Raymond L. Flynn. The plan was historic because the City established zoning and land use regulations for Chinatown. This activism and cooperation continued in 2000 when the Chinatown Initiative, a coalition of residents, agencies, businesses, and institutions, prepared the *Chinatown Master Plan 2000: Agenda for a Sustainable Neighborhood*. This plan reaffirmed the goals of the 1990 plan and created a process for how the community could work with the City and the institutions.

As Chinatown moves forward, the community faces new opportunities and challenges that include the growth of surrounding Asian American communities, the planning for the Harrison Avenue-Albany Street corridor, the potential redevelopment of parcels created by the Central Artery Tunnel, and a dynamic and changing residential base. While the adult entertainment district continues to disappear, it has been replaced by high-end housing with both rentals and condominiums. At the same time, Chinatown's anchor agencies and institutions have made the decision to maintain their permanent homes in the community, ensuring that Chinatown remains the region's cultural center for the present and future.

Chinatown Master Plan 2010: Community Vision for the Future has been a two-year collaborative planning process driven by Chinatown residents, organizations, institutions, and businesses. This plan drew from the expertise, experiences, milestones, and setbacks of the past. With each successive plan, the community has built upon previous achievements, and through a spirit of cooperation and commitment, has created a vision for a healthier and more sustainable Chinatown in the future.



Child on Hudson Street, late 1940s. David Gin Woo races along Hudson Street in the late 1940s. (Courtesy of Reggie Wong/CHSNE Collection.)

Chinatown Yesterday: A Historical Overview

1790–1900: Early History

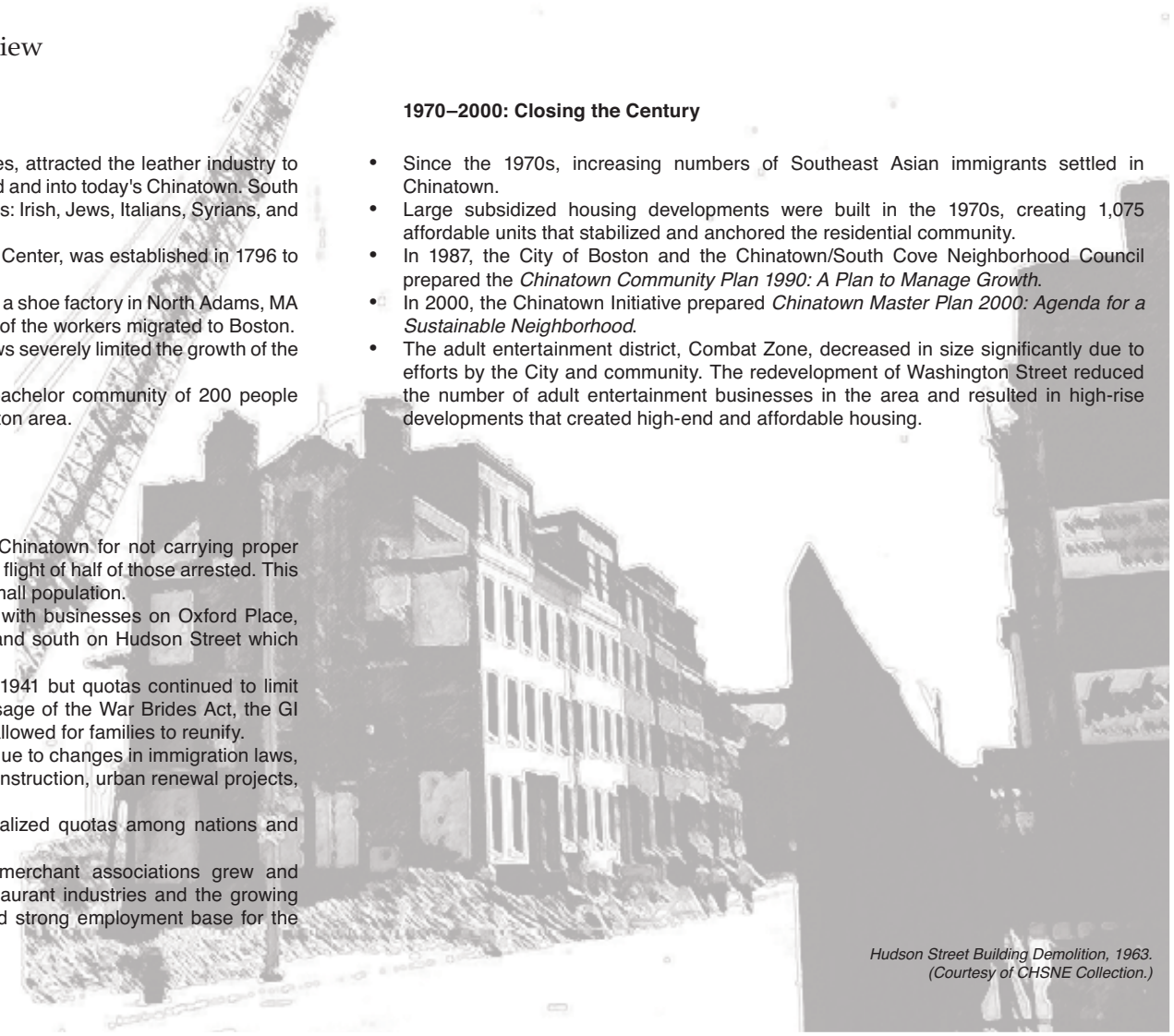
- The presence of the railway, along with low land values, attracted the leather industry to the area running the length of the South Station rail yard and into today's Chinatown. South Cove was populated by successive waves of immigrants: Irish, Jews, Italians, Syrians, and Chinese.
- The Boston Dispensary, predecessor to Tufts Medical Center, was established in 1796 to provide health care services to the City's poor.
- A group of 75 Chinese men was hired in 1870 to work in a shoe factory in North Adams, MA during a workers' strike. When the strike ended, some of the workers migrated to Boston.
- The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and subsequent laws severely limited the growth of the Chinese population across the country.
- By 1890, Boston's Chinatown was predominantly a bachelor community of 200 people with approximately 1,100 living and working in the Boston area.

1901–1950: Growth and Change

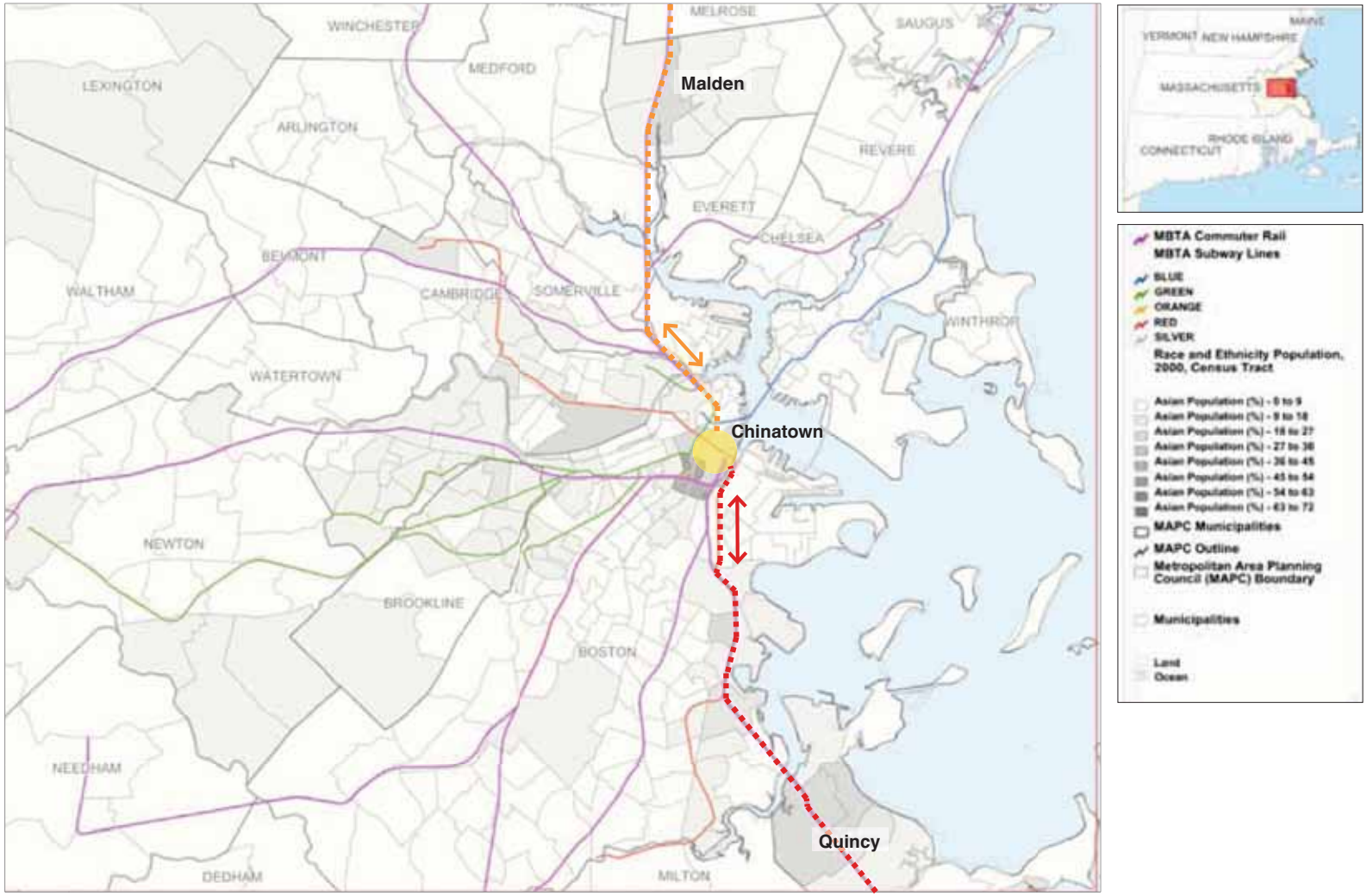
- In 1903, Boston police arrested over 300 people in Chinatown for not carrying proper immigration documents, leading to the deportation and flight of half of those arrested. This incident jeopardized the viability of the community's small population.
- By the 1920s, the community was firmly established with businesses on Oxford Place, Harrison Avenue, and Tyler Street and began to expand south on Hudson Street which was mostly occupied by Syrian immigrants.
- The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was repealed in 1941 but quotas continued to limit Asian immigration to 105 people a year until the passage of the War Brides Act, the GI Fiancées Act, and the Immigration Act in 1946 which allowed for families to reunify.
- During the 1950s and 1960s, as the community grew due to changes in immigration laws, land and housing in Chinatown was lost to highway construction, urban renewal projects, and institutional expansion.
- The Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965 equalized quotas among nations and paved the way for increased immigration.
- Advocacy agencies, schools, health centers, and merchant associations grew and expanded with the population. The garment and restaurant industries and the growing number of Chinese businesses provided an early and strong employment base for the community.

1970–2000: Closing the Century

- Since the 1970s, increasing numbers of Southeast Asian immigrants settled in Chinatown.
- Large subsidized housing developments were built in the 1970s, creating 1,075 affordable units that stabilized and anchored the residential community.
- In 1987, the City of Boston and the Chinatown/South Cove Neighborhood Council prepared the *Chinatown Community Plan 1990: A Plan to Manage Growth*.
- In 2000, the Chinatown Initiative prepared *Chinatown Master Plan 2000: Agenda for a Sustainable Neighborhood*.
- The adult entertainment district, Combat Zone, decreased in size significantly due to efforts by the City and community. The redevelopment of Washington Street reduced the number of adult entertainment businesses in the area and resulted in high-rise developments that created high-end and affordable housing.



Hudson Street Building Demolition, 1963. (Courtesy of CHSNE Collection.)



Source: MetroBoston DataCommon. Map prepared by IKM Architects.

Center for Asian American Communities

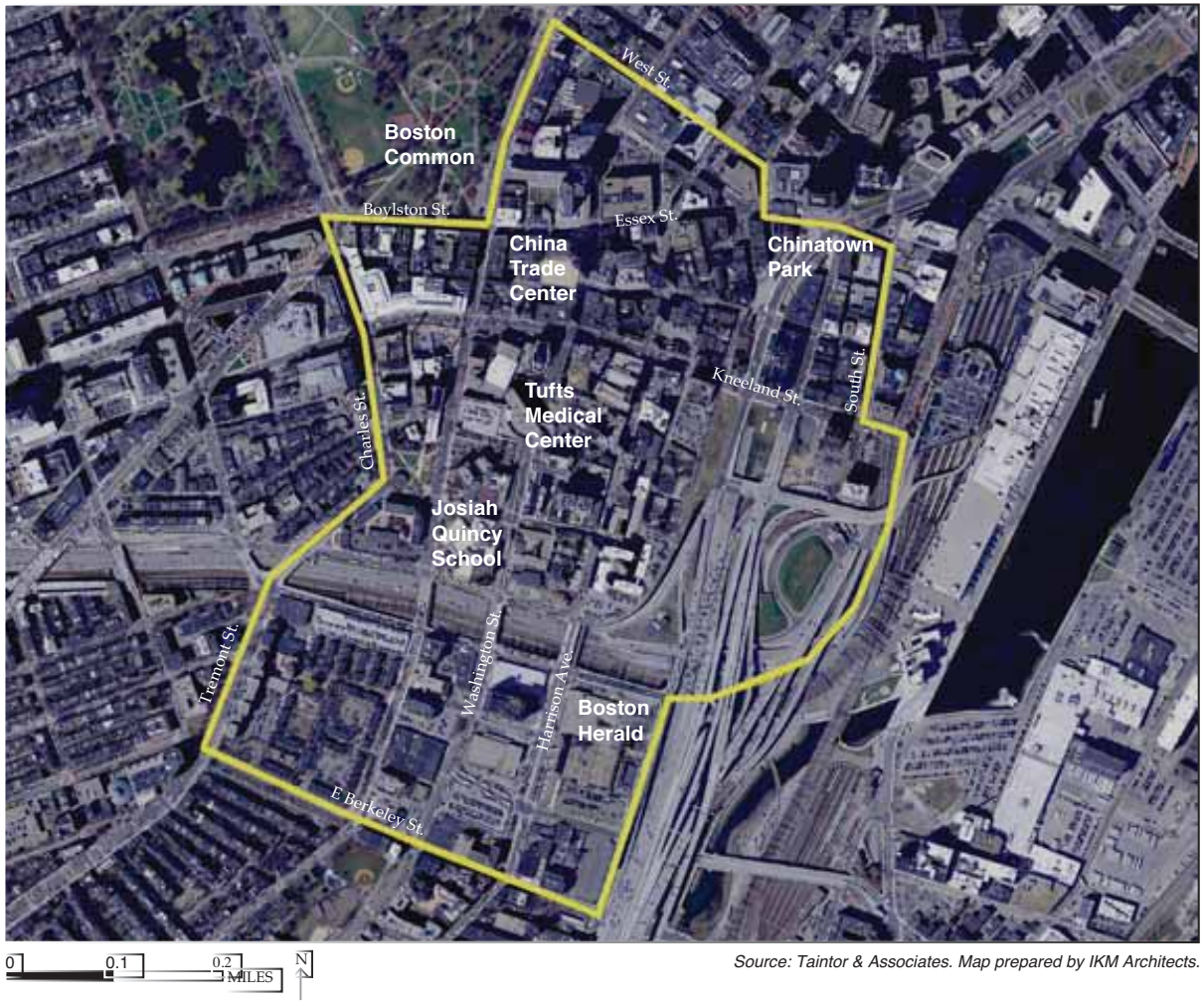
Chinatown's proximity to the state's transportation infrastructure allows for convenient access by visitors and Asian American communities in the region. Chinatown is accessible by public transportation through the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority's (MBTA) subway, bus, and commuter rail lines, interstate highways I-93/I-90, and private transportation services. Combine with the presence of over 65 family associations and social service agencies, Chinatown serves as a cultural and social service center for the region's Asian American population.

Source: MetroBoston DataCommon. Map prepared by IKM Architects.

Study Area

Chinatown spans approximately 137 acres and is located near the heart of Boston. The neighborhood is bordered by Downtown to the north, Leather District and Southeast Expressway to the east, South End to the south, and Midtown Cultural District, Boston Common, and Bay Village to the west. Established in the late 1870s, the Chinatown-South Cove area was created by the filling of former tidal flats that were originally part of the Shawmut Peninsula. The presence of railways and the garment industry attracted early immigrants such as the Irish, Italians, Jews, and Syrians.

Throughout its history, Chinatown's boundaries have both expanded and contracted. The Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) defines the Chinatown District as bounded by Essex Street to the north, Surface Artery/I-93 to the east, Marginal Road to the south, and Washington/Tremont Street to the west. The boundaries of the Chinatown /South Cove Neighborhood Council define the community as bounded by West/Bedford Street to the north, Surface Artery/Albany Street to the east, East Berkeley Street to the south, and Tremont/Charles Street to the west. The study area for Chinatown Master Plan 2010 combines the boundaries from the BRA Chinatown district zoning and the Chinatown /South Cove Neighborhood Council. The study area is for planning purposes and is intended as a guide to understand the growth and change in the community.



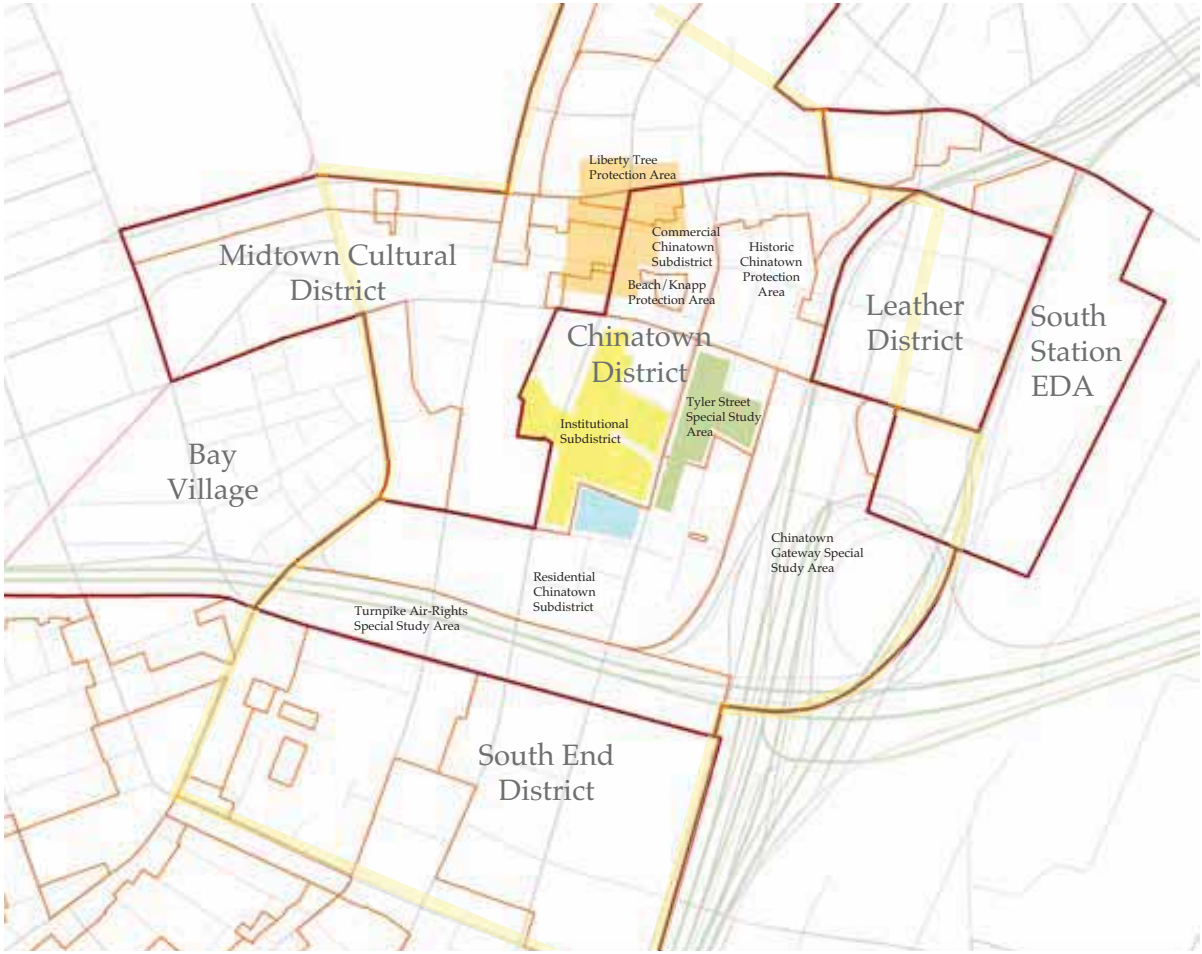
Source: Taintor & Associates. Map prepared by IKM Architects.

Chinatown District Zoning

The study area overlaps with five zoning districts – Chinatown, Leather District, Midtown Cultural District, South Station Economic Development Area, and South End.

	In Established PDA Maximum Height	FAR
Turnpike Air-Rights PDA Area	100'/250'	6
Chinatown Gateway PDA Area	100'/300'	7-10
Residential Chinatown PDA Area	125'/175'	6

	As-of-Right Maximum Height	Floor Area Ratio (FAR)
Chinatown District		
Liberty Tree Protection Area	65'/80'	6/7
Beach/Knapp Protection Area	65'/80'	6/7
Historic Chinatown Protection Area	65'/80'	6/7
Residential Chinatown Subdistrict	80'/100'	4/6
Institutional Subdistrict	80'/125'	6/8
Commercial Chinatown Subdistrict	80'/100'	6/7
Turnpike Air-Rights Special Study Area	80'/100'	6/7
Chinatown Gateway Special Study Area	80'/100'	6/7
Tyler Street Special Study Area	80'/125'	6/8



Source: Boston Redevelopment Authority. Map prepared by Taintor & Associates/IKM Architects.

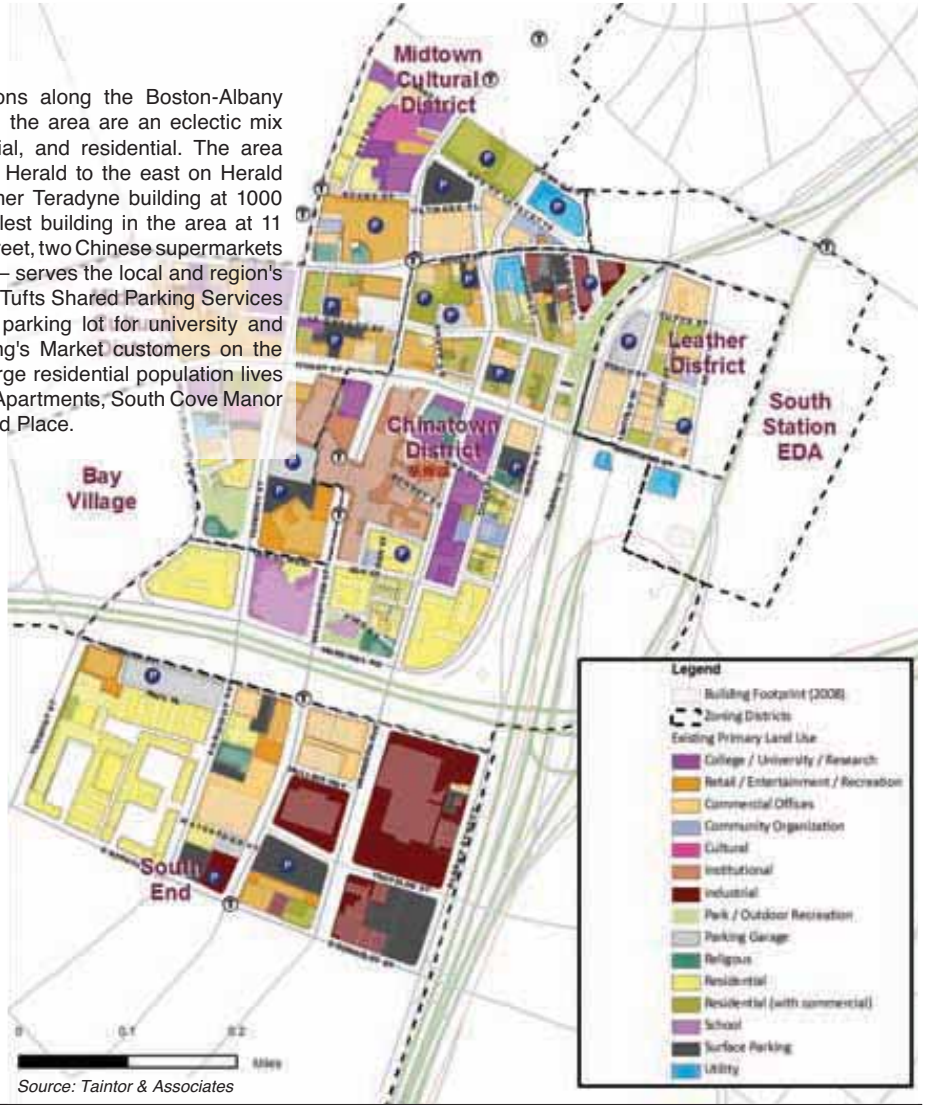
Existing Uses

Established in the late 1870s, the Chinatown community has existed alongside diverse land uses. By the early 1900s, the Boston-Albany railway and garment factories occupied the area. Today, Chinatown is dominated by the presence of two institutions, Tufts Medical Center and Tufts University, and can be roughly divided into three sections grouped by their primary uses.

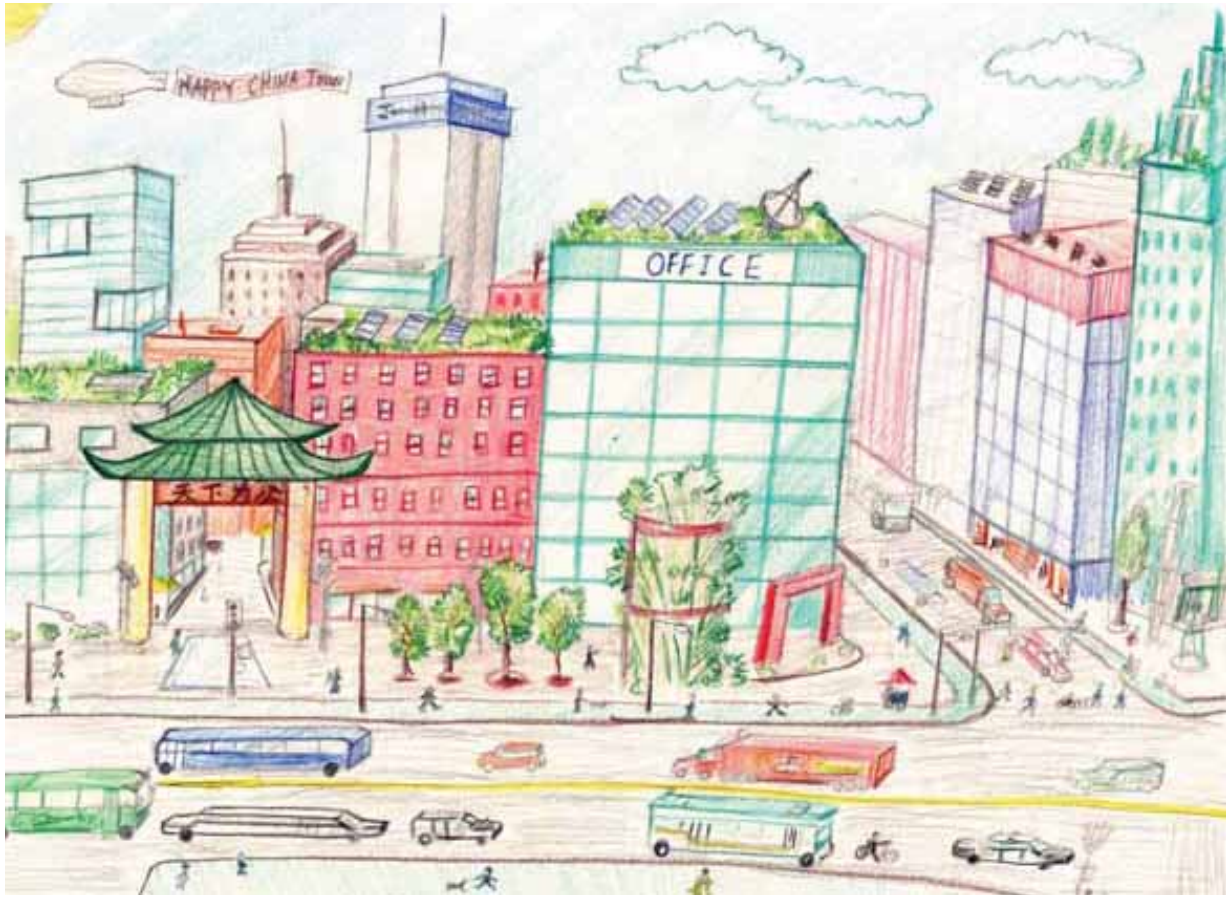
Chinatown Business District - The historic birthplace of Chinatown, this area is north of Kneeland Street and is the core business district because of the large number of commercial and retail shops, restaurants, and markets on Washington, Essex, Beach, and Tyler Streets, and Harrison Avenue. In recent years, Emerson College and Suffolk University have expanded into the Theater District on Washington Street.

Institutional and Residential District - South of Kneeland Street and extending to Marginal Road/Mass Turnpike, this area is the institutional and residential core district due to the presence of Tufts Medical Center and Tufts University. Large residential structures are in this area: Tai Tung Village, Mass Pike Towers, the Metropolitan, Oak Terrace, Mei Wah Village, Quincy Towers, and South Cove Plaza East and West. In recent years, social and community service agencies have made investments in the community by purchasing new homes in the area in addition to the existing agencies and family associations. Notable social and community service agencies include: Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association of New England, Ni Lun Association, Asian American Civic Association, Kwong Kow Chinese School, Asian Youth Essential Services, Asian Community Development Corporation, Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center, Chinese Progressive Association, South Cove Community Health Center, Chinatown Wang/YMCA, Boston Chinese Evangelical Church, and St. James Church.

New York Streets/South End District - The New York Streets district is south of the Mass Turnpike and extends to East Berkeley Street. The streets in the area were at one time named after destinations along the Boston-Albany Railroad. Today, the uses in the area are an eclectic mix of light industrial, commercial, and residential. The area is dominated by the Boston Herald to the east on Herald and Albany Street. The former Teradyne building at 1000 Washington Street is the tallest building in the area at 11 stories. Along Washington Street, two Chinese supermarkets – C-Mart and Ming's Market – serves the local and region's demand for Asian groceries. Tufts Shared Parking Services operate the Traveler Street parking lot for university and hospital employees and Ming's Market customers on the weekends. To the west, a large residential population lives in Castle Square, Eva White Apartments, South Cove Manor Nursing Home, and Waterford Place.



Source: Taintor & Associates



"A panoramic view of the Chinatown gate somewhere in the future."
Angus Mo, age 11

Purpose and Process

Purpose
This plan captures the vision and goals of the Chinatown community and is intended to be used as a reference by city and state agencies, developers, residents, and community members. The plan summarizes the community's needs, identifies opportunities and challenges for the future, and recommends strategies for implementation.

Process
The planning process has been divided into two phases driven by a 13 member Oversight Committee and guided by a nine-member Technical Committee. The 13 members of the Oversight Committee represents a diverse group of community members representing agencies, institutions, businesses, and residents. The consultant team of Taintor & Associates and Community Circle have been engaged to facilitate the public process and to develop the plan.

Phase I of the process develops the vision and goals and includes the following activities:

- Three public meetings
- Key stakeholder interviews
- Youth focus group
- Resident focus groups
- Parent workshop
- Workshop with English as a Second Language students
- Workforce focus groups
- Chinatown business survey
- Social service agency survey
- Comment board

Phase II of the process develops the community development and action plan and includes the following activities:

- Two public meetings
- Youth art contest
- Presentation to five community groups

Kwong Kow Chinese School, 1933. (Courtesy of Chinese Historical Society of New England Collection.)

Members of the Gung Ho Lion Dance. (Courtesy of Chinese Historical Society of New England Collection.)

Chinatown Community Plan 1990

The community's first master plan, *Chinatown Community Plan 1990: A Plan to Manage Growth*, was prepared by the City of Boston and the Chinatown community. The 1990 plan established Chinatown zoning and land use regulations, and enforced the recognition of the plan by the institutions. The 1990 master plan stated five goals for the community and these goals became the reference point for future planning.

1. To strengthen the family orientation of the neighborhood by containing Combat Zone activities and by creating affordable housing;
2. To expand Chinatown's economic base by reinforcing community services and providing opportunities for the growth and diversification of businesses and employment;
3. To strengthen Chinatown's cultural heritage, historic legacies, and environment by enhancing its unique streetscape, upgrading its pedestrian-oriented environs, and reinforcing its community infrastructure;
4. To protect Chinatown's land base by redirecting institutional growth to the periphery of the district and preventing further highway construction that infringes on the neighborhood; and
5. To support Chinatown's future growth by building "land bridges" at the Hinge Block, the Chinatown Gateway area, and the Turnpike Air-Rights area, which connect Chinatown with the Midtown Cultural District, the South Station Economic Development Area, and the South End.

Boston Knights Volleyball Tournament 1970. (Courtesy of Reggie Wong/ Chinese Historical Society of New England Collection.)

Workers at a garment factory. (Courtesy of Doug Brugge/CPA Collection.)

Community Progress Since 2000

The five goals established by the Chinatown Community Plan 1990 became the reference point for the two master plans that followed – *Chinatown Master Plan 2000: Agenda for a Sustainable Community* and *Chinatown Master Plan 2010: Community Vision for the Future*. In the 2000 master plan, the five goals of the 1990 plan were affirmed and incorporated as the plan's vision. For this plan, these five goals are the benchmarks to measure the community's progress in the last decade.

1. To strengthen the family orientation of the neighborhood by containing Combat Zone activities and by creating affordable housing;

- Created 1,366 housing units with 183 units (18%) affordable;
- Preserved 1,000 federal subsidized housing contracts from expiring;
- An additional 1,300 housing units are currently permitted for construction of which 25% is affordable;
- Development of new businesses and housing on Lower Washington Street has restricted the activities of the Combat Zone.

2. To expand Chinatown's economic base by reinforcing community services and providing opportunities for the growth and diversification of businesses and employment;

- Six social service agencies purchased or constructed permanent facilities in Chinatown and anchored the community as a cultural and service center.
- The Josiah Quincy Upper School was opened to complement the existing Josiah Quincy Elementary School to provide an education continuum from K-1 to grade 12.
- There are over 300 businesses operating in the Chinatown business district. New industries and businesses emerged in Chinatown such as supermarkets, banking, hotel accommodations, travel, real estate, construction, and health services. Restaurant and food services continue to be Chinatown's primary sources of employment.
- Chinatown Main Street was formed by the City to market and revitalize the business district.

3. To strengthen Chinatown's cultural heritage, historic legacies, and environment by enhancing its unique streetscape, upgrading its pedestrian-oriented environs, and reinforcing its community infrastructure;

- The Chinese Historical Society of New England raised the funds to build the Chinese Immigrant Memorial at Mount Hope Cemetery to honor the early Chinese settlers buried in the cemetery.
- Annual events such as the New Year and August Moon Festivals continue to attract visitors to Chinatown.
- The former Don Bosco High School was renovated and converted into the Doubletree Hotel and Chinatown Wang/YMCA.
- The Paramount Theater was rehabilitated by Emerson College and the Modern Theatre is in the process of being rehabilitated by Suffolk University.
- The Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway Chinatown Park was opened in 2007 and honors the historic and cultural influence of Chinatown with Asian-themed elements in the park.
- The completion of the Central Artery Tunnel project improved perimeter road conditions and traffic circulation.

Ribbon-cutting for the opening of new Boston EMS Ambulance Station on Harvard Street. Fourth from left: City Councilor Bill Linehan, Bill Moy, Chinatown Neighborhood Council, Mayor Thomas M. Menino, and Ellen Zane, CEO, Tufts Medical Center. (Courtesy of Cody Yiu/SAMPAN Newspaper.)

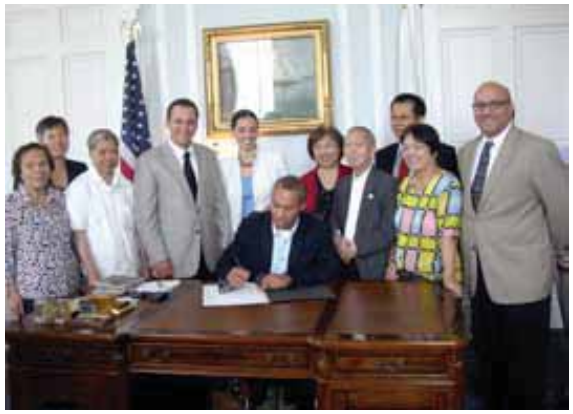
The former Don Bosco High School was redeveloped as the Doubletree Hotel and Chinatown Wang/YMCA in 2000.

4. To protect Chinatown's land base by redirecting institutional growth to the periphery of the district and preventing further highway construction that infringes on the neighborhood;

- Tufts University developed the Jaharis Health & Science Center on land already owned by the University and added five additional stories to Tufts Dental School. The university invested in storefront upgrades to their existing facilities.
- Emerson College relocated its campus from the Back Bay to the area near Boston Common and redeveloped the Paramount Theater. Suffolk University has purchased and is rehabilitating the Modern Theater.
- The BRA selected E.A. Fish & Associates and Asian Community Development Corporation to design and construct the Metropolitan. The Metropolitan was constructed in 2005 and became the new home for Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center, Boston Asian Youth Essential Services, Chinese Progressive Association, and Asian Community Development Corporation.

5. To support Chinatown's future growth by building "land bridges" at the Hinge Block, the Chinatown Gateway area, and the Turnpike Air-Rights area, which connects Chinatown with the Midtown Cultural District, the South Station Economic Development Area, and the South End.

- *Civic Vision for the Turnpike Air Rights* was completed in 2000. However, the complexity and high cost of air rights construction has stalled any development to date.
- Kensington Place was approved for development in the Hinge Block to connect Chinatown to the Midtown Cultural District.
- In 2004, the BRA and MassDOT completed the *South Bay Planning Study Phase I* to connect Chinatown with the Leather District, South Station Economic Development Area, and Fort Point Channel.
- The BRA is preparing the *Harrison-Albany Strategic Corridor Plan* to link Downtown, Chinatown, and South End.



Massachusetts Governor Deval L. Patrick signs the bilingual voting rights bill. Left to Right: Dan Xin Chen, Cyndi Mark, Siu Ching Tsang, Representative Aaron Michlewitz, Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz, Governor Deval L. Patrick (seated), Suzanne Lee, Henry Yee, Gilbert Ho, Jian Hua Tang, and Representative Jeffrey Sanchez. (Courtesy of Christina Chan.)

Students from Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center's Adult Education program visit City Hall on New Bostonian Day.

"Windmills and solar energy developed. Some buildings harmful to the environment destroyed."
Anthony Chu, age 11

Population

The population of Chinatown is approximately 9,275 residents with 47% Asian, 41% White, 7% Black or African American, and 5% other races. (*Nielsen-Claritas Census Updates 2008*.)

Existing Conditions

- Asians are the largest group in Chinatown comprising 47% of the population compared to 8% city-wide. Among the Asian population, 92% are Chinese.
- Forty-one percent have a household income of less than $15,000.
- Fifty-three percent of the people age five or older speak an Asian or Pacific Islander language at home.
- Chinatown is the densest neighborhood in the city with more people per square foot.
- Chinatown is an employment and transportation hub for the region's Asian and Chinese American workers.
- The largest employers in Chinatown are Tufts Medical Center and Tufts University, which brings a diverse workforce that commutes to Chinatown daily.

Key Issues and Trends

- Asian Americans are the fastest growing ethnic group in Massachusetts and Chinese Americans make up the largest percentage of this group.
- Chinatown's residential population has grown by 44% from 1990 to 2008 and 9% from 2000 to 2008.
- Asians represented 70% of the population in Chinatown in Census 2000. In 2008, Asians represented 47% of the population.
- The development of new housing has attracted a diverse population of professionals and middle-class residents to community.
- The percentage of elderly over age 65 is 21%, nearly double the city-wide average of 11%.
- Children and youth, age 0 to 17, were 14% compared to 20% city-wide. In the Census 1990, children and youth were 19%.
- Chinatown's role as a gateway for new immigrants is changing as new immigrants and second-generation Asian Americans are migrating to nearby communities that offer more opportunities for affordable housing.
- New immigrants arriving from China are more likely to speak Mandarin than Toishanese or Cantonese.
- As the regional Asian and Chinese American population grows, businesses and service providers are adapting to this trend. For example: approximately 80% of the patients at the South Cove Community Health Center (SCCHC) and 80% of the Boston Chinese Evangelical Church (BCEC) congregation are from outside of Chinatown. SCCHC has opened a new facility in Quincy and BCEC holds Sunday services at their Newton church.

Opportunities

- Chinatown's population is growing, due to continued Asian immigration, expansion of universities, and development of new housing. Currently, projects approved by the City will add over 1,000 new housing units in Chinatown.
- Chinatown is the regional hub providing jobs, housing, and services to the region's Asian and Chinese American community. In the last decade, at least six social service agencies have invested in Chinatown's future by purchasing permanent facilities and providing services to the community's regional population.

Challenges

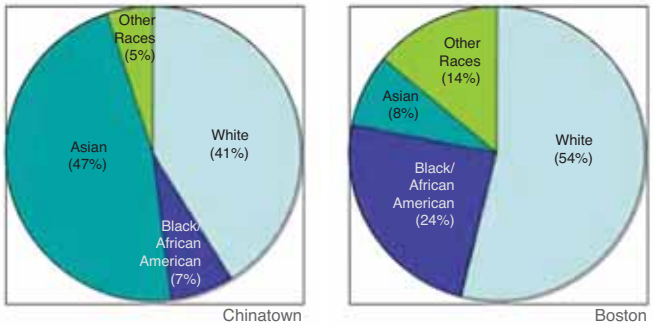
- As Chinatown's population continues to increase, the need for services increases as well. These demands include: workforce development, career counseling, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), job training, and GED preparation.
- A large percentage of residents do not have proficiency in the English language and requires translation services.

Suzanne Lee teaching a class at the Chinese Progressive Association in the 1970s. Lee later became the Principal of the Josiah Quincy Elementary School. (Courtesy of CPA Collection.)

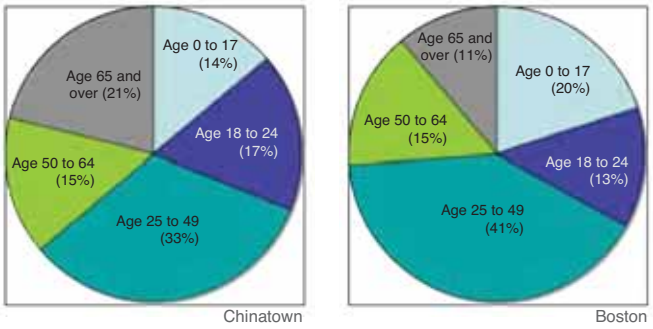
Boston Chinese Folk and Classical Dance Troupe.

Comparative Overview of Chinatown & Boston

Data Source: Nielsen-Claritas Census Updates 2008



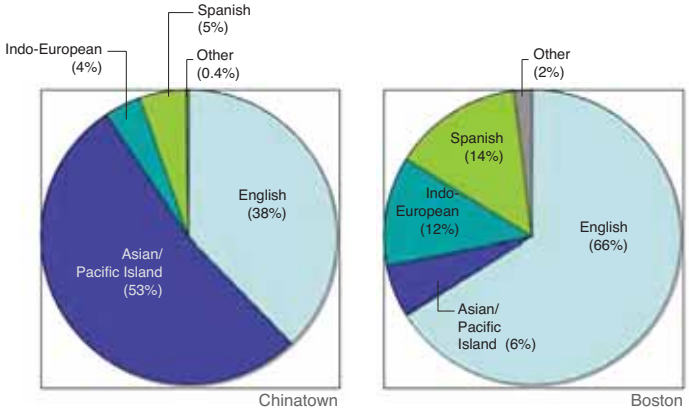
Population by Single Race Classification



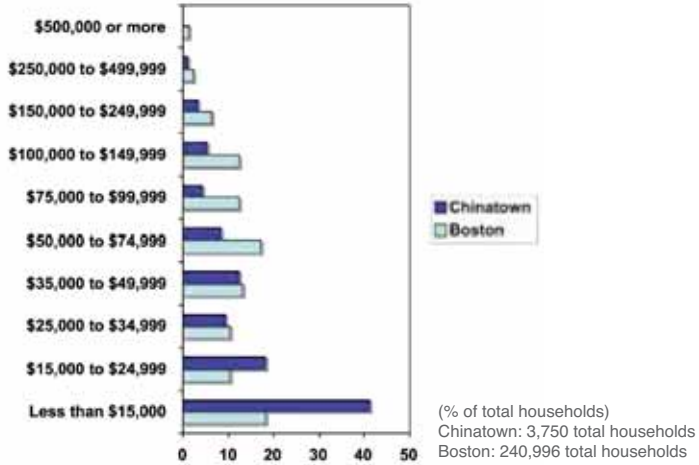
Population by Age

Population

	Chinatown	Boston
2008 Estimate	9,275	589,823
2000 Census	8,537	589,069
1990 Census	6,434	574,211

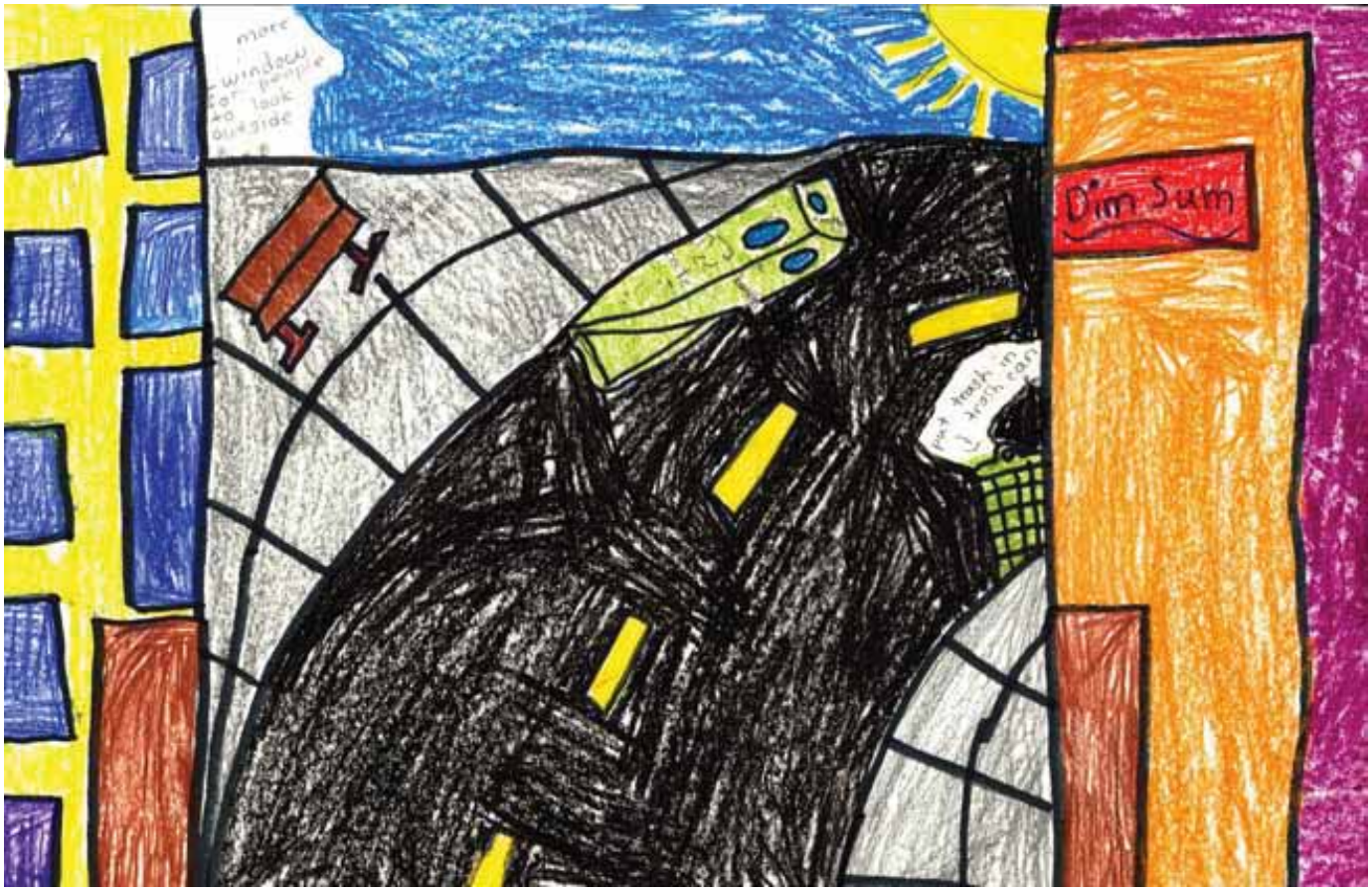


Language Spoken At Home (Age 5+)



(% of total households)
Chinatown: 3,750 total households
Boston: 240,996 total households

Household Income



"My artwork shows that we need to have more trash cans to keep our streets clean and to have more benches for people to rest outside."
Emilia Fong-Gallagher, age 8.5

Land Use

The character of the community is defined by both the physical environment and the mix of land uses within its boundaries and along its edges. Chinatown's streetscapes are a mix of new and old buildings with diverse architectural styles and scales. They reflect the changing economic, cultural, and social factors that have influenced the neighborhood's development and redevelopment over time. Sixty percent of the land in Chinatown is occupied by the institutions and tax-exempt non-profits. Housing is 12% of the land, primarily consisting of rental and multi-family units. Commercial and industrial uses comprise 20%.

Existing Conditions

The *Chinatown Master Plan 2010* study area includes:

- Five primary zoning districts (Chinatown, South Station EDA, South End, Midtown Cultural District, Leather District)
- Various zoning sub-districts and planned development areas (PDA) including areas designated for commercial, residential, institutional, open space, special protection, and special studies.
- Tufts Medical Center occupies 5.9 acres.
- Tufts University occupies 2.7 acres.

Key Issues and Trends

- The Chinatown core is fully developed except for pockets of parcels and surface parking lots.
- Future growth will occur in the South Bay/Chinatown Gateway parcels and the New York Streets.
- The future changes on how Trigen generates power will be key to the potential development of the South Bay/ Chinatown Gateway parcels along Kneeland Street.
- The New York Streets area is zoned for manufacturing, residential, and commercial uses. The Boston Redevelopment Authority is preparing a study for the Harrison-Albany Corridor Strategic Plan to rezone the area.
- Future new housing developments will be mixed-use with ground floor retail and mixed-income with market-rate and affordable units.
- The Turnpike Air Rights parcels have potential, but current financial situation make development of the air rights parcels difficult.
- The Adult Entertainment District (formerly known as the Combat Zone) has diminished substantially, and is being replaced by new developments along Washington Street.
- Major institutions in and around Chinatown continue to shape the physical, cultural and social setting of the neighborhood.

Opportunities

- Chinatown's location in the hub of the City and the region's transportation network ensures its unique cultural heritage will continue to attract visitors.
- The South Bay/Chinatown Gateway parcels along Kneeland Street and sites in the New York Streets area provide opportunities for growth that could enhance the economic stability for both the City and the community through increased housing, services, and job creation.
- The changes in the way Trigen generates power will open opportunities for redevelopment of the South Bay/ Chinatown Gateway parcels.
- Emerging enterprises include hotels, new economy business opportunities, and construction.
- Dense, adaptable mixture of former industrial and residential buildings creates the potential for Chinatown to quickly respond to new land use opportunities.
- Improved access and visibility for Chinatown following the completion of the Central Artery/Tunnel Project and opening of the Rose Kennedy Greenway Chinatown Park will continue to attract investment opportunities.
- Existing surface parking lots have development potential.

Trigen Energy Plant on Kneeland Street.

Tufts Medical Center and Tufts University owns and leases approximately nine acres of land in Chinatown.

Challenges

- There is a scarcity of developable land in Chinatown's core. Future growth will occur at the edges that border other neighborhoods.
- Few parcels are publicly-owned that the community can provide input on possible development. For the majority of the privately-owned parcels, the community has limited input.
- Economic and financial challenges will be a stumbling block to development and construction in or near Chinatown. Several projects in Chinatown – Parcel 24, 120 Kingston St./Oxford-Ping On, and Hong Lok House – are delayed because of the lack of financing.
- Chinatown needs an integrated network of streets and public spaces that accommodates and balances all modes of transportation and circulation: automobiles, public transportation, pedestrians, bicyclists and other forms of transportation.

What was formerly an exit ramp for I-93, the area is now part of the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway Chinatown Park.

Economy

Existing Conditions

- There are 300 businesses in the Chinatown business district today compared to 176 in 1988.
- Businesses typically employ two to five employees per retail shop and five to 20 employees for restaurants and bakeries.
- Most of the workers employed in Chinatown live outside of the community.
- The supply of affordable spaces for small businesses is scarce.
- Including the institutional and health services sectors, there are over 700 businesses in Chinatown employing nearly 11,000 workers. Approximately 65% work in the health care and food service industries.
- Emerging businesses and industries include hotels, new economy businesses, and construction.
- Employment opportunities for the residential workforce are limited due to education, language barriers, and skills training among other factors.

Key Issues and Trends

- Business growth requires space and competes with other land use priorities.
- Large businesses employing assembly labor (i.e. Teradyne) have left Chinatown.
- Major institutions in and around Chinatown provide the best opportunities for employment.
- Chinatown has lost out on workforce and employment development activities afforded to other neighborhoods.
- Chinatown shows an increase in the diversification of businesses, though restaurant and food service industries are still the majority.

Opportunities

- Build ties with major institutions such as Emerson College, Suffolk University, Tufts University, and Tufts Medical Center to develop training programs and employment opportunities.
- Growth and stability of Chinatown's small businesses is

Cakes from Bao Bao Bakery on Harrison Avenue.

The opening of a laundromat on Tyler Street.

critical to the community's long-term sustainability.
- Improve the image of Chinatown through cleanliness, aesthetic improvements, and public safety.
- Provide integrated and accessible services that support residents in multiple ways including health care, transportation, day care, job search resources, job training, and English language skills.

Challenges
- Chinatown's economic base includes businesses that service the regional Asian American community as well as the local institutions. The small restaurants, food stores, and locally owned retailers define Chinatown's cultural identity and strengthen it as a tourist destination. However, attracting and retaining larger businesses is also important to increasing jobs and bringing new investments.
- Commercial space in Chinatown presents multiple challenges. Many of the community's existing commercial facilities are in poor condition and offer little capacity for expansion.
- Thirty-seven percent of Chinatown residents live in poverty (20% citywide) and 60% of residents have less than a high school education (20% citywide).
- Chinatown residents are concentrated in the lowest paying industry sectors: food service, accommodations, retail, manufacturing, and education.
- More workforce development services are needed to help residential workforce become more marketable and to obtain career advancement opportunities. These services include career counseling, language skills, GED preparation, and job training.

Workforce development services include career counseling, language skills, GED preparation, and job training.

A worker at Chinatown Cafe on Harrison Avenue. (Courtesy of Carmen Chan/AARW Collection.)

Housing

As Chinatown is a small area abutting the Downtown and Theater Districts, combined with its growing population, housing continues to be a pressing need. Due to the Immigration Act of 1965, Chinatown's population has grown significantly. During this same period, Chinatown's land area shrunk because of highway and institutional expansion.

Existing Conditions
- 4,189 total residential units
- 2,095 market-rate units (50%)
- 2,094 affordable/subsidized units (50%)
- About 5% of all units in Chinatown are owner-occupied compared to 32% citywide.
- 71% of all residential units are one bedroom or less
- 1,369 housing units have been constructed since 2000, a 33% increase.
- Of the 1,369 housing units constructed, 1,186 (87%) are market-rate units and 183 (13%) are affordable or subsidized.

Key Issues and Trends
- Since 2000, housing development has included 1,186 market rate residential units and 183 affordable units. Another 1,240 housing units are planned with 24% affordable.
- There are 525 units with Section 8 contracts that will expire by 2012 with an additional 620 units by 2025.
- Affordable housing is in high demand. With a median household income of less than $20,000, prices for market-rate units are out of reach for Chinatown's working-class.
- Lower housing costs and more home ownership opportunities are available outside Chinatown.
- Student dormitories (Emerson College, Suffolk University) have expanded substantially along Washington, Boylston and Tremont Streets.
- Upgrades within Tufts University Health Sciences campus have improved buildings, streetscapes, open space, and capacity.
- The number of hotels have increased with addition of the Doubletree Hotel, W Hotel, and a potential hotel at 275 Albany Street.

Opportunities
- Future housing developments will be mixed-use with a range of uses.
- The Boston Herald property will be redeveloped in the near future.
- South Cove Manor Nursing Home on 120 Shawmut Avenue is seeking to relocate and expand.
- The 50 Herald Street property has been designated as a site for affordable housing. C-Mart Supermarket's lease at 50 Herald Street expires in 2012.
- Holy Trinity Church on Shawmut Avenue may be up for sale.
- Turnpike Air Rights and South Bay/Gateway hold great potential.
- Parcels 12 and A are zoned for housing.

Challenges
- Developable land is scarce in Chinatown's core district. Future growth will occur at the edges and boundaries of Chinatown.
- Financing for development projects and affordable housing is limited in today's economy. Several approved projects in Chinatown are stalled and waiting for financial markets to improve.
- Currently, there are a number of underutilized sites in the New York Streets area.

Constructed in 1970, Mass Pike Towers is a 200-unit affordable housing development on Tremont Street. Mass Pike Towers, Tai Tung Village, and Castle Square were developed as a result of the South Cove Urban Renewal Plan.

Constructed in 1968, Castle Square is a 500-unit affordable housing development in the South End.

Constructed in 1970, Tai Tung Village is a 214-unit affordable housing development on Harrison Avenue.

Constructed in 1995, Oak Terrace is an 88-unit mixed-use development on Washington Street with market-rate and affordable units. The Oak Terrace development reflected a shift by the City and developers to mixed-use and mixed-income projects.

Rising over the Paramount Theater, Millennium Place is a mixed-use development with condominiums, hotel, restaurants, retail, and a movie theater. Completed prior to the City's Inclusionary Zoning Policy, the project provided linkage funds to Chinatown for childcare.

Approved Development Projects

Project	Total Units	Affordable Units
Kensington place	346	$7 million linkage to Hong Lok House for 75 affordable units
Hayward Place	277	$14 million linkage funds in lieu of on-site affordable housing
Parcel P-7A	54	7
Parcel 24	325	136-169
Hong Lok House	75	75
120 Kingston/ Oxford Ping On	180	38
Total	**1168**	**370**

Completed in 2005, the Metropolitan is a 23-story mixed-use development. Forty-six percent of the housing units are affordable and is home to four agencies serving Chinatown community. (Courtesy of Shawn Read/BCNC.)

Physical Environment

The Chinatown-South Cove area was created by the filling of tidal flats that were part of the original Shawmut Peninsula. In the early twentieth century, the physical environment was noted for its railways, garment factories, and row houses. In the 1950s and 1960s, the physical environment underwent significant changes as interstate highways were constructed, institutions expanded, and urban renewal created housing developments. The result of these changes is that the physical environment today is marked by a mix of highways, railways, row houses, former factory buildings, institutional buildings, and housing developments.

Existing Conditions

- The community is well served by the subway, commuter rail, buses, and two interstate highways, and is within minutes of Logan International Airport.
- Chinatown has an aging infrastructure and streetscape environment. Sidewalks need improvements with streets in need of better drainage.
- Chinatown is the densest neighborhood in the City and lacks recreational and open space. Tree canopy in Chinatown is 5.1% coverage -- the lowest for any neighborhood (City average is 28% coverage).

Key Issues and Trends

- In recent years, Trigen has been the focus of several manhole explosions in Downtown and Chinatown due to aging infrastructure.
- Chinatown's sidewalks are transportation corridors as well as commercial and social spaces. Street trees, lights, signs, and other pedestrian amenities are needed to make the most of these critical resources.
- New developments such as the Millennium, Archstone, Metropolitan, Lofts Avana, and W Hotel have made vast improvements to sidewalks, tree plantings, and lights in their projects.
- Due to its density, Chinatown suffers from overcrowding. This is exacerbated by some non-residential buildings being used as rooming houses.
- There is increased usage of streets as access points to and from major highways.
- There are competing needs between automobile-centric and pedestrian-centric street design.

Opportunities

- The community should coordinate with the BRA's *Harrison-Albany Strategic Plan* to upgrade the Harrison Avenue connections to Downtown, Chinatown, and South End.
- The community should coordinate with the City's *Crossroads Initiative* to redesign Essex Street at the China Trade Center and Phillips Square.
- Six developments have been approved and are waiting for financing or the economy to improve before construction. These projects will upgrade the nearby physical environment and/or provide linkage funds for improvements.
- Veolia, the French subsidiary that purchased Trigen, uses a different process for generating steam. The existing Trigen property may be considered for development in the near future.
- The community has formed an Implementation Committee to monitor and note infrastructure upgrades.

Challenges

- Chinatown's local transportation issues are linked to the region's transportation system. The issues cannot be resolved solely at the local level.
- Due to the recession, state and city budgets have been drastically cut. Catalytic developments that help subsidize infrastructure upgrades are having difficulty finding financing.
- Chinatown both benefits and suffers from its proximity to the City's and region's transportation hub. This results in crowded streets, dangerous bicycle and pedestrian crossings, and poor air quality.

Back Bay and the John Hancock building can be seen in the distance from Marginal Road.

Silver Line bus stop on Washington Street.

Social Services

Since its inception, Chinatown has had a network of associations to assist the community with housing, health care, education, and jobs. Today, more than 65 community organizations exist within Chinatown that provide support to residents and the greater Asian American community.

Existing Conditions

- A large and growing number of Chinese Americans outside of Chinatown rely on Chinatown's service providers. Eighty percent of South Cove Community Health Center's patients and Boston Chinese Evangelical Church's congregation live outside of Chinatown.
- Some of the social services offered but not limited to include: education, language classes, health care, workforce development, job placement, affordable housing, and recreational activities.

Key Issues and Trends

- Eight community organizations have established permanent facilities or have long-term commitments to Chinatown, anchoring Chinatown as the social service and cultural center for Asian Americans in the region.
- At least two organizations — South Cove Manor Nursing Home and Boston Chinese Evangelical Church — have publicly expressed interest in expanding in Chinatown.
- The addition of the Josiah Quincy Upper School provides a public education continuum from K through 12.
- Chinatown Community Educational Partnership (CCEP) has increased coordination among adult education providers to improve continuity of services.
- The growth of the community is reflected by a diversity of voices providing input to Chinatown issues.

Opportunities

- Future mixed-use developments can provide new facilities for community services.
- Coordinate and create partnerships with the larger Asian American community.
- Coordinate activities targeted towards recent residents.
- Coordinate with social services agencies to create a comprehensive needs assessment.

Challenges

- Public budget cuts and tightening of private foundation resources will challenge Chinatown's service agencies' future sustainability.
- There is a high demand for services with agencies operating at maximum capacity.
- There is a scarcity of land available for social service agencies that wish to expand.

The Chinese Progressive Association organizes an annual Bikeathon. (Courtesy of CPA Collection.)

Tufts Medical Center provides free blood pressure screening at Chinatown National Night Out.

Agencies, Organizations, and Institutions in Chinatown*

American Chinese Christian Educational & Social Services	Multi-service
Asian American Civic Association	Multi-service
Asian American Resource Workshop	Arts, Culture
Asian Community Development Association	Planning, Housing
Boston Asian Youth Essential Services	Youth
Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center	Multi-service
Boston Chinese Evangelical Church	Religious
Castle Square Tenants Organization	Multi-service, Advocacy
The Chinatown Coalition	Information & Resource
Chinatown Safety Committee	Quality of Life
Chinatown American Legion Post #328	Social
Chinatown Main Street	Economic
Chinatown Resident Association	Advocacy
Chinese Freemason	Social
Chinese Merchants Association (On Leong)	Economic
Chinese Women's Association of NE	Social
Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association of New England	Multi-service
Chinese Economic Development Corporation	Housing
Chinese Historical Society of New England	History, Culture
Chinese Progressive Association	Multi-service, Organizing
Church of Saving Grace	Religious
Emerson College	Education
Eng Suey San Association	Family
Fung Luen Association	Family
Friends of Chinatown Library	Advocacy
Gee How Oak Tin Association	Family
Goon Family Association	Family

Greater Boston Chinese Golden Age Center	Senior
Guangzhou Association Of Boston	Family
Gund Kwok Asian Women Lion & Dragon Dance Troupe	Martial Arts, Dance
Gung Ho Athletic Club	Martial Arts
Hong Lok House	Senior
Hakka Benevolent Association of New England	Family
Hoy Kew Association	Family
Hoy Ting Association	Family
Kuo Ming Tong	Advocacy
Kwong Kow Chinese School	Education
Kwong Tung Association of New England	Family
Lee's Family Association	Family
Moy Association	Family
Ni Lun Association	Family
Que Sing Chinese Music & Opera Group	Music, Dance
Saint James Church the Greater	Religious
Soo Yuen Tong Family Association	Family
South Cove/Chinatown Neighborhood Council	Advocacy
South Cove Community Health Center	Health
South Cove Manor Nursing Home	Senior
Suffolk University	Education
Taishan Association	Family
Teo Chew Association of New England	Family
Tufts Medical Center	Health care
Tufts University	Education
Wang YMCA of Chinatown	Recreation
Wong's Family Association	Family
Yee Fung Toy Association	Family

Students at the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center's Adult Education program. (Courtesy of Shawn Read/BCNC Collection.)

Dan Xin Chen, a resident from South Cove Plaza East speaks during a meeting of the Chinatown Resident Association.

**This is not a comprehensive list of all the agencies and organizations in Chinatown.*

Quality of Life and Environmental Health

Quality of life is a broad topic and can include a number of issues. This section focuses on quality of life issues related to environmental health such as, but not limited to, highway and building construction, trash and pollution, and recreational space.

Existing Conditions

- Chinatown is the densest neighborhood in the City.
- Chinatown is located next to I-93/I-90 interchange and the MBTA transportation system. Traffic is congested on the main streets as vehicles enter/exit the highway interchange.
- Air pollution monitoring found particulate matter levels close to or above national standards.
- Overcrowded housing contributes to the spread of contagious diseases.
- The lack of recreational and open spaces affect the health of residents as it limits opportunities for physical activities.
- The area's restaurants produce large amounts of trash which attracts pests.

Key Issues and Trends

- The Josiah Quincy Elementary School noted a high number of students with asthma.
- Traffic-related pedestrian injuries occur in congested intersections.
- The major source of noise pollution in Chinatown is from traffic and construction.
- In an environmental health survey, Chinatown residents ranked the indoor environment as their number one concern.
- Overcrowding can exacerbate contagious diseases such as Hepatitis B and tuberculosis.

Opportunities

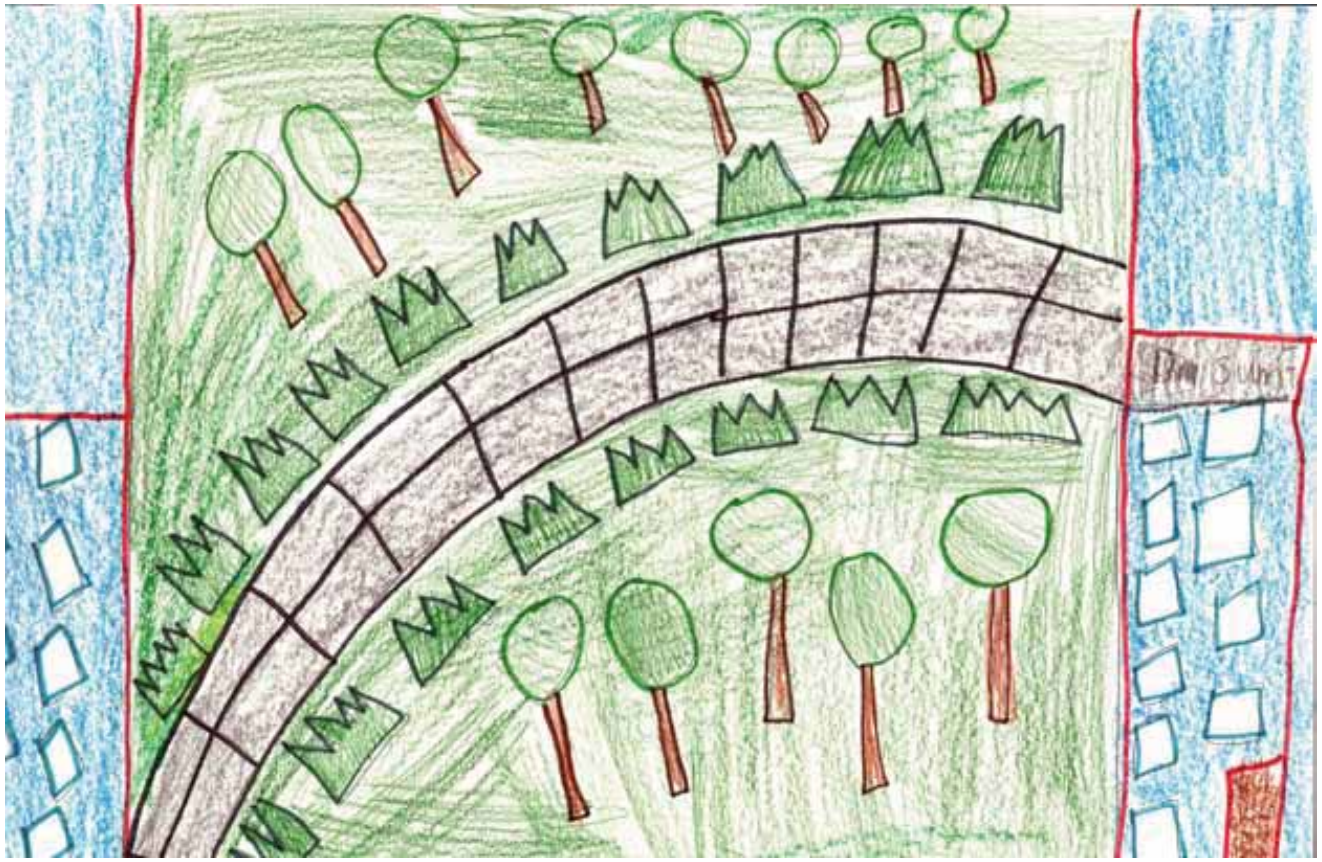
- Tufts University School of Medicine is collaborating with Chinatown and Somerville on the Community Assessment of Freeway Exposure and Health (CAFEH). This five-year study will provide air monitoring for ultrafine particulates.
- Chinatown Main Street has a beautification and storefront improvement project. Businesses receive matching grants from the City for upgrading storefronts and signage.
- Social service agencies in the community could coordinate with local hospitals and health centers to disseminate health-related information and to provide translation services.
- More community-wide efforts are needed to organize regular Chinatown clean-ups and to install bilingual English and Chinese signs to keep Chinatown clean.
- Future developments may create additional recreational and open spaces.

Challenges

- Air pollution will continue to be a long-term problem due to Chinatown's proximity to major interstate highways.
- The presence of a number of restaurants and food services in the area results in large quantities of trash daily.
- There is limited land available for new housing that may alleviate overcrowding in the community.
- There is limited land available for new recreational and open spaces.

Chinatown Crime Watch. (Photo by Ming Pao.)

Berkeley Street Gardens

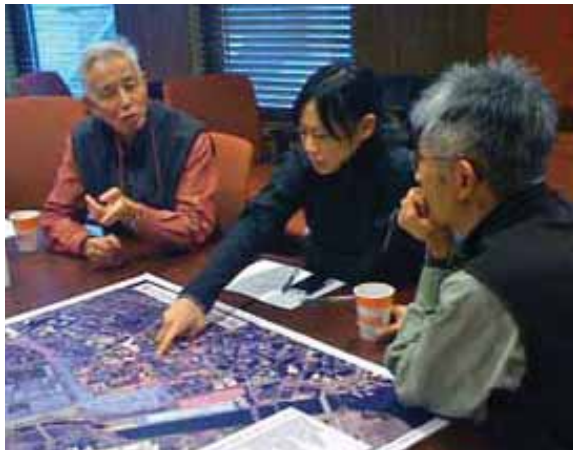


"More green space and paths for people to walk."
Taina Lorenzana

"Done with watercolor pencils, includes library, park with fountain, affordable housing, recycling bin to emphasize 'going green,' and clean sidewalks."
Lori Wang, age 15

Community Development Plan

The community development plan is a set of recommendations for developing and improving the physical elements of the neighborhood based on the vision and goals. The community development plan is comprised of four elements organized into community anchors, potential development sites, connections and open spaces, and urban design. The challenge for the community is that the core of the Chinatown residential and business districts is developed to such an extent that there is little room for growth. In order for Chinatown to grow and thrive, the community must look to the edges and outside of its core districts. Conceptual plans included herein are for informational purposes and shall not indicate an endorsement by the *Chinatown Master Plan 2010*.



Anchor Areas

Source: Taintor & Associates. Map prepared by IKM Architects.

1. Parcel R-1

2. Parcels 25, 26a, 26b

3. Parcel 12

4. Parcel A

Master Plan Study Area Boundary

Master Plan Anchor Areas

Properties with Development Potential

BRA approved

Public

Private

Long Term Potential

5. 50 Herald St..

Phillips Square

MBTA Stations
Master Plan Study Area Boundary
Master Plan Anchor Areas
Future Pedestrian Plazas
Future Pedestrian Enhancements
Potential Pocket Parks
Key Vehicular Connectors

Properties with Development Potential

BRA approved
Public
Private

Source: Taintor & Associates. Map prepared by IKM Architects.

Phillips Square is a vital point of entry connecting Downtown, Chinatown, and South End through the Harrison Avenue corridor. This anchor includes Essex Street, Harrison Avenue, and Chauncy Street. Current uses in Phillips Square include the Hong Lok House on Essex Street, mixed-use housing and commercial units on Chauncy Street, and commercial units on Harrison Avenue including Verizon, Kaze Restaurant, the former Sun Sun Supermarket, and a public plaza. Within three blocks of Phillips Square, there are several projects approved by the City:

- Hayward Place - 14-story mixed-use building with 277 residential units, retail, and underground parking.
- Hong Lok House - 75 elderly assisted living units on 11-31 Essex Street.
- 120 Kingston - 147 units of high rise condominiums, retail, and 95 parking spaces.
- Oxford Ping On - 38 units of low-income and affordable housing subsidized from linkage by the 120 Kingston project.

The redevelopment of Hong Lok House, Hayward Place, and 120 Kingston/Oxford Ping On affirms the importance of Phillips Square to Chinatown as an anchor for future growth. The Harrison Avenue plaza should be redesigned to make it a prominent entry point to Chinatown. The City's *Crossroads Initiative* has studied redesigning the Phillips Square plaza as an urban oasis with public art, seating, and street lighting to enhance appeal. Additionally, as Verizon restructures its workforce, the building has potential for future development. On the west side of Harrison Avenue, the Kaze Restaurant also has the potential for future development.

Phillips Square.

Kaze Restaurant.

Potential rehab of Verizon building and improvements to Oxford Place by student planners and architects for the Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston's Affordable Housing Development Competition, 2009. Conceptual plans included herein are for informational purposes only and shall not indicate an endorsement by the Chinatown Master Plan 2010. (Source: "Chinatown Crossing" Daou, Delgado, Gaudet, et al.)

Phillips Square Plaza.

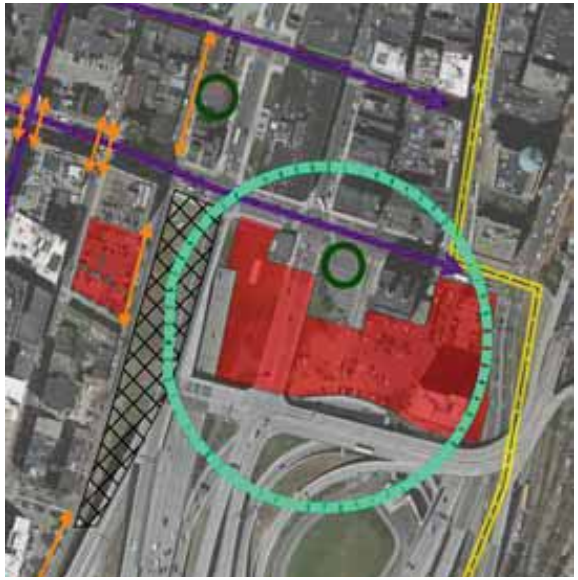
Conceptual redesign of Phillips Square plaza. (Source: BRA/Crossroads Initiative.)

Phillips Square

Proposed Development
Hong Lok House - 11-31 Essex St.
Hayward Place - Hayward/Washington St.
120 Kingston - 120 Kingston/Essex St.
Oxford Ping On - Oxford St.

Potential Development Sites
Verizon - Harrison/Essex St.
Kaze Restaurant - 1 Harrison Ave.
Stanhope Parking Lot - 33 Essex St.

South Bay



MBTA Stations
Master Plan Study Area Boundary
Master Plan Anchor Areas
Future Pedestrian Plazas
Future Pedestrian Enhancements
Potential Pocket Parks
Key Vehicular Connectors

Properties with Development Potential

BRA approved
Public
Private

Source: Taintor & Associates. Map prepared by IKM Architects.

South Bay is a 20-acre area of terra firma parcels and air rights. The site is owned by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) made available for development upon completion of the Central Artery Tunnel Project. The site is strategically located at the major entry/exit point of interstate highways I-93 and I-90. Vehicles traveling from south and west of Boston exit at the South Bay interchange onto Kneeland Street, Atlantic Avenue, and Albany Street. Current uses on the 20 acres include the MassDOT building, Trigen Plant, Pagoda Park, highway interchange ramps, and the proposed Parcel 24 development on Hudson Street. The importance of South Bay as a gateway to Chinatown and the City of Boston was recognized by the *Chinatown Community Plan 1990* which identified and zoned the area as the "Chinatown Gateway." At the time, South Bay/Chinatown Gateway was envisioned as a land bridge for the future growth of Chinatown by reconnecting the residential and business base east of Hudson Street displaced by highway construction in the 1960s.

The Massachusetts Turnpike Authority (now MassDOT) released a Request for Proposal in 2004 for South Bay. One developer responded but this proposal was not advanced further. In 2004, the Boston Redevelopment Authority, the Turnpike Authority, and a community task force completed Phase I of the *South Bay Planning Study.* The vision for this plan was to create a new mixed-use district and to generate economic vitality and housing for the City. In 2007, in response to the *South Bay Planning Study*, the Chinatown Gateway Coalition led a planning charrette to create a vision for community economic development and affordable housing.

Planning for the South Bay has ceased because of the economic downturn, changing political climate, and the complexities of a plan that included developing the air rights parcels and potential relocation of the Trigen Energy plant. The South Bay remains a vital gateway to Chinatown and offers the possibility of reknitting a community torn apart by highway construction. This scenario may soon become a reality as Parcel 24 on Hudson Street has been approved for a 23-story mixed-use housing development with up to 50% affordability. Currently, the Parcel 24 project is undergoing changes to the project due to the financial climate. In addition to Parcel 24, there are opportunities for the remaining *terra firma* parcels along Kneeland Street. These are Parcels 25, 26A, and 26B.

South Bay (Courtesy of SAS Design/Chinatown Gateway Charrette.)

Surface Artery Road. (Photo by SAS Design/Chinatown Gateway Charrette.)

Parcel 24 with the Chinese Merchants Building and State Street Building in the background.

The 20-acre South Bay includes the I-93/I-90 interstate exchange and air rights. (Photo by SAS Design/Chinatown Gateway Charrette.)

The Chinese Freemasons practice at the Pagoda Park in preparation for the North American Chinese Invitational Volleyball Tournament.

South Bay

Proposed Development
Parcel 24 - Hudson/Albany St.

Potential Development Sites
Parcel 25 - Kneeland St.
Parcel 26A/Pagoda Park - Kneeland St.
Parcel 26B - Kneeland/Atlantic Ave.

New York Streets

MBTA Stations
Master Plan Study Area Boundary
Master Plan Anchor Areas
Future Pedestrian Plazas
Future Pedestrian Enhancements
Potential Pocket Parks
Key Vehicular Connectors

Properties with Development Potential

BRA approved
Public
Private

Source: Taintor & Associates. Map prepared by IKM Architects.

The New York Streets anchor is bounded by Herald Street to the north, Albany Street to the east, East Berkeley Street to the south, and Tremont Street to the west. The "New York Streets" derived its name from the former Boston/Albany Railroad lines. During the mid to late twentieth century, heavy industry declined and brought in new wholesale trade and light manufacturing. Urban renewal cleared the tenements and dilapidated structures for industrial and office uses. In 1987, Mayor Raymond Flynn formed the Chinatown/South Cove Neighborhood Council to assist the City in preparing the *Chinatown Community Plan 1990* and included the New York Streets in the Council's boundaries. Concurrently while planning for *Chinatown Master Plan 2010*, the City is preparing the *Harrison-Albany Corridor Strategic Plan*. The Harrison-Albany corridor extends from the New York Streets to Massachusetts Avenue.

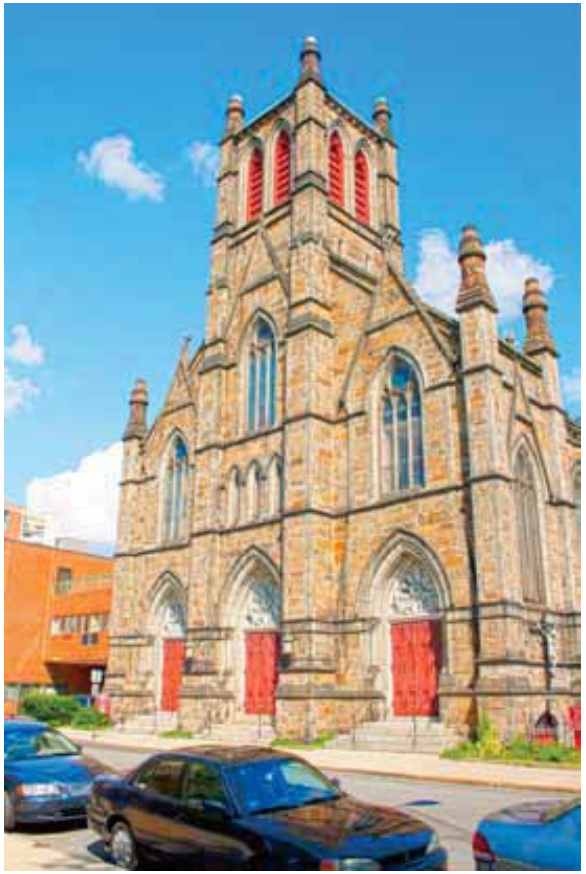
The New York Streets zoning falls under the South End Zoning District with current uses being a mix of light manufacturing, commercial, residential, and surface parking lots. There is a significant presence of Chinatown businesses in the New York Streets – C-Mart Supermarket, Ming's Market, Ho Kong Beansprouts, Quinzani Bakery – and a sizeable residential population living in Castle Square, South Cove Manor Nursing Home, and Waterford Place. Development potential includes the Boston Herald, Holy Trinity Church, 275 Albany Street, South Cove Manor Nursing Home, and 50 Herald Street.

The Chinatown business, institutional, and residential core districts serve as the cultural center for Chinese and Asian Americans in the region, but have little room for growth or expansion. *Chinatown Master Plan 2010* has identified the New York Streets as pivotal for the future growth of Chinatown. Its redevelopment will provide jobs, housing, civic and open spaces, and link the Downtown, Chinatown, and South End districts through a redesigned Harrison Avenue corridor. The catalyst to achieving this vision in the New York Streets is 50 Herald Street and adjacent parcels. The 50 Herald Street site (formerly SCM site) was deeded to the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, acting on behalf of the Chinatown community, by New England Medical Center (now Tufts Medical Center) for the creation of affordable housing. Adjacent to 50 Herald Street on Shawmut Avenue is South Cove Manor Nursing Home, which is seeking to expand its facilities, the vacant Holy Trinity Church, and a City-owned parking lot. In 2009, a concept was prepared to explore the potential of a larger development that would allow for mixed-use developments with affordable housing, expanded nursing home facilities, commercial space, a community park, a Chinatown library, and additional parking.

New York Streets area.

Waterford Place Apartments is a 40-unit development on Shawmut Avenue. Constructed in 1989, the property is owned by the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association of New England.

South Cove Manor Nursing Home.



Holy Trinity Church.

New York Streets

Proposed Development
275 Albany Street

Potential Development Sites
C-Mart Supermarket - 50 Herald St.
Boston Herald - One Herald Square
Ming's Market - 1102 Washington St.
Tufts Shared Services Parking Lot - Traveler St.
Graybar Electric - 345 Harrison Ave
South Cove Manor - 120 Shawmut Ave
Holy Trinity Church - 136 Shawmut Ave
Druker Properties - Washington St..
Herald Street Parking Garage - Herald St..

Hinge Block

MBTA Stations

Master Plan Study Area Boundary

Master Plan Anchor Areas

Future Pedestrian Plazas

Future Pedestrian Enhancements

Potential Pocket Parks

Key Vehicular Connectors

Properties with Development Potential

BRA approved

Public

Private

Source: Taintor & Associates. Map prepared by IKM Architects.

The Hinge Block is a 2-acre site bounded by Washington, Boylston, Tremont, and Stuart Street. Identified in the *Chinatown Community Plan 1990* as a "land bridge" connecting Chinatown to Downtown, Midtown Cultural District, Boston Common, and Back Bay, the Hinge Block anchor when completed, will be the connection between these districts. Thus, the area was given the name "Hinge Block." Planning for the Hinge Block was prepared in cooperation by the Midtown Cultural District and Chinatown and is included in the *Midtown Cultural District Plan 1988* and zoning. To this day, Chinatown and the Midtown Cultural District are closely linked together because of this previous cooperation.

Located strategically along the Washington and Tremont Street corridors between the MBTA Orange and Green Lines, the Hinge Block includes landmarks such as the Jacob Wirth Restaurant, Hayden building, Young Men's Christian Union, and the Chinatown Trade Center (Boylston Building). At the corner of Washington and Essex Streets is the historic Liberty Tree site where the Sons of Liberty protested against the British Stamp Tax of 1765. The Hinge Block consists of a mix of commercial, residential, and restaurant uses. Adult entertainment businesses still operate in the area, but their numbers have dwindled and their influence waned with the passing of the Combat Zone.

Except for the China Trade Center, properties and land on the Hinge Block are privately-owned. Future redevelopment will require the cooperation of the City, private sector, and the community. The Boston Redevelopment Authority has approved two developments in the Hinge Block:

1. Parcel P-7A - a 14-story residential building with 72 studio and 1-bedroom units, ground floor space for restaurant, and;
2. Kensington Place - a 30-story mixed-use housing development on Washington and LaGrange Street with 299 rental units, parking, and ground floor retail space. Linkage funds from the project will be provided off-site to Hong Lok House, a 75-unit affordable housing project on Essex Street (see Phillips Square). As part of this mitigation package, the Kensington project will redesign and reconstruct the China Trade Center plaza.

Additionally, the Jacob Wirth parking lot at 45 Stuart Street is proposing a mixed-used housing development with parking and ground floor retail. As this project evolves, Chinatown will have opportunities to discuss community benefits as well as housing and job creation linkage.

Jacob Wirth restaurant on 31-37 Stuart Street. "Built in 1845, the buildings are the only survivors of the bow-front Greek Revival row houses that once dominated the area. In 1889 Wirth expanded next door, adding the storefront that unites the properties today." Plaque by the Bostonian Society/ Boston Landmarks Commission

China Trade Center

Proposed site for Kensington Place.

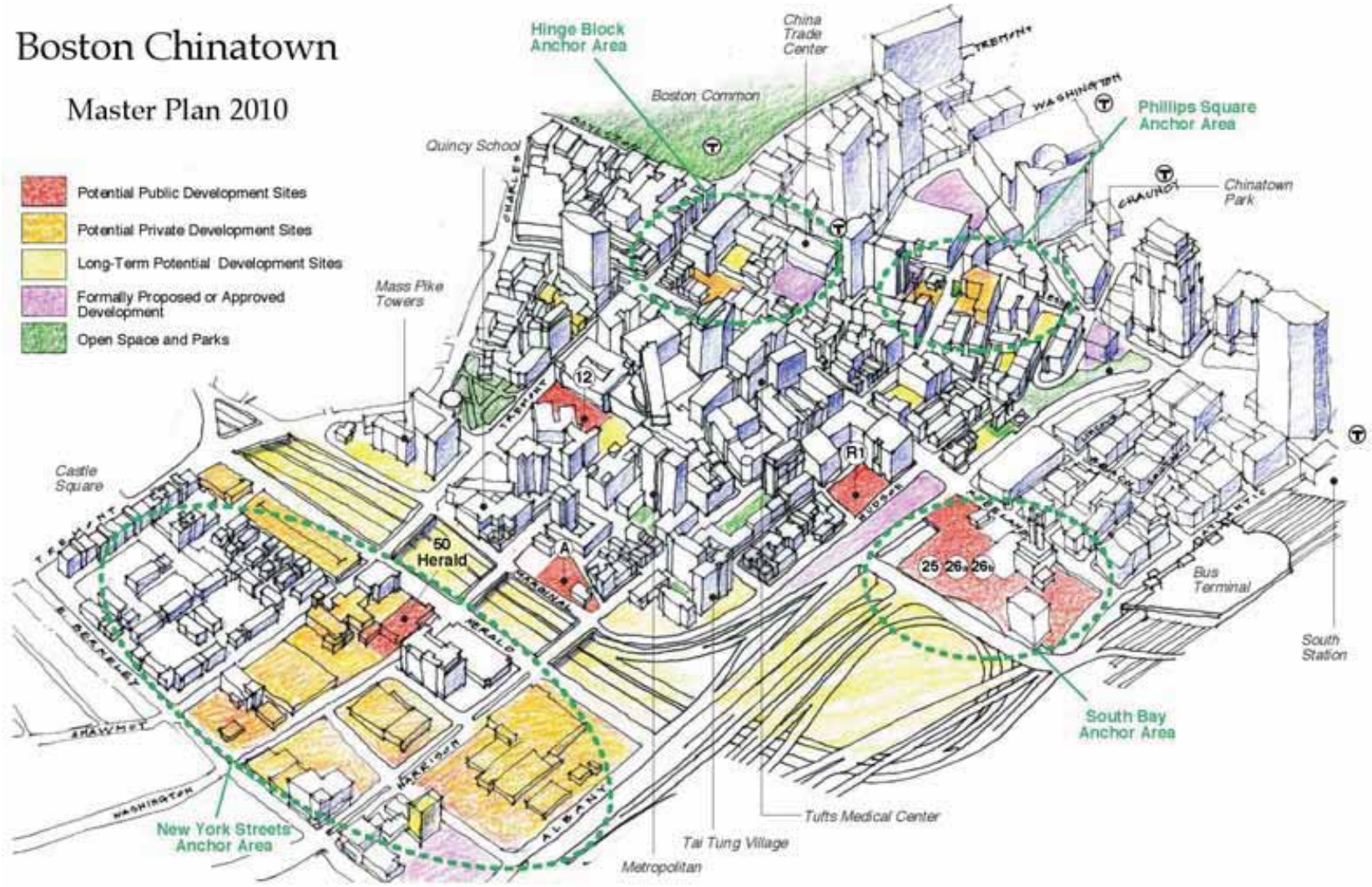
On the third floor of the Registry of Motor Vehicles is a plaque commemorating the Liberty Tree.

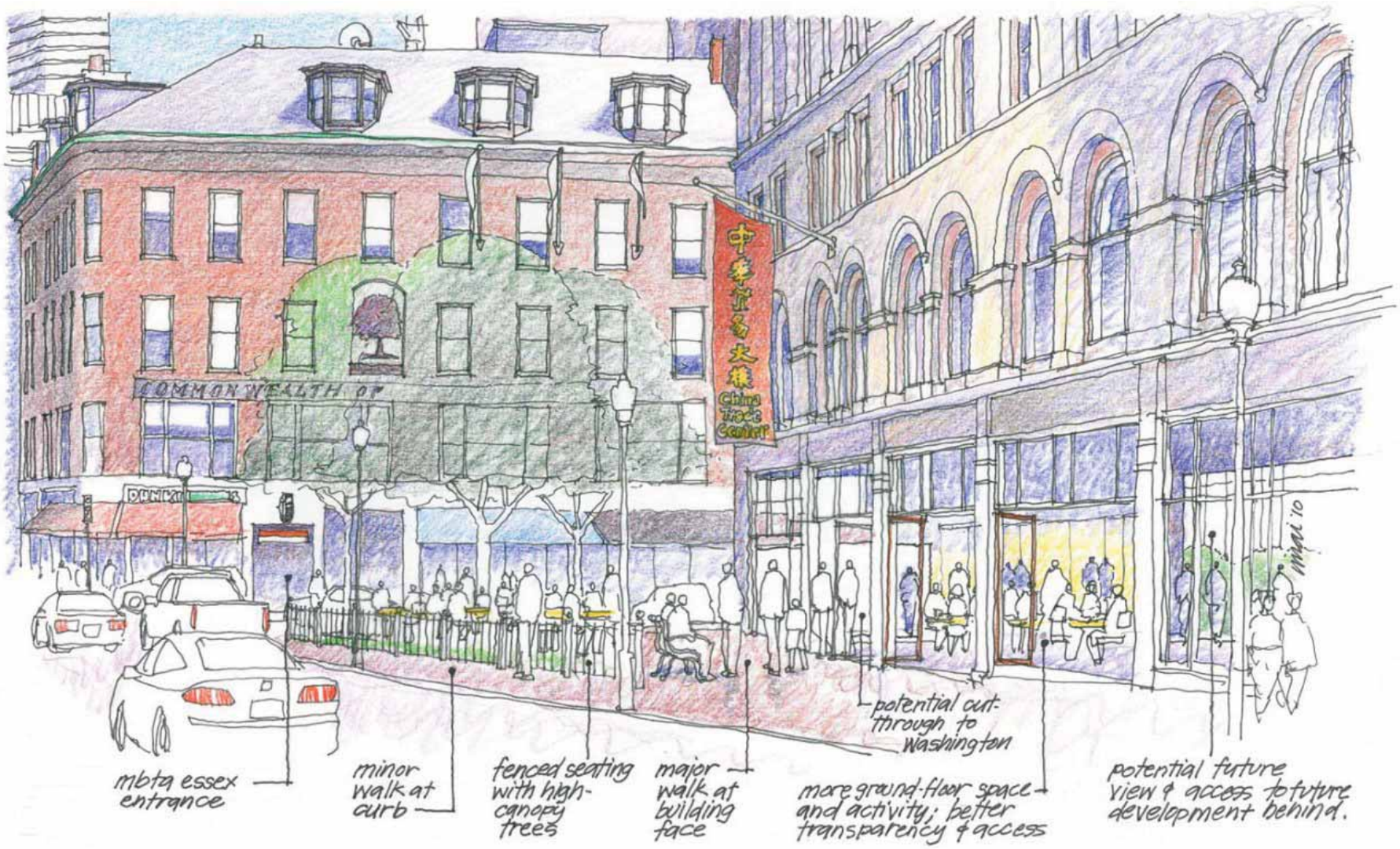
The Hinge Block connects Chinatown to the Theater District.

Hinge Block

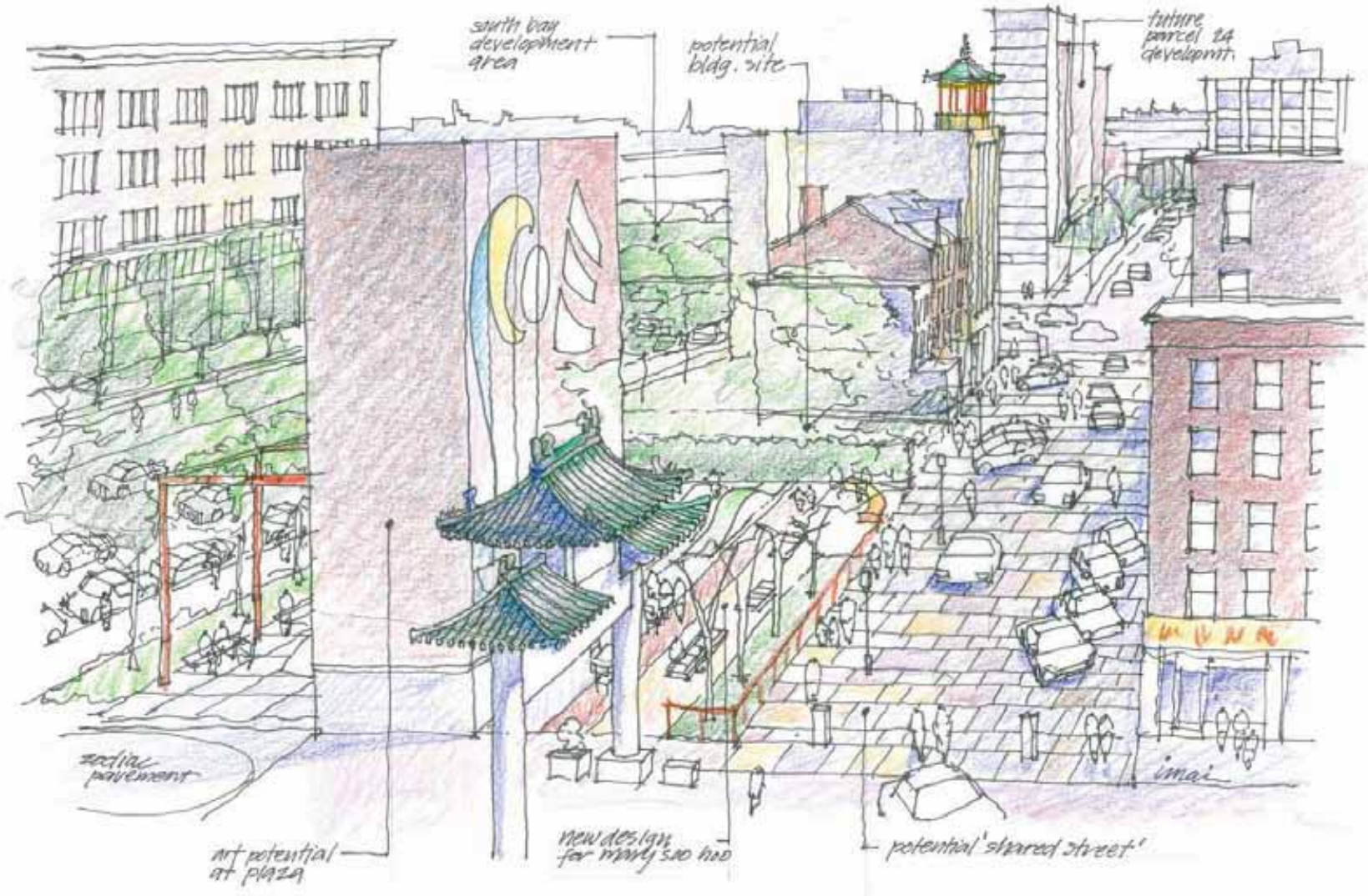
Proposed Development
Parcel P-7A - 240 Tremont Street
Kensington Place - 659-679 Washington Street

Potential Development Sites
Jacob Wirth parking lot - 45 Stuart Street


Boston Chinatown
Master Plan 2010
Potential Public Development Sites
Potential Private Development Sites
Long-Term Potential Development Sites
Formally Proposed or Approved Development
Open Space and Parks
Hinge Block Anchor Area
China Trade Center
Boston Common
Phillips Square Anchor Area
Quincy School
Chinatown Park
Mass Pike Towers
Castle Square
50 Herald
Bus Terminal
South Station
South Bay Anchor Area
New York Streets Anchor Area
Tufts Medical Center
Tai Tung Village
Metropolitan


COMMONWEALTH OF
DUNKIN'
China Trade Center
mbta essex entrance
minor walk at curb
fenced seating with high-canopy trees
major walk at building face
potential cut-through to Washington
more ground-floor space and activity; better transparency & access
potential future view & access to future development behind.

potential replacement bldg. as part of verizon redevelopment
chauncy st. crosswalk
verizon potential mixed-use developmt.
wide walk along building face and retail
new park with high canopy trees, seating, community art lighting
angle parking on east side of harrison
potential mixed-use infill building
kaze restaurant

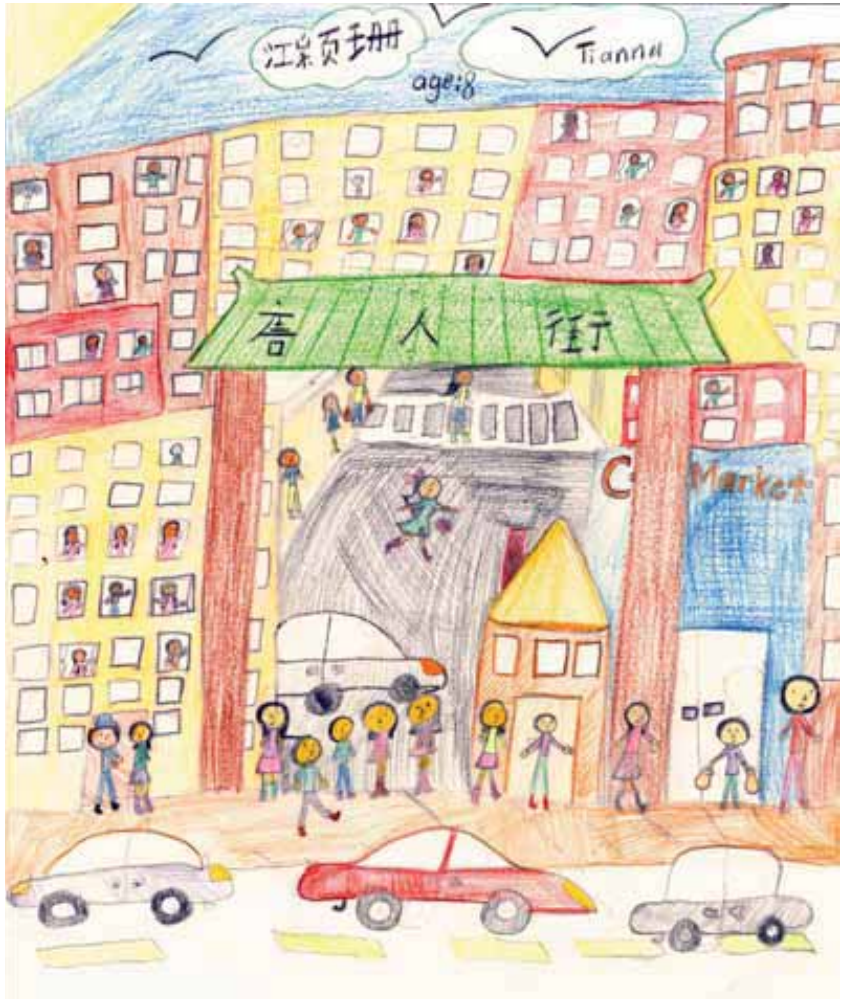

south bay development area
potential bldg. site
future parcel 24 development
zodiac pavement
art potential at plaza
new design for Mary Soo Hoo
potential 'shared street'
imai

future buildings
future buildings
1000 washington
herald st.
massplex/ amtrak
more friendly bridge fencing
potential 2 traffic lanes
parking
street and sidewalk lights

1000 Washington
metropolitan
tai tejung village
future mixed-use buildings
develop strong street edge
study median landscape/ lighting
street level commercial/ retail

Potential Development Parcels

Potential development parcels are properties that could possibly be developed in the near term to fulfill the vision and goals of the community. Due to the scarcity of land in Chinatown, *Chinatown Master Plan 2010* has identified four parcels with a high potential for immediate development because of availability, location, and ownership by either public or community entities: Parcel 12, Parcel A, Parcel R-1, and 50 Herald Street. A fifth potential development consists of several parcels adjacent to each other along Kneeland Street in the South Bay anchor area. These are the South Bay terra firma parcels 25, 26A, and 26B owned by MassDOT. During the planning process, the community affirmed the need and priority for housing, specifically affordable and family housing. Due to the lack of funding from Federal and State sources for affordable housing, *Chinatown Master Plan 2010* recommends that development proposals for these five parcels consider innovative mixed-use projects to attain the housing goals desired by the community. Conceptual plans included herein are for informational purposes and shall not indicate an endorsement by *Chinatown Master Plan 2010*.



Tianna Jiang, age 8

Parcel 12

Owned by the Boston Redevelopment Authority, Parcel 12 is located in the heart of the Theater District on Tremont Street between the Doubletree Hotel/Wang YMCA and the Tufts Medical Center parking garage. Parcel 12 was designated for housing in the *Chinatown Community Plan 1990*, but the site was proposed for uses other than housing. The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) had proposed the site as an underground portal entrance for the Silver Line; this proposal was rejected. The Boston Arts Academy had proposed building a new home on the site, but has withdrawn its proposal.

If housing is to be developed on the site, Parcel 12 poses a number of development challenges due to its odd shape and its location between a hotel and a parking garage. When and if housing is considered, an in-depth study should be conducted to determine the most appropriate uses of the site and the range of affordable units that could be provided.

Parcel 12 Concept Plan
Total Gross Square Feet: 377,450
Residential Units: 219
Hotel Rooms: 105
Parking Spaces: 315
Library: 14,200 gsf

S*ource: Asian Community Development Corporation/UTILE*

Parcel 12

The Silver Line Portal Development Study is for engineering purposes and was conducted to analyze the feasibility of an underground portal with a mixed-use development. Conceptual plans included herein are for informational purposes only. (Source: UTILE)

Parcel A

Owned by the BRA, Parcel A is bounded by Washington Street, Pine Street, and Marginal Road. The site is zoned as a residential planned development area (PDA); meaning the site is designated for housing. Parcel A was formerly part of a larger site that became available for development after the removal of the elevated Orange Line portal on Washington Street in 1987. The site was divided into three parcels (A, 1A, and B). The BRA designated two community development corporations – Chinese Economic Development Council (CEDC) and Asian Community Development Corporation (ACDC) – to develop the parcels independently. CEDC planned and codeveloped with South Cove Manor Nursing Home Parcel 1A as Mei Wah Village, a 40-unit Section 202 affordable housing project. ACDC planned and constructed Parcel B as Oak Terrace, an 88-unit affordable housing development. However, Parcel A was never developed due to lack of financing.

Presently, the Josiah Quincy Upper School sits on Parcel A as a pre-fabricated structure. The Upper School has just been awarded a grant for the construction of a new and expanded facility. Once the new facility is constructed, the temporary school will be demolished. The grant to the Upper School allows the Boston Chinese Evangelical Church (BCEC) to advance their plans to redevelop Parcel A for a new church. BCEC is the BRA designated developer for Parcel A.

Chinatown Master Plan 2010 recommends that Parcel A and the existing church site be developed in phases, possibly as a mixed-use development with affordable housing along with the new church. The site's use should be optimized as Parcel A is one of the few remaining developable sites in Chinatown.

Parcel A Concept Plan
Residential Units: 148-204
Community Space: 2,500-3,500 gsf
Library: 15,000-20,000 gsf
Church: 20,000-25,000 gsf
Retail: 1,000-6,500 gsf
Parking Spaces: 100-170

Source: "Chinatown Community Fulcrum" - Affordable housing proposal for Boston's Parcel A in Chinatown." Fischer-Baum, Gallagher, Grassi, et al.

Parcel A

The Boston Chinese Evangelical Church has proposed a land swap with Parcel A to build a new church. In exchange, this site will be given to the City in a swap.

Parcel R-1

Parcel R-1, owned by the BRA, is located on Tyler and Hudson Street adjacent to the Chinese Christian Church property on Harvard Street. The site is leased to Tufts University for employee parking. Parcel R-1 is the former site of the South Cove/YMCA before the "Y" moved to its current location on Oak Street West. The site is zoned for housing with Tufts holding an option to develop the site. Currently, Tufts has no immediate plans for development and the lease for Parcel R-1 will expire in 2011. The BRA, Tufts, and the community should engage in discussions for the best possible use of Parcel R-1.

There was a vision for redeveloping Parcel R-1 as part of the Hudson Street Plan but the plans were not advanced. In 2003, E.A. Fish Associates developed a concept for a residential community on Hudson Street that included Parcel R-1, the Chinese Christian Church property, and Parcel 24. The plan envisioned a development that would re-knit the fabric of the Hudson Street residential community torn apart by highway construction. The project included housing, an underground garage, and a community park that would extend from Harvard Street to Tai Tung Village. This plan was not advanced beyond the conceptual stage.

Parcel R-1

Parcel R-1 was the site of the former Chinatown YMCA.

South Bay Parcels: 25, 26A and 26B

South Bay is a 20-acre area owned by MassDOT and includes terra firma and air rights parcels. In 2004, the City and MassDOT completed Phase 1 of the South Bay Planning Study. Developing South Bay is a challenge due to the complexities of the air rights parcels and the "No Access" interstate exchange ramp system. *Chinatown Master Plan 2010* recommends phasing the development of South Bay with a priority on developing the terra firma parcels 25, 26A, and 26B situated along Kneeland Street. Current uses on the site include the Trigen Energy Plant, MassDOT building and parking lot, and Pagoda Park. The Trigen Energy Plant on Kneeland Street was sold in 2007 to Veolia Energy North America, a French subsidiary. Veolia has a process that can generate steam in a much smaller facility. The existing Trigen plant and smokestack building has potential for future development and could serve as the catalyst for the development of South Bay.

South Bay Parcel 25 Design Concept
Total Gross Square Feet: 335,750
Residential: 311,000 sq.ft.
Retail: 24,750 sq.ft.
Parking Spaces: 197-252

South Bay Parcel 26A and 26B Design Concept
Total Gross Square Feet: 1,416,000
Residential: 230,000 sq.ft.
Retail: 26,000 sq.ft.
Commercial: 489,000 sq.ft.
Hotel: 671,000 sq.ft.
Parking Spaces: 613-659

Source: SAS/Design, Chinatown Gateway Charrette

Surface Artery road. (Photo by SAS/Design, Chinatown Gateway Charrette.)

Design concept for Parcel 25. Conceptual plans included herein are for informational purposes only. (Source: SAS/Design, Chinatown Gateway Charrette.)

50 Herald Street

Formerly known as the SCM Building, 50 Herald Street was deeded to the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association of New England in 1983 through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Tufts College (now Tufts University) and New England Medical Center (now Tufts Medical Center).

In 1983, CCBA entered into an agreement with the two institutions to transfer the rights to the SCM Building at 50 Herald Street with the intention of developing affordable housing for the Chinatown community. The site is currently leased to a commercial tenant for use as a supermarket until 2013.

In 2003, CCBA entered into discussions with the supermarket tenant to support a mixed-use development concept that would include affordable housing and the supermarket as the commercial anchor. However, discussions for the 50 Herald Street development concept ceased and did not advance further within CCBA.

In 2008 the South Cove Manor Nursing Home, located on an adjacent property at 120 Shawmut Avenue, proposed to purchase or lease 50 Herald Street from CCBA. This purchase would allow for the nursing home to expand, creating affordable housing, community space and additional parking. However, the nursing home proposal did not advance further.

In 2009, a group of community members drafted a development concept for 50 Herald Street, 120 Shawmut Avenue, and the vacant Holy Trinity Church at 140 Shawmut Avenue. Combined into one development concept, these sites could provide new housing for the community, expanded nursing home facilities, expanded supermarket space, a Chinatown library, a community park, a restaurant or café, and underground parking. This, or a similar concept, could be the future anchor for the Chinatown community in the New York Streets area.

Chinatown Master Plan 2010 has determined that there is little room for growth in Chinatown's core area. In order for Chinatown to grow, it must expand at the edges. The community vision for the future is to expand in the New York Streets area, where there are a number of Asian businesses and a large Asian residential population. The 50 Herald Street site can be an anchor for this expansion, ensuring that Chinatown is able to grow in the future as a neighborhood and as the cultural and social center for Asian Americans in the region.

C-Mart Supermarket. (Photo courtesy of Taintor & Associates/Community Circle.)

Potential development concept for Shawmut Avenue-Washington Street. Conceptual plans included herein are for informational purposes only.

Parking Lots and Garages

There are a number of surface parking lots in Chinatown that have development potential.

Mass Pike Towers Parking Lot
- In 2005, Trinity Financial prepared a concept plan to develop the Mass Pike Towers parking lot at Marginal Road into a high-rise mixed-use housing project. The program included 182 units and an underground garage. This plan was not advanced further due to objections by the Mass Pike tenants.

Tai Tung Village Parking Lot
- The Tai Tung Village parking lot is owned by the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association of New England.

Stanhope Parking Lot
- This lot in Phillips Square has development potential in the future. This lot abuts Kaze Restaurant.

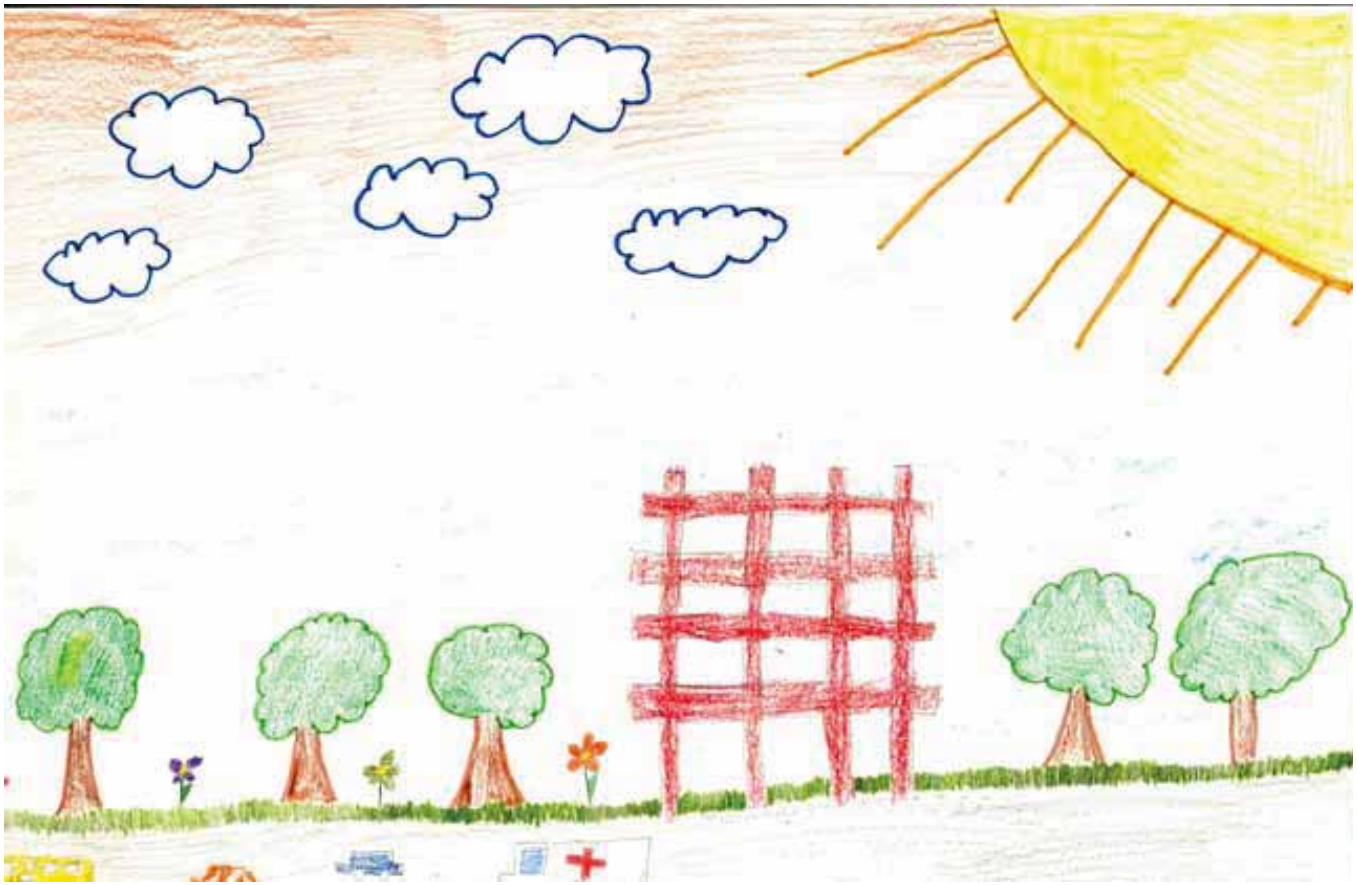
Druker Parking Garage on Herald Street
- This garage in the New York Streets area has development potential in the future.

Mass Pike Towers parking lot.

Crane House and Pavilion. Conceptual plans included herein are for informational purposes only. (Courtesy of Trinity Financial/TAT.)

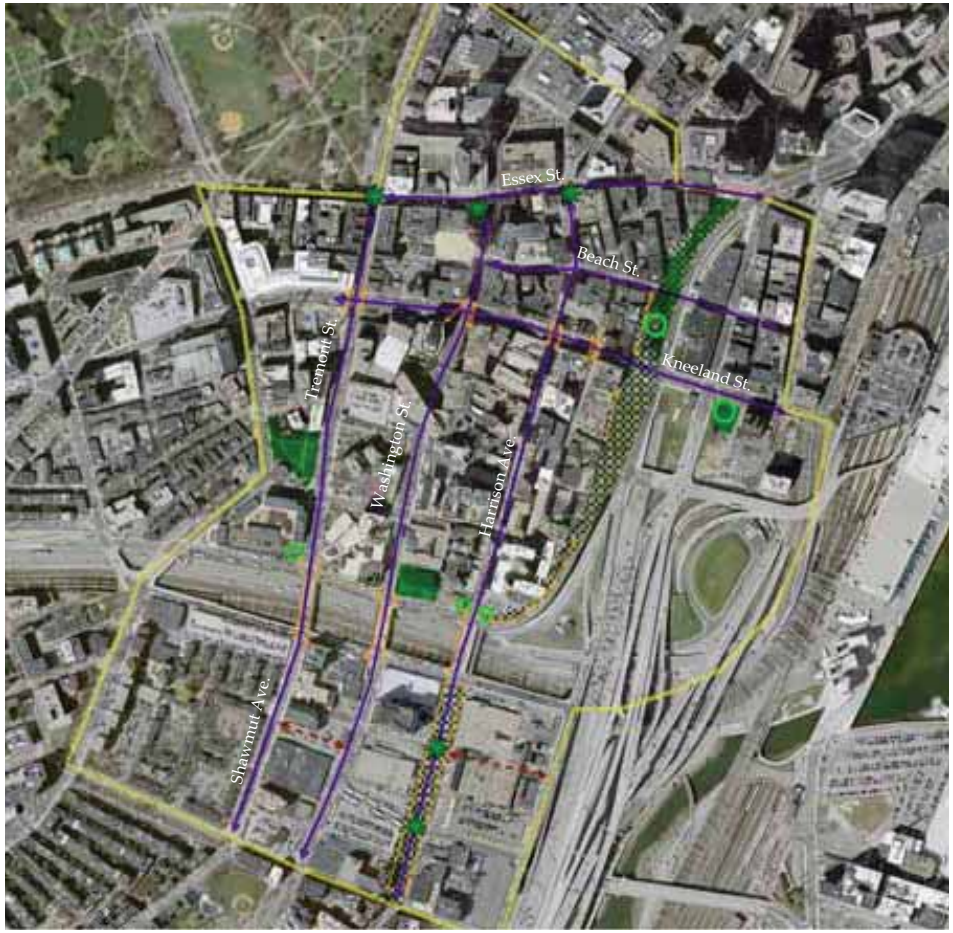
Tai Tung Village parking lot.

Crane House and Pavilion perspective. Conceptual plans included herein are for informational purposes only. (Courtesy of Trinity Financial/TAT.)



"More green space, less traffic."
Stephanie Lo

Connections, Public Spaces, and Parks



Source: Taintor & Associates. Map prepared by IKM Architects.

Connections and public spaces includes streets, sidewalks, alleys, parks, gardens, plazas, and other physical locations. The plan proposes improvements to Chinatown's connections and public spaces by:

- Upgrading streets to be more pedestrian-friendly and improve bike paths and bike lanes;
- Reinforcing Chinatown's connections between Downtown, South Station, the South End, and the Midtown Cultural District;
- Increasing access to public transportation nodes;
- Providing more recreational spaces for children and families.

The plan identifies the following streets as major connections between Chinatown and nearby districts and recommends prioritizing these streets for future improvements: Harrison Avenue, Washington Street, Tremont Street/Shawmut Avenue, Essex/Boylston Street, Beach Street, and Kneeland/ Stuart Street.

MBTA Stations
Master Plan Study Area Boundary
Master Plan Anchor Areas
Future Pedestrian Plazas
Future Pedestrian Enhancements
Potential Pocket Parks
Key Vehicular Connectors

Properties with Development Potential

BRA approved
Public
Private

Boylston Street/Essex
The Essex/Boylston Street corridor connects the Back Bay with Chinatown, South Station, Rose F. Kennedy Greenway, Boston Common, the Midtown Cultural District, and the I-93 southbound ramp at Essex and Lincoln Streets. Boylston/ Essex Street is one-way eastbound from Charles Street at Boston Common to Atlantic Avenue opposite South Station. At Washington Street, Essex Street also provides a dedicated MBTA lane for Silver Line service to South Station, the Convention Center, and Logan International Airport. At Boylston and Tremont Streets, connections can be made to the MBTA Green Line, and at Essex and Washington Streets, service to the MBTA Orange Line.

Recommendations
- Upgrade the Phillips Square plaza.
- Upgrade the China Trade Center plaza.
- Install wayfinding signs and maps.

Beach Street
Beach Street is actually two streets. Beach Street, one-way, from Hudson Street at the Chinatown Gate to Washington Street is in the heart of the Chinatown commercial district and the entrance to the new Chinatown Park. The other part of Beach Street is one-way from Atlantic Avenue to the Surface Artery leading to Chinatown, I-93 Southbound, and I-90 westbound.

Recommendations
- Widen sidewalks and expand curb extensions.
- Install tables and chairs in Chinatown Park.

Kneeland/Stuart Street
Kneeland/Stuart Street is a heavily-travelled city arterial with two-way traffic; three lanes in each direction (east and west). Kneeland Street becomes Stuart Street at Washington Street. I-93 south and I-90 east traffic enter Kneeland Street/ Atlantic Avenue discharges traffic to Downtown, Chinatown, and Back Bay. Traffic exits Kneeland Street and enters ramps to I-93 south and I-90 west.

Recommendations
- Increase the width of crosswalks.
- Increase pedestrian crossing timers.
- Install crosswalks at the intersection of Kneeland/Hudson Street.

Harrison Avenue
Harrison Avenue is a major corridor linking Downtown, Chinatown, and the South End. Traffic on Harrison Avenue is one-way from Phillips Square (south) to Herald Street. Then, it becomes a four lane street with two-way traffic separated by a median from Herald to East Berkeley Street.

Recommendations
- North of Kneeland Street: plant trees and greenery.
- From Kneeland Street to Mass Turnpike bridge: install lighting and buffers to enhance pedestrian crossing; reduce from four lanes to three lanes, create parking spaces or bike lane; increase meter and visitor parking spaces.
- South of Herald Street: remove median strip, increase curb width, and create pockets of open space.

Washington Street
Washington Street is a najor corridor linking Downtown, Chinatown, and the South End. Sections of the street change from one-way to two-way traffic. From East Berkeley to Marginal Road, the street has two traffic lanes northbound and shares a dedicated lane with the MBTA Silver Line. From Marginal Road to Kneeland Street, Washington Street is divided by a median strip with two-way traffic in each direction. From Kneeland/Stuart Street, Washington Street is one-way traffic with two lanes northbound.

Recommendations
- North of Kneeland Street: increase sidewalks.
- Turnpike bridge: install lighting and buffers to enhance pedestrian crossing.

Tremont Street/Shawmut Avenue
Tremont Street/Shawmut Avenue links Chinatown with the Boston Common, the Midtown Cultural District, and the South End. Traffic on Tremont Street is three lanes going south, turning right at Oak Street West and continuing as Tremont Street. Continuing straight at Oak Street West, the street changes into Shawmut Avenue with two lanes southbound.

Recommendations
- Tremont Street: plant trees and greenery. Install signage and wayfinding maps at intersection of Tremont and Stuart Streets.

Ribbon of Green Space
The plan recommends a ribbon of green space in Chinatown that links existing parks, temporary parks, and landscape features together. The ribbon of green space extends north to south from Essex Street to East Berkeley Street.

Rose Kennedy Greenway Chinatown Park, Mary Soo Hoo Park, and Pagoda Park
Recommendations
- Increase visibility and appeal with signage and banners.
- Install chairs, tables, and umbrellas on the Chinatown Park.
- Coordinate with Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy, MassDOT, and City to explore feasibility of installing a pavilion on the Chinatown Park.
- Consider enlarging and adding green space to the parks.
- Encourage businesses to orient entrances toward parks.

Harrison Avenue
Recommendations
- Create additional park space by reducing street width.
- Use trees to define space and provide shelter.
- Provide seating and ample walking space.
- Develop green edges along the Tai Tung Village park.

Hudson Street
Recommendations
- Consider a shared auto/pedestrian plaza with no curbs and special paving.
- Explore feasibility with MassDOT, City, and owners to convert vacant parcels into temporary parks and green space.

Urban Design

Urban design guidelines address the physical characteristics of the community such as building facades, public spaces, streets, sidewalks, parks, and plazas. The purpose of these urban design guidelines is intended to:

- Reinforce community identity.
- Enhance pedestrian orientation.
- Improve aesthetics and safety.

These guidelines are meant to help rather than prescribe specific activities and aesthetic qualities. The application and implementation of these guidelines should be coordinated with the City, property owners, and community members.

Buildings

Buildings should contribute to an active streetwall with designs and uses that link interior public spaces directly to the sidewalk, street, and outdoor public spaces.

Design

- Design facades with well-defined entrances and windows.
- Ensure that ground floor windows provide visual access as well as display merchandise.
- Encourage placement of windows on all sides that face a street or sidewalk
- Where blank walls are necessary, encourage painting of murals or facade designs to break up the expanse.
- Site plazas, courtyards, squares or wider sidewalks next to building entrances.
- Encourage Asian cultural characteristics such as storefront mezzanines, recessed balconies, decorative wrought ironwork, upturned eaves and tile roofs, and Asian-style ornamentation.
- Encourage creative signage and storefront design such as colorful and vertically-oriented signage that is common in Chinatowns in the U.S.

Use

- Encourage ground floor uses that are primarily retail or include community or public space.
- Allow building uses to spill onto sidewalks such as outdoor patios and street furniture. Use vacant storefronts as venues for temporary programs, artistic displays, or exhibits.

Streets and Sidewalks
Streets and sidewalks should emphasize connectivity for pedestrians and vehicle traffic.

Connectivity and Walkability
- Limit block lengths to maintain the walkability of neighborhoods and create alternative routes for vehicles and pedestrians.
- Enhance and expand the network of alleyways and pedestrian passageways.

Wayfinding and Orientation
- Encourage the use of signs and design elements to improve visitor orientation.
- Incorporate bilingual signage.

Pavement
- Preserve and highlight Chinatown's historic stone sidewalk pavement.
- Replace damaged or missing curbs with adequately sized stone
- Protect the decorative paving inserts along Beach Street sidewalks
- Upgrade the paving on alleyways and secondary streets
- Consider crosswalks marked with patterned asphalt.

Medians
- Install plantings or art installations celebrating Chinatown.

Street Furniture
Street furniture should enhance pedestrian safety, comfort, and quality of life.

Seating
- Create places to sit including free standing benches, ledges, steps, and terraces.
- Coordinate seating with lighting and plantings.

Lighting
- Maintain sufficient lighting to provide adequate sight distances at night.
- Encourage creative decorative lighting that adds to the vibrancy of the commercial areas.
- Install down lighting to minimize light pollution or leakage into residences at night.

Litter
- Install attractive and accessible trash receptacles.

Vegetation
- Plant trees where conditions will allow growth to maturity.
- Consider vines that can be supported on buildings, poles, or other structures.
- Encourage plantings in public and private areas including window boxes, decks, and rooftops.

Art and Ornamentation
- Install decorative planters, banners, or other elements that help create a sense of pedestrian scale and visual appeal.
- Encourage public art that is reflective of the community's culture.

Transit amenities
- Install transit amenities such as bike racks and bus shelters.

Parking Lots
The plan encourages the redevelopment of surface parking over time, but surface parking lots can serve as an important and necessary element of the community's transportation system.

Edge Definition
- Maintain the street wall to the extent possible with the use of fences, trees, hedges or other elements.

Lighting
- Provide adequate interior lighting for safety and comfort but control spill out on adjacent streets or properties.

Curb Cuts
- Limit the width and number of curb cuts to increase pedestrian safety.

Maintenance
- Encourage increased maintenance of existing surface lots.

Public Spaces
The plan recommends creating a network of public spaces that will enhance the quality of life in the community. The physical design of these places should consider features such as visibility, accessibility, edge conditions, location, and programmed uses.

Amenities
- Maximize usability of public space by incorporating seating and other amenities whenever possible.
- Provide active recreational spaces.
- Consider installing community bulletin boards.

Safety and Accessibility
- Site public spaces with good visibility and accessibility.
- Provide adequate lighting at night.

Location
- Prioritize the creation of new parks in proximity to residential clusters.

Maintenance
- Design with consideration for maintenance to ensure long-term success.

Vacant Lots
- Use vacant lots for temporary public spaces or parks.

Eliot Norton Park

Parking lot between Harrison Ave. and Tyler St..

Action Plan

The action plan is a summary and guide for the implementation of master plan goals which is organized into short-term and long-term strategies – short-term strategies implemented within five years; long-term strategies longer than five years to implement. The tables shown are a checklist for monitoring the progress of the plan.

Jennifer Chan and Felicia Au, students from the Wudang Daoist Arts Association perform at the Oak Street Fair.

Short-Term Strategies

Strategy Description	Action
Economic Development	
1. Identify and study potential growth markets.	• Study needs of student populations. • Identify needs of visitors/tourists. • Recruit institutional partners. • Assess tourism opportunities
2. Work with local institutions and large employers to identify opportunities for the resident workforce.	• Identify a community organization to work with institutions and employers. • Develop a program to provide job and career training for the community workforce.
3. Work with Chinatown business associations to market Chinatown as a visitor/tourist destination.	• Work with Chinatown business associations and City to market Chinatown. • Involve businesses, art and culture organizations, and event organizers. • Target outreach to a larger population including newcomers, youth, residents of satellite communities. • Centralize gathering of information on events, activities, shops, restaurants, etc. • Develop visitor maps, itineraries, and Internet presence.
Housing	
1. Maintain existing affordable housing and strengthen inclusionary zoning.	• Work with City and State agencies to identify and track expiring affordable housing contracts, and explore opportunities for inclusionary zoning.
2. Increase homeownership and housing opportunities for families, low-income residents, and residents with disabilities.	• Work with City and State agencies to identify housing opportunities. Encourage future development to include a range of housing options.
3. Explore need for different types of housing such as group homes or single-room occupancy (SRO) units.	• Work with City and State agencies to assess need.
Civic Responsibility	
1. Establish programs to involve community members in community discussions and planning.	• Provide translation services at public meetings. • Provide outreach to the community including newcomers, youth, and visitors. • Develop and maintain community bulletin board(s) at appropriate site(s). • Design a neighborhood web page to provide a central location for information online.

Short-Term Strategies

Strategy Description	Action
Public Spaces and Parks	
1. Coordinate with public agencies for maintenance and improvement to public spaces.	• Coordinate with Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy to install banners, chairs, and tables on the Chinatown Park. • Develop a process and criteria for reporting on condition of public spaces. • Support the Friends of Chinatown Library to create library services for the community.
2. Develop temporary parks on vacant parcels.	• Explore feasibility of a temporary park on Parcel 24 with ACDC, MassDOT, and City.
Community Services	
1. Increase public awareness and access to community services.	• Create a comprehensive assessment of social services. • Identify opportunities for collaboration and sharing of resources.
Safety	
1. Work with police department and community on program to make Chinatown a safer neighborhood.	• Increase visibility of police and citizen patrols. • Coordinate with BPD to provide more visibility in the neighborhood. • Provide and maintain better lighting.
2. Improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety.	• Coordinate with BTD to ensure that all driving lanes, parking spaces, and crosswalks are clearly marked • Evaluate streets and sidewalks to assess capacity for bike paths and make recommendations for improvements (bike racks, security lighting, fencing).
Environmental Health	
1. Develop an environmental health public awareness program.	• Identify organization(s) to oversee environmental health improvement program. • Develop bilingual educational materials that explains hazards and risks to individuals and community health.
2. Improve cleanliness throughout Chinatown.	• Provide more trash receptacles. • Establish program involving local businesses, residents, and institutions for cleaning sidewalks. • Provide and install bilingual signs to educate against littering.

Long-Term Strategies

Strategy Description	Action
Economic Development	
1. Development of incubator space that can support small businesses through shared facilities and services.	• Coordinate with City to identify incubator spaces for existing or emerging Chinatown businesses.
Housing*	
1. 50 Herald Street	• Coordinate with BRA and CCBA to determine potential development.
2. Parcel 12	• Coordinate with BRA to develop and release Request For Proposals (RFP).
3. Parcel R-1	• Coordinate with BRA and Tufts University to determine potential development.
4. Parcel A	• Coordinate with BRA and community to develop and release RFP for Parcel A.
5. South Bay Parcels 25, 26A and 26B	• Coordinate with MassDOT and BRA on South Bay Planning Study.

*(*Mixed-use developments may also be categorized under economic development.)*

Long-Term Strategies

Strategy Description	Action
Public Spaces and Parks	
1. Create a linear park along Harrison Avenue south of Herald Street.	• Coordinate with the BRA and the Harrison-Albany Corridor Strategic Plan.
2. Redesign Phillips Square plaza.	• Coordinate with BRA and Cross Roads Initiative.
Safety	
1. Improve pedestrian safety on streets.	• Coordinate with the BTD on ways to improve pedestrian safety. • Increase WALK signal times at intersections. • Evaluate options for traffic calming measures. • Install signs with bilingual English and Chinese.
Environmental Health	
1. Develop a community-wide wellness and health program.	• Coordinate with community agencies to develop a community-wide program.
2. Mitigate traffic impacts of new development.	• Develop program to minimize impacts of construction projects.
3. Minimize noise and air quality impacts.	• Support installation of replacement windows to buffer sound in existing housing developments. • Support usage of sound barrier walls along the highway. • Request noise and air quality monitoring and reporting from construction projects.

Implementing the Plan

The implementation plan presented is the result of input from a group of stakeholders responsible for the preparation of this master plan. Throughout this process, a number of important issues have dominated the conversation. Among these issues were the sustainability of Chinatown in the future, affordable housing for families, jobs and the local economy, public spaces, and cultural identity. Strategies that address these issues are the highest priority for the community.

Implementation Committee
To oversee implementation of the master plan's recommendations, an on-going commitment from the community is needed. The first step to overseeing the implementation is to create and form a Master Plan Implementation Committee (MPIC). The role of the MPIC is to guide, monitor, and evaluate strategies based on the community's capacity to implement the plan's recommendations. The MPIC should be recognized by the community and the City as the body responsible for ensuring that the goals of the master plan are met.

A Master Plan Implementation Committee ideally should:
- Provide for broad representation of the community.
- Define roles for the committee and its members.
- Establish operating procedures.
- Include a process for decision making.
- Draw from expertise within and outside its membership.
- Understand the vision and goals of the Master Plan.

Appendix

Chinatown Master Plan 2010 Public Meetings

Phase 1 Vision and Goals
July 22, 2009

Phase 1 Vision and Goals
September 30, 2009

Phase I Vision and Goals
October 29, 2009

Phase II Implementation Plan
April 10, 2010

Phase II Implementation Plan
June 26, 2010

Presentation to Community Groups

Safety Committee
May 5, 2010

Chinatown Residents Association
May 5, 2010

Chinatown Neighborhood Council
May 17, 2010

Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association
May 25, 2010

The Chinatown Coalition
June 10, 2010

Planning studies that were referenced.

Harrison-Albany Corridor Strategic Plan: 2009/10
BRA plan to develop the Harrison-Albany corridor. The plan shares boundaries in the New York Streets area with *Chinatown Master Plan 2010*.

Tufts Medical Center: 2010 Institutional Master Plan
The plan provides an analysis, inventory, and initiatives of the hospital for the next ten years.

Tufts University: 1992 Institutional Master Plan (amended in 2007)
The plan outlines objectives and development goals of the university.

Phase I South Bay Planning Study: 2004
BRA and MassDOT (formerly Mass Turnpike) plan to develop a vision for the South Bay/Chinatown Gateway parcels.

Chinatown Gateway Charrette: 2007
Community charrette to create a vision for the South Bay/ Chinatown Gateway parcels.

"Chinatown Community Fulcrum." Asian Community Development Corporation/Affordable Housing Design Competition: 2005
Study on Parcel A by graduate students and cosponsored by ACDC for the Federal Home Loan Affordable Housing Development Competition.

"Chinatown Crossing." Asian Community Development Corporation/Affordable Housing Design Competition: 2009
Study of Phillips Square conducted by graduate students. Study cosponsored by ACDC for the Federal Home Loan Affordable Housing Development Competition.

Silver Line Portal Development Study: 2008
MBTA engineering study to determine potential support for above ground development if an underground tunnel was constructed.

50 Herald Street Study: 2009
Study by developer E.A. Fish Development and The Architectural Team.

Participatory Chinatown: 2009
An experimental project by ACDC, Emerson College, Metropolitan Area Planning Council, and Muzzy Lane Software to create a 3-D simulation of Chinatown.

Comment Letter

Chinatown Master Plan 2010 uses a consensus driven model to arrive at the vision for the plan. During the community meetings, there was disagreement of the master plan's vision by the Co-chair of the Chinatown Resident Association. Reprinted here in the appendix is a letter submitted by the Co-chair of the Chinatown Resident Association.

Boston Chinatown Master Plan 2010
Mr. Henry Yee, Co-chair of Chinatown Resident Association

In 1840, San Francisco introduced a number of foreign workers into the United States. Two hundred of them were Chinese. In 1872, they came to Massachusetts and worked at a shoe factory for three years. Then most of them had left. Only 75 people moved to Boston in 1875. That is Beach Street in Boston now. They opened up a new world of Chinatown. The residents here, including most of the Chinese and ethnic minority, have gone through 100 years of hard work to make today's Chinatown. This is the saga of the Chinatown contributions. Future generations will not forget.

"Boston Chinatown Master Plan" for the first time entered into in 1990, and then the second time in 2000, now the third time entered into in 2010. What is its purpose? My opinions are:

(1) Protection of Chinatown forever.
(2) Protection of Chinatown residents are able to live forever in Chinatown.
(3) Now there are about 8000 residents living in Chinatown. The average income per person per year is about $15,000.
(4) Chinatown maintains low-income housing, so that low-income residents to feel ease to live in Chinatown.
(5) Affordability of housing development in Chinatown, but in line with Chinatown residents, the average income is about $15,000 as a priority. And then only middle income residents of fifty thousand a year.
(6) The Government now made affordable housing requirement of each year's average community income is about $ 50,000, and Chinatown residents in a year's average income is only $ 15,000 compared Chinatown residents simply cannot afford.
(7) Against the expansion of luxury house in Chinatown. Luxury House brings high rent, a direct impact on housing rents are now rising. The victims were working - class Chinatown residents since they cannot afford the exorbitant rent, so are forced to move out of Chinatown. If not remedied in time, many years later, the Chinese no longer live in Chinatown that time, the name is in name only.
(8) Everyone wants to lead a good life, but first of all to solve the housing problem. Followed by a good life to live and work . Including work, education, medical health, safety , small business, 100% bilingual ballots, library and political strength.
(9) Listed above are the facts, we cannot rely on the income of a small number of people to assess the income of residents in Chinatown. This is only fair and reasonable. Also set "Chinatown Master Plan 2010" the real purpose.

Members of the Chinatown Master Plan 2010 Oversight Committee, Technical Committee, and Supporters. From left to right 1st row: Tunney Lee, Yulina Chow (baby), LiZhen Zhu, Marie Moy, Henry Yee, Suzanne Lee, Sherry Dong, Dan Xin Chen, Sue Liu, Hua Quan Liu, Jeff Hovis. From left to right 2nd row: Lawrence Cheng, Lydia Lowe, Paul Chan, Cheri Leung, Ann Wong, Wingkay Leung, Junko Yamamoto, Min Guang Yu, Janelle Chan. From left to right back row: Eswaran Selvarajah, Daphne Politis, Bill Moy, Chong Chow, Gilbert Ho, David Moy, PK Chan, Barbara Rubel, Daniel Blasi.