



# CONNECTING COMMUNITIES AND NATIONS

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Insights from the 2023 US-Canada  
Chinatown Solidarity Summit



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2023 US-Canada Chinatown Solidarity Summit aimed to build on work from previous leaders and generations from Chinatowns. The summit recognized the historical and cultural significance of Chinatowns, as well as the need for action and collaboration to address systemic issues impacting Chinatowns across the world. The summit aimed to chart a better path forward for all Chinatowns and ethnocultural neighbourhoods confronting similar issues.

The summit was held on May 23rd and 24th, 2023, bringing together prominent leaders from 17 Chinatowns across the United States and Canada along with ambassadors, elected officials, and community leaders.

The focus of the Summit was on three essential pillars:

- **Cultural and Historic Preservation**
- **Economic Revitalization, and**
- **Public Safety**

These pillars served as the core themes of the summit's discussions, aiming to address key issues and foster stronger Chinatown communities.

The Summit and subsequent engagements couldn't have been possible without the support from the U.S. Mission to Canada along with Presenting Sponsor Deloitte Digital, Silver Sponsor RBC, and Bronze Sponsors Chan Family Foundation, Destination Vancouver, and TD. Thank you!

“  
The history and triumphs of Chinese Canadians and Americans remind us how important it is to sustain the unique treasure that is our equitable, inclusive Chinatown society.”

David L. Cohen,  
U.S. Ambassador to Canada



**Carol Lee** (L), Chair, Vancouver Chinatown Foundation, **David L. Cohen** (R), U.S. Ambassador to Canada





The following report presents the key insights and case studies derived from the summit, focusing on each pillar discussed.

### **Cultural and Historic Preservation:**

In this pillar, the report emphasizes the significance of collaboration with multiple levels of governments, obtaining appropriate historical designations, and redefining the identity of Chinatowns to resonate with the next generation. By preserving cultural heritage and engaging the youth, Chinatowns can ensure their rich history endures.

### **Economic Revitalization:**

Addressing the second pillar, the report highlights the imperative of raising awareness and engagement, enhancing digital literacy and infrastructure, and providing support to existing business owners. By leveraging

community involvement, embracing innovative technologies, and fostering intergenerational partnerships, Chinatowns can breathe new life into their economies and attract a diverse clientele.

### **Public Safety:**

The third and final pillar emphasizes the urgency of tackling discrimination, hate crimes, and safety concerns faced by Chinatowns. The report underscores the importance of community engagement and collaboration, while also advocating for the development of tailored public safety models. By fostering unity, empowering communities, and adopting community-centered approaches, Chinatowns can bolster their safety and resilience.



L-R: **David L. Cohen**, U.S. Ambassador to Canada, **Mary Ng**, Canadian Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development, **Carol Lee**, Chair, Vancouver Chinatown Foundation, **Ken Sim**, Mayor, City of Vancouver, and **D. Brent Hardt**, Consul General, U.S. Consulate General Vancouver

**“We stand on the shoulders of giants. From the ashes of adversity, our ancestors built a foundation of what we stand on today. Revitalizing Chinatown means investing in infrastructure, providing support to local businesses, and embracing the artists, entrepreneurs and visionaries who dared push the boundaries to keep our traditions alive. Chinatown doesn’t just belong to individuals of Chinese descent; it belongs to all of us.”**

Ken Sim, Mayor, City of Vancouver



David L. Cohen, U.S. Ambassador to Canada





# BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

## Building on a Strong History

Drawing from rich historical roots, Chinatowns hold immense significance in North American history and culture, serving as not only sanctuaries for Asian immigrants but also as integral parts of the cities they inhabit. From their inception in the 19th and early 20th centuries, these vibrant communities have defied adversity and flourished, providing enduring homes for immigrant families and acting as cultural beacons for language and tradition preservation and economic participation and mobility. This conference focuses on older established inner-city Chinatowns but also acknowledges the changing, diverse, and newer Asian neighborhoods that can be found across city regions in North America.

Chinatowns in Canada and the United States have always been dynamic places shaped by local, provincial, and national policies and global events. Throughout the decades, there have been active movements and community dialogues concerned about the future of these Chinatowns. Some examples can be seen in the 1969 proceedings of the Sien Lok Society's (Calgary) National Conference of Urban Renewal as It Affected Chinatown" paper<sup>1</sup> and the 1992 Chinatown Neighborhood Improvement Resource Center's "Chinatown USA: Report Planning and Development in American Chinatowns written by Tarry Hum. Through these documents, they present how these neighborhoods that have been challenged in terms of economic and demographic shifts and hostile governmental policies and projects, but how these communities are willing to rise to these challenges.

Yet, the challenges faced by these resilient neighborhoods have only intensified over time. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated long standing struggles, manifesting in heightened vandalism, violence, discrimination, and the distressing closure of cherished businesses.

During the pandemic's peak in 2020, the United States witnessed a staggering 73%

surge in anti-Asian hate crimes<sup>2</sup>, while Canada experienced a troubling 300% rise in police-reported hate crimes against East and Southeast Asian individuals<sup>3</sup>.

In response to these pressing issues, the 2023 US-Canada Chinatown Solidarity Summit convened leaders from Chinatowns across the United States and Canada, creating a powerful platform for sharing experiences and fostering vital connections between communities. United by a shared vision, the summit sought to chart a more promising path forward, addressing the challenges confronted by all Chinatowns and ethnic enclaves with a sense of solidarity and purpose.

## 2023 US-Canada Chinatown Solidarity Summit

The summit included over 50 leaders hailing from 18 Chinatowns from across the United States and Canada came together at Dr. Sun-Yat Sen Classical Chinese Garden. This summit included leaders from Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, San Francisco, Ottawa, New York City, Philadelphia, Edmonton, Oakland, Victoria, Atlanta, Washington, Portland, Honolulu, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles and Montreal Chinatowns, as well as US Ambassador to Canada David L. Cohen, Canadian Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development Mary Ng, Vancouver Mayor Ken Sim, US Trade Representative Katherine Tai, Vancouver Chinatown Foundation CEO Carol Lee, and numerous other influential figures.

<sup>1</sup> <https://digitalcollections.ucalgary.ca/archive/National-conference-on-urban-renewal-as-it-affects-Chinatown-2R3BF1OEOHQE5.html>

<sup>2</sup> *Anti-Asian hate crimes rose 73% last year, updated FBI data says (nbcnews.com)*

<sup>3</sup> *Anti-Asian hate crimes jumped by 300 per cent in 2020: StatCan / CTV News*



Image from Bloomberg Article: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-06-20/north-america-s-historic-chinatowns-find-strength-in-numbers>

The US-Canada Chinatown Solidarity Summit served as a platform to enhance collaboration, exchange best practices, and develop actionable solutions to ensure the long-term prosperity and sustainability of Chinatown communities in both the United States and Canada.

### **The summit revolved around three overarching goals:**

- Celebrating and reflecting the rich history, traditions, and invaluable contributions of Chinatowns.
- Exploring effective strategies and initiatives to invigorate and fortify Chinatowns, with a specific focus on fostering economic development, community engagement, heritage preservation, urban planning, and tourism.
- Facilitating collaboration among leaders and promoting exchanges between US and Canadian Chinatowns to encourage mutual learning, cooperation, and support.



At the heart of the conference were three key pillars, identified as crucial to the well-being of all Chinatowns represented:

- 1. Cultural Preservation & Reinvention**
- 2. Economic Revitalization**
- 3. Public Safety**



These pillars formed the foundation of the summit's discussions and initiatives, guiding the participants towards collective efforts to ensure the vibrant future of Chinatown communities.

## REPORT STRUCTURE

To inspire leaders in Chinatowns across the United States and Canada and ensure the conference's outcomes can benefit diverse ethnic communities throughout the region, we have summarized the key takeaways across the three pillars into a comprehensive report.

Each section of the report focuses on a specific pillar, providing a concise overview of the challenges faced by these communities and shining a spotlight on innovative solutions and

initiatives proposed by all participants, with the aim of igniting future inspiration.

The conclusion emphasizes the interconnected nature of the pillars, highlighting the significance of integrated solutions that can bring exponential benefits to these vibrant neighborhoods.

In the final section, you will find essential information on key contacts, resources, and sources for those seeking to learn more and take proactive steps. With this report, we aspire to drive positive change and collective progress for Chinatowns across North America.



# PILLAR 1: Cultural Preservation & Reinvention

## Overview of Pillar and Key Underlying Issues

Rooted in their origins as sanctuaries for immigrants during the Gold Rush era, North American Chinatowns bear the indelible marks of their 19th and 20th-century beginnings. Enduring buildings, businesses, and cherished traditions have withstood the test of time, spanning multiple generations and weaving intricate historical narratives.

Yet, despite commendable efforts to define and preserve cultural and historical elements, numerous challenges persist. Internal struggles, often stemming from limited funding, hinder the maintenance of buildings and businesses. Externally, threats loom large, exemplified by disconcerting projects like the construction of the New York City Rikers' Island replacement jail near senior homes and daycares in Chinatown, and the divisive Vine Street highway cutting through Philadelphia's vibrant Chinatown. Moreover, the encroachment of high-end real estate development further threatens these precious territories.

The very fabric of these communities is being questioned, as new generations increasingly migrate in pursuit of higher-paying careers, leaving businesses without successors and community events graced by aging populations.

Preserving Chinatowns' cultural and historical legacy demands more than simply conserving them in their current state. To ensure their thriving resilience, a 21st-century agenda must be skillfully woven, balancing progress without compromising the core elements that define these remarkable enclaves.

“  
**Preservation  
without  
development  
is just as  
bad as  
development  
without  
preservation.”**

Carol Lee,  
Chair, Vancouver Chinatown  
Foundation



Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden, Vancouver, Canada

## CASE STUDY HIGHLIGHT 1: COLLABORATING WITH GOVERNMENTS

During the summit, participants engaged in candid discussions about significant challenges that warrant governmental support. Chinatowns frequently grapple with disruptive developments that deeply affect the lives of their residents, ranging from the construction of prisons, highways, to the encroachment of costly properties in close proximity. These developments exacerbate the struggle for low-income individuals to find affordable housing, intensifying the housing crisis.

Unfortunately, securing the necessary funding to enhance existing structures, build new homes, and facilitate access to affordable services remains a formidable obstacle. Addressing these pressing issues will require collaborative efforts and support from relevant authorities to ensure the sustained prosperity and well-being of Chinatown communities.

“  
**The role of the government is to create environments where these neighborhoods can succeed.**”

Ken Sim, Mayor, City of Vancouver

Chinatown officials can draw inspiration and potential solutions from successful policies implemented elsewhere. For example, San Francisco's approach of setting height limitations and requiring community-serving organizations like travel agencies in commercial buildings within certain areas has shown promise in creating vibrant and community-focused environments.

Similarly, Denmark's decentralized social housing model, featuring over half a million units spread throughout the city and managed by nonprofit housing associations<sup>4</sup>, fosters social inclusivity and accessibility is run by 700+ nonprofit housing associations.

Adopting a similar approach with multiple smaller stakeholders in Chinatowns could nurture a stronger sense of cultural knowledge and heritage preservation.



**Deborah Wei** (L), *Asian Americans United*,  
**Jenny Zhang** (R), *Asian Pacific Islander Political Alliance*

By proactively exploring and adapting these policies, Chinatown communities can pave the way for a sustainable and prosperous future, ensuring the well-being of all residents.

In addition, obtaining government funding through lobbying, media attention, and gaining support from influential leaders has led to major improvements. The federal government of Canada pledged \$150M towards repairs and construction of affordable housing in Vancouver's Downtown East Side, including Chinatown, with the goal of housing 8000 low-income individuals within the first year. The majority of buildings in New York City's Chinatown are also rent-regulated, allowing long-term renters freedom from the fear of eviction and increased pricing.

Boosting political literacy and engagement within Chinatown is paramount to empower voices and motivate policymakers to address local concerns proactively. An inspiring example of success lies in the formation of the Asian Pacific Islanders Political Association (APIPA)<sup>5</sup> by Pennsylvania residents, aimed at augmenting political influence and education. Following a similar trajectory, Vancouver's Mayor Ken Sim inaugurated a satellite office near Chinatown, streamlining access to city government and fostering a more approachable political landscape. Taking cues from such impactful initiatives, Chinatown communities can proactively strengthen their political presence and drive positive change for their collective well-being.

<sup>4</sup> *A Danish city housing model where the residents decide what's best – The Irish Times*

<sup>5</sup> *The first 501c4 political organization directly advocating for API voices in Pennsylvania.*



## CASE STUDY HIGHLIGHT 2: OBTAINING APPROPRIATE HISTORIC DESIGNATIONS

Gaining official recognition of historical significance yields numerous tangible benefits and sets the stage for positive action. It directly opens avenues for increased public and private funding, fueling essential developments in the community. Additionally, such recognition triggers indirect yet powerful outcomes like a surge in tourism, heightened foot traffic, and a genuine appreciation of the rich cultural heritage. This, in turn, bolsters the economic outlook of the area while safeguarding its authenticity and cultural essence, fostering a harmonious balance between progress and preservation. Embracing this approach thoughtfully can lead to a thriving and culturally enriched future for the community.

Victoria and Vancouver's Chinatowns were designated as National Historic Sites in the 1990s and 2010s, respectively, while advocates have been proposing the same designation for Toronto's Chinatown for years. Although these titles offered no direct legal protection or funding, they provided an increase in media awareness and tourism and further leverage to apply for federal funding programs<sup>6</sup>. Vancouver's Chinatown has also been preparing its application to be the first Chinatown in the world to obtain a UNESCO World Heritage Site designation, which would provide professional and technological safeguards to preserve certain properties, access to emergency assistance when necessary, and increased public awareness.<sup>7 8</sup>

Honolulu's Chinatown was listed as a historic district in the National Register for Historic places in 1973, prompting the city to invest in maintaining the neighborhood's unique history and buildings, such as the Wo Fat Building, namesake to the famous fictional villain in the award-winning police procedural Hawaii Five-0, which continues to be a popular tourist attraction.<sup>9</sup> The renewed interest has led to the renovation of damaged structures and building shopping centres, theatres, and various other attractions that served to revive a neighborhood that had been declining since the second World War.

Montreal's Chinatown sought a provincial heritage designation following the pandemic to counter real estate development threats. Two historic buildings and city blocks were registered as provincial heritage sites, designated as the 'Institutional Hub' of Chinatown, unable to be altered or demolished without approval from the Culture and Communications Minister.<sup>10</sup>

Although this may be considered a solution to cultural preservation, heritage site titles may present complications. Regulations can put restrictions on much needed development and bonding community activities to retain heritage site status, such as longer approval times for any development needed in Montreal's Institutional Hub. Creating or designating a landmark also invites the potential of higher costs and maintenance standards in the surrounding areas, which can lead to evictions for those who cannot afford the rising prices.

In the pursuit of historic designations, a strategic and inclusive approach is paramount to ensure optimal outcomes. Thoroughly assessing both the positive and negative impacts of potential designations is essential. This calls for active collaboration with the community and involvement of experts who possess a profound understanding of the community's unique needs. By prioritizing this comprehensive approach, the most suitable and beneficial designation can be identified, paving the way for a resilient and culturally enriched future.

<sup>6</sup> [Vancouver's Chinatown to celebrate national historic-site designation | Vancouver Sun](#)

<sup>7</sup> [What is the future for Vancouver's Chinatown? | Vancouver Sun](#)

<sup>8</sup> [Vancouver to apply for UNESCO World Heritage Site designation for Chinatown | Vancouver Sun](#)

<sup>9</sup> [Chinatown Historic District \(Honolulu\) \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](#)

<sup>10</sup> [Part of Montreal's Chinatown has been classified a Quebec heritage site | Montreal Gazette](#)



### CASE STUDY HIGHLIGHT 3: REDEFINING OUR IDENTITY

The future vitality of a community lies with its youth, but in recent times, younger generations have been steadily drawn away from Chinatowns, seeking more diverse career opportunities and safer environments to raise families. This trend is often encouraged by older generations who hope their children can access less labor-intensive and more stable living conditions. Unfortunately, the decline in youth involvement has intensified the challenges of cultural preservation, while also contributing to business closures due to the lack of successors. Taking decisive action to address this issue is imperative to safeguard the cultural heritage and economic sustainability of Chinatown communities for generations to come.

During the summit, two pivotal themes emerged to sustain youth engagement: the organization of regular community events to foster awareness and a sense of belonging, and active collaboration with other underrepresented communities, particularly those with significant youth populations.

“  
**The more voices heard,  
the greater the chance  
of gaining support and  
building stronger  
communities.”**

Deborah Wei, Founder, Asian Americans United

An array of community-fostering events was highlighted, showcasing successful examples such as Vancouver's annual Dragon Boat Festival longboat race, Ottawa's vibrant Chinatown Night Markets, and Oakland's lively Chinatown Street Festivals, all strategically tailored to appeal to young audiences and business owners. These engaging events serve as catalysts to draw youth to Chinatowns, promoting a deeper understanding of diverse cultures and histories while creating incentives for their return as they discover other small businesses and attractions promoted during these occasions.



Oakland Chinatown

Recognizing the interconnectedness of various communities, summit participants emphasized the importance of intercultural networks in bolstering youth engagement. Chinatowns' challenges and strengths do not exist in isolation; leaders pointed out that other underrepresented minorities, like Black and Hispanic communities in Philadelphia, encounter similar struggles with an increasingly disconnected youth. By forging alliances, strengths within these communities can intersect and complement each other. As a tangible example, Philadelphia Chinatown has been a vibrant hub for multiple Asian and Latino joint art exhibits, providing young artists with a platform to showcase their art and music to audiences from both communities. By actively cultivating these intercultural connections, Chinatown leaders recognize the immense potential to enhance youth engagement and foster a thriving and united future.







# LOOKING FORWARD

The cultural and historical significance of Chinatowns lies at the core of their identity and purpose. To chart a meaningful path forward, leaders must not only draw inspiration from the past but also actively involve and embrace the perspectives of the next generation. A key aspect of this endeavor involves building thriving communities that prioritize the interests and needs of both current and future residents. Nurturing a vibrant culture demands a concerted effort to provide ample economic opportunities and ensure the mental and physical well-being of the community. The forthcoming sections of this report will delve deeper into exploring these essential aspects, guiding leaders towards actionable strategies for a resilient and prosperous future.

San Francisco Chinatown



San Francisco Chinatown



Lily Ho, Delta Chinatown Initiative



# PILLAR 2: Economic Revitalization

## Overview of Pillar and Key Underlying Issues

Chinatowns across North America have experienced their fair share of economic struggles throughout history including rent affordability, declining youth engagement, decreased tourism due to safety concerns, and limited digital literacy for businesses. In addition, Chinatowns are often some of the most disadvantaged communities following massive external events, such as natural disasters, pandemics, and wars, often being overlooked in receiving funding for restoration efforts.

Most recently, xenophobic attitudes following COVID-19 have triggered increased vandalism, violent attacks, and other aggressions thereby impacting the business across Chinatowns. A combination of safety concerns, discrimination, self-isolation, and minimal engagement resulted in a 90% decrease in foot traffic for Montreal's Chinatown in 2020, prompting community leaders to begin the long process of seeking relief funding from the government.<sup>11</sup> 30% of businesses in San Francisco and Oakland Chinatowns closed, many of which have not reopened at the time of writing. Similar stories are echoed throughout North America's Chinatowns.

In order to revitalize Chinatowns' economies in a post-pandemic world, summit attendees discussed **three broad themes**: Increasing awareness and engagement to gain more support, improving digital literacy to enable forward-looking businesses, and engaging and supporting new business owners.

“  
We are facing challenges in the ‘long economic COVID’. We need to understand the level of disruption in businesses and acceleration of pre-existing factors during the pandemic. However, the ‘death of Chinatown’ has been greatly exaggerated.”

Andy Yan, Director,  
Simon Fraser University



Vancouver Chinatown

<sup>11</sup> COVID-related racism, lack of tourists combine to devastate Montreal's Chinatown | CTV NewsCanada

## CASE STUDY HIGHLIGHT 1: CREATING AWARENESS

To initiate economic revitalization, the first crucial step identified was to create **widespread awareness** of the diverse offerings of local businesses. An inspiring example was shared by panelist Forrest Liu, who co-founded the non-profit organization Dear Community in San Francisco, alongside like-minded leaders. Their mission was to promote awareness, security, and community building, actively raising funds to support local businesses. Through foot patrols that visited over 60 local restaurants, they sparked media interest in SF Chinatown, leading to an influx of funding, government-implemented security measures, and a rejuvenated business landscape. Activists and curious visitors flocked to the area, drawn by the increased attention.

Capitalizing on the strategic location of many Chinatowns near bustling city centers presents a valuable opportunity to increase foot traffic.

By promoting Chinatown's strengths, such as its affordable and unique food and drinks, akin to the successful approach of Dear Community, more customers can be attracted, particularly appealing to the growing trend of socially conscious spending among the youth.

An essential next step involves devising robust marketing strategies and harnessing media attention to draw more pedestrians to explore the plethora of offerings in the area, including restaurants, bars, and surrounding attractions. Nevertheless, media attention must be utilized strategically to focus on promoting Chinatown's various services, strengths, and beneficial programs, balancing the narrative that has traditionally centered on its challenges. By taking bold and decisive action, Chinatowns can leverage their unique strengths, invigorate their economies, and pave the way towards a vibrant and flourishing future.



**Forrest Liu** (L), Dear Community, **Alan Lowe** (R), Victoria Chinatown Museum Society



## CASE STUDY HIGHLIGHT 2: IMPROVING DIGITAL LITERACY, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND ACCESSIBILITY

Summit attendees highlighted digital literacy as an essential aspect of revitalizing and sustaining Chinatown businesses.

Various ideas were discussed to address this issue, including implementing educational programs and fostering collaborations between young business people and older generations, facilitating the digitization of brick-and-mortar businesses. Encouraging policymakers and service providers, such as internet and digital payment service providers, to invest in Chinatowns where needed emerged as another crucial avenue, supported by awareness efforts and incentivization. Moreover, increasing access to digital payment methods, such as Square or e-transfer, and providing educational support will pave the way towards empowering Chinatown businesses to thrive in the digital era.

A significant challenge facing many small businesses in Chinatowns is their heavy reliance on cash payments and limited online presence. This poses a considerable obstacle as more customers prefer cashless transactions, potentially leaving businesses disconnected

from new target audiences. In Edmonton's Chinatown, the convergence of limited digital services, safety concerns, and outdated infrastructure has resulted in the decline of several generations-old businesses. The transition to digital platforms proves difficult for small business owners, who grapple with both a lack of trust in technology and barriers to accessing funding, exacerbated by limited technological know-how. For instance, in New York, door-to-door canvassing was found to be more effective in engaging business owners for economic recovery grants compared to social media and email. Additionally, 25% of grant applicants resorted to submitting paper applications due to limited education or access to digital resources, leading to longer processing times. Moreover, e-commerce businesses and those working from home encounter challenges in obtaining high-speed internet access in certain San Francisco Chinatown areas, resulting in outmigration.<sup>12</sup>

By taking targeted and actionable steps, Chinatowns can transform their economic landscape, ensuring resilience and progress for generations to come.

*12 Why is S.F. Chinatown's internet so bad? 'It's racism,' says the person trying to fix it (sfchronicle.com)*



**Lorraine Lowe**, Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden



### CASE STUDY HIGHLIGHT 3: SUPPORTING ESTABLISHED AND NEW BUSINESS OWNERS

Young entrepreneurs with fresh perspectives play a pivotal role in revitalizing Chinatowns' economies and bridging intergenerational gaps that contribute to the closure of family businesses. In San Francisco, an inspiring trend has emerged, with young investors expressing keen interest in launching businesses, such as fusion bars or restaurants, in Chinatown, drawn by the combination of affordable land and rich cultural significance.

The rise of e-commerce businesses further complements older brick-and-mortar shops, with local artists forming groups to sell their work in Chinatown gift shops, while simultaneously helping older shop owners set up their own online sales platforms.

During the summit, non-profit founders proposed a proactive approach to invite young entrepreneurs, envisioning increased awareness of available spaces and audience-finding platforms at cultural events. Moreover, fostering partnerships between seasoned business owners and newcomers through mentorship and community engagement emerged as a powerful strategy. The 2023 Vancouver Dragon Boat Festival exemplifies this approach, inviting small business owners to rent booths, promoting their work alongside other businesses to reach new audiences, and creating opportunities for collaborations with established older businesses, such as showcasing products from Small-Medium Enterprises at the Chinese Canadian Museum.

Governmental programs and policies intended to assist small businesses may not necessarily reach small businesses in Chinatown due to language and information barriers. Community organizations struggle to bridge small business owners who have limited administrative capacity with government programs and their administrative loads to participate in these programs are mismatched. In the case of Vancouver's Chinatown, the Chinatown Foundation with volunteers and with support from the financial services sector went door to door in the neighbourhood to make sure businesses were aware of and helped them apply for government COVID relief programs for small businesses.

Unfortunately, this is often repeated with other small business assistance programs at levels of government from business technical assistance to disaster relief programs as there can be a disconnection between programs and those who need access to them.



**William Liu**, Kam Wai Dim Sum 金威點心, Vancouver, Canada

**“The most impactful work that we’ve done is when we bridge the multiple generations to champion something together. Intergenerational work is a requirement to continue to pave the way into our future Chinatown.”**

Jennifer Tam,  
Co-Founder, Welcome to Chinatown

Young entrepreneurs with fresh perspectives play a pivotal role in revitalizing Chinatowns' economies and bridging intergenerational gaps that contribute to the closure of family businesses. In San Francisco, an inspiring trend has emerged, with young investors expressing keen interest in launching businesses, such as fusion bars or restaurants, in Chinatown, drawn by the combination of affordable land and rich cultural significance.

The rise of e-commerce businesses further complements older brick-and-mortar shops, with local artists forming groups to sell their work in Chinatown gift shops, while simultaneously helping older shop owners set up their own online sales platforms.

For community members, business developers, and policy makers, accessible, available, and timely business data is another example of supporting small business strategy, advocacy, and development. Made available through its Open Data Catalogue, the City of Vancouver has developed and implemented an annual inventory of the city's ground-level storefronts.<sup>13</sup> With a Spring 2020 baseline, the city is able to document and measure change, particularly as the businesses recover after the pandemic. In 2021, out of the 478 storefronts in Vancouver's Chinatown, 12.3% (59) of storefronts in the neighbourhood were either vacant or vacant under construction.



*Jennifer Tam, Welcome to Chinatown*

Additional data on the retail category such as food and beverage, comparison goods are also available. From this data, neighbourhoods like Chinatown are able to measure and monitor business change and progress as well as plan and inform future economic and physical development initiatives.

Another category of new business owners emerges as inheritors, entrusted with developing older businesses to appeal to new and existing audiences. Traditionally, the children of immigrants often pursued different career paths, rarely continuing their parents' businesses. However, changing sentiments in cities like New York indicate a growing number of small shop successors embracing digitalization and eventually taking over their parents' businesses out of loyalty and the availability of additional resources to support continuity.

<sup>13</sup> <https://opendata.vancouver.ca/explore/dataset/storefronts-inventory/information/>



# LOOKING FORWARD

Affordability remains a paramount concern among successors, grappling with rising expenses and the challenges of maintaining brick-and-mortar shops. Addressing this, summit attendees proposed beneficial policies to alleviate the financial burden on inheritors, such as offering tax breaks for legacy ownership and implementing legacy-oriented leases to prevent drastic rent increases and subsequent attrition when businesses change hands. Another impactful solution involves increasing accessibility to funding. Notably, the non-profit Welcome to Chinatown, led by Jennifer Tam, took proactive steps to support struggling small businesses by establishing the Longevity Fund, a grant aimed at helping them stay afloat during challenging times. Through concerted and strategic efforts, Chinatown communities can empower young entrepreneurs, invigorate their economies, and secure a flourishing legacy for the generations to come.



Vancouver Chinatown

# PILLAR 3: Public Safety

## Overview of Pillar and Key Underlying Issues

Public safety has emerged as a pressing issue for municipalities across North America, encompassing various aspects like mental health, homelessness, poverty, and violent offenses.<sup>14</sup> For Chinese and Asian communities, a significant decrease in public safety is linked to the surge in anti-Asian hate crimes and discriminatory incidents. Once revered as secure havens, Chinatowns have been tragically marred by xenophobia, with Stop AAPI Hate documenting over 11,000 hate acts against Asian Americans since the pandemic's onset.<sup>15</sup> Locally, Vancouver's Chinatown residents have borne a disproportionate impact, witnessing a staggering 717% increase in Anti-Asian hate crimes since the pandemic began, earning the city the disheartening label of "the anti-Asian hate crime capital of North America."<sup>16</sup> Taking decisive action to address these issues is paramount to ensure the safety and well-being of these communities.

“  
Anywhere you go in the world, the US, Canada, the UK, you step into a Chinatown, and you feel safe, you feel full belonging as a human being.”

Justin Zhu, Co-Founder & Executive Director, Stand with Asian Americans



L-R: **Garret Tom**, San Francisco Police Department, **Justin Zhu**, Stand for Asian Americans, **Brian Pang**, Stand for Asian Americans, **Hon. Teresa Woo-Paw**, Canadian Race Relations Foundation, ACCT Foundation, **Audrey Wong**, Eliminate8Hate

<sup>14</sup> Public Safety is a priority for B.C. voters. But what does that mean?

<sup>15</sup> <https://stopaapihate.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/23-SAH-CivilRightsReport-1.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/may/23/vancouver-anti-asian-hate-crimes-increase>





Asian elders, in particular, have been victims of unprovoked attacks, leaving them feeling unsafe and vulnerable within their own communities.

Justin Zhu, Founder of Stand with Asian Americans, shared the story of multiple attacks on Asian elders in San Francisco where little action was taken by law enforcement to reprimand perpetrators and resolve victim concerns. In response to this injustice, the Defend Asian Elders rally was organized, drawing hundreds of individuals who united in demanding genuine action from law enforcement. This collective outcry led to a significant breakthrough—an inclusive town hall meeting where members of the AAPI community engaged in constructive dialogue with the police.<sup>17</sup>

The current state of public safety, coupled with a lack of action from law enforcement reflects a distressing pattern of discrimination that immigrants and newcomers to North America have endured for decades. It underscores the urgent need to address systemic racism as a fundamental driver of this ongoing issue.

In many cases, the systemic racism experienced by Chinatowns is further compounded by their locations in neighborhoods with increased homelessness and drug-related activities. This not only poses a threat to the physical safety of residents and business owners but also contributes to a public perception of Chinatowns as unsafe areas.<sup>18</sup> These safety concerns have manifested in various ways. Commercial break-ins, vandalism, and theft have become more prevalent, impacting the ability of Chinatowns to achieve cultural preservation and economic stability.

During the summit, inspiring stories of resilience, courage, and transformation were shared. A unanimous consensus emerged that restoring public safety necessitates unified efforts from governments, law enforcement agencies, community organizations, and residents alike. By adopting comprehensive strategies that encompass crime prevention, promote community engagement, and combat discrimination, we can take vital steps towards safeguarding the well-being of Chinatown residents. Together, we can forge a safer and more inclusive future for these vibrant communities.



**Cam T. Ashling**, National Association of Chinese-Americans



**Allan Kwan**, Chinatown Transformation Collaborative Society



**Grace Chan McKibben**, Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community

<sup>17</sup> <https://abc7news.com/violence-against-asians-aapi-hate-elderly-attacks-san-francisco-asian-americans/12108092/>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/british-columbia/article-vancouver-chinatown-high-rents-safety/>

## CASE STUDY HIGHLIGHT 1: STRENGTHEN COMMUNITIES THROUGH ENGAGEMENT

Improving public safety in Chinatowns demands a collaborative and action-oriented approach with community and civic engagement at its core. Harnessing the potential of grassroots-level community engagement, both within Chinatowns and across different communities, holds tremendous power in fostering connections and mobilizing collective efforts for transformative change. Within Chinatowns, residents must forge robust lines of communication and foster a shared sense of responsibility, cultivating strong ties with local businesses and community organizations. For instance, in San Francisco's Chinatown, over 280 merchants actively participate in a community group on social media to stay informed about suspicious activities or crimes, exemplifying the potency of community-driven vigilance. This approach engenders a united front against discrimination, bolstering a sense of belonging and solidarity among Chinatown residents, while also forging cross-community partnerships.

While acknowledging the systemic and societal discrimination faced by the Chinese community, it is crucial to recognize that this shared message resonates with various BIPOC populations as well. To foster profound and systemic change, cultivating cross-community alliances becomes imperative. This involves active listening, empathy, and the establishment of channels for allyship, creating an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued, empowered, and united in their pursuit of a safer and more equitable future. By working together with determination and compassion, Chinatowns can pave the way for positive societal transformations, transcending borders and bridging communities for lasting impact.

During the summit, the importance of civic engagement emerged as a recurring theme, recognized as a critical yet underutilized tool for enhancing public safety in Chinatowns. Attendees shared stories of loss and hardship from their respective communities, but these narratives brought forward solutions centered on resilience, advocacy, and transformation. An impactful example was presented by Teresa Woo-Paw of the Action! Chinese Canadians Together (ACCT) Foundation, who highlighted a recent success story in Edmonton's Chinatown.



Manhattan

Following two tragic killings in May 2022, victims' families and community members filled the city council chambers, urging authorities to improve public safety in the neighborhood<sup>19</sup>. Responding to the urgent call, the city of Edmonton, in collaboration with the province, established the Healthy Streets Operation Centre in Chinatown. This innovative center brings together police officers, peace officers, paramedics, firefighters, and social agency partners under one roof, backed by a significant \$15-million investment<sup>20</sup>. Operating for almost a year, the center has already yielded positive results, with a notable decrease in crime severity from 114.8 in November to 85.8 in March. Moreover, it has effectively assessed 170 individuals, redirecting 113 ambulance trips, and showcased the tangible outcomes achievable through collaborative efforts between the government and its partners. Civic engagement can take many forms, including educating voters and having community members run for office; this example exemplifies the transformative power of civic engagement and serves as a testament to the positive impact it can have on public safety in Chinatowns.

The path to improving public safety in Chinatowns lies in the embrace of a collaborative and inclusive approach rooted in community and civic engagement. By building lines of communication, fostering a collective sense of responsibility, and forging connections within and across communities, Chinatowns can cultivate a stronger sense of unity and benefit from the support of their neighbors. By continuing to empower communities, foster dialogue, and amplify collective voices, Chinatowns can become beacons of resilience, advocacy, and positive change.

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/chinatown-homicides-edmonton-1.6464152>

<sup>20</sup> <https://edmonton.citynews.ca/2023/06/22/healthy-streets-operation-pilot-project/>



## CASE STUDY HIGHLIGHT 2: COLLABORATE TO DEVELOP ADAPTED MODELS

In the ever-evolving landscape of law enforcement, police agencies grapple with complex challenges, heightened public concerns about safety, and the imperative to address systemic issues following instances of police violence against people of color. These pressing concerns resonated during the summit, where attendees, including former SFPD Deputy Chief Garret Tom, acknowledged the staffing challenges faced by police departments on the front line. However, amidst these challenges, innovative solutions and community-centered models have emerged, charting a path to enhanced public safety in Chinatowns across North America.

Developing effective models for public safety demands a deep understanding of the public's main concerns, emphasizing the need for accurate and consistent reporting of hate incidents. Summit participants shed light on two key reasons for the underreporting of such acts: accessibility barriers, particularly language barriers, and a lack of belief in the efficacy of follow-up actions. Addressing these challenges head-on, the non-profit organization Stop AAPI Hate introduced an online hate crime reporting tool available in 16 languages, effectively tackling the accessibility issue. Additionally, California's Governor Newsom recently enacted legislation that provides clearer definitions of hate crimes and imposes appropriate criminal penalties, addressing barriers to reporting and ensuring appropriate punishment<sup>21</sup>.

However, a crucial aspect that remains essential is on-site community support. The provision of immediate and responsive community-based resources is vital in fostering a safer and more supportive environment. By continuing to innovate and collaborate, Chinatowns can stand at the forefront of positive change, championing public safety and the well-being of their residents.

This is where the concept of community patrols comes into play. During the summit, representatives from San Francisco, Oakland, and Honolulu shared inspiring stories of community patrol initiatives in their respective Chinatowns.

Oakland's foot patrol, originally known as the Blue Angels, consider themselves vital in maintaining street safety. These unarmed community patrols offer Chinatown residents a sense of comfort, as the patrol members are often residents of the community, fluent in the language, and equipped to support victims in reporting hate incidents. The mere presence of these patrols acts as a deterrent against vandalism and other criminal behaviors. This proactive and volunteer-driven initiative exemplifies a commitment to collaboration and the development of effective strategies that align with the evolving needs and aspirations of the communities they proudly serve and call home.

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.gov.ca.gov/2022/09/18/governor-newsom-signs-legislation-to-crack-down-on-hate-crimes-protect-targeted-communities/>



Vancouver Police Department



# LOOKING FORWARD

Overall, the solution to public safety is something that extends far beyond the control of Chinatowns; however, it is evident that localized solutions and engagement can make a difference in improving the current state for all. As communities move forward, it is crucial to continue to hold leaders accountable in the form of community/civic action plans and public reporting. By staying committed to collective action and amplifying community voices, it will be possible to create safer, stronger, and harmonious Chinatowns across North America.



Attendees, U.S.-Canada Chinatown Cultural Preservation & Revitalization Conference 2023, Vancouver, Canada



Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden, Vancouver, Canada





**“ Optimism and positivity is the way to go. Market, tell the story, and show the good that will come out of it. If we have something that will bring change, how can people say no to that? ”**

Jane Chin, Co-Chair, San Francisco CCDC

In conclusion, the US-Canada Chinatown Solidarity Summit has proven to be transformative, fostering a dynamic exchange of ideas and paving the way for tangible solutions. The insights shared and the case studies presented in the report serve as a powerful roadmap, not only for Chinatown communities but also for other ethnic enclaves across North America. Drawing inspiration from the summit's discussions, leaders are now equipped with the tools and strategies to chart a stronger and more resilient future.

By wholeheartedly embracing the pillars of cultural preservation & reinvention, economic revitalization, and public safety, Chinatowns can thrive and preserve their invaluable place in North American history and culture. The lessons learned and experiences shared during the summit underscore the collective responsibility to protect and elevate the essence of Chinatowns and their contributions to our shared heritage. By uniting communities, government officials, and various organizations under a common vision, Chinatowns can continue to serve as beacons of resilience, diversity, and cultural significance.

We hope the US-Canada Chinatown Solidarity Summit has ignited a spark of hope and determination. As we move forward, it is imperative to maintain the momentum through ongoing commitment and action.

*Attendees, U.S.-Canada Chinatown Cultural Preservation & Revitalization Conference 2023, Vancouver, Canada*





# APPENDIX

## CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

### DAY 1 | MAY 23, 2023

#### 08:30 Opening Keynote Address

- Ambassador David L. Cohen, U.S. Ambassador to Canada
- The Honourable Mary Ng, Canadian Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development
- Ambassador Katherine Tai, U.S. Trade Representative
- Ken Sim, Mayor, City of Vancouver
- Carol Lee, Chair, Vancouver Chinatown Foundation

#### 09:30 **Panel 1:** Building Back Better

- **Moderator:** Emily Fuder, VP Programs and Marketing, National ACE
- Carl Chan, President, Oakland Chinatown Chamber Foundation
- Forrest Liu, Co-Founder, Secretary, Fundraising, Dear Community
- Jennifer Tam, Co-Founder and Board Chair, Welcome to Chinatown
- Andy Yan, Director, The City Program, Simon Fraser University

#### 10:40 Roundtable Breakout Discussions

#### 11:40 Lunch Discussion with the Honourable Mary Ng, Canadian Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development, and Ken Sim, Mayor, City of Vancouver; moderated by Sophie Lui, Anchor, Global News

#### 13:00 **Panel 2:** Cultural and Historical Preservation in the Face of Urbanization

- **Moderator:** Bill Tam, Managing Director, ThoughtBridge
- Jane Chin, Co-Founder and Board Co-Chair, Chinatown Community Development Center
- Carol Lee, Chair, Vancouver Chinatown Foundation
- Jan Lee, Co-Founder, Neighbors United Below Canal
- Deborah Wei, Founder and Member, Asians Americans United, Philadelphia

#### 14:10 Roundtable Breakout Discussions

#### 15:00 Day 1 Wrap-Up

### DAY 2 | MAY 24, 2023

#### 09:30 **Panel 3:** Public Safety Issues Facing 21st Century Chinatowns

- **Moderator:** Audrey Wong, Executive Director, EliminateHate
- Brian Pang, Partnerships and Strategy Advisor, Stand with Asian Americans
- Garret Tom, Retired Deputy Chief, San Francisco Police Department
- The Honourable Teresa Woo-Paw, Chair, Action! Chinese Canadians Together (ACCT) Foundation
- Justin Zhu, Co-Founder and Executive Director, Stand with Asian Americans

#### 10:45 Roundtable Breakout Discussions

#### 11:30 Closing Keynote Address

- **Closing Remarks by:**  
Ambassador David L. Cohen, U.S. Ambassador to Canada  
and Carol Lee, Chair, Vancouver Chinatown Foundation
- Last Networking Sessions





## CONFERENCE ATTENDEES

<b>Cam T. Ashling</b> Member	National Association of Chinese-Americans Atlanta   <a href="http://naca-atlanta.org">naca-atlanta.org</a>
<b>Carl Chan</b> President	Oakland Chinatown Chamber Foundation Oakland   <a href="http://oaklandchinatownchamber.org">oaklandchinatownchamber.org</a>
<b>Lan Chan-Marples</b> Secretary	Chinatown Transformation Collaborative Society Edmonton   <a href="http://ctcyeg.com">ctcyeg.com</a>
<b>Zeien Cheung</b> Head of Operations	Asians Are Strong San Francisco   <a href="http://asiansarestrong.org">asiansarestrong.org</a>
<b>Jane Chin</b> Board Co-Chair	Chinatown Community Development Center (CCDC) San Francisco   <a href="http://chinatowncdc.org">chinatowncdc.org</a>
<b>Ener Chiu</b> Executive VP, Community Building	East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation Oakland   <a href="http://ebaldc.org">ebaldc.org</a>
<b>Queenie Choo</b> Chief Executive Officer	S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Vancouver   <a href="http://successbc.ca">successbc.ca</a>
<b>Howard Chow</b> Deputy Chief Constable	Vancouver Police Department Vancouver   <a href="http://vpd.ca">vpd.ca</a>
<b>Tzu-I Chung</b> Curator of History	Royal BC Museum Victoria   <a href="http://royalbcmuseum.bc.ca">royalbcmuseum.bc.ca</a>
<b>Jordan Eng</b> President	Vancouver Chinatown BIA Vancouver   <a href="http://vancouver-chinatown.com">vancouver-chinatown.com</a>
<b>Emily Fuder</b> VP, Programs & Marketing	National ACE San Francisco   <a href="http://nationalace.org">nationalace.org</a>
<b>Robert Fung</b> Vice Chair	Victoria Chinese Museum Society Victoria   <a href="http://victoriachinatownmuseum.com">victoriachinatownmuseum.com</a>
<b>Erika Gee</b> Fundraising & Program Manager	National CAPACD San Francisco   <a href="http://nationalcapacd.org">nationalcapacd.org</a>
<b>Ted Gong</b> Executive Director	1882 Foundation Washington, DC   <a href="http://1882foundation.org">1882foundation.org</a>
<b>Lily Ho</b> President & Founder	Delta Chinatown Initiative San Francisco   <a href="http://deltachinatownsfs.com">deltachinatownsfs.com</a>
<b>Duncan Hwang</b> Associate Director	APANO Communities United Fund Portland   <a href="http://apano.org">apano.org</a>
<b>Allan Kwan</b> Vice President	Chinatown Transformation Collaborative Society Edmonton   <a href="http://ctcyeg.com">ctcyeg.com</a>



<b>Bill Kwok</b> Board Vice Chair & Treasurer	Chinese Cultural Centre Vancouver   <a href="http://cccvan.com">cccvan.com</a>
<b>Carol Lee</b> Chair	Vancouver Chinatown Foundation Vancouver   <a href="http://chinatownfoundation.org">chinatownfoundation.org</a>
<b>Jamie Lee</b> Director of Community Initiatives	Seattle Chinatown International District Preservation and Development Authority Seattle   <a href="http://scidpda.org">scidpda.org</a>
<b>Jan Lee</b> Co-Founder	Neighbours United Below Canal (NUBC) New York   <a href="http://nubcnyc.com">nubcnyc.com</a>
<b>Melissa Lee</b> Chief Executive Officer	Chinese Canadian Museum Vancouver   <a href="http://chinesecanadianmuseum.ca">chinesecanadianmuseum.ca</a>
<b>Myron Lee</b> Community Advocate	BeChinatown San Francisco
<b>Edward Lew</b> 2nd Vice Chair	Chinese American Museum Los Angeles   <a href="http://camla.org">camla.org</a>
<b>Angie Liou</b> Executive Director	Asian Community Development Corporation Boston   <a href="http://asiancdc.org">asiancdc.org</a>
<b>Forrest Liu</b> Co-Founder, Secretary, Fundraising	Dear Community San Francisco   <a href="http://dearcommunity.org">dearcommunity.org</a>
<b>Tonny Louie</b> Chair	Toronto Chinatown BIA Toronto   <a href="http://chinatownbia.com">chinatownbia.com</a>
<b>Alan Lowe</b> Chairman	Victoria Chinese Museum Society Victoria   <a href="http://victoriachinatownmuseum.com">victoriachinatownmuseum.com</a>
<b>Lorraine Lowe</b> Executive Director	Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden Vancouver   <a href="http://vancouverchinesegarden.com">vancouverchinesegarden.com</a>
<b>Grace Chan McKibben</b> Executive Director	Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community Chicago   <a href="http://cbcacchicago.org">cbcacchicago.org</a>
<b>Fo Niemi</b> Co-Founder & Executive Director	CRARR Center for Research-Action on Race Relations Montreal   <a href="http://crarr.org">crarr.org</a>
<b>Brian Pang</b> Partnerships & Strategy Advisor	Stand with Asian Americans Vancouver   <a href="http://standwithasianamericans.com">standwithasianamericans.com</a>
<b>Bill Tam</b> Managing Director	ThoughtBridge Vancouver
<b>Jennifer Tam</b> Co-Founder	Welcome to Chinatown New York   <a href="http://welcometochinatown.com">welcometochinatown.com</a>





<b>Andrew Tang</b> Urban Designer and Architect	Honolulu Chinatown Arch Honolulu   <a href="http://arch.hawaii.edu/faculty/andrew-tang">arch.hawaii.edu/faculty/andrew-tang</a>
<b>Wilson Tang</b> CEO/Chief Designer	YumeBau Vancouver   <a href="http://yumbau.com">yumbau.com</a>
<b>Joshua Tiong</b> Senior Partner, Advisory Services	BDC Vancouver   <a href="http://bdc.ca">bdc.ca</a>
<b>Garret Tom</b> Former Deputy Police Chief	San Francisco Police Department San Francisco   <a href="http://sanfranciscopolice.org">sanfranciscopolice.org</a>
<b>Henry Tom</b>	Vancouver Chinatown Merchants Association Vancouver
<b>Chelios Vuong</b> Policy Advisor	Global Affairs Canada Vancouver   <a href="http://international.gc.ca">international.gc.ca</a>
<b>Deborah Wei</b> Founder & Member	Asian Americans United Philadelphia   <a href="http://aaunited.org">aaunited.org</a>
<b>Audrey Wong</b> Executive Director	Elimin8Hate Vancouver   <a href="http://elimin8hate.org">elimin8hate.org</a>
<b>Teresa Woo-Paw</b> Chair	ACCT Foundation Calgary   <a href="http://acctfoundation.ca">acctfoundation.ca</a>
<b>Andy Yan</b> Director	The City Program, Simon Fraser University Vancouver   <a href="http://sfu.ca/continuing-studies/about/city-program.html">sfu.ca/continuing-studies/about/city-program.html</a>
<b>Kevin Au Yeung</b> President	Association of Chinese Canadian Entrepreneurs (ACCE) Toronto   <a href="http://acce.ca/new">acce.ca/new</a>
<b>Thomas Sze Leong Yu</b> Co-Executive Director	Asian Americans For Equality New York   <a href="http://aafe.org">aafe.org</a>
<b>Jenny Zhang</b> Asian American Field Organizer	Asian Pacific Islander Political Alliance (API PA) Philadelphia   <a href="http://apipennsylvania.org">apipennsylvania.org</a>
<b>Justin Zhu</b> Co-Founder & Executive Director	Stand with Asian Americans San Francisco   <a href="http://standwithasianamericans.com">standwithasianamericans.com</a>



## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS AND PANELISTS

### KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



**Ambassador David L. Cohen**  
U.S. Ambassador to Canada



**The Honourable Mary Ng**  
Canadian Minister of International Trade,  
Export Promotion, Small Business  
and Economic Development



**Ambassador Katherine Tai**  
U.S. Trade Representative



**Carol Lee**  
Chair, Vancouver  
Chinatown Foundation

### LUNCH DISCUSSION



**Ken Sim**  
Mayor,  
City of Vancouver



**The Honourable Mary Ng**  
Canadian Minister of International Trade,  
Export Promotion, Small Business  
and Economic Development



**Moderated by:**  
**Sophie Lui**  
Anchor, Global News

### PANEL 1 | BUILDING BACK BETTER



**Carl Chen**  
Oakland Chinatown  
Chamber Foundation



**Forrest Liu**  
Dear Community



**Jennifer Tam**  
Welcome to Chinatown



**Andy Yan**  
Simon Fraser University



**Moderated by:**  
**Emily Fuder**  
National ACE





## PANEL 2 | CULTURAL PRESERVATION & REINVENTION IN THE FACE OF URBANIZATION



**Jane Chin**

Chinatown Community  
Development Centre  
(CCDC)



**Carol Lee**

Vancouver Chinatown  
Foundation



**Jan Lee**

Neighbors United  
Below Canal



**Deborah Wei**

Asians Americans  
United, Philadelphia



**Moderated by:**  
**Bill Tam**

ThoughtBridge

## PANEL 3 | PUBLIC SAFETY ISSUES FACING 21<sup>ST</sup>-CENTURY CHINATOWNS



**Brian Pang**

Stand with Asian  
Americans



**Garret Tom**

Retired Deputy Chief,  
SFPD



**Hon. Teresa Woo-Paw**

Canadian Race Relation  
Foundation, ACCT  
Foundation



**Justin Zhu**

Stand with Asian  
Americans



**Moderated by:**  
**Audrey Wong**

Elimin8Hate

## ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

**Carol Lee**

Vancouver Chinatown Foundation

**Carrie Leung**

Vancouver Chinatown Foundation

**Penny Tham**

Vancouver Chinatown Foundation

**Jordan Eng**

Vancouver Chinatown BIA

**Lorraine Lowe**

Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden

**Brian Pang**

Stand with Asian Americans

**Joshua Tiong**

BDC

**Hon. Teresa Woo Paw**

Canadian Race Relation Foundation,  
Asian Heritage Foundation and ACCT  
Foundation

**Andy Yan**

Simon Fraser University



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND LINKS

### REPORTS

#### **Asian American and Pacific Islander Anti-Displacement Strategies**

National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development's report Asian American and Pacific Islander Anti-Displacement Strategies discusses the impact of the housing crisis and features proactive and impactful strategies, tools, and policies that have been utilized by neighborhoods across the country to counter the forces of displacement. A number of the strategies are employed in US Chinatowns in Boston, Los Angeles, New York, Oakland, Philadelphia, San Francisco, and Washington DC.

#### **Balancing Act: Asian American Organizations Respond to Community Crises and Build Collective Power**

The Building Movement Project (BMP) supports and pushes the nonprofit sector by developing research, creating tools and training materials, and facilitating networks for social change. The Balancing Act: Asian American Organizations Respond to Community Crises and Build Collective Power report is part of BMP's Movement Infrastructure Series which offers ideas, approaches, and practices to strengthen individual organizations and broader social movement ecosystems. It is a collaboration between BMP and Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Asian Law Caucus (ALC)

#### **Case studies on Gentrification and Displacement in the San Francisco Bay Area, by Miriam Zuk and Karen Chapple, UC Berkeley and Center for Community Innovation (CCI)**

This research seeks to explore more closely the phenomena of gentrification and displacement in the San Francisco Bay Area, in an effort to better understand, predict and possibly prevent residential displacement. In Section 1: Neighborhoods Long Experiencing Pressures of Gentrification and Displacement, Chapter 3. San Francisco's greater Chinatown neighborhood has witnessed years of housing pressures. In part due to strong community organizing and planning restrictions, the core of Chinatown has stemmed the tide of gentrification and displacement, yet the greater area including the neighborhoods of Polk Gulch and parts of North Beach have witnessed significant change and loss of Asian households since 1980.

#### **Chinatown Impact Study State of Neighborhood Small Businesses (2022)**

Welcome to Chinatown conducted an in-depth study to: quantify Manhattan Chinatown's historic economic exclusion, assess its enduring strengths and emerging vulnerabilities, and determine recommendations to strengthen the Chinatown small business community, and keep Chinatown open for generations to come. Welcome to Chinatown commissioned HR&A for this study.

#### **Commercial District Needs Assessment report (CDNA)**

Commissioned by the NYC Dept of Small Business Services, Think!Chinatown and the Chinatown BID provided on the ground research to create this comprehensive neighborhood report. Through surveying and interviewing Chinatown's business owners, consumers, and community members about businesses and socio-cultural services in our neighborhood, the CDNA report identifies any strengths, challenges, and opportunities to optimize New York Chinatown's potential.

#### **Impact of Big Business on Chinatown (Los Angeles, July 2014)**

The purpose of this research is to examine the impacts of the Walmart Neighborhood Store and Starbucks on Asian small businesses in Los Angeles' Chinatown. The key question is whether these chain-store developments are displacing existing businesses. Moreover, large-scale development is likely to alter Chinatown's cultural significance as a historic place where Chinese immigrated to live and work in Los Angeles. This research examines whether Walmart and Starbucks are attracting more customers for ethnic small businesses or threatening these businesses' sustainability.





### **NeighborWorks America Creative Community Development Bright Spot Case Study - Chinatown Community Development Center, San Francisco Chinatown**

Over the course of a year, NeighborWorks America sought to capture what art, culture and creativity can contribute to creating equitable and engaged communities that offer opportunity to all. NeighborWorks America Creative Community Development report describes our exploration process and findings.

### **Reflections on a Year of Community Healing and Solidarity – Community Healing and Safety Report**

In 2019, five San Francisco-based organizations founded the Coalition for Community Safety and Justice (CCSJ) — Chinese for Affirmative Action, Chinatown Community Development Center, Chinese Progressive Association, Community Youth Center, and New Breath Foundation. CCSJ focuses on long-standing safety issues within the Asian American and Pacific Islander (API) community and works to address and prevent violence, racism, and xenophobia. This report shares their work to identify and develop community-centered programmatic solutions to mitigate violence and hate across all communities of color.

## **ARTICLES**

[ArtPlace Blog post - National CAPACD convening in March 2020 at the Ping Yuen with AAPI community development organizations in response to threats of gentrification and displacement](#)

[LISC Blog: “Our Resistance Is in Being Here”: Q&A with Mei Lum](#)

[NPR article: Chinatowns Across The Country Face Off With Gentrification, March 17, 2017](#)

[KOED: How Senior Fashion is Turning Heads in San Francisco's Chinatown](#)

[NeighborWorks Blog: East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation \(EBALDC\): Finding Balance in Chinatown](#)

## **INITIATIVES**

[National Trust for Historic Preservation's Chinatowns Initiative](#)

[Preserving Chinatowns in the United States](#)

## **WEBSITES**

[Spotlight Chinatown](#)

[Seeing Providence Chinatown](#)

[Coming Home: The 990 Pacific Relocation Story](#)







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