CHINATOWN

NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE

CHINATOWN
STOCKTON STREET, GRANT AVENUE, AND KEARNY STREET, FROM BUSH STREET TO BROADWAY
Neighborhood Features

Established in 1848, San Francisco’s Chinatown is the oldest and second largest Chinese-American community in the United States (after New York City). Chinatown is the densest neighborhood in the city, and has retained its own customs, languages, places of worship, social clubs, and identity. The neighborhood continues to play an integral role in shaping the Chinese-American experience; serving as the gateway for immigrants to find work, learn English, receive social services, and participate in community activities.

Chinatown is multi-faceted: Stockton Street as Chinatown’s marketplace serves the local community; Grant Avenue, with its various curio shops, is the top tourist destination; and Kearny is the neighborhoods’ vehicular gateway. The neighborhood offers affordable goods and services and a variety of authentic restaurants, herbal and curio shops, fish markets, and vegetable stands. The festivals, temples, renowned Dragon’s Gate entrance, historical buildings, and alleyways are among Chinatown’s strengths as a pedestrian-accessible neighborhood. The neighborhood also features a large network of longstanding family associations, arts, culture and community-based organizations that offer a range of social services and resources to support and promote the history and culture of Chinatown.

Commercial District Health

Located in downtown San Francisco, Chinatown covers 24 square blocks and overlaps with five different postal codes. Sales tax captured in the district grew by 21% between 2006 and 2012, compared with 17% growth Citywide over the same period. Chinatown has a very low vacancy rate (less than 4% as of spring 2013); several of the existing vacancies are larger commercial spaces.

Public safety in Chinatown is a concern for businesses and other community stakeholders. From 2009 to 2012 the neighborhood experienced an increase in the number of vehicle thefts/thefts from vehicles and slight decreases in assaults and robberies. Hotspots of criminal activity occur along Stockton Street and near the intersection of Broadway and Columbus. (Source: SFPD incidents data, November 2009-October 2012)

Demographics

More than 32,600 people live within a one-quarter mile radius of the Chinatown commercial district. Its population is older than San Francisco’s with a higher proportion of residents over 60 years old. A majority of Chinatown residents are of Asian descent and the neighborhood does not have the racial diversity of the City overall. There are about 22,700 housing units in the area, mostly in multi-family structures of 10 units. A majority of households are renters and single person households predominate. About two-thirds of all households in Chinatown do not own cars. Household incomes in the neighborhood are less than half of the Citywide median and almost a quarter of residents live below the poverty level.
### Notable Places
1. Chinatown Branch Library
2. Betty Ann Ong Chinese Recreation Center
3. International Hotel
4. Chinese Hospital
5. Quong Ming Buddhism and Taoism
6. Chinese Historical Society of America Museum
7. Portsmouth Square Plaza
8. Willie “Woo Woo” Wong Playground
9. Golden Gate Fortune Cookie Factory
10. Waverly Place
11. Tin How Temple
12. Old Chinese Telephone Exchange
13. Chinese Culture Center
14. Cameron House
15. Chinatown Gate
16. Self Help For the Elderly

### Cultural Events
- Chinese New Year’s Parade
- Autumn Moon Festival
- Lunar New Year Festival
- Miss Teen Chinatown
- Chinese New Year Flower Festival
- SF Union Square / Chinatown 5k Running Tour
- Chinese New Year Basketball Jamboree
- Chinatown Community Street Fair
- Music Festival
- Ping Pong Tournament

### Merchant & Resident Groups
- Chinatown Community Development Center
- Chinese Chamber of Commerce
- Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association
- Chinatown Merchants Association
- Chinese American Citizens Alliance
- APA Family Support Services
- API Council
INVEST IN NEIGHBORHOODS

COMMERCIAL DISTRICT HEALTH

**Chinatown Storefronts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Storefront Type</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grocery Store/Small Market</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant, Full Service</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifts</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Service</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing, Accessories</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewelry</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business or Professional Service</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank/Financial Service</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacy</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cafe</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assembly/Private Club</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety/Discount</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Retail Services</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronics Retail</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bakery w/Retail</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Service</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antiques Shop</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fast Food/Limited Restaurant</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bar</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appliance, Home Furnishings</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books, Records</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Commercial Uses</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florist</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist Hotel</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other retail</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massage Establishment</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant Storefronts</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Demographics**

- **White**: 33%
- **Black**: 2%
- **Asian**: 61%
- **Native American / Hawaiian or Pacific Islander**: 0%
- **Other / Two or More**: 4%
- **% Latino**: 5%

**District Population**: 32,600

**No. of Households**: 19,465

**Median Household Income**: $33,845

“We have a lot of seniors in Chinatown but we are missing young people. How do we get them here?”

Community Advocate
Recent Accomplishments

“We are excited for the Central Subway project. It means new shoppers, businesses and more opportunities for our community to shine.”

Community Advocate

**STRENGTHS**

- Well-established community with deep historic roots, cultural significance and unique architecture
- Top tourist attraction for the Bay Area
- One stop shopping for both local population and visitors; affordable markets, restaurants, shops, cafes, places of worship, banks, social service centers, and cultural centers
- Strong Community Based Organization (CBO) network for immigrants, families and seniors
- Chinatown CBOs provide a steady source of customers to the business community
- Celebrate cultural identity through implementing public realm improvements

**OPPORTUNITIES**

- Provide technical assistance to businesses seeking financial assistance for capital improvements
- Develop partnership with Department of Health and Department of Building Inspection to identify at risk businesses/buildings
- Support community businesses utilizing cultural events and programs
- Implement Portsmouth Square renovations
- Develop plan to decrease congestion on streets and increase walkability
- Increase cleanliness in the district
- Implement and/or promote workforce development programs that include language access and cultural competency for local population
- Chinese Hospital re-construction and Central Subway project online and proceeding
- Identify public spaces for community meetings
- Evaluate an opportunity to develop a social services hub in Chinatown
- Assist in filling big footprint vacancies

**CHALLENGES**

- Much of existing building stock is in poor condition and does not comply with present day safety standards; some property owners unable or unwilling to upgrade/retrofit existing properties
- Businesses receive costly citations regarding ADA accessibility and complain that they cannot afford to comply with
- Increasing commercial rents make it difficult to attract new types of businesses
- Night life is nonexistent; establishments close at 9 or 10pm, making it difficult to attract younger people to the area
- Aging senior population; fear of loss of culture identity as young Chinese individuals move away
- Poor physical conditions: dirty sidewalks, storefronts and awnings; graffiti and vandalism
- Poor street level lighting
NOTE:

Demographic data presented on page 7 represents the area within 1/4 mile of the Chinatown commercial district.

Business mix data presented on page 9 corresponds with the Trade Area indicated on the map.

Chinatown storefronts data presented on page 4 corresponds with the Commercial District Area indicated on the map.
CHINATOWN: DEMOGRAPHICS

Population

32,600
vs. 805,240 Citywide

Race / Background

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CITYWIDE</th>
<th>CHINATOWN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
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<td>Native American / Hawaiian or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>1%</td>
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<td>% Latino</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male / Female Ratio</td>
<td>51/49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Born</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linguistic Isolated Households</td>
<td>14%</td>
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Median Age

45.0
vs. 38.5 Citywide

Median Household Income

$33,845
vs. $71,420 Citywide

Unemployment

11%
vs. 7% Citywide

No. of Households

19,465
vs. 345,810 Citywide

% of Households Without a Car

67%
vs. 29% Citywide

Education

Half the population has a high school diploma or less.

No. of Housing Units

22,000
vs. 376,940 Citywide

Residential Density

40 units per acre
vs. 12 Citywide

Income

Median Family Household Income

$86,670
$34,540

Per Capita Income

$45,478
$39,830

% Poverty

12%
23%

Unemployment

7.0%
11.0%

Education

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Housing

Renting Households

62%
78%

Rental Vacancy Rate

3.4%
9%

Median Rent

$1,260
$1,180

Housing Type

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<td>33%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 - 4 Units</td>
<td>21%</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 - 9 Units</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 units or more</td>
<td>35%</td>
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Population Density

70 people per acre
vs. 27 Citywide

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Chinatown: Land Use

Vacancy & Opportunity Sites

- Vacant Lots & Surface Parking Lots
- Vacant Storefronts

Spaces indicated as "Vacant Storefronts" include all ground floor commercial spaces that were unoccupied as of February 2013.
Summary of Business by Categories, 2011
Source: Business data provided by Infogroup, Omaha NE Copyright 2012, all rights reserved. ESRI forecasts for 2011.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAICS Business Category</th>
<th>Businesses</th>
<th>Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing &amp; Hunting</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>249</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>335</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wholesale Trade</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>486</td>
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<tr>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>1,336</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transportation &amp; Warehousing</td>
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<td>48</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>424</td>
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<td>Finance &amp; Insurance</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>3,381</td>
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<tr>
<td>Real Estate, Rental &amp; Leasing</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, Scientific &amp; Tech Services</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>3,584</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of Companies &amp; Enterprises</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin. Support, Waste Mgmt. &amp; Remediation Services</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Services</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care &amp; Social Assistance</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>1,019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts, Entertainment &amp; Recreation</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation &amp; Food Services</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>3,825</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Services (except Public Administration)</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>1,514</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Administration</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>197</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unclassified Establishments</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>326</td>
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Leakage / Surplus Factor by Industry Group, Chinatown

The Leakage / Surplus Factor summarizes the relationship between supply (retail sales by businesses in the commercial district) and demand (consumer spending by households within a quarter-mile radius of the commercial district). As the Leakage / Surplus Factor trends toward +100, the market is experiencing leakage, meaning there is less retail activity relative to local demand. As the factor trends toward -100, this means that the market is in surplus and retail activity is in excess of local demand.
CHINATOWN: TRANSPORTATION

Major Transit Lines / Cross Lines

**Major Transit Lines**

1  inbound on Sacramento Street  
   outbound on Clay Street

12  inbound on Pacific Street  
    outbound on Broadway Street

8X, 8AX, 8BX  inbound on Kearny Street  
              outbound on Stockton Street

30, 45, 91  inbound/outbound on Stockton Street

41  inbound/outbound on Columbus Avenue

Powell/Mason Cable Car  inbound/outbound on Powell Street

California Cable Car  inbound/outbound on California Street

**Walking**

- Key Walking Streets  (see map)
- High Priority Segments  (see map)

**Bicycling**

Bicycle Racks  5

**Parking**

Metered Spaces  434

Unmetered Spaces  22

Parking Garages / Lots  5
CHINATOWN: EXISTING PLANS & INTERVENTIONS

Central Subway Project
DATE: 2013  SOURCE: MTA
SUMMARY: The Central Subway Project will construct a modern, efficient light-rail line that will improve public transportation in San Francisco. This new 1.7-mile extension of Muni’s T Third Line will provide direct connections to major retail, sporting and cultural venues while efficiently transporting people to jobs, educational opportunities and other amenities throughout the city. With stops in South of Market (SoMa), Yerba Buena, Union Square and Chinatown, the Central Subway will vastly improve transit options for the residents of one of the most densely populated neighborhoods in the country, provide a rapid transit link to a burgeoning technology and digital-media hub, and improve access to a premier commercial district and tourist attraction. Construction is currently underway and the project is scheduled for completion in 2019.
URL: http://centralsubwaysf.com/

Chinatown Broadway Street Design
DATE: February 2013  SOURCE: SF Planning Department
SUMMARY: In 2011, the San Francisco Planning Department partnered with the Chinatown Community Development Center (CCDC) and other City agencies to engage the Chinatown community in the redesign of Broadway in Chinatown. This document is a summary of that process and the recommendations that have been developed through the planning process to envision a new Broadway in Chinatown. Phase IV will cover Columbus to Tunnel; funding is pending.

Broadway Great Streets Project
DATE: 2006-2013  SOURCE: DPW/MTA/Planning
SUMMARY: Phases I and II of the Broadway Streetscape Improvement project, completed in 2005 and 2008, provided resurfacing and transit and pedestrian improvements to two segments of Broadway. Phase III will connect the work completed in previous phases by focusing on streetscape improvements on Broadway between Kearny and Montgomery Streets, and resurfacing improvements from Kearny to Battery Streets.
URL: http://www.sfdpw.org/index.aspx?page=1492

Chinatown Economic Action Plan
DATE: August 2008  SOURCE: OEWD
SUMMARY: OEWD engaged community members, neighborhood businesses, local non-profit organizations, and tourism and planning professionals in a collaborative effort to increase economic activity in Chinatown and to support it as an attractive and cultural destination for locals and visitors alike. This document recaps the process and presents an action plan that identifies short- and long-term strategies that the City and sponsoring agents can undertake to improve business conditions in Chinatown.
URL: http://oewd.org/media/docs/080915_CEAP_Low_Res.pdf
### DPW Community Corridors and Ambassadors Program

**DATE:** 2013  
**SOURCE:** Department of Public Works

**SUMMARY:** DPW’s Community Corridors program is active on Grant from Broadway to California, on Stockton from Columbus to Sacramento, and on Kearny from Columbus to California.


### DPW Streetscape and Repaving Projects

**DATE:** 2013  
**SOURCE:** Department of Public Works

**SUMMARY:** DPW plans a number of streetscape and repaving projects in Chinatown in 2013 including Broadway Tunnel to Columbus; Spofford Street from Clay to Washington Street; Broadway; Jackson Street from Grant Ave to Pontiac; Grant Ave from Pine St to Columbus Ave; Clay Street from Kearny Street to Walter U Lum Plaza; Kearny Street from Pine Street to Columbus Ave; Pine Street from Kearny Street to Stockton Street; and Stockton Street from Pacific Ave to Broadway.

The Invest in Neighborhoods Commercial District Profiles have been brought to you by:

SAN FRANCISCO
Office of Economic and Workforce Development

SAN FRANCISCO
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

LISC
Bay Area

To learn more about Invest in Neighborhoods please visit our website at http://oewd.org/IIN.aspx, or contact the Office of Economic and Workforce Development at (415) 554-6969 or moewd@sfgov.org and ask to speak with a member of the Invest in Neighborhoods team.