

CHINATOWN CONNECTIONS

通達華埠

COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

05/2026



Chinatown Connections will redesign the gateway to Manhattan's Chinatown into a safe and vibrant space that celebrates the neighborhood's Chinese heritage, improves multimodal circulation into and around Chinatown, and supports local businesses.

Central to this transformative project is the re-design of Kimlau Square.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GOALS



1. Understand the Daily Experiences of Chinatown Residents

in traversing and gathering around Kimlau Square, to inform conceptual and schematic design ideas to improve public space and streetscape environment



2. Center Accessibility and Inclusivity throughout the Process

by providing specific engagement opportunities and support, including translation services in Mandarin and Cantonese, in-person and digital, scheduled events, pop-ups in the community during heavily trafficked times and areas, tabling at well-attended events in Chinatown, to ensure engagements with seniors, youth, tourists, local businesses, daily commuters and more.



3. Create a Feedback Loop

for input and clearly share how the input translates into design recommendations with the community. Build trust and maintain transparency with the community about constraints, including gateway, DOT alignment, and more.



4. Memorialize and Recognize Project History

to ensure the design and engagement process is building with history of the neighborhood.

The team conducted **55** outreach and engagements across Chinatown between **2025-2026**

Community Stakeholders Walk-Through
 Public Meeting
 CCWG + CB
 Online Survey
 Stakeholder Meetings
 Local Residents

Pop-ups

- Kimlau Square #1, #2, #3
- Transfiguration Church
- Columbus Park
- Confucius Plaza
- Chinatown Supermarket

Tabling

- Smith Houses
- Gotham Park Block Party
- Chinatown Bid Pell Open Street
- 80th Anni. of the AL, Lt. B.R. Kimlau Chinese Memorial Post 1291
- E.E.E. Festival
- BID Summer Refreshing Weekend
- Chinatown Block Party
- AL Veterans Day

Senior Center

- CPC's Open Door Senior Center
- VHS Chinatown NNORC
- 100 Gold St.

Schools

- P.S. 124
- P.S. 130
- CPC Christie St. After-school Program

Gateway

- Artist Selection Info Sessions
- Artist Selection Charrettes
- 1 on 1 with Stakeholders, Local Artist, Residents





THROUGH 2025 AND 2026, THE TEAM CONDUCTED 55 OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENTS ACROSS CHINATOWN



55 OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENTS

GROUPS ENGAGED:
SENIORS, CHILDREN, COMMUNITY MEMBERS, RESIDENTS, ELECTED OFFICIALS, VISITORS

700+ PEOPLE ENGAGED

332+ WRITTEN COMMENTS

268 VOTES ON DESIGN ELEMENTS

148 SURVEY RESPONSES

2025

FEBRUARY

1. CCWG 6 (2/19/25)

MARCH

2. Stakeholders: Walk Through (3/21/25)
3. Public Meeting #2 PS001 (3/29/25)
4. Online Survey (3/29/25 - 6/30/25)

APRIL

5. Pop-Up: Kimlau Square #1 (4/8/25)
6. Pop-Up: Transfiguration Church (4/8/25)
7. Senior Center: NNORC Advisory Board Meeting (4/16/25)
8. Pop-Up: Columbus Park (4/17/25)
9. Pop-Up: Confucius Plaza (4/17/25)
10. Pop-Up: Chinatown Supermarket of Manhattan (4/18/25)
11. Pop-Up: Kimlau Square #2 (4/18/25)
12. School: PS130 (4/21/25)
13. School: PS124 (4/22/25)
14. Tabling: Earth Day Event at Smith Rec Center (4/23/25)
15. Senior Center: Open Door (4/24/25)
16. School: Chrystie St SACC (4/25/25)
17. Pop-Up: Kimlau Square #3 (4/26/25)
18. Tabling: 80th Anni. Of the American Legion, Lt. B. R. Kimlau Chinese Memorial Post 1291 (4/26/25)
19. Tabling: Chinatown Bid Pell Open Street (4/26/25)

MAY

20. Tabling: Gotham Park Block Party (5/3/25)
Press Release: Gateway Artist Selection (5/3/25)
21. Senior Center: NNORC VNS Health (5/6/25)
22. Gateway Artist Info Session at American Legion (5/19/25)
23. Gateway Artist Info Session at Think! Chinatown (5/22/25)

JUNE

24. Tabling: EEE Festival (6/15/25)
25. Senior Center: 100 Gold St. (6/25/25)

JULY

26. CCWG 7 (7/16/25)
27. Gateway Artist Charettes Day 1 (7/29/25)
28. Gateway Artist Charettes Day 2 (7/30/25)

AUGUST

29. Tabling: BID Summer Refreshing Weekend (8/9/25)
30. Tabling: Chinatown Block Party (8/10/25)
31. Stakeholders: BID Concept Meeting (8/11/25)
32. Stakeholders: BID, AL, UOFAA Concept Meeting (8/20/25)
Press Release: Selected Artist (8/21/25)

SEPTEMBER

33. Tabling: Smith House Backpack Giveaway (9/2/25)
34. CB1 (9/3/25)
35. CB3 (9/9/25)
36. Chatham Tower Board and Residents (9/10/25)
37. CCWG 8 (9/17/25)
38. Chatham Green Board and Residents (9/18/25)

OCTOBER

Press Release: Conceptual Design (10/21/25)

NOVEMBER

39. Stakeholders: BID - Maintenance and Operation meeting (11/7/25)
40. Stakeholders: AL Veterans Day at GoGo Dimsum (11/11/25)

DECEMBER

41. Stakeholders: BID - Maintenance and Operation Meeting (12/15/25)

2026

FEBRUARY

42. CCWG 9 (2/11/26)

MARCH

43. Stakeholders: American Legion - Memorial Arch Relocation (3/9/26)
Press Release: American Legion + UOFAA (3/18/26)
44. CCWG 10 (3/18/26)

APRIL

45. Stakeholders: BID - Maintenance and Operation Meeting (4/4/26)
46. Gateway: BID (4/8/26)
47. Gateway: American Legion (4/9/26)
48. Gateway: CCBA (4/9/26)
49. Gateway: Think!Chinatown (4/23/26)

MAY

50. Tabling: Gotham Block Party (5/2/26)
51. Gateway: Phillip Poon (5/5/26)
52. Gateway: Chatham Green (5/5/26)
53. Gateway: Initial Planning with Chatham Towers (5/8)
54. CB3 (5/12/26)
55. CB1 (5/21/26)

Upcoming:

- Gateway: Schools
- Gateway: Senior Centers
- Gateway: Fujianese Associations
- Gateway: Local Artists
- Gateway: Local Residents
- CCWG 11

TO ENGAGE, WE HAVE DONE:

爲了聆聽你們的意見:

**CHINATOWN CONNECTIONS
PUBLIC MEETING #2
通達華埠 公開研討會 #2**



**WHEN: 2025/03/29 SATURDAY (11AM-1PM)
ENGAGED: APPROX. 60 PEOPLE**

TO ENGAGE, WE HAVE DONE:

爲了聆聽你們的意見：

**POP-UP AT
KIMLAU SQUARE**

社區參與 - 劉錦廣場



WHEN: 2025/04/8 TUESDAY (3-5PM)

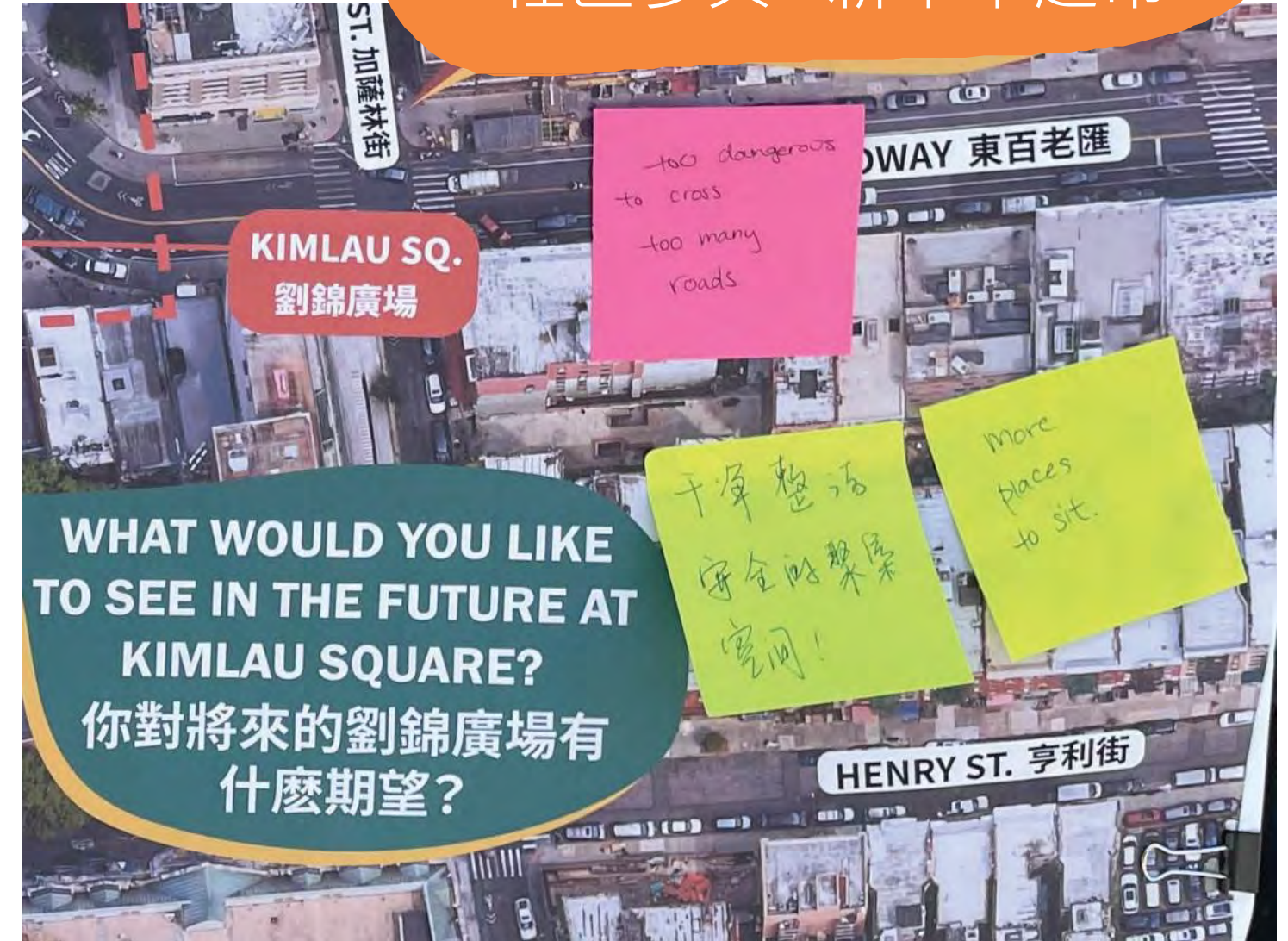
ENGAGED: APPROX. 80 PEOPLE

TO ENGAGE, WE HAVE DONE:

爲了聆聽你們的意見:

**POP-UP AT
CHINATOWN SUPERMARKET
OF MANHATTAN**

社區參與 - 新中華超市



WHEN: 2025/04/18 FRIDAY (10AM-12PM)

ENGAGED: APPROX. 80 PEOPLE

TO ENGAGE, WE HAVE DONE:

爲了聆聽你們的意見：

**SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT
PS130**

學童參與 - PS130



WHEN: 2025/04/21 MONDAY (3:30-4:30PM)

ENGAGED: APPROX. 17 CHILDREN

TO ENGAGE, WE HAVE DONE:

爲了聆聽你們的意見:

**SENIOR CENTER
OPEN DOOR SENIOR CENTER**

長者中心 - 人瑞中心



WHEN: 2025/04/24 THURSDAY (10:30AM-12PM)

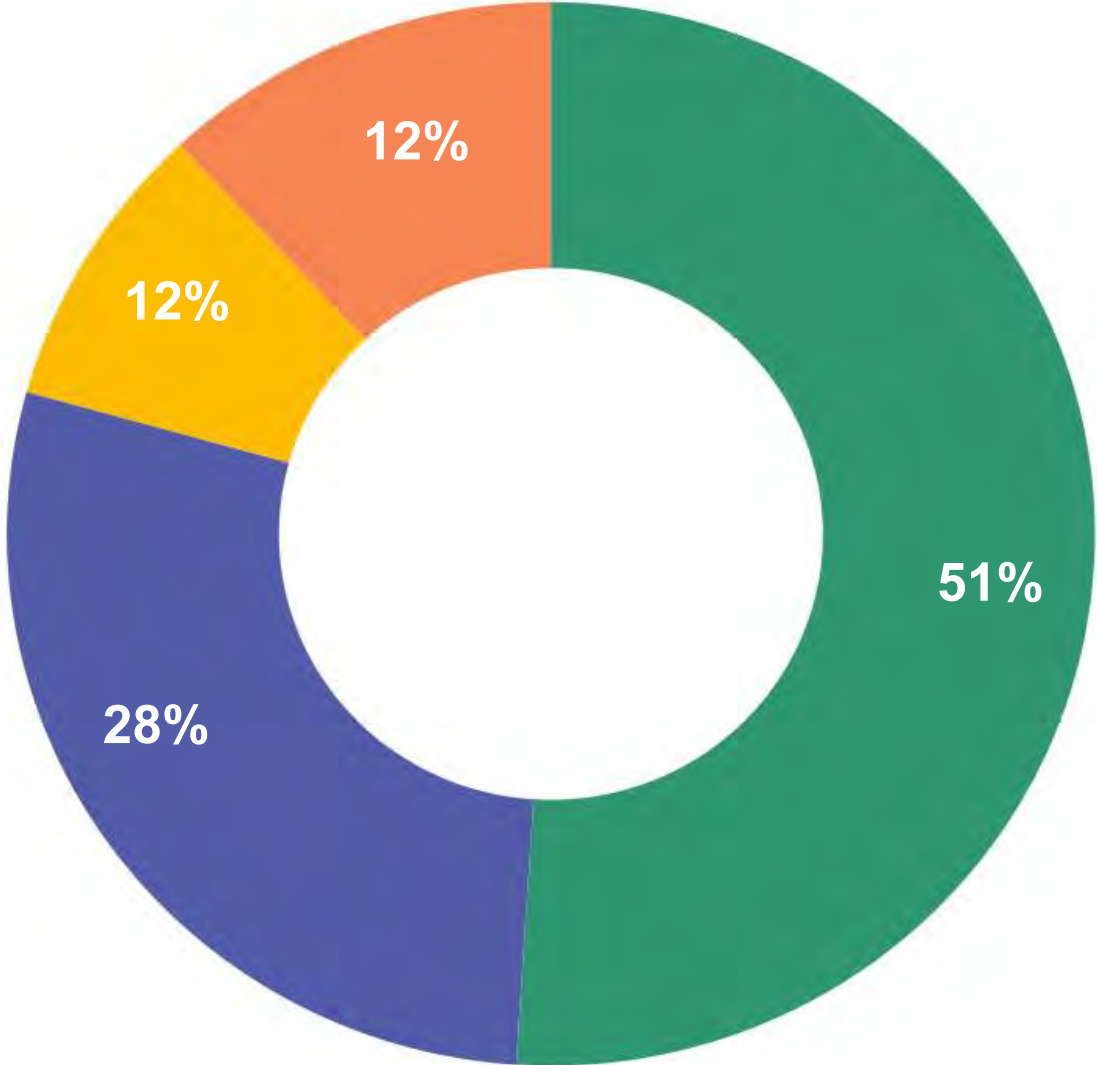
ENGAGED: APPROX. 100 PEOPLE



What We Heard

An analysis of 332 written comments revealed four key themes that highlight Existing Conditions and Visions for Kimlau Square...

- Design & Landscaping
- Circulation & Connectivity
- Arts, Culture & Programming
- General Comments



Overview of Existing Conditions

Design & Landscaping

- Lack of trees
- Few places to sit and rest
- Insufficient lighting
- Busy and noisy intersections
- Environment not respectful for memorialization

Arts, Culture, & Programming

- A place people pass through, not gather
- Desire for public art
- Lack of programming that highlights local history and cultural identity
- Insufficient space for community activities

Circulation & Connectivity

- Unsafe for pedestrians
- Sidewalks too small
- Long crosswalks with dangerous intersections
- Placement of bus stops and Citibikes
- Poor bike lane configuration
- Poor neighborhood connectivity
- Insufficient wayfinding

General Concerns

- Poor accessibility
- Few activities for children and senior
- Not integrated with the rest of the neighborhood
- Need for cleanliness and upkeep
- At time feels unsafe



**Community
Vision**

A PLACE TO GATHER

A green, shaded, and comfortable gathering place where mature trees, thoughtful amenities, and flexible spaces invite people of all ages to connect, rest, play, and celebrate together.

CELEBRATE AND SHARE CULTURE

A space that respects and reflects the neighborhood's history and cultural context.

SAFE AND CONNECTED

A road design that improves pedestrian safety and neighborhood connectivity and that minimizes friction at key crossings to Kimlau Square.

INCLUSIVE AND ADAPTABLE

An inclusive space that should be designed flexibly to accommodate many different types of programming, uses, and people.

A PLACE TO GATHER

Residents envision the new Kimlau Square as...

Designing a New Gathering Space

A green, shaded, and comfortable gathering place where mature trees, thoughtful amenities, and flexible spaces invite people of all ages to connect, rest, play, and come together.

- Landscape Design
- Furniture
- Shade & Shelter
- Lighting
- Places for Play
- Comfort Station
- Community-Led Design

A GATHERING SPACE

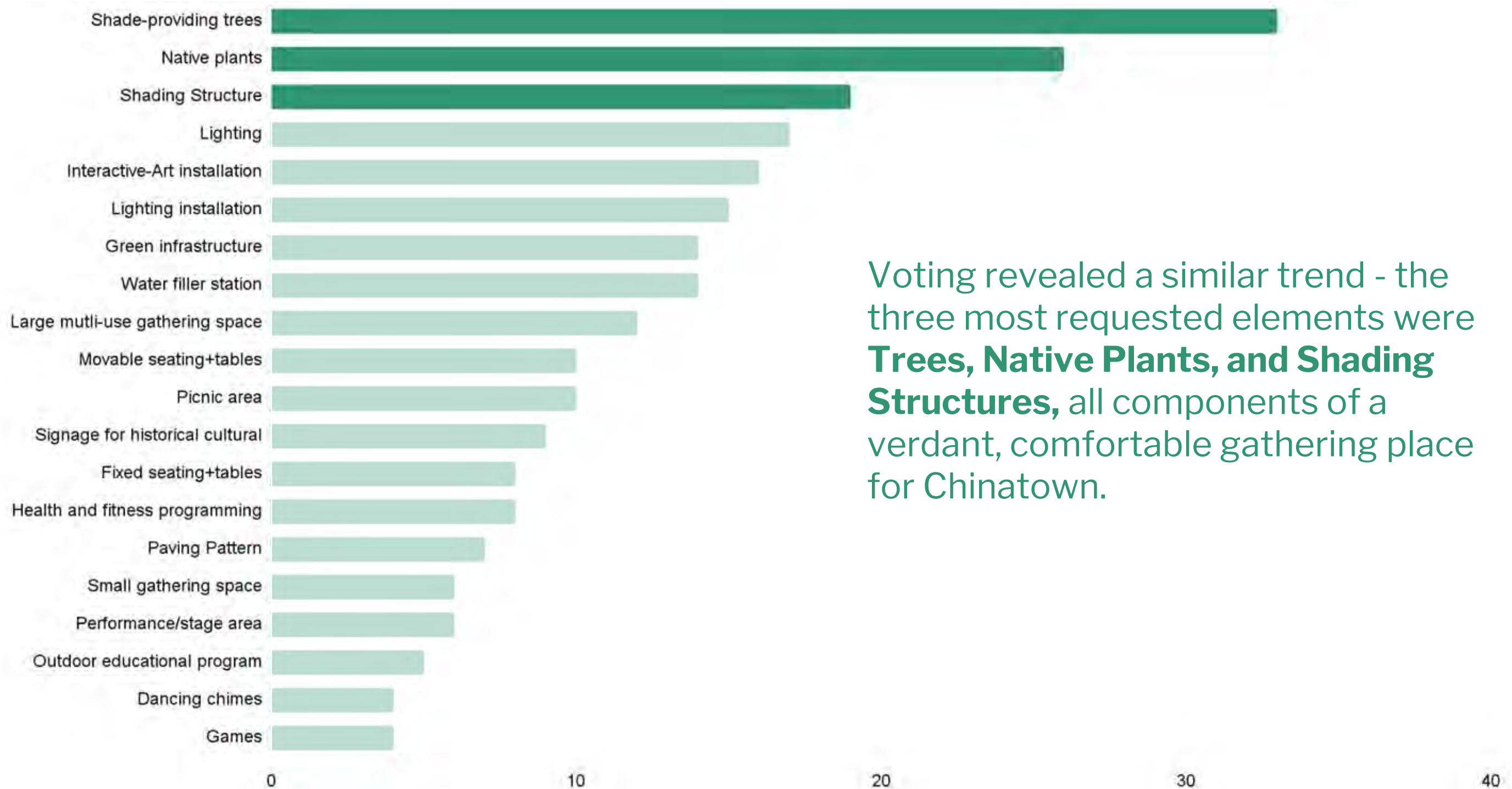
Voting Activity

During Pop-up and Tabling events, participants voted on what they would most like to see and experience in Kimlau Square. In total, we received **268 votes**.



A GATHERING SPACE

Votes on Design



Voting revealed a similar trend - the three most requested elements were **Trees, Native Plants, and Shading Structures**, all components of a verdant, comfortable gathering place for Chinatown.

SAFE & CONNECTED

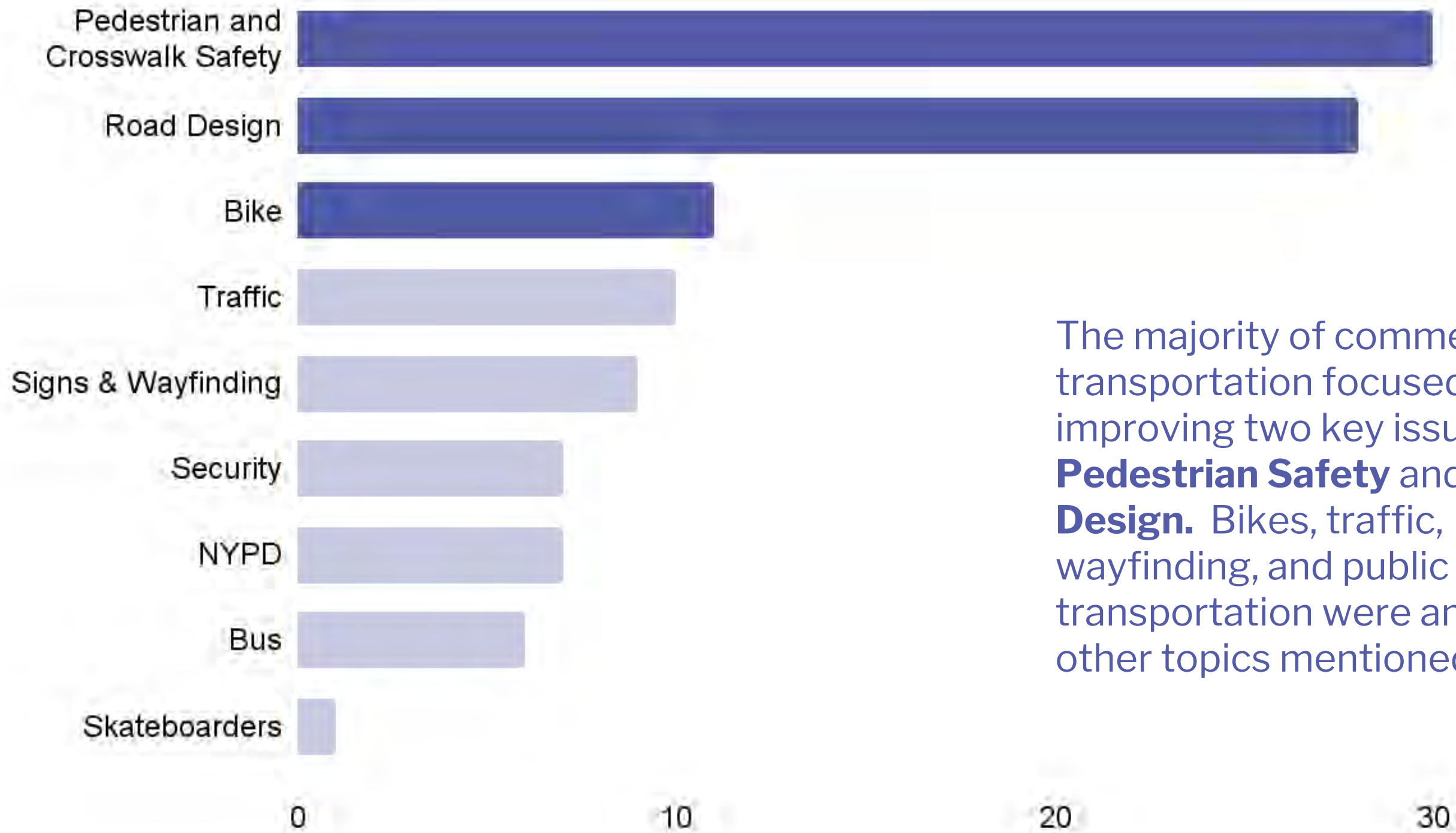
Designing a Safe and Connected Kimlau Square

Residents envision the new Kimlau Square as...

A road design that improves pedestrian safety and neighborhood connectivity, and that minimizes friction at key crossings to Kimlau Square.

- Pedestrian Safety
- Traffic and Road Design
- Bus Locations and Circulation
- Bike Safety
- Signage and Wayfinding

Transportation Comments



The majority of comments about transportation focused on improving two key issues: **Pedestrian Safety** and **Road Design**. Bikes, traffic, wayfinding, and public transportation were among the other topics mentioned.

CELEBRATE & SHARE CULTURE

Residents envision the new Kimlau Square as...

A Design that Celebrates History and Culture

A space that respects and reflects the neighborhood's history and cultural context.

- Cultural Identity
- Commemorative
- Public Art
- Visual Storytelling
- Icons & Symbols
- Supporting Businesses
- Activities & Programming
- Destination

CELEBRATE & SHARE CULTURE



CULTURAL IDENTITY

Commenters expressed a desire to celebrate the mix of cultures that make Chinatown unique. The design must reflect the blend of cultures in Chinatown by crafting a destination with a defined sense of place.

VISUAL STORYTELLING

Public art, cultural symbols, and decorative elements can honor Chinatown's rich history, while drawing visitors to experience and engage with its unique cultural landscape.

SUPPORTING BUSINESS

Chinatown's local businesses are part of its living history. Kimlau Square can support and celebrate them as an essential part of the neighborhood's identity.

CELEBRATE & SHARE CULTURE



“The commemorative meaning of this space is more important than making it a space to rest/relax.”

“Need something to celebrate Chinese culture and elements. And peace between the mix of cultures.”

Something to represent the special characters, and history & culture of Chinatown.

INCLUSIVE AND ADAPTABLE

An Inclusive Adaptable Space

Residents envision the new Kimlau Square as...

An age-inclusive plaza designed with flexibility in mind to accommodate programming for many generations of residents including children, seniors, and families.

- Inclusive and Accessible
- Adaptable Design
- Programming for Recreation
- Neighborhood Integration
- Local Economic Catalyst

INCLUSIVE AND ADAPTABLE



INCLUSIVE

Age-inclusive, flexible design that can accommodate children, seniors, and families.

ADAPTABLE

Allows for temporary programs and recreational activities that do not rely strictly on fixed design elements.

LOCAL CATALYST

Create a broader, lasting neighborhood impact, catalyzing positive changes in Chinatown.

INCLUSIVE AND ADAPTABLE



“Senior programming and multi-use space!”

“A space for all different types of activities”

“Build a beautiful and clean space for a minority group. Ensure that the kids have a positive impression of Chinatown as they're growing up.”

What we have heard....

KIMLAU SQUARE SHOULD.....



Be designed as a **UNIQUE PUBLIC SPACE** in the city that reflects its neighborhoods.

Accomodate **DIFFERENT SCALES/TYPES OF COMMUNITY GATHERING SPACE**, including large events and intimate daily memorialization.

Provide **GREEN SEPARATION** to buffer plaza from busy intersections

Provide **SAFETY** for all users and community

Be **SHADED!**

Advance **SUSTAINABILITY and GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE**

What we have heard

Meeting with Chinatown BID

- **“The square should be a world class plaza.”**
- **“The plaza hosts frequent community events. Gathering spaces should be flexible to support both daily use and events of all sizes.”**
 1. Lunar New Year Parade
 2. 911 Remembrance Event (Current not have enough space)
 3. Volunteer Clean-up
 4. Transfiguration Church Annual Assumption Festival (near plaza)
 5. National Night Out
 6. Thanksgiving Turkey Give-away
 7. Fujianese Stage
 8. Mid-Autumn Festival
 9. Backpack Give-away
 10. Confucius Ceremony (at Confucius Plaza)
 11. Earth Day Event
 12. Lantern Festival
 13. Veterans Day
 14. Memorial Day
 15. July 4th
 16. New Year’s Eve
 17. October 1st, October 10th
 18. Open Streets through the year
 -
- **“Event Movement: processions approach from north, down Mott st., pause at Kimlau square, continue to E. Broadway.”**
- **“Use greenery as buffer zones to shield traffic. Maintenance need to be discussed with DOT/Parks.”**
- **“Create a destination for tourists coming from Park Row.”**

What we have heard

Meeting with American Legion

- **“Gathering space should focus around the 3 cultural markers (Memorial Arch, Lin Ze Xu Statue and the Gateway art piece).”**
- **“Flat, defined gathering space in front of the Memorial Arch.”**
- **“Need power for light and sound for events.”**
- **“Pigeon proofing of the 3 cultural markers is essential.”**
- **“Planting should act as buffer, especially behind the Memorial Arch.”**
- **“Provide flag pole, and locate to the audience’s left.”**

What we have heard

Meeting with Fujianese Groups

- **“Clear circulation and visual connections between cultural markers.”**
- **“Shading is needed.”**
- **“Planting should not obstruct views of Lin Ze Xu Statue.”**
- **“Lin Ze Xu statue faces East Broadway, and should be visible when approaching from East Broadway.”**
- **“Create a defined gathering space in front of Lin Ze Xu Statue: for 100-200 people, potentially expand to 500.”**
- **“Create a cohesive, well connected space between the main plaza and adjacent enlarged sidewalks.”**
- **“Street closure only occurs very rarely.”**

