

The Chinatown Working Group will vote on Monday, November 2, 2009 on whether or not to endorse the following Guiding Principles, as proposed by its Working Teams. All voting members of the CWG should review this document prior to the vote.

**CWG Working Teams' Proposed Guiding Principles**  
**Draft Date: November 2, 2009**

**CULTURE, AFFORDABILITY, PRESERVATION, AND ZONING (CAPZ)**

**Affordability**

1. To provide opportunity for new equitable housing, as well as the preservation of existing housing, both rental and homeownership, that is affordable to the community, to counter the displacement of existing residents. Affordability will be defined by utilizing a local Area Median Income figure, defined by the CWG, which will truly represent the low, moderate, and middle income, key to the above AMI, demographics and the needs of residents of the community.

**Zoning**

1. To promote commercial stability and preservation; to encourage balanced economic growth appropriate to the neighborhood, in particular to small businesses; and to counter involuntary displacement of existing small businesses.
2. To preserve the historical and cultural character of the neighborhood. Protect Chinatown's historical buildings/structures, distinctive streetscapes (including street artists, craftspeople and vendors) and other characteristic elements of the community.
3. To provide opportunity for new housing as well as preservation of existing housing, both rental and homeownership, affordable to current residents in the neighborhood, while recognizing a variety of income levels; to counter displacement of existing residents.
4. To base Zoning Working Team recommendations on existing and new detailed research, in-depth fact finding, and community plans.
5. To acknowledge that zoning alone will not guarantee the preservation of neighborhood character; that the Zoning Team will work closely with all other working teams of different issues, to coordinate and incorporate their input into future recommendations.

## **Culture and Historic Preservation**

1. Preserve and enhance the cultural character of Chinatown that makes it a unique and diverse community of predominantly Chinese Americans. Recognize that the foundations of traditions from the past and the innovations of the present compose the dynamic and complex character of this community.
2. Support cultural activities and preservation efforts that will attract and retain Chinatown residents, businesses, and visitors, while also addressing the quality and importance of family life.
3. Create a dedicated community arts center and other appropriate spaces for cultural use that are affordable to area artists, organizations and residents. Cultivate a hospitable and affordable environment in Chinatown for traditional and contemporary artists, artisans, cultural entities, culturally-based businesses, and cultural activities from inside and outside the community. Chinatown's interplay with its neighboring communities and the City infrastructure itself can be significantly enhanced.
4. Recognize, protect and preserve Chinatown's historical buildings/structures and districts of architectural and/or cultural significance, its distinctive streetscapes and other characteristic elements of the community.
5. Encourage imaginative new architecture and environmental design reflective of contemporary life and aesthetics, but also respects and acts in harmony with older architectural styles in the neighborhood.
6. Ensure that the efforts of other CWG working teams are consonant with the community's historic/cultural preservation, growth, and development goals.
7. Work with and support local cultural organizations that gather, safeguard and disseminate the shared histories and stories that collectively form the basic foundations of this neighborhood and are vitally relevant to its future, successive generations and the general American population.
8. Recognize that decorative elements like Chinese-style facades or ceremonial arches, while worthwhile, are just symbolic measures. Active policies, legislation and efforts are needed to achieve true long term revitalization that avoids the danger and short-sightedness of a "Disneyland Chinatown".

## **ECONOMICS AND TRANSPORTATION**

### **Economic Development & Revitalization**

1. Promote economic development strategies in Chinatown that will broaden the base of businesses and classifications; increase opportunity for local employment; expand job skills; and, overall, expand Chinatown's customer/patron profile as a distinct and contributing New York City entity.
2. Create and integrate education and training opportunities to improve business practices and labor conditions and employee skills to build a stronger base of Chinatown resources.
3. Provide targeted business assistance to help and support business expansion. Such assistance would include, but may not be limited to: Worker education programs; ESL programs; customer retention programs; new business incubators; new business investment programs/funds.
4. Coordinate and promote long-term environmental and business improvement efforts for the purpose of raising the community's image and stimulating business growth.
5. Pursue transformational development projects that can strengthen Chinatown's inherent cultural, social and economic assets. E.G. Multi-purpose buildings with compatible/contributing use groups.

### **Parking, Transportation, Circulation, and Safety**

1. Strive for a balance in transportation, parking, and security.
2. Foster community input and involvement in vehicular and pedestrian traffic planning and monitoring in an ongoing transparent process.
3. Advocate for "natural" [holistic] designs and flows (a "go with the flow" approach to designs); develop improvements to physical layout by taking small steps towards an end goal that measures the effectiveness/success/failure at each step and reassessing the path accordingly.
4. Resolving parking and transportation issues: Re-establish lost parking, promote public transportation while easing bus congestion and improving pedestrian and cyclist safety, plan for private transportation (buses, shuttles, etc) to make it easier for customers to patronize Chinatown businesses, for residents to travel within their community and for people who have family and other ties to Chinatown throughout the New York Metropolitan Area to congregate and pursue Chinatown traditions and activities related, but not limited, to Chinese-American culture.

## **IMMIGRANT & PARKS**

### **Immigrant Affairs & Services**

1. Protect the rights of all immigrants and workers by fostering increased education and outreach among employees and employers about workers rights and employment discrimination.
2. Encourage new businesses in the community to hire local residents.
3. Improve translation and interpretation services among institutions (schools, hospitals, city, state, federal agencies) that serve immigrants in our community.
4. Ensure that truly affordable housing (for tenants or homeowners) is available in the community for new immigrants with low/moderate incomes and limited resources.
5. Address family issues including domestic violence prevention, child abuse prevention, support for senior citizens and youth, parent education and support.

### **Parks, Open Space, and Recreation**

1. Increase open and green space, preserve/develop flexible multi-use space and expand recreational opportunities for the health and environmental well-being of the community.
2. Improve the safety and cleanliness of local parks and open spaces.
3. Foster in local residents a sense of community ownership and stewardship of our parks by the identifying roles that our local institutions can play – be it the private sector (e.g. banks, businesses, real estate owners) and public (e.g. schools).
4. Strive for a balance between beautification and economic development ensuring the improvement of local parks and open spaces benefits existing residents and does not spur further displacement as it increases property values.
5. Alleviate Chinatown's low open space per person ratio: Make better use of existing resources (e.g. underutilized and poorly programmed public housing campuses) as sites for open space.
6. Gather community input and prioritize community uses in local parks.
7. Foster communication and interagency coordination in regards to local parks.

## **EDUCATION & SCHOOLS**

1. Protect, preserve, support and strengthen Chinatown's learning institutions (public schools, daycare centers, youth based organization, senior learning centers, GED and tutoring programs, etc.) that serve the Chinatown area.
2. Prioritize resources for parents to improve their capacity as parents in languages they can understand. Increase access to English language learning for parents to help level the playing field for both students and parents.
3. Provide parents, schools, daycares, seniors and youth centered organizations with tools to empower themselves in the community. Encourage partnerships and the pooling of resources between relevant community resources. Establish a central clearinghouse on After-Schools, tutoring, cultural activities and other information for parents, young people and schools.
4. Create ongoing opportunities to encourage the young people of Chinatown to have their own voice in the issues of learning and education.