

CHINATOWN CONNECTIONS

通達華埠

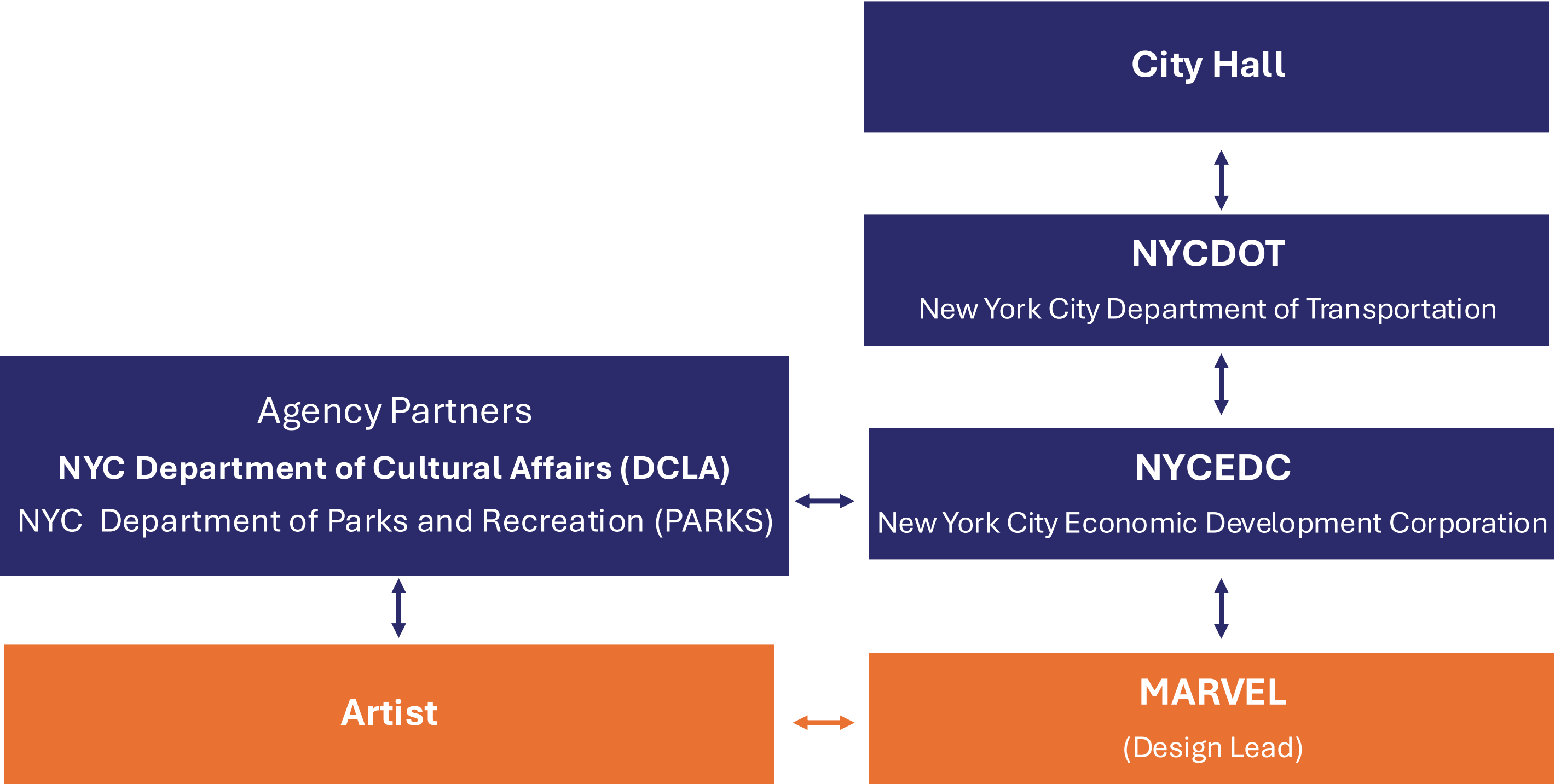
CCWG 11
07/01/2026



AGENDA

- 1. Welcome Gateway - Selection Process Recap**
- 2. Welcome Gateway - Engagement + Framework**
- 3. Memorial Arch Restoration Update**
- 4. Discussion**

CHINATOWN WELCOME GATEWAY PROJECT STRUCTURE



CHINATOWN WELCOME GATEWAY DESIGN BRIEF



A public art piece intended to highlight Chinatown, Manhattan’s cultural heritage and fulfill a longstanding community desire for an iconic symbol serving as a beacon and wayfinding feature for visitors.

Overview

- Chinatown welcome gateway subgroup is a group of community leaders that help guide the gateway process from design to implementation.
- The group is organized and supported by NYCEDC, DCLA, and NYSDOS.
- The subgroup developed the design brief after 6 meetings over a six month period.

Members

- Kenny Chan, United Overseas Fujianese Ass'n of America
- Nolan Chang, Community Leader
- Wellington Chen, Chinatown BID/LDC
- Gabe Mui, American Legion – Post 1291
- Raymond Tsang, Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association
- Cheryl Wing-Zi Wong, Local Artist

PUBLISHED ON: MAY 2, 2025
CALL FOR ARTIST DEADLINE: JUNE 15, 2025

The Design Brief was prepared by the following Consulting Teams: 3x3, Public Works Partners, and Fu Wilmers Design.

CHINATOWN WELCOME GATEWAY

DESIGN BRIEF: DESIGN GUIDELINES

01

MULTIFACETED EXPERIENCE

Ensure the Welcome Gateway is not a monolith but an interactive experience that extends beyond its physical structure.

02

GUIDING SYMBOL

Design the Welcome Gateway to be a clear and recognizable symbol, serving as a beacon and wayfinding feature for visitors.

03

GATHERING SPACE

Design the Welcome Gateway as an integral part of the community, creating a surrounding space that invites community members to gather and rest.

04

CELEBRATE HERITAGE

The Welcome Gateway should honor Chinatown’s rich cultural heritage, celebrate diversity, and foster a sense of belonging.

CHINATOWN WELCOME GATEWAY

DCLA PERCENT FOR ART PROCESS: ARTIST SELECTION

INITIATION Current Phase	ARTIST SELECTION			DESIGN DEVELOPMENT	
Project Initiation	Artist Selection Panel	Design Charrettes	Artist Selection Meeting	Artist Community Presentation	PDC Conceptual Design Review
- Community Project Brief from EDC to share goals / hopes for the artwork - Community suggests panel members - Community shares artist suggestions to be considered for Panel	Selection Panel (including community Advisory panel members) reviews the previous work of artist pool and votes to select finalists and alternates to invite to participate in Design Charrette	- Community Members attend virtually and may submit questions moderated by DCLA and integrated into the discussions. - Daily debrief at end of charrettes	Community Members participate in discussion as Advisory Panelists, providing feedback and final impressions to inform the final voting selection.	- Conceptual Design presentation by Artist - Q+A with Artist and Feedback from Community Members - Letter of Support requested from Community Board	- PDC meeting is open to the public - Members of the public may provide testimony - PDC votes for Conceptual Design Approval

CHINATOWN WELCOME GATEWAY

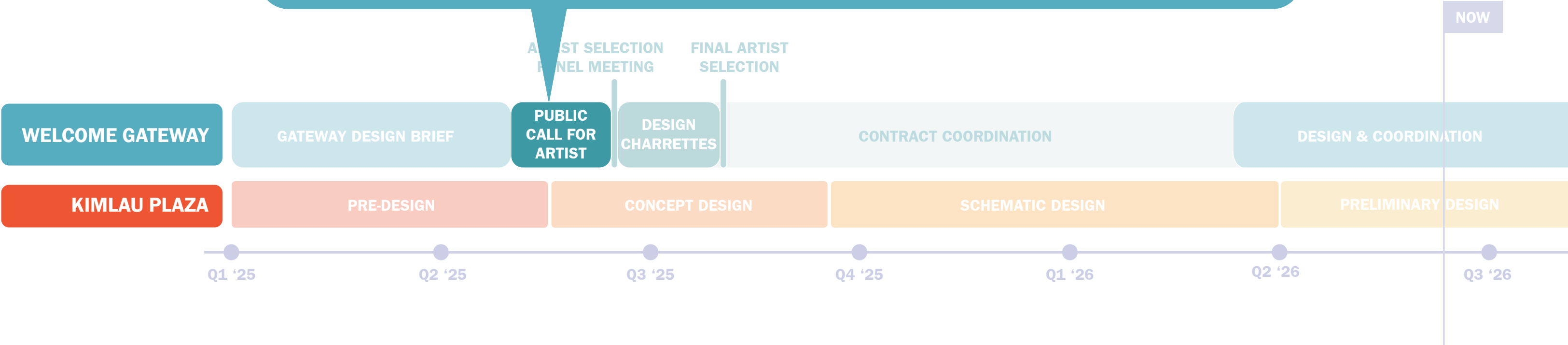
DCLA PERCENT FOR ART PROCESS: ARTIST SELECTION



PUBLIC CALL FOR ARTIST INFO SESSION 1
2025 05 19



PUBLIC CALL FOR ARTIST INFO SESSION 2
2025 05 22



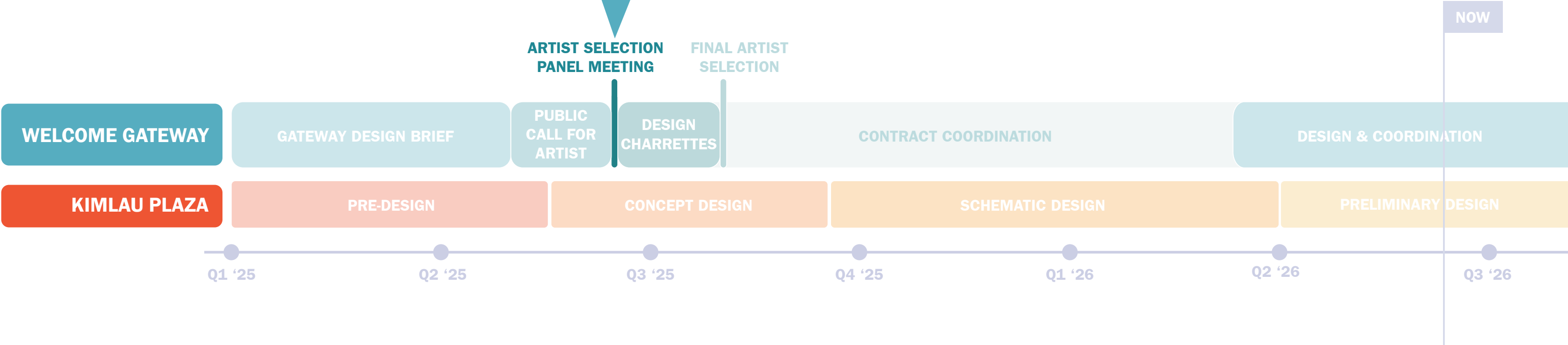
CHINATOWN WELCOME GATEWAY

DCLA PERCENT FOR ART PROCESS: ARTIST SELECTION



ARTIST SELECTION PANEL MEETING 2025 06 25

- PUBLIC INVITED TO ATTEND
- COLLECTIVELY RANKED 30+ ARTISTS PRESENTED BY DCLA
- 50+ COMMUNITY MEMBERS ATTENDED AND PARTICIPATED IN REVIEWING AND SELECTING ARTISTS
- SHORTLISTED 4 ARTISTS AND 2 ALTERNATE CANDIDATES TO PARTICIPATE IN DESIGN CHARRETTE



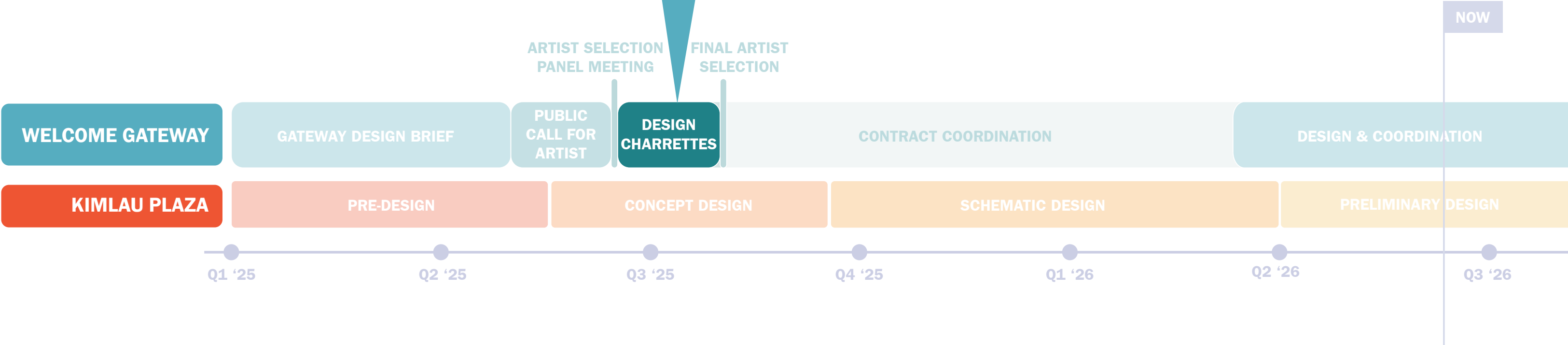
CHINATOWN WELCOME GATEWAY

DCLA PERCENT FOR ART PROCESS: ARTIST SELECTION



ARTIST CHARETTES DAY 1+2
2025 07 29 - 2025 07 30

- 4 ARTISTS INVITED TO PRESENT THEIR WORK
- MEETINGS OPENED TO THE PUBLIC VIRTUALLY
- COMMUNITY SHARED COMMENTS AND THOUGHTS TO INFORM FINAL ARTIST SELECTION



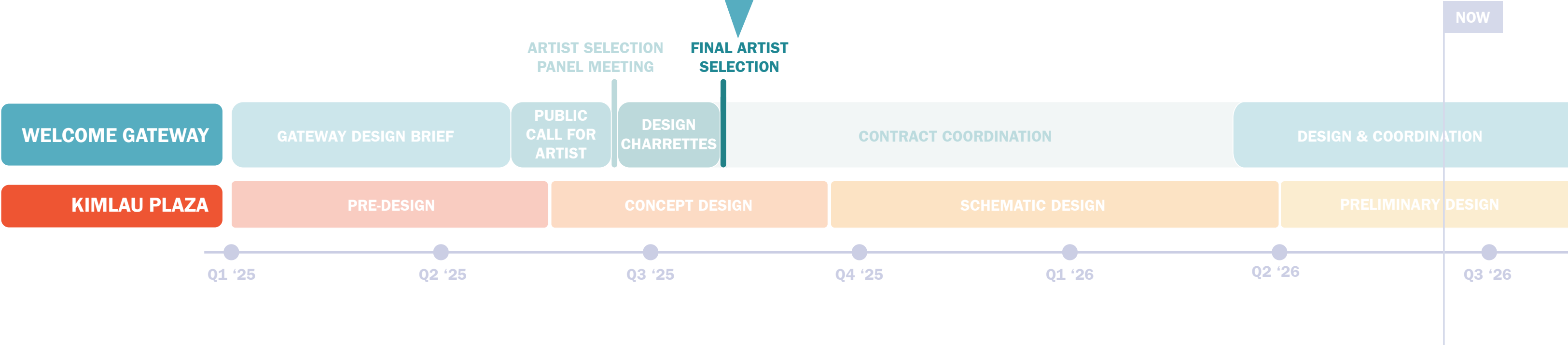
CHINATOWN WELCOME GATEWAY

DCLA PERCENT FOR ART PROCESS: ARTIST SELECTION



FINAL ARTIST SELECTION 2025 08 01

- SELECTION COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY SELECTED JENNIFER WEN MA BASED ON COMMUNITY FEEDBACK AS WELL AS PAST EXPERIENCE WITH CHINATOWN



WELCOME GATEWAY

Community & Stakeholders Engagement

Summary

Meetings with Community Stakeholders

- Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association | April 9th
- Think!Chinatown | April 23rd
- Phillip Poon, architect | May 5th
- Chatham Green | May 6th, June 15
- VNS Chinatown NNORC | June 3rd
- CPC Christie St. After-school Program | June 3rd
- Smith Houses | June 10th
- Confucius Plaza | June 11th
- Chatham Towers | June 8th, June 15th
- Gotham Park | June 12th
- Welcome to Chinatown | June 15th
- Chinatown business leaders | June 15th

Upcoming Engagements

- 100 Gold St
- Chinese American Planning Council
- P.S. 124
- Chinatown Manpower Project
- P.S. 130
- Business communities



Artist Jennifer Wen Ma meeting with Confucius Plaza board members and Chinese Chamber of Commerce members



Artist Jennifer Wen Ma and Marvel team's Chit Yee Ng and Ishita Gaur meeting with Fujianese Association and Chinatown business leaders

Meetings with Community Partners

- **American Legion**
April 9th 2026
- **Chinatown BID**
April 8th 2026
- **United Overseas Fujianese Association of America**
June 15th 2026



Artist Jennifer Wen Ma meeting with Chinatown BID and business community

Key Takeaways | What We Have Heard

Would like for the artwork to...

- *“Hold traditional elements of Chinese identity”*
- *“Be iconic and bold”*
- *“Convey the important contribution of veterans to the community”*
- *“Carry the history of Chinatown as part of the storytelling of the artwork/plaza”*
- *“Invite intergenerational members of the community... people at different ages have different needs”*
- *“A ‘welcome’ to all cultures, we welcome you”*
- *Inheritance: “say that ‘this is yours’ to our younger generation”*
- *“Create a sense of belonging... We are here and we built this place from the grounds up”*
- *“Show an immigrant society integrating their old world values into American modernity”*
- *“This place is not just Chinatown, but it's pivotal for so many immigrants”*
- *“Serve as infrastructure for future programming”*
- *“The work should be modern and forward thinking, with balance of classics”*
- *“Express our self-confidence”*

Key Takeaways | What We Have Heard

Needs and wants for the project

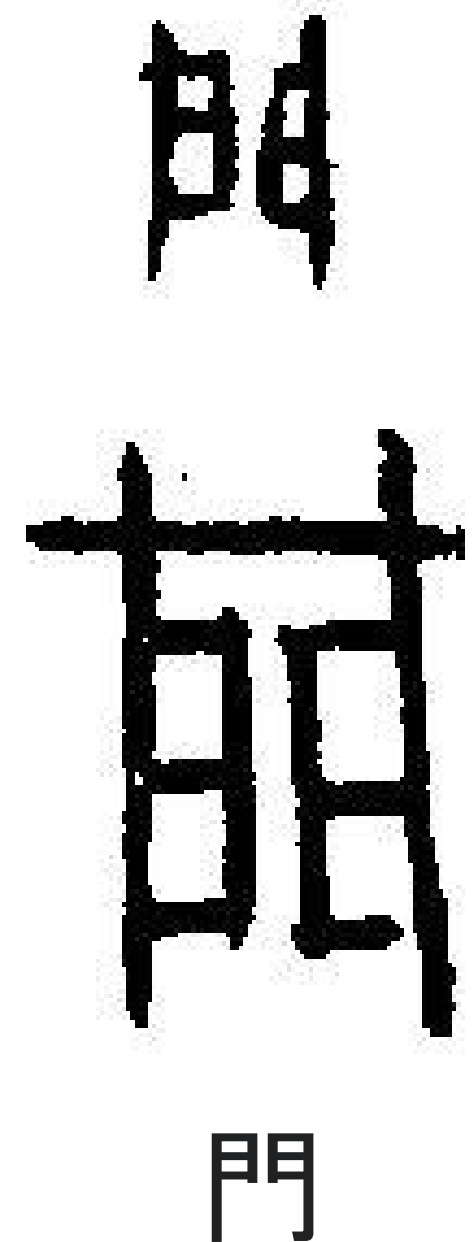
- *“Parade as a ritual that ties in many Chinese traditions”*
- *“Alleviate the chokehold of the congestion of the site”*
- *“Programming to attract continuous flow of visitors to Chinatown”*
- *“Proponent for a sculpture based on Chinese traditions”*
- *“I don't want to walk out of my building and feel like I live in a prison yard”*
- *“The biggest challenge of the project is to have a single unifying element that will rally the complexity of demographics”*
- *“RESPECT of the neighborhood and its history through these new art projects”*
- *“The plaza being programming friendly is key factor for organizations to create ongoing programming”*
- *“Environmentally safe: cleaner and fresher air, less concrete and more trees”*
- *“Night life, since Covid it's hard to find restaurants open late”*
- *“Kids activities not based on spending money”*

Cultural Framework Research

Research

Key research elements serving as inspiration and cultural framework:

- Ancient Chinese philosophy
- Classic Chinese architecture and landscape design
- Other Chinese traditions, such as horticulture and solar terms
- American and global historical references
- Scientific, such as quantum physics
- Contemporary art references
- Astronomical Portals: Chinese and global perspectives



Chinese character for "door" is 門, evolved from the oracle bone script based on a pictograph representing a double-leaf door.

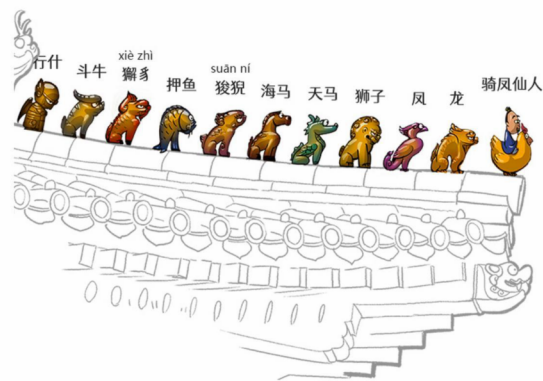
Research



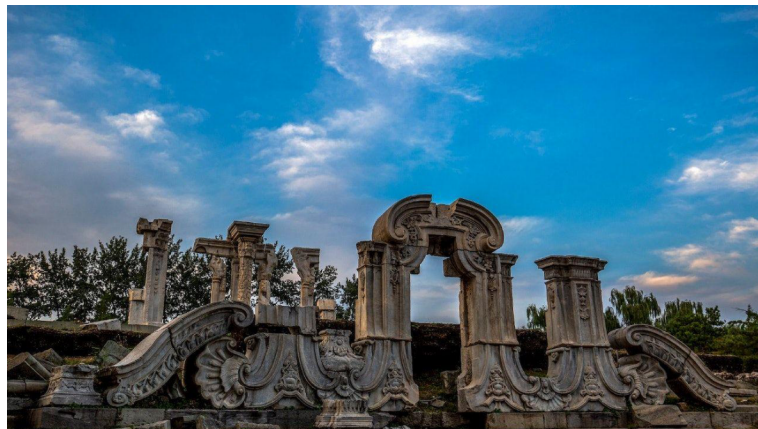
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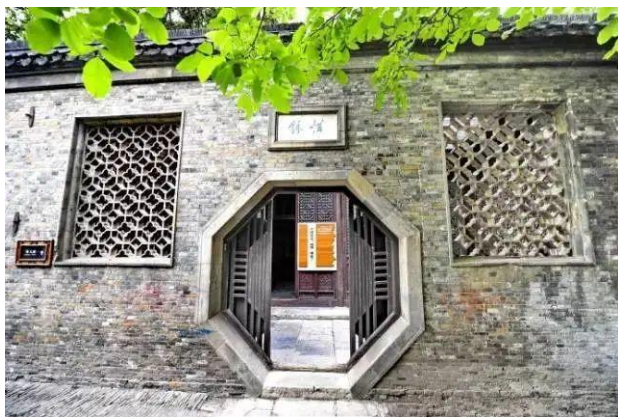
1. I-Ching Hexagram
2. Study of various styles of paifang

3. Traditional Chinese guardian creatures
4. Ruins of Yuanming Palace in Beijing

Research



5



6



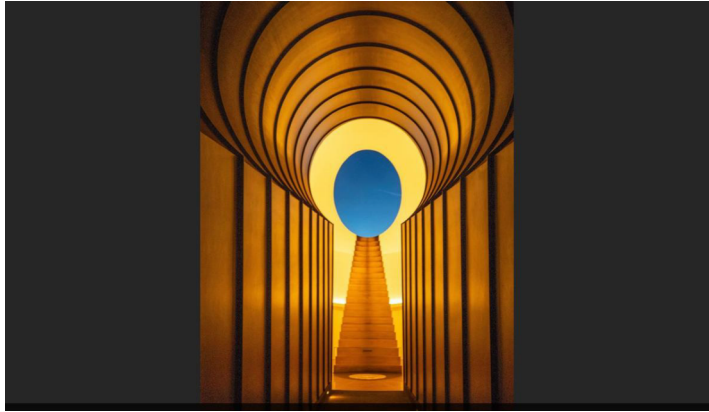
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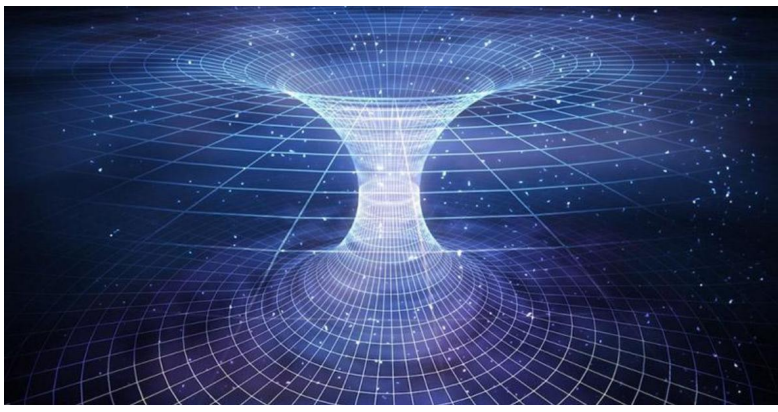
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9



10



11

5. Moon Gate
6. Octagonal Gate

7. Scholar's Rock
8. Historical Manhattan's Map

9. Ziwei Astrological Constellations
10. *Roden Crater* by James Turrell

11. Worm Hole representation

Collaborative Design Process

Art and Design Integration

Since March 2026 Jennifer Wen Ma and her team have been meeting with Marvel weekly to share updates on concept development and explore potential applications to components within the plaza design.

During these meetings, our teams also studied underground infrastructures, security considerations, existing plans and viewing vantage points to identify potential locations for the work.



Jennifer Wen Ma and Marvel Architects, May 29, 2026

Artwork Conceptual Framework

Guiding Principles

- **Visually bold and iconic:** The work will serve as a landmark for the neighborhood—a vital destination for visitors and a visual anchor that defines the community’s identity. Some identifying keywords gained through community outreach: culture, vibrancy, hard work, resilience, creativity, family, belonging, adventurous and joyful.
- **Historical elements:** The artwork will embody philosophies, materiality, and craftsmanship of both traditional Chinese and Chinese/Asian American heritage. Principles such as 天时地利人和 Opportune time, geographical advantage, and united people, 天赖地赖人赖 Sounds of Heaven, Earth and Humankind.
- **Balance contemporary aesthetics with traditional:** The work won’t be only rooted in history but also relevant to the present, while possessing a timelessness that endures into the future.
- **Multivalent perspectives:** The work should accommodate diverse vantage points, offering distinct visual experiences for pedestrians, motorists, residents in adjacent buildings, and parade participants.

Guiding Principles

- **Durational viewing:** The work will be designed to operate on multiple temporal registers – immediate, bold impact for the casual passerby while offering layered cultural and educational narratives for those engaging in a more prolonged experience.
- **Collaborative coalition:** Engage with locally-based artists, writers, musicians, performers and oral historians, and work with the extended community ranging from seniors to children during the design and production process, to build the project as a co-creative platform, and create a sense of belonging to the community.
- **Connectivity:** The design will demonstrate the inter-connective tissues that weave together and strengthen the Chinatown community.
- **Site Integration:** The work will be cohesively integrated into the plaza's design and topography, maintaining a harmonic dialogue with the environment and the two existing sculptures, as specifically requested by the PDC at Marvel's most recent presentation.

Design and Form Explorations

- **A Primary Anchor:** A singular, large-scale form as a beacon to provide the necessary verticality and striking visual presence to be legible from a distance.
- **Satellite Constellations:** A series of smaller sculptures—echoing the primary work’s conceptual DNA—will be distributed across the plaza and surrounding park. They create a cohesive grouping that shifts in configuration based on the viewer's movement. Employing the calligraphic principle of 飞白 “flying white,” from a specific vantage point, these forms align to reveal a grander, interconnected “gateway.”
- **Social & Intergenerational Collaboration:** These satellite works will be realized through partnerships with artistic community members, seniors and children, embedding community creative and artisanal talents into the fabric of the piece.
- **Ephemeral & Time-Based Media:** Several components will feature audio or video—such as oral histories, music, or performance—delivered through hardware-free technologies to ensure long-term operational sustainability.

Design and Form Explorations

- **Illumination:** Light is a critical component to offer a distinct sensory experience after dark, and further act as a beacon to the site.
- **Integrated Elements:** Working closely with the Marvel team to ensure design interventions are incorporated into existing park infrastructure, such as planters, seating, ground-plane carvings and more.
- **Cultural Cartography:** Through poetic phrases and visual prompts, mapping the site's history and spatial connections – having hosted generations of peoples, from indigenous inhabitants to successive waves of global immigration of diverse geographic locations, at different times in history.
- **Environmental Geomancy:** Ensure the placement and design of artwork and all its elements are aligned with feng shui principles in the I-Ching, including but not limited to directional, elemental, formal, color and material considerations.



Thank You!

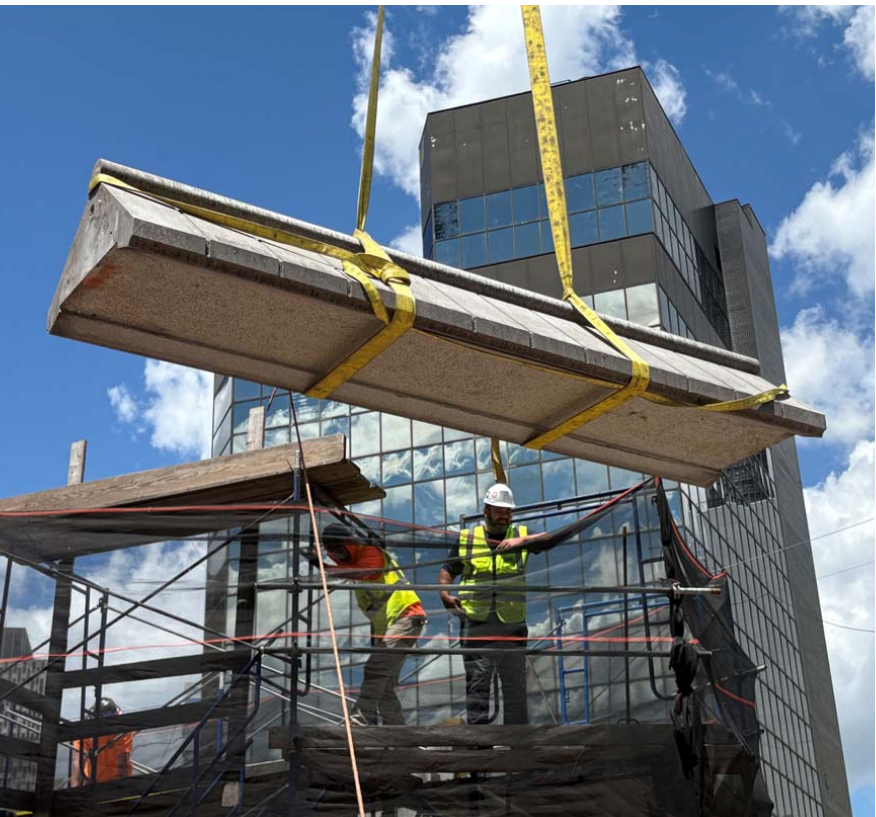
Prepared by Littlemeat Productions
www.littlemeat.net
hi@littlemeat.net
2026

MEMORIAL ARCH RESTORATION

KIMLAU WAR MEMORIAL ARCH RECONSTRUCTION

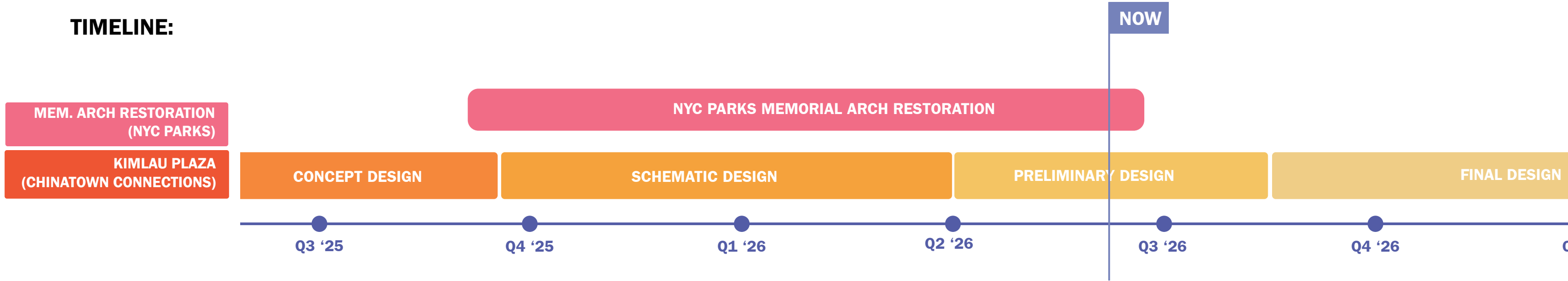
RECONSTRUCTION SCOPE:

- REPAIR ARCH STRUCTURE AND MORTAR JOINTS
- REPLACE OR RESTORE STONES
- CLEAN THE ENTIRE STRUCTURE
- STABILIZE FOUNDATIONS AND ADD SITE IMPROVEMENTS, INCLUDING BIRD DETERRENTS AND BENCH RESTORATION

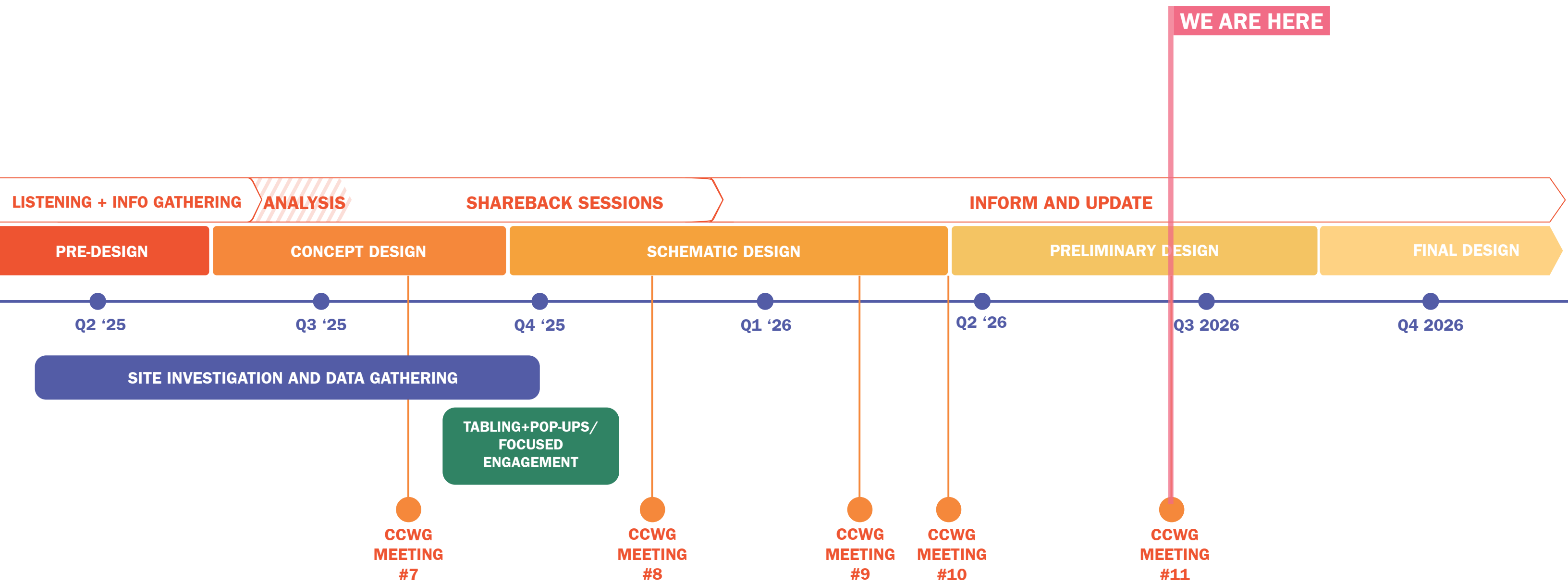


JUNE 2026

TIMELINE:



Timeline



DISCUSSIONS