

Chinatown Crossing

Live above the Stacks

A Community Driven Development Plan

Affordable Housing Development Competition

Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston
April 8, 2009

table of contents

credits	4
executive summary	6
framework	9
site context	11
community outreach	17
site acquisition	23
design	25
sustainability	39
financing & delivery	41
references	49

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Judging Criteria

Project Financing

- Site acquired through multi-stakeholder plan involving a land-swap, cash transfer and charitable tax write-off to incentivize Verizon to divest its buildings for the development of affordable housing
- Financing approach combines public subsidies (LIHTC, HOME, CDBG, Leading the Way, National Housing Trust) and private sector revenue to finance the construction of affordable housing and public amenities, such as a park and the Chinatown Branch of the Boston Public Library
- Market-rate units cross-subsidize affordable apartments in a neighborhood where high rents and small living spaces have driven away workforce families

Physical Design

Site Design

- Reinforces the through-block connection between Harrison Avenue and Oxford Street by transforming an existing alleyway
- Creates new green spaces for the neighborhood based on the community's demand for parks and the Boston Redevelopment Authority's Crossroads Initiative

Building Design

- Provides programming for the neighborhood including a public library, community room, park and courtyard to accommodate educational services, community activities and outdoor recreation
- Introduces elements such as a layered entrance and lantern-shaped lighting that respond to the community's desire for references to traditional Chinese architectural features
- Maximizes units while creating modulations in the façade that break down the scale of the building

Unit Design

- Takes advantage of the south-oriented courtyard to maximize daylight
- Provides flexible, open living spaces for small and large households

Community Responsiveness

- Developed community outreach strategy based on priorities established by Chinatown Masterplan 2000
- Administered a survey to Chinatown residents and business owners to inform key aspects of our proposal
- Conducted one-on-one meetings with neighborhood and government leaders including representatives from Chinatown Main Streets, the Chinatown Blog, the Chinatown Masterplan, the Friends of the Chinatown Public Library, the Boston Redevelopment Authority as well as the Office of Councilman Bill Linehan
- Organized a community design workshop in partnership with the ACDC to solicit neighborhood feedback regarding our preliminary designs and incorporated comments into proposal

Environmental Sensitivity

The project embodies key principles of Smart Growth by:

- Developing an underutilized site in an urban neighborhood
- Creating a mixed-use development with residential, commercial and civic spaces
- Providing a range of housing choices, including 2-3 bedroom affordable units
- Encouraging walkability and the use of nearby transportation nodes by reducing onsite parking and locating spaces in existing garages

The development aspires to LEED Silver Certification by:

- Conserving resources through rehabilitating an existing building
- Partnering with the Crossroads Initiative to develop a public park and courtyard
- Meeting LEED criteria which minimize operating expenses and utility costs

Project Feasibility

The feasibility of acquisition, construction and future operation of the site are strengthened by:

- Reducing ACDC's acquisition cost through an innovative land-swap between the BRA and Verizon that reduces ACDC's costs while providing Verizon with a comparable piece of BRA-owned land and a tax write-off to defray the capital gains the company owes the state and federal governments for its recent sale of several buildings
- Stacking of units to reduce construction costs
- Receiving 36 Points from the US Green Building Council's (USGBC) LEED rating system as a LEED Silver structure



Chinatown Crossing Development

Chinatown Crossing is a community-driven, transit-oriented, mixed-use, mixed-income development located in Phillips Square at the historic intersection of Essex and Harrison in Boston's Chinatown. This proposal addresses the community's urgent need for workforce family housing and desire for civic space. The development converts the 1920's Verizon building, its adjacent annex, and the surrounding lot on Harrison Avenue into an apartment building, with ground-floor retail and a branch of the Boston Public Library, all linked together with new open spaces. Specifically, the 168,165 gross square foot building offers 63 market-rate lofts as well as 1 and 2-bedroom units, which cross-subsidize 42 affordable 2 and 3-bedroom units, 25% of which are affordable to very low-income households at or below 30% of the Area Median Income. The development creates a northern gateway into Chinatown and reestablishes a corner of Chinatown's historic urban fabric and identity. It presents community members with viable housing options and provides an important public space for learning, relaxing, gathering and celebrating. This development plan demonstrates project feasibility by creatively combining public and private funds, as well as garnering community and political support. Lastly, through contextually-sensitive and environmentally-friendly design, the development fits into the neighborhood, combines rehabilitation and new construction, and is designed to meet LEED Silver certification.

Introduction

The only historically Chinese area in New England, Chinatown, Boston remains a hub of Asian-American life in the Northeast, boasting many Chinese, Japanese, Cambodian and Vietnamese restaurants and markets. Although the neighborhood is home to a diverse array of residents, small business owners and community organizations, it faces a number of challenges related to its changing demographic composition and to increasing pressures from private developers to build high-end commercial and residential properties in lieu of the affordable, mixed-use developments that the community so desperately needs.

Chinatown is one of Boston's most densely populated residential districts, with over 28,000 people per square mile. Nearly 70% of Chinatown's residents are Asian, with their average household incomes (\$14,289) paling in comparison to the average Boston family (\$39,629) and with their poverty levels (37%) being nearly twice as high as the city's average (20%). Despite the fact that the majority of Chinatown residents live in small, over-crowded spaces, the neighborhood is experiencing intense gentrification. Large, luxury residential towers continue to overtake three-to-five-story apartment buildings, with the Dainty Dot Hosiery building recently acquired by a private developer who plans to transform it into market rate condominiums.

Over the course of seven weeks, our team conducted surveys, interviews and focus group meetings with community organizers, business owners and municipal and state government officials to identify and address some of Chinatown's greatest challenges including 1) its lack of affordable apartments for intergenerational families; 2) insufficient and poorly maintained community spaces and public parks and 3) heavy congestion.

The development of affordable housing on a densely populated urban site such as ours poses unique challenges, ranging from the acquisition of our \$9.6 million dollar site from its current owner, Verizon Communications, Inc., to the construction of underground parking in the face of high projected costs and mixed community perceptions regarding the impact of additional spaces on neighborhood traffic and commerce. Even after pinpointing the community's priorities, the challenge remained to identify the appropriate local partners to help finance the construction and future operation of affordable units, community spaces and public spaces.

Ultimately, the neighborhood and its many stakeholders were our greatest assets in designing and financing our proposed mixed-income, multi-use housing development. Since 1987, our partner organization, the Asian Community Development Corporation (ACDC), has been an effective advocate and developer of affordable housing in the Chinatown neighborhood. Our proposal leverages ACDC's community-driven approach while developing an expanded set of multi-stakeholder partnerships that will help the organization overcome site-specific challenges and implement our proposed plan. In addition to engaging community members, we worked with staff from Councilman Linehan's office as well as various departments of the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) to identify previously under-utilized resources and to broker new public-private-nonprofit sector partnerships to help ACDC advance the neighborhood's longstanding priorities.

Building Site

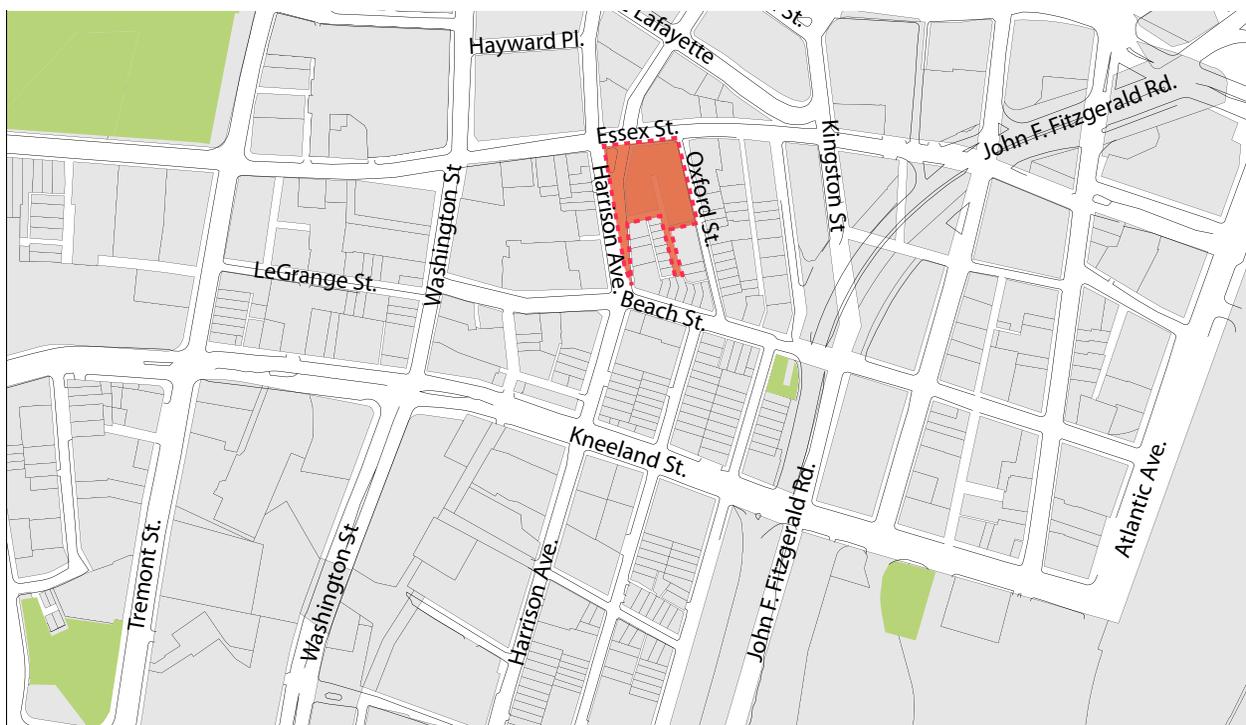
The site is approximately 21,193 square feet and located in the Chinatown neighborhood of downtown Boston, at the corner of Essex Street and Harrison Street. It consists of two existing buildings: a 1920's 8-story brick building called the "Verizon building" and a 1960's addition called the "annex."

The site is near the northern edge of Chinatown and is central to many other downtown Boston neighborhoods. A few blocks to the north is the Theater District along Washington Street, which has seen great rejuvenation as well as gentrification in the last decade. Several blocks west along Essex Street is Boston's oldest and most prominent park, the Boston Common. Along Essex Street to the east is the new Rose Kennedy Greenway, a linear park covering the submerged Interstate 93 of the "Big Dig". Since Essex Street connects these important parks and neighborhoods of Boston, it was identified by the Boston redevelopment Authority (BRA) as one of the streets to be improved through the Crossroads Initiative. The small traffic island at the Essex and Harrison Street intersection has been proposed as a park as part of this initiative.



Verizon building and annex

The streets surrounding the site vary in character, from the active retail and pedestrian environments of Essex and Harrison Streets to the narrower and less active Oxford Street. Directly to the south is Oxford Alley, which is a part of the older fabric of Chinatown and remains a through-block path and the only access to several small townhouses. The alley is dark through much of the day and has a fair amount of graffiti. The neighboring buildings range in height from one to eight stories, with an average height of at least 4 stories. Many are also brick masonry construction from the same era as the Verizon building, and most have retail on the ground floor.



Site denoted in red

History of Chinatown

framework | site context | community outreach | acquisition | design | sustainability | financing & delivery

Boston's Chinatown is the third largest Chinese neighborhood in the country and one of the oldest. It is located on a landfill, as is much of Boston, created in the early 1800s to house Boston's middle-class families. In the 1840s, however, these families began moving out of the area and were replaced by Chinese, Irish, Italian, Jewish, and Syrian immigrants who resided mostly in converted multi-unit tenements.

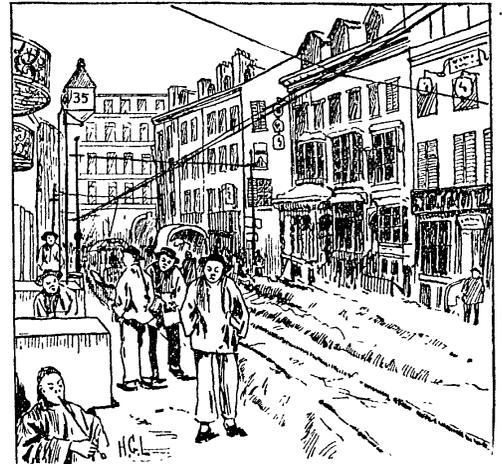
The completion of the Transcontinental Railroad around 1870 led to the establishment of Boston's Chinatown. Chinese railroad workers settled in Chinatown around this time, setting up tents on Ping On Alley, which is just two blocks away from our site. The population has continued to grow over the last century, making Chinatown one of Boston's most densely populated neighborhoods.

Chinatown's boundaries have shifted over time and development has subjected its population to displacement. While it is now generally identified as the neighborhood between the Boston Common, Downtown Crossing, the South End, and the Massachusetts Turnpike, it began as a six-block area. Those six-blocks were located between Harrison Avenue, Essex Street, Hudson Street, and Kneeland Street. Around the 1940s and 50s, Chinatown began to expand, but it was short lived. The construction of the Southeast Expressway/Central Artery in the 1950s displaced over three hundred families. Following the Expressway construction, urban renewal projects and institutional expansions in the 1960s significantly reduced the land area allotted to Chinatown.

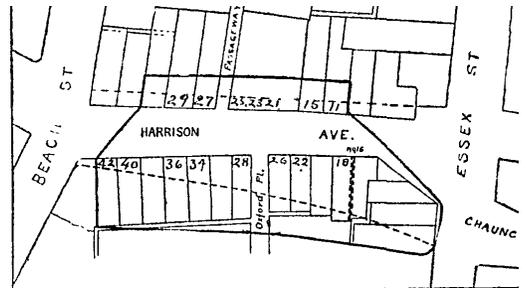
Today, Chinatown serves as a cultural and social hub for people of both Asian and non-Asian ancestry. It also is a nexus of social service agencies, businesses (especially restaurants and bakeries), organizations, and political activism for Chinese throughout Eastern Massachusetts.

BOSTON'S CHINESE QUARTER.

Its Squalor and Bad Sanitary Condition==Room Wanted For Rapid Transit.



GLIMPSE OF CHINATOWN.



Our proposal aims to put back the housing that was taken away by urban renewal in the 1940s



A view of Harrison Avenue in 1900, one of Chinatown's first streets

Demographics: Chinatown Today

Population & Density

In 2000, the approximate population of Chinatown was 6,015. Of the total population they were, 4,169 Asians. The population density of this area is 44 persons per acre, which is double the city average of 20 persons per acre.

POPULATION		
	Chinatown	Boston
Total	6,015	589,111
White	17%	49%
Black	7%	24%
Asian	69%	7%
Hispanic	5%	14%
Other Race	0%	1%
Multi-Racial	1%	3%

Age

Chinatown has somewhat fewer children and a much larger presence of elderly than the entire City of Boston.

AGE		
	Chinatown	Boston
Median Age	35.1	31.1
Percent Below 18	17%	20%
Percent Aged 19-65	62%	70%
Percent 65 and Over	21%	10%

Household Size

Household size in Chinatown is similar to that of the entire City of Boston, but there is a greater presence of family households in Chinatown.

HOUSEHOLD SIZE		
	Chinatown	Boston
Average Household Size	2.44	2.31
Family Households	59%	48%
1 Person Household	35%	37%
2+ Person Households	65%	63%

Income and Poverty

Household income in Chinatown is very low in comparison with the citywide median income. Overall, Chinatown has higher poverty rates than the rest of the City, and the elderly in Chinatown are significantly poorer than other population cohorts throughout the City.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME		
	Chinatown	Boston
Median Household Income	\$ 14,829.00	\$ 39,629.00
Less than \$20,000	61%	29%
\$20,000 - \$49,999	27%	32%
\$50,000-\$99,999	8%	27%
\$100,000 +	4%	13%

POVERTY RATES		
	Chinatown	Boston
Overall	37%	20%
Under 5 Years	62%	25%
5 Years	27%	28%
6-11 Years	39%	27%
12-17 Years	37%	25%
18-64 Years	28%	18%
65-74 Years	50%	17%
75+	61%	19%

Housing

Most of the housing stock in the Chinatown area is contained in either older, small apartment buildings (2-6 units) or in large newly built, mid-rise residential towers. Some of the housing in the older, smaller buildings has been converted to commercial uses or storage and warehousing uses. Most of the larger housing developments or buildings (e.g. Castle Square, Mass Pike Towers, Quincy Towers, and Tai Tung Village) were built in the 1960s and are subsidized housing. Some new developments (e.g. Waterford Place and Oak Terrace) built in the 1980s and 1990s have a mixture of subsidized and market-rate units. Many of Chinatown's housing units are small (one or two bedrooms) with very few larger apartments. Also, the vast majority of Chinatown is rental housing with only a very small share owner-occupied.

Housing Tenure

In 2000, there were 2,091 housing units in the Chinatown Area. The vacancy rate was only 2% versus 5% in the entire City of Boston. The renter-occupancy percentage was 98% in Chinatown versus 68% citywide.

HOUSING TENURE		
	Chinatown	Boston
Owner Occupied	2%	32%
Renter Occupied	98%	68%

HOUSING VACANCY		
	Chinatown	Boston
Occupied	98%	95%
Vacant	2%	5%

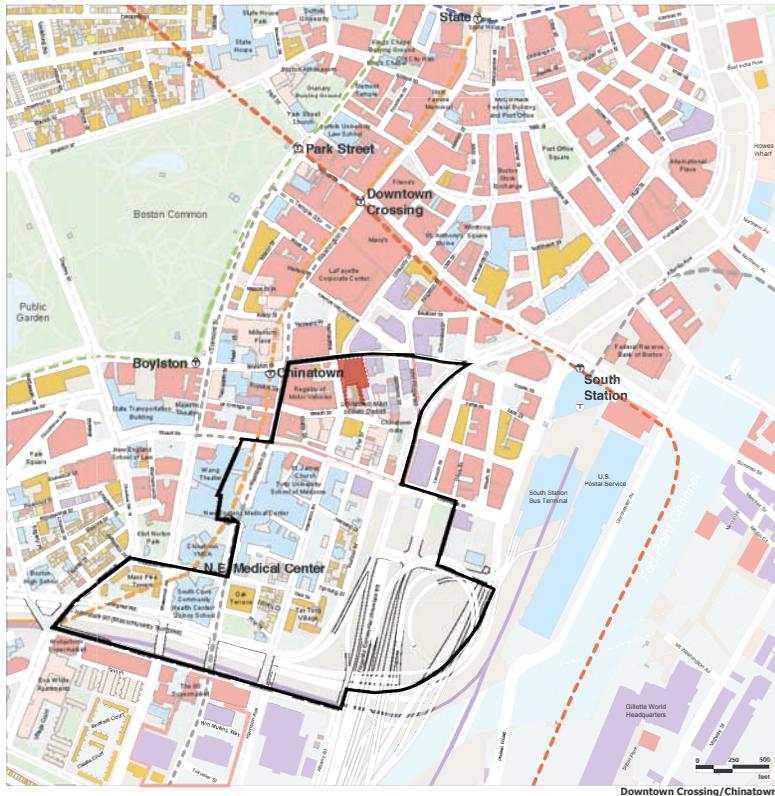
Overcrowding

The housing units in Chinatown have a considerably greater number of persons per room than citywide data show – in Chinatown 34% of all housing units have more than one person per room, while for Boston the percentage is only 7%. Because Chinatown units tend to be smaller and household size tends to be larger than the City, overcrowding is more evident in this neighborhood.

OVERCROWDING		
	Chinatown	Boston
.50 or Less Occupants per Room	24%	59%
.51 to 1.00 Occupants per Room	42%	34%
More than 1.00 Occupant per Room	34%	7%

Site Analysis

framework | site context | community outreach | acquisition | design | sustainability | financing & delivery



Downtown Crossing/Chinatown
Chinatown/Leather District

- Legend**
- 1 Family Residential
 - 2 Family Residential
 - 3 Family Residential
 - Apartment/Condos
 - Mixed Use (Res./Comm.)
 - Commercial
 - Institutional
 - Industrial
 - Open Space
 - Surface Parking
 - Main Streets District
 - MBTA Stations
 - MBTA Surface Subway Lines
 - MBTA Underground Subway Lines
 - Commuter Rail
 - Below Ground Commuter Rail
 - Water Transit Facilities
 - Water Transit Routes
 - Bus Routes

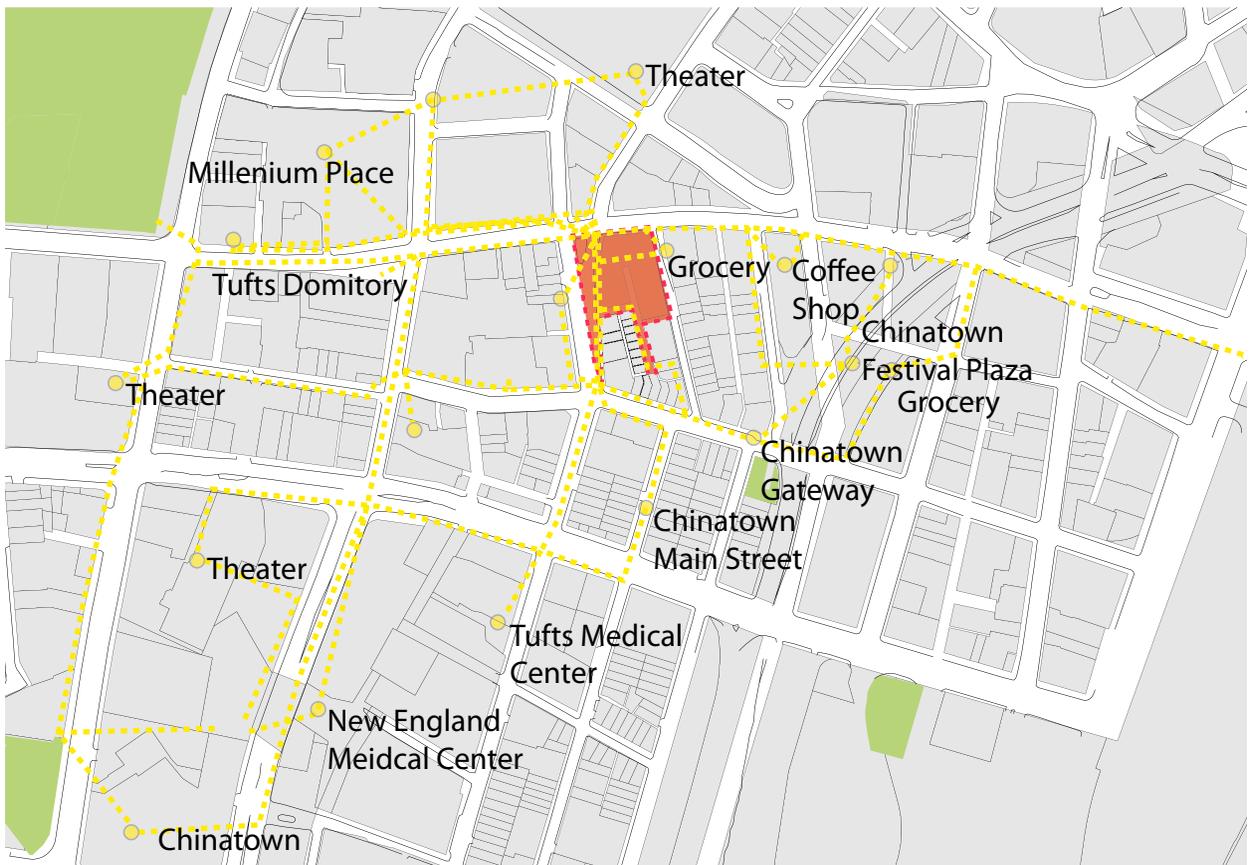


Zoning map taken from Boston Redevelopment Authority
(Project site is zoned as industrial and Chinatown boundary is shown in black)

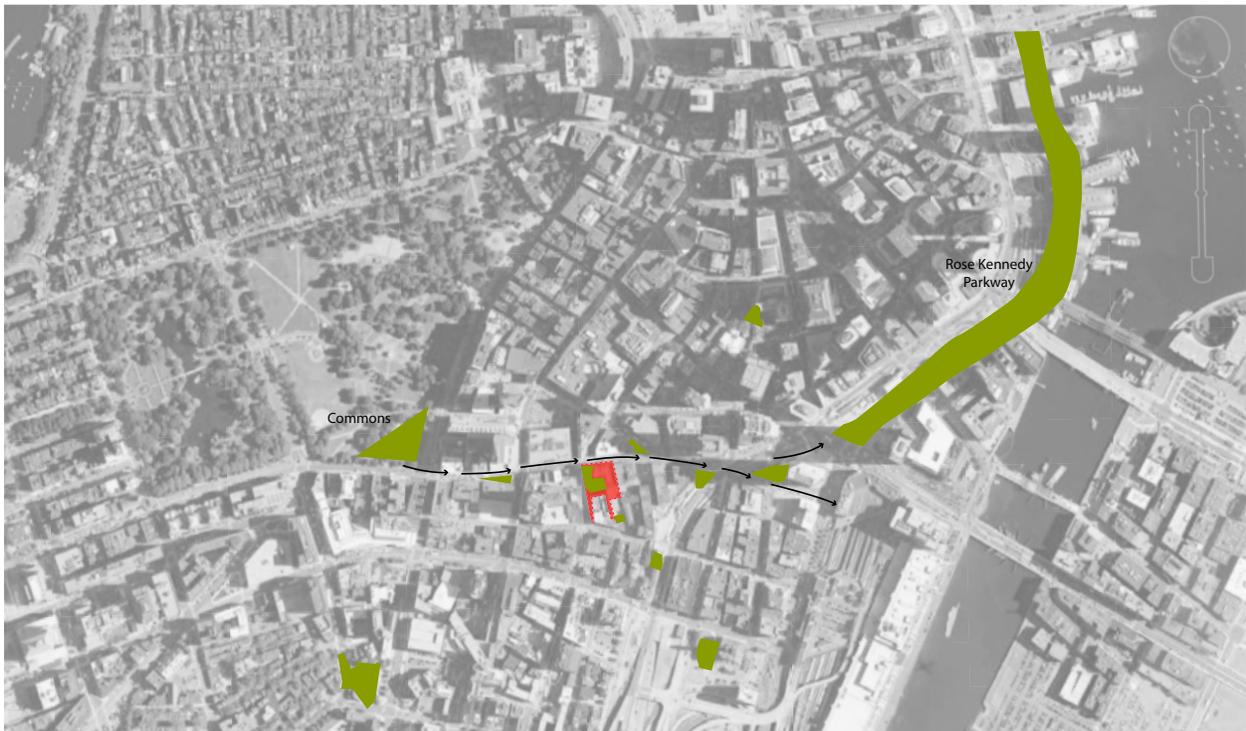
Magnets and Generators

The project site is located in the heart of Chinatown and is the nexus of pedestrian activity. The site is centrally located around “magnets and generators”. Magnets are the areas of interest that create daily movement through the site. Some of these magnets include grocery stores, coffee shops, T-stops, parking, Tufts University, New England Medical Center, surrounding residential buildings, businesses and the Commons. Generators are areas surrounding the site that periodically become hubs of activity. These areas include the theater district, the Rose Kennedy

Parkway, the Ritz Carlton, and local churches. We aim to create open space and an active ground floor on our site will provide a much-needed resting point in the midst of the magnets and generators. In turn, the spaces and activities provided by the site will become a magnet and generator itself. This integration will promote community and economic development.



Places of interest: magnets and generators



Existing green space network

Green Spaces

Boston has a history of creating exceptional public open spaces. Frederick Law Olmsted’s open space plan for the city was called the Emerald Necklace. This legacy was lost after valuable green connections were destroyed through the Federal Urban Renewal Project and the creation of the Central Artery. The Boston Redevelopment Authority is also furthering this legacy with the Crossroads Initiative. The Crossroads Initiative is a streetscaping and landscaping program for the City of Boston. Twelve Crossroads, including Essex

Street, traverse the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway and connect people to neighborhoods and destinations on either side. These streets link the city to the Greenway and the Greenway to the Harbor. Phillips Square is a priority for the City, and public funds have been committed to finance landscaping improvements that will help it become a friendlier, livelier, and more accessible public space. initiative.



MBTA subway stations with 5 and 10 minute walking radii

Transit

Centrally located between seven Boston transit stops, the site is easily accessible from the green, red, blue and orange T lines. It is within a five-minute walk to the Chinatown, Boylston, NE Medical Center and Downtown Crossing subway

stops, and is with a 10 minute walk to South Station, State Street, and Park Street subway stop.

Market Analysis

Chinatown Real Estate

Over the past fifty years Chinatown has experienced significant growth and development, which have helped and hurt the community. The purchasing of large portions of peripheral land by Tufts and New England Medical has increased demand for land by both reducing supply of developable land and introducing new populations associated with these institutions. In light of this increase in institutional development, the Chinatown Master Plan 2000 specifically identifies the need to “preserve Chinatown as a residential community.” As Andrew Leong, Chairman of the Campaign to Protect Chinatown, said, “If the residential district goes, you will have a dead Chinatown. It will be a shell only for tourists.”



Typical family residences in Chinatown

Home and Condominium Market

Since 2000, most units built in Chinatown have been luxury condominiums. While the market for condominiums in Chinatown was strong for many years, luxury condominium buildings are currently having difficulty selling all of their units. In general, the for-sale housing market in Chinatown has declined significantly in the past year. While the number of sales is currently around the same as a year ago, median sales prices have dropped from \$1,200,000 in February 2008 to \$400,000 in February 2009. Given this, it is an inopportune time to develop for-sale housing or condominiums in Chinatown.

Rental Market

A 2009 City of Boston report identifies that, of rental housing in Boston, 58% of renters live in private market-rate rental units, and about 40% of these households pay over 50% of their income. In contrast to the declining housing market, the rental market in Boston has a shortage of supply. Given that the median income of Chinatown residents is lower than that of Boston as a whole, it is safe to assume that the housing hardship in Chinatown is equivalent to, or worse than the housing situation in Boston.

Additionally, Chinatown residents, especially renters, have been affected by the recent foreclosure crisis. Foreclosures upon owner-occupied multifamily

properties resulted primarily in tenant displacement. Approximately 77% of people displaced in 2008 as a result of foreclosures were renters in Boston, and this places an extra strain on the existing supply.

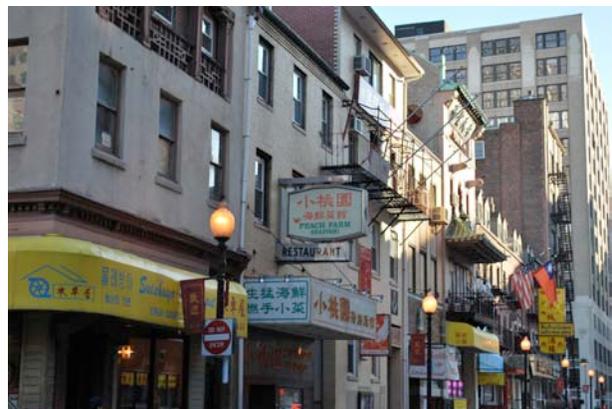
Affordable Housing

The high prices of rental housing, low median income, and high volume of luxury condominiums in Chinatown all contribute to the fear of gentrification and concern over insufficient affordable housing that is expressed by residents and community members. This need for affordable housing has been recognized over time, and efforts to maintain affordability in Chinatown have been successful, as is demonstrated by the 40% of housing that is subsidized or for the elderly. Regardless of these successes, there remains a desperate need to create new, and preserve existing, affordable and moderate income rental housing.

Retail Market

While the economy of Chinatown has diversified in the last thirty years, there remains a high concentration of small restaurants in the neighborhood, which both serve local residents and draw regional visitors. In regards to the building stock, many of the small businesses are located in buildings constructed in the early 19th century that are unable to provide adequate commercial space.

An asset to the site’s commercial component is its location in Boston’s designated Chinatown Main Streets district. According to a City of Boston Commercial Trends Report, retail lease rates in Boston Main Streets districts held their own during the last recession while “secondary” retail areas saw falling rents and increased vacancies. The retail lease rates in the Chinatown Main Streets district range from \$35 to \$45 per square foot.



Small family businesses are popular in Chinatown

In order to ensure that our development plan would be responsive to the needs of the Chinatown community, we developed an engagement strategy to garner the input of residents, business owners, neighborhood organizations, politicians, and local authorities in designing the mixed-income, multi-use housing development at the corner of Essex and Harrison. One of the major challenges of creating this proposal was balancing the various interests of the many stakeholders involved. In addition to responding to the feedback we received from our surveys and interviews, we drew upon the priorities and recommendations established by the Chinatown Master Plan and the Chinatown Blog.

Our engagement strategy included four main steps:

Step 1: Collect & Interpret Information

Step 2: Interview Key Neighborhood and Government Leaders

Step 3: Solicit Feedback from the Community through a Design Workshop

Step 4: Refine the Plan



Residents participate in community meeting

Step 1 - Collect & Interpret Information

Chinatown Master Plan 2000

The 2000 Master Plan is the second in a series of sourcebooks designed by Chinatown's residents, business owners, nonprofits and government agencies to establish key priorities, initiatives and partnerships for the development of the neighborhood. One of its key objectives is to "preserve existing affordable housing" while strengthening Chinatown's "mixed-rate housing stock." In order to do this, the Master Plan emphasizes the need for "continued community participation in processes related to housing development" as well as expanded "public sector investment and private sector involvement in the creation of mixed income housing."

Chinatown Blog

The Chinatown Blog, which was started in March 2007, is a collection of stories and events related to Boston Chinatown and the Asian American community in Massachusetts. The Blog originated to disseminate information to residents about Chinatown land development and planning issues. The Blog is owned and managed by the Chinatown Gateway Coalition whose mission is to advocate for real estate developments in the interest of Chinatown through community planning processes. From this Blog, we learned that residents are striving to preserve the culture and history of their neighborhood as the City of Boston continues to change.

Originally, in order to reach more community members, we had planned to post our preliminary proposals on the blog and ask readers for their input. Ultimately, we decided that this might confuse the blog's audience about the hypothetical nature of our project and jeopardize community reception of any future development proposals for the intersection of Essex and Harrison. However, if ACDC decides to move forward with the proposal, we recommend posting information and design schemes on the blog to garner feedback from a broader audience.



Survey route

Neighborhood Surveys

Aside from reading planning documents, news articles, and other sources, we felt that it was important to simply talk to those who live and work near the intersection of Essex and Harrison to learn more about the surrounding area and Chinatown, as well as better understand how our development plan could address the needs of residents and workers. Thus, we designed a survey to help us do exactly this. Our findings were in line with what we discovered from the Chinatown Master Plan and the Blog.

We surveyed a total of 23 individuals, all of who stated that they work in the area. Interestingly enough, only 5 of the 23 respondents actually live in Chinatown. The age of respondents varied from 19 to 60, but most people surveyed ranged in age from 19 to 39. Seventeen respondents said that they were familiar with the corner at Essex and Harrison, and several people said that they walk through the intersection often to use the T and other amenities located near the site. When we asked respondents how they would like to see the corner improved, the following answers were expressed several times:

- *I would like to see more housing for the business owners that live in the area*
- *We need a nice park in that area*
- *That polluted needs to be cleaned and the buildings there are unused.*
- *It is a good place to put more apartments for the people who want to live here.*
- *We need a community place where we can relax or come together.*

The survey process also enabled us to gauge what community members like and dislike about Chinatown so that our development plan could preserve and enhance these assets, and help alleviate problems in the community. Respondents told us that the diversity, culture, street fairs, celebrations, and small traditional businesses, as well as landmarks such as the Chinatown Gateway and recreation spaces such as the YMCA were their favorite aspects of the neighborhood. In general, those surveyed complained about the area's pollution, high rents, as well as its lack of green space and gathering places.

One community member stated, "The area is misrepresented, and Chinatown is not celebrated enough. It is too often shown as economically depressed and suffering. I would like any new development to celebrate our history."



Sam Lee interviewing a Chinatown resident

Chinatown Community Outreach Survey

1. Do you live in Chinatown?
2. If you do live in Chinatown, how long have you lived here?
3. Do you work in Chinatown?
4. How long is your commute to work?
5. If you do work in Chinatown, how long have you worked in the area?
6. How old are you?
7. Are you familiar with the Essex and Harrison corner in Chinatown?
8. Do you visit or walk through that part of Chinatown often?
9. How would you like to see that corner / area of Chinatown improved?
10. What do you enjoy most about your neighborhood?
11. What do you like least about your neighborhood?
12. Would you be interested in attending a community meeting to learn more about and provide feedback for a proposal for the Harrison and Essex corner? If so, please provide your email address or phone number so we can contact you in the future about such a meeting.

Thank You and Have a Nice Day!

Step 2 - Interview Key Neighborhood and Government Leaders

The purpose of these formal interviews was to understand the varying interests, needs, and concerns of major stakeholders who are representative of larger contingents in Chinatown. The knowledge gained from this process informed several components of our proposal including the decision to rehabilitate the existing structure, to offer specific unit types and public amenities, as well to design the corner as a secondary gateway into Chinatown. After researching the area extensively, and with help from the Asian Community Development Corporation, we identified 15 local groups that would be affected by and interested in our development proposal and reached out to the organizations' leaders. Since our site is located in District 2 of Boston, we identified the Office of Councilman Linnehan and the Boston Redevelopment Authority as relevant local government offices.



Residents identify need for better street lighting

Community Outreach

Richard Chin, YMCA

Debbie Ho, Chinatown Main Streets

Drew Leff, GLC Development, Chinatown Main Streets Boardmember, and Resident

Kye Liang, Chinatown Blog & Chinatown Master Plan

David Sealy, Leather District Neighborhood Association

Marrika Trotter, Friends of the Chinatown Public Library

Through these interviews, we learned that household sizes are large in Chinatown, and therefore 2 or 3 bedroom affordable units are very needed in the area. Many people who work in Chinatown would prefer to live in the neighborhood, but simply cannot afford a home for their family and commute from towns such as Quincy. We also learned that there is not enough available parking for residents or workers in the area, and that while the area is very accessible by public transit, more infrastructure and parking for automobiles would be convenient and possibly lure more suburban consumers to the shops and restaurants in the area. Yet, at the same time, community members find the area too congested with automobiles. Lastly, it was recommended that any new development adhere to the architectural character of the area.



James Chan and Tim Brown, community liaisons of Councilor Linehan's office, discuss their priorities for Chinatown

Political Outreach

Boston Redevelopment Authority
 David A. Carlson, Senior Architect
 Sheila A. Dillon, Deputy Director for Housing
 Peter Gori, Project Manager, Crossroads Initiative
 Mary Knasas, Senior Planner

Affordable Housing

The Deputy Director of Housing at the BRA explained to us that the Chinatown community has always advocated for additional affordable housing in the neighborhood. Unlike Chinatown, many communities in Boston do not support the expansion of affordable housing in their areas because of the low-income or at-risk populations that may be attached to these units. For this reason, bringing affordable housing to Chinatown, where the units are welcomed, has always been a priority for the City.

Open Space

We were interested to learn more from the BRA about their intentions and priorities for the site because the corner of Essex and Harrison also known as Phillips Square, is part of the Boston Redevelopment Authority's Crossroads Initiative.



BRA rendering for proposed public space at Phillips Square

Office of Councilor Bill Linehan, City of Boston
 Timothy Brown, Community Liaison
 James Chan, Constituent Services

Affordable Housing and Community Facilities

Our meeting with the Councilman's Office underscored the need to develop and maintain Chinatown's affordable housing stock. According to James Chan, Director of Constituent Services, the neighborhood "has been oversaturated with condominiums, and we therefore seek to promote the development of rental units, particularly affordable ones." The community liaisons also emphasized the need to develop additional community facilities in the neighborhood. Specifically, Chinatown has been without a library since 1956, despite the fact that it has remained a largely immigrant and low-income area that would benefit significantly from the types of services and spaces that only a library can provide. In 2001, the Friends of the Chinatown Library group was established to advocate for a branch library. "Whether it be affordable housing, public space, or a library, it is the community's voice that drives how the City responds to their needs," explained Timothy Brown.

Step 3 - Solicit Feedback from the Community through a Design Workshop

After processing all the information we gathered from our research, we developed preliminary designs for the site and sought to gather feedback on these concepts from Chinatown residents. We chose not to present renderings or finalized site plans because ACDC did not want to lead participants to believe that our proposed development was currently in the CDC's pipeline. With the help of Alex Zhang, Community Organizer from ACDC, we presented our ideas for the site to a group of residents on the evening of April 3rd and asked them to respond by sharing their own visions for the corner.



Alex Zhang translates for residents



Flyer distributed among leaders and residents of Chinatown to advertise community meeting

To facilitate communication, Alex served as a translator for the evening and we incorporated nonverbal communication methods such as an open forum to draw on site maps and large photographs. The main recommendations that arose from the meeting were:

1.) *Open Space and Greenery*

While most participants were in favor of the addition of parks and lawns, maintaining these public spaces was a primary concern. It was noted that when open spaces are not properly lit or maintained they become unsafe and uncomfortable places for people to congregate.

2.) *Mixed-Income Housing*

While the provision of affordable housing for Chinatown's families was of paramount importance, participants recognized that market-rate units help attract residents with higher incomes which helps strengthen and diversify the neighborhood's consumer base.

4.) *Commercial Space*

Participants were supportive of having retail space on the bottom floor of the mixed-income development, and explained that small independent businesses in Chinatown need appropriate, affordable spaces to operate stores or restaurants.

5.) *Community Space*

The YMCA is very popular in Chinatown because it is one of the only places in the neighborhood where young people, the elderly, and adults can spend time for recreational purposes. It was noted that more facilities such as this one are needed, and should be incorporated into the development.



Community members discuss their visions for the site

Step 4 - Refine the Plan



Conceptual board used in the planning process with community members

The final step of our outreach strategy was to modify our proposal based on the feedback we received from residents and community stakeholders. Because our initial ideas were based on research, surveys, and interviews, the meeting's participants were generally supportive of our preliminary proposal, which seemed to address their needs. Ultimately, we incorporated specific design elements such as Asian landscapes in our plans that were recommended at the meeting. Lastly, we distributed our contact information to participants in the event that anyone wanted to share other thoughts, concerns, or ideas at a later date.

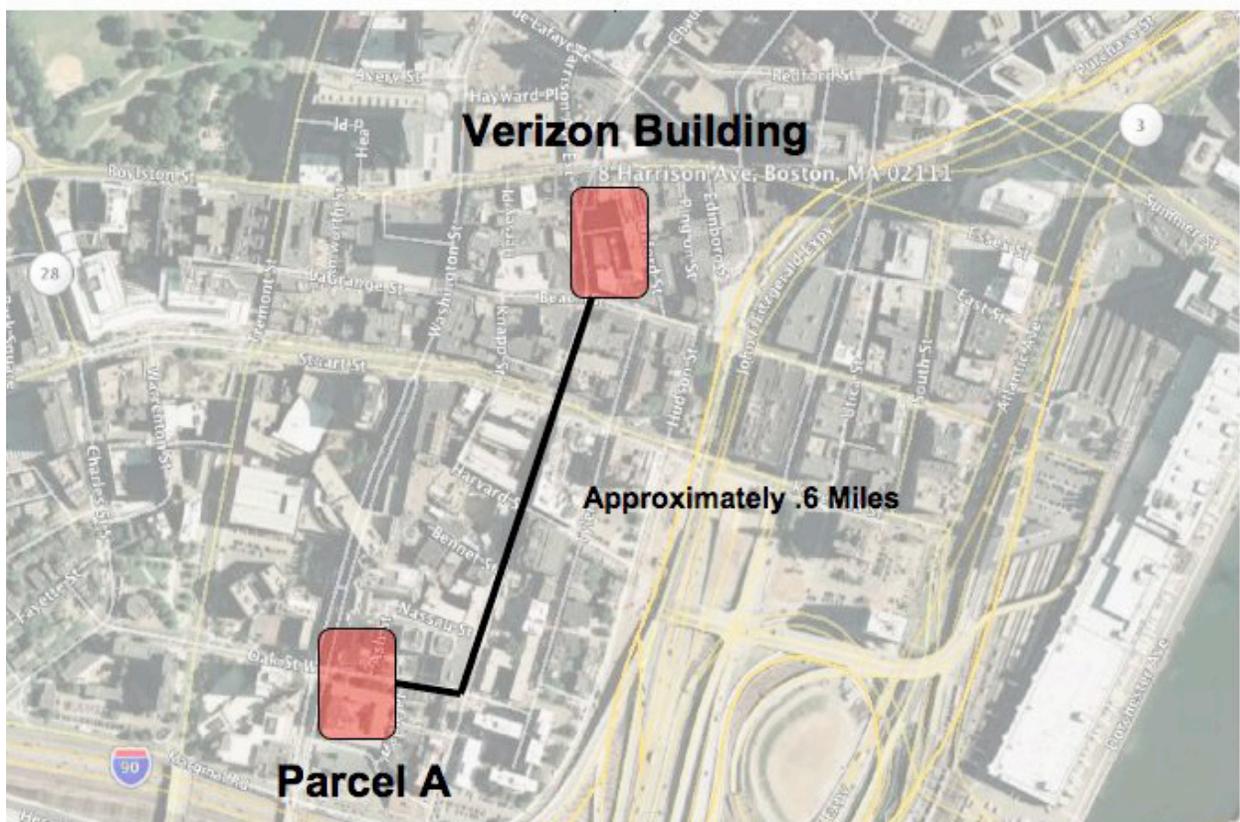
In keeping with the recommendations of the Master Plan and Blog, we allowed residents, business owners and community organizations to drive the design and planning process, while relying upon local architects, government officials, and bankers to provide the necessary advice to ensure the viability and sustainability of our community-driven proposal. ACDC was a key partner in organizing the abovementioned community outreach initiatives and is well-positioned to organize future engagements and foster local support to see the project through construction and leasing.



Student team revising the plan

The site we propose to develop is currently owned by Verizon Communications Inc. The company, which is headquartered in Boston, uses the 8-story building and 3-story annex located at the intersection of Harrison and Essex to house equipment and provides working space for approximately ten employees. Over the past 4 years, telecommunications companies, such as Verizon, have been paring down their real estate portfolios in the Boston area in order to reduce their growing property tax burden. Throughout fiscal year 2007, Verizon sold 505,000 square feet of office and storage space in Braintree and Waltham and, in October of 2008, sold its 22-story office tower at 185 Franklin Street for \$192 million. According to Commercial Property News (CPN), Verizon's disposition of its Boston headquarters dovetails with the company's ongoing corporate strategy of evaluating and realigning its real estate needs to maximize use and reduce operating expenses. "We are constantly assessing our business needs and how our real estate portfolio fits into them, and we make certain moves when they make sense," a Verizon spokesperson told CPN.

"Given today's competitive telecommunications environment, it is particularly important that Verizon make the most efficient use of its facilities," says Lee Brathwaite, vice president of real estate. Recognizing that Verizon's buildings at Essex St. and Harrison Ave. are underutilized and impose tax liabilities upon Verizon, the company should consider divesting them in order to relocate its operations to more appropriate facilities or eliminate costly, redundant space from its portfolio altogether. Moreover, if the company were to sell the abovementioned buildings to ACDC for the development of mixed-income housing and public amenities, it would generate significant good will with city officials and members of the community while advancing its Corporate Responsibility Strategy to invest in community development initiatives in the greater Boston area.



Distance between Verizon and Parcel A

The Verizon site is currently valued at \$9.6 million (land is \$2.7 million and buildings are \$6.9 million). Given that this property is prime real estate, we have worked with ACDC and the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) to develop two alternative acquisition strategies, which incentivize Verizon to sell the site whether the company’s ultimate goal is to eliminate property from its portfolio or to consolidate operations in more appropriate facilities. Both of our proposed strategies combine a cash transfer from ACDC to Verizon with a tax write-off from the City that will enable the company to defray its tax liabilities incurred through the sale of several hundred million dollars worth of real estate as well as ongoing state and federal taxes related to the company’s operations in the continental United States.



Diagram of Parcel A taken from Chinatown library feasibility study

Under the first scenario, ACDC would acquire the site through a \$2 million cash transfer to Verizon, with the company taking a \$7.6 million tax write-off based on the outstanding value of its charitable donation to the nonprofit, ACDC. This approach allows Verizon to generate income and reduce its tax liabilities by eliminating underutilized buildings from its real estate portfolio. Our second acquisition strategy assumes that Verizon needs to maintain comparable space in Boston, but that it would benefit from relocating to a new site that would more efficiently meet the company’s storage needs. Specifically, we have discussed with the BRA the engineering of a land-swap between the City of Boston and Verizon. In exchange for its Essex

and Harrison site, Verizon would receive a comparable piece of land on Parcel A, which is located within several blocks of its current buildings on Marginal Street. This land-swap will come at no cost to ACDC or the city because Parcel A is already owned by the BRA. Moreover, the BRA’s board of directors already has investigated and initiated discussions to execute a land-swap using Parcel A, with the end goal of freeing-up land to develop additional affordable housing and the Chinatown Branch of the Boston Public Library. Because a land-swap alone would only compensate Verizon for the



Temporary trailers on Parcel A

value of the land and not the buildings, the swap would be supplemented by an additional cash transfer and tax write-off. The cash transfer would come from ACDC in the amount of \$2 million and a \$4.9 million tax write-off to Verizon. This \$6.9 million would cover the value of the buildings and provide funds for the construction of basic storage facilities that could be located on its designated portion of Parcel A.

Rehabilitation or Demolition?

The team spent time evaluating whether the Verizon building and its annex should be preserved or demolished. The 8-story Verizon building is structurally sound, the large original windows are in place, and the brickwork and cornices are intact. The building's layout, fenestration, and generous floor height allow for apartment conversion. However, it is impractical to renovate the adjacent annex for housing because of its blank facades, large footprint, and low height.

While assessing the site, we also researched precedents in the area to better understand recent and upcoming development in Chinatown. If we demolished both structures, then the architects could design a large tower for the site, increasing the number of market rate and affordable units in the development. Such towers such as Archstone, The Metropolitan, and the proposed Dainty Dot building are present and appearing in Chinatown. It would not be possible to construct such a tower by simply adding floors to the existing Verizon building because the structural capacity would not be able to support additional floors without major reinforcing, making the project prohibitively expensive.

Historical Context

In 1920, one of Boston's leading architectural firms Parker, Thomas, and Rice designed the Verizon building. It was built to provide workspace for New England Telephone's around-the-clock operators. In this way, the building is not only an important structure, creating an anchor for the corner of the street, but it also embodies the history of Boston's telecommunications industry.

Architectural and Structural Considerations

The Verizon building is a Classical Revival structure, with a 2 story rusticated base of brick, and a 15' high ground floor with 1st level arched openings. The façade consists of the original buff-colored brick and limestone, and many of the original windows and exterior light fixtures are still in place. The pebbled concrete infill panels at the ground floor arches are not original to the building, and will be replaced with new windows to match the above existing windows. Although we were unable to procure existing conditions drawings, it is assumed that the structure is built from a steel and concrete frame supporting the brick and limestone veneer, consistent with other Boston buildings of this period.

Dainty Dot Building

Located on 120 Kingston Street just a few blocks away from our site is the Dainty Dot building, built in 1889. It is on the National Register of Historic Places because of its location in a once-significant textile district. In November 2006, the building was sold to developer Ori Ron who has proposed a 29-story residential tower on the site. Due to community and political pressure, the developer intends to preserve about half of the building's exterior bays, which will remain along Essex and Kingston Streets. Ultimately, we decided not to demolish the Verizon structure and build a residential tower because of the many complaints and criticisms we heard from the community about the contentious Dainty Dot development. During an interview, David Sealy from the neighboring Leather District Neighborhood Association explained that the loss of the building

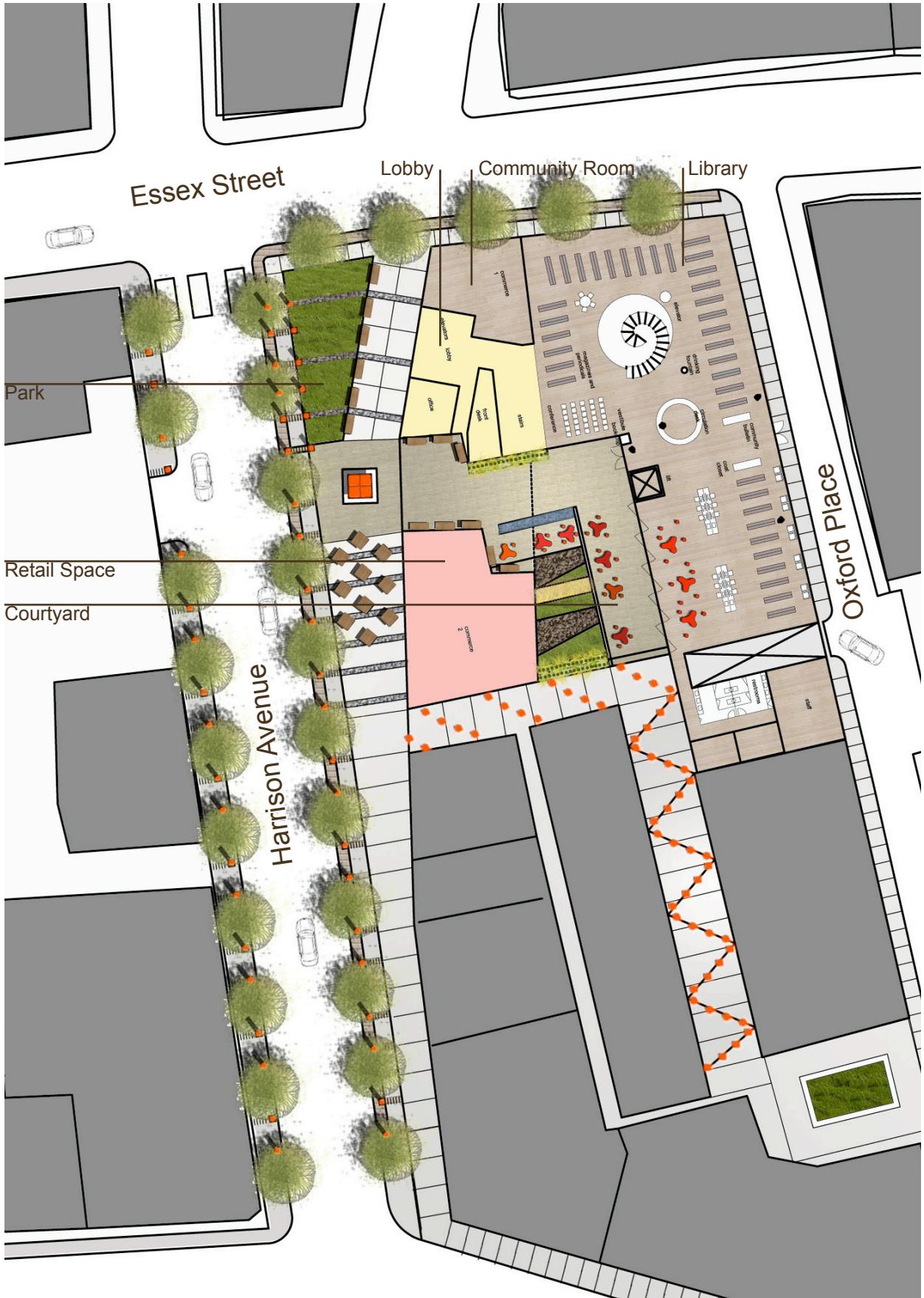
was a loss of history for the area. According to the Boston Globe, "Some neighbors and other critics say the new Dainty Dot building is too tall for the relatively low-rise Chinatown community and would impose too much on the adjacent Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway park. They also worry the new building would set a precedent for more towers in the area."



Existing Dainty Dot building



Proposed Dainty Dot development



Site and ground floor plan

The Verizon building's front door provides the entry to the residentail units above, with a management office on the ground floor. The remaining ground floor is taken up by the new Library and a small commercial space in the new addition. Access to underground parking is on Oxford Street.

Design Proposal



View from Essex Street

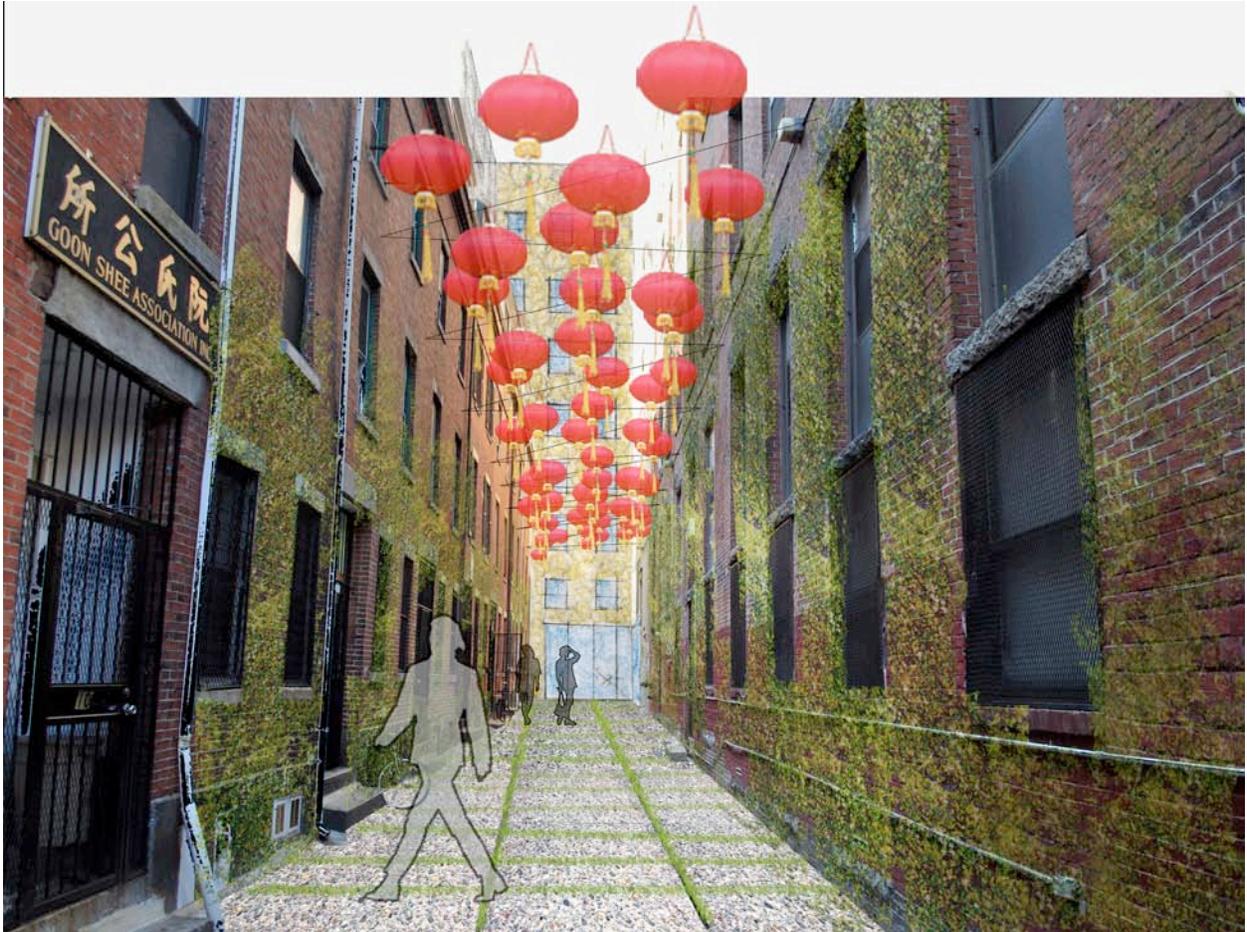
After deciding to rehabilitate the Verizon building and demolish the annex building, the new addition was designed with several goals. These goals include reinforcing the street edge along Harrison Avenue while maximizing the number of units in the development. Lastly, we aimed to create healthy living spaces with good air and light circulation, and facilitate a green network throughout our development.

The site features a new park along Harrison Avenue, inspired by the BRA's Crossroads Initiative. There is also a new internal courtyard, which serves as part of the entry sequence to the Library and is shared by building residents, the Library, and the community. Responding to community input, we incorporated traditional Chinese design elements such as a series of lanterns that connect the park, the courtyard, and the existing through-block alley. These light fixtures create a unified design composition, while simultaneously providing enhanced night time security, also of concern to residents we spoke with.

The new addition matches the scale of the Verizon building in both height and in the base rustication line which is carried across the facade. The plane of the facade above steps back to modulate the facade and bring the scale down further, while simultaneously providing a series of "window boxes" for the units.

Park and Courtyard

framework | site context | community outreach | acquisition | design | sustainability | financing & delivery



View of alley off of Oxford Place

The incorporation of open space is key to our design proposal. Located between the Boston Common and the Rose Kennedy Greenway, Chinatown currently has the least open space of any Boston neighborhood, and a desire for more greenery was echoed in the Chinatown Master Plan as well as at our community meetings.

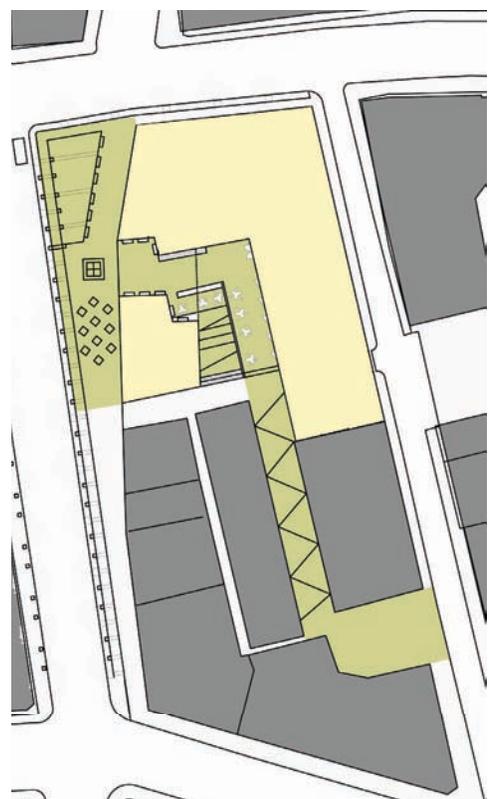
Our open space design links several components: a new park along Harrison Avenue, a new internal courtyard, the existing alley off of Oxford Place and an existing park on Oxford Street. Linking these spaces as shown in the diagram above, a new through-block connection is established, and the alley (part of the original urban fabric of Chinatown and currently fronted by townhouses) is given new prominence.

Given residents' concern for safety, lighting is a critical feature in the open space design. Responding to Chinatown residents' desire for traditional Chinese design elements, a network of lanterns provides nighttime security and visually connects the open spaces through the project.

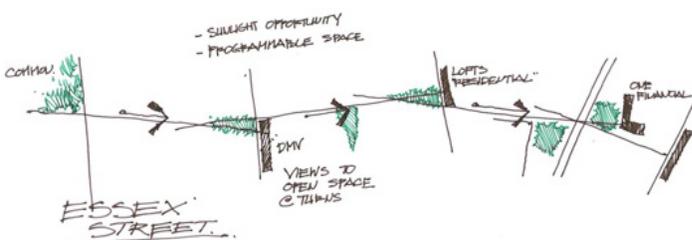
The BRA Crossroads Initiative identified Essex Street as a critical corridor, and a new park in front of our building has been proposed. We have further developed the park plan to include seating and special place-identifying lighting.



Current view of the alley off of Oxford Place



Reconnected alley



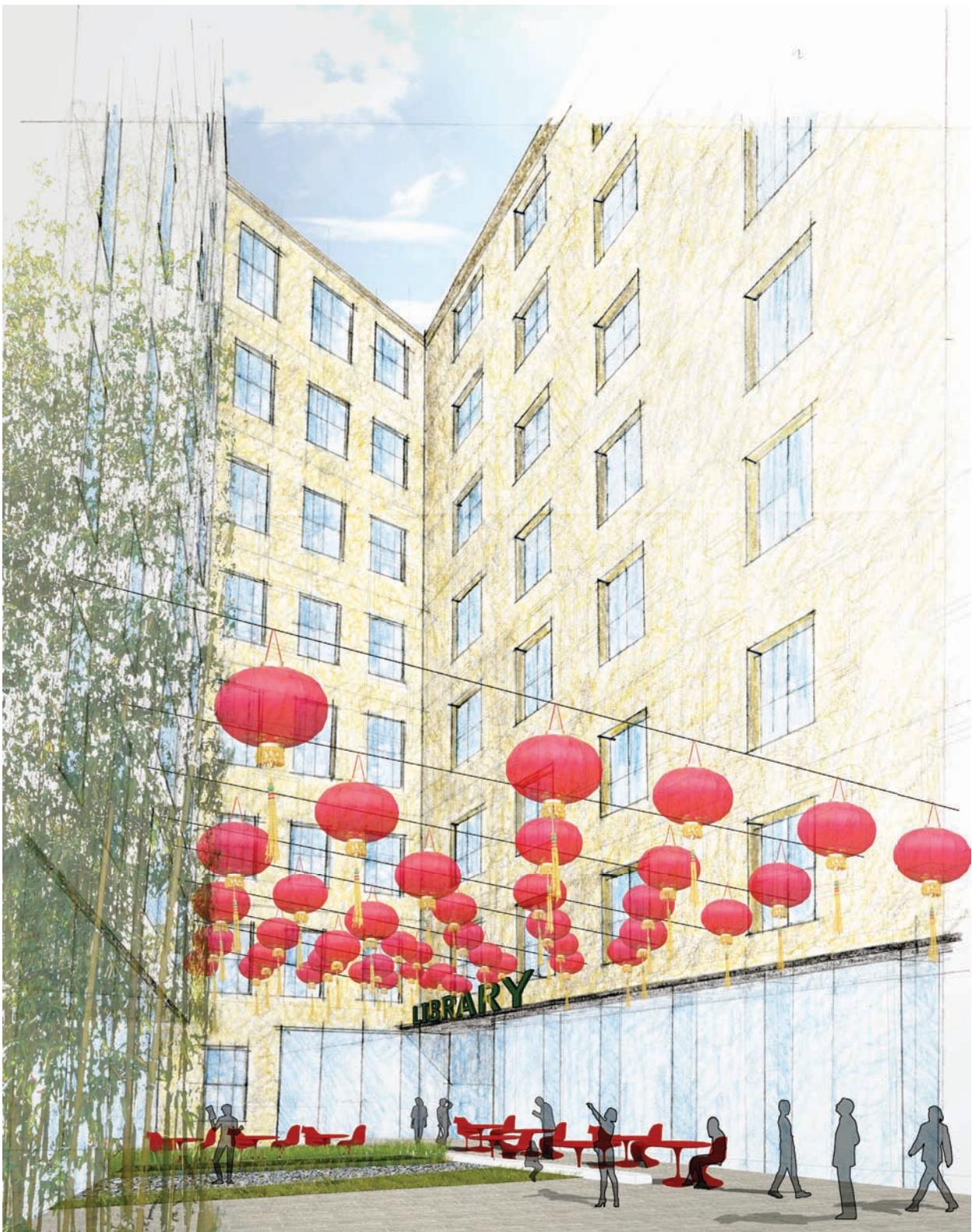
Sketch of Essex Street as part of the BRA's Crossroad Initiative



Current view of unused space



View of park in front of Chinatown Crossing development



View into new courtyard

Chinatown Branch Boston Public Library

A Branch Library for Chinatown

The intersection of Harrison and Essex Streets is the ideal location for the Chinatown Branch of the Boston Public Library. The addition of a library to this corner would reactivate Phillips Square and create a memorializing gateway at the north end of the neighborhood. Several community leaders with whom we spoke, including Debbie Ho of Chinatown Main Streets, emphasized how much the community would benefit from the services and community spaces that a library could provide. Marrika Trotter, the Project Planner for the Chinatown Library Program and Siting Study, agreed that the ground floor of our mixed-use development would serve as a convenient and accessible location for the facility.

Since the 1960's, Chinatown has been one of the few Boston neighborhoods without a branch library of its own. Currently, residents travel to the neighborhood branch library in the South End or the main branch at Copley Square to borrow books or take advantage of other programming. Chinatown is in critical need of this important public facility, which can provide education and recreation opportunities, as well as gathering space for the dense neighborhood's large immigrant population and various community organizations. The area is struggling to maintain its residential population and cultural identity, and shopkeepers are experiencing hardship due to a decrease in business. The addition of a Boston Public Library branch would pay tribute to this historic enclave, build a sense of pride among residents and other stakeholders in Chinatown, and reinvigorate the local economy by attracting visitors to the neighborhood.

In June 2006, the Boston City Council convened a hearing to discuss proposals for the branch library, and, in July 2007, Mayor Thomas Menino granted funds to the architectural firm Miller Dyer Spears to conduct a feasibility study examining where the proposed library might be located in Chinatown. The study was conducted in a transparent, inclusive manner with members of the neighborhood thoroughly engaged from the outset. The Advisory Council for the feasibility study included community leaders, representatives from the Boston Public Library, and City of Boston representatives from the Property & Construction Management Department, the Mayor's Office, the Boston Redevelopment Authority, and the Office of Budget.

History of the Chinatown Public Library Movement

The history of the Boston Public Library (BPL) in Chinatown dates back to 1896, when a branch of the BPL first opened on 130 Tyler Street. The library offered valuable services such as English classes, citizenship information, and a program for community events and performances. The branch library was in operation for over four decades before it was closed in 1938. Despite strong community protests, the branch remained closed until 1951, when it was reopened as a reading room. Just four years later, however, the Chinatown branch at 130 Tyler Street was demolished in order to make way for the Boston Central Artery. While residents of Chinatown remember the original branch library and have advocated for its replacement since the time of its demolition, this movement was reinvigorated in 2001 when the Chinese Youth Initiative conducted a survey and then began distributing promotional materials to galvanize local support.



The Boston Public Library in Copley Square



View of residential entrance (left), entrance to library and courtyard (center), and retail space (right)

Goals for the Library

The design of our proposed library directly responds to feedback we received from community stakeholders and adheres to the objectives set forth in the Chinatown Program and Siting Study. The following are our proposal objectives:

- Provide significant visibility and natural light;
- Create a new, forward-thinking vision of what a public library and community space can be;
- Celebrate multi-cultural and multi-lingual interchange;
- Provide a meeting place for the community;
- Expand the existing exterior, passive recreation space in Chinatown (this includes areas such as gardens and parking which are meant for respite and dialogue as opposed to movement and interchange);
- Locate the library centrally in a dense, pedestrian-oriented urban context with special regard towards favorable adjacencies with existing community programs and facilities;
- Establish a unique identity for this library, reflecting the unique population it will serve;
- Identify realistic sites suitable for a time implementation of library construction;
- Build sustainable strategies into library site options.

The study also notes that “given the dense urban fabric of the Chinatown community, it is likely that any proposed site will have compelling development interests, and that the library may ultimately be located within a mixed-use development.” Although the Boston Public Library stated a general preference for a one-story facility, it concluded that a multi-level scheme would be suitable if the building’s amenities and residents created a supportive community environment.

Located on the ground floor of the rehabilitated Verizon building, the Library in our proposal meets the goals outlined above. In particular, the new courtyard provides a unique public space overlooked by the main reading room. Every part of the Library has natural light and views to the outside. A community room provides a multi-purpose space for the residents and several organizations of Chinatown. Archival stack space and loading docks are accommodated at the lower level, which are connected to the new underground parking garage. The overall building design is projected to attain LEED silver status, making the Library a prominent example of sustainable building construction.

Feasibility and Costs

Given the community’s demonstrated desire and need for a public library branch, as well as Mayor Menino’s commitment to the cause, it can be assumed that the City of Boston will help fund the construction and programming of the facility. According to Timothy Brown, Community Liaison to Councilman Linnenhan, “If there is enough community support for the library, which there seems to be, then there would be enough will on the City’s side to move funding allocation for the project along.” Furthermore, after the Verizon-BRA land-swap, the BRA would own the site designated for the library, which would eliminate any acquisition costs for the city to proceed with the project.

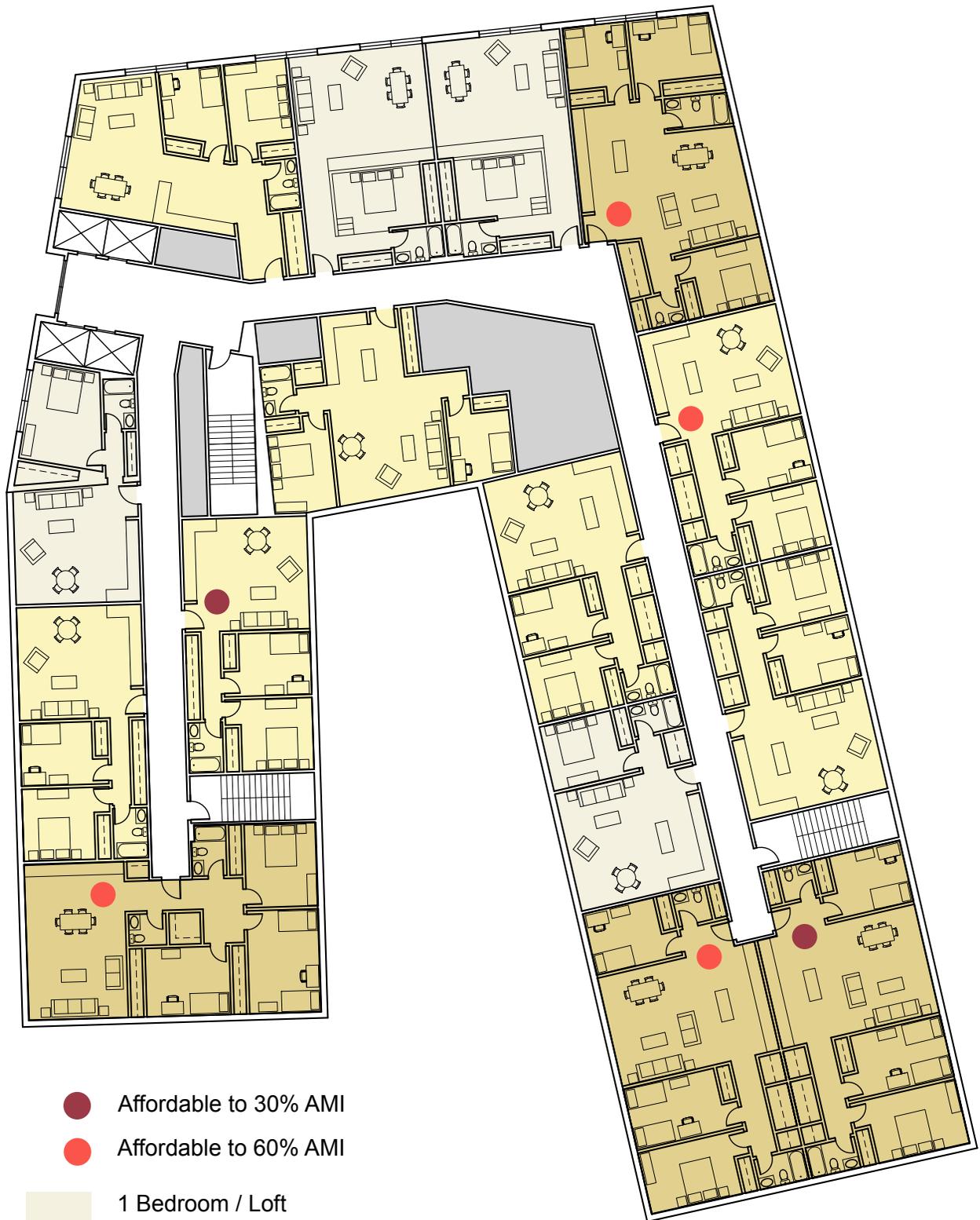
Lastly, with financial support from organizations like the George Robert White Fund, construction of the library is feasible. The White Fund helps create public beauty and utility for Boston inhabitants by financing the construction of museums, recreation centers, and parks. For example, in 2005 the Fund contributed \$2,000,000 for the construction of the George Robert White Youth Development Center in Dorchester. The library also could secure financial resources for its construction by issuing general obligation bonds, which the City has experience in using to finance the construction of public buildings. This year’s City budget assumes \$600 million in new general obligation borrowings over the next five years to support ongoing capital needs.

The Chinatown Library Feasibility Study provides cost estimates for the construction of the public facility. Because three of the four suggested sites are envisioned as components of a larger mixed-use development, these locations are priced as a fit-out, with building site work, envelope, and building level MEP / FP systems not included. We already have accounted for these costs in our overall budget.

LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION SOURCES	
Description	Total
Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program	\$720,000
General Obligation Bond	\$1,000,000
The White Fund	\$2,755,800
The Boston Globe Foundation	\$10,000
Private Donations	\$10,000
Boston Public Library Foundation	\$10,000
TOTAL	\$4,505,800

LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION USES				
Ground Floor	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total
Interior and Exterior Renovation	13,315	GSF	\$119.00	\$1,584,485
Sprinkler / Plumbing	13,315	GSF	\$31.00	\$412,765
HVAC	13,315	GSF	\$25.00	\$332,875
Electrical / Tele and Data	13,315	GSF	\$25.00	\$332,875
Total			\$200.00	\$2,663,000
Basement Floor	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total
Low-Rise Elevator	1	-	\$20,000.00	\$20,000
Interior Renovation	9,800	GSF	\$105.00	\$1,029,000
Sprinkler / Plumbing	9,800	GSF	\$31.00	\$303,800
HVAC	9,800	GSF	\$25.00	\$245,000
Total		GSF	\$161.00	\$1,597,800
TOTAL				\$4,260,800

Building Plans



Typical floor plan

Unit Mix

The design seeks to maximize units with double-loaded corridors and efficient layout. With the mix of unit types and affordability levels projected, disbursing the affordable units throughout the project (rather than concentrating them all in the same area) was a priority. The design makes use of the existing elevator core to serve the entire building and adds some new core components such as exit stairs, central trash, and recycling at each floor.

An open, loft-like kitchen and dining/living layout in the units allows maximum flexibility in use and provides every space with natural light and views. Five percent of the units are accessible, and the unit design also meets both HOME and LIHTC standards. To provide maximum thermal control, each unit is equipped with its own hot water heater and high efficiency furnace. Air conditioning is not provided, but the windows are operable.

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Residential Floor	Loft	1 BR	2 BR	3 BR	
2	2	2	7	4	
3	2	2	7	4	
4	2	2	7	4	
5	2	2	7	4	
6	2	2	7	4	
7	2	2	7	4	
8	2	2	7	4	
TOTAL	14	14	49	28	Total Units
	13%	13%	47%	27%	

Unit	Avg. Size (GSF)
Loft	750
1	725
2	875
3	1100

Unit Type	New	Rehab
Loft Units	None	14
GSF	None	10,500
1 BR Units	None	14
GSF	None	10,150
2 BR Units	14	35
GSF	12,250	30,625
3 BR Units	7	21
GSF	7,700	23,100

Residential Floor		Loft	1 BR	2 BR	3 BR	TOTAL
2	New Units	0	0	2	1	3
	Rehab Units	2	2	5	3	12
3	New Units	0	0	2	1	3
	Rehab Units	2	2	5	3	12
4	New Units	0	0	2	1	3
	Rehab Units	2	2	5	3	12
5	New Units	0	0	2	1	3
	Rehab Units	2	2	5	3	12
6	New Units	0	0	2	1	3
	Rehab Units	2	2	5	3	12
7	New Units	0	0	2	1	3
	Rehab Units	2	2	5	3	12
8	New Units	0	0	2	1	3
	Rehab Units	2	2	5	3	12
TOTAL		14	14	49	28	105

Floors	Total GSF	New GSF	Rehab GSF
Basement	21,715	7,000	14,715
1	16,950	2,235	14,715
2	18,500	3,785	14,715
3	18,500	3,785	14,715
4	18,500	3,785	14,715
5	18,500	3,785	14,715
6	18,500	3,785	14,715
7	18,500	3,785	14,715
8	18,500	3,785	14,715
TOTAL	168,165	35,730	132,435

Unit	Market	Affordable
Loft	14	0
1 BR	14	0
2 BR	35	14
3 BR	0	28
Total	63	42

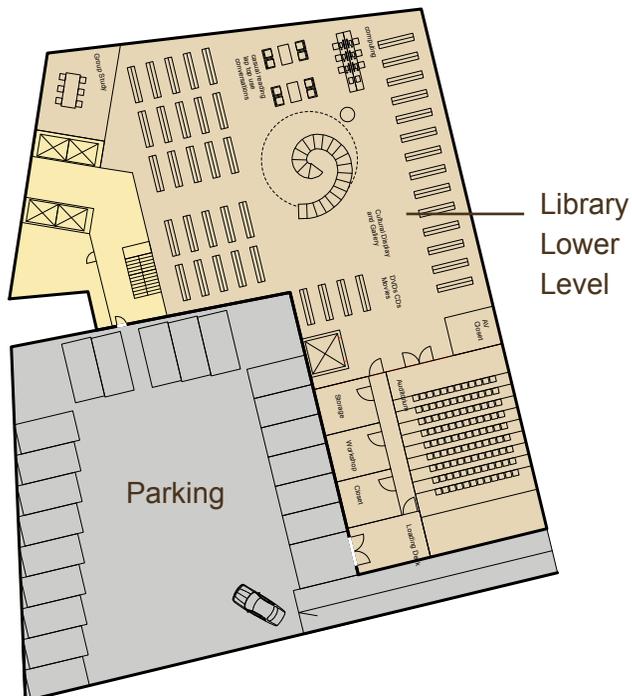
Affordable	2 BR	3 BR
60% AMI	10	21
30% AMI	4	7

Affordable	40%	42 Units
Market Rate	60%	63 Units

Building Plans



Eighth floor plan

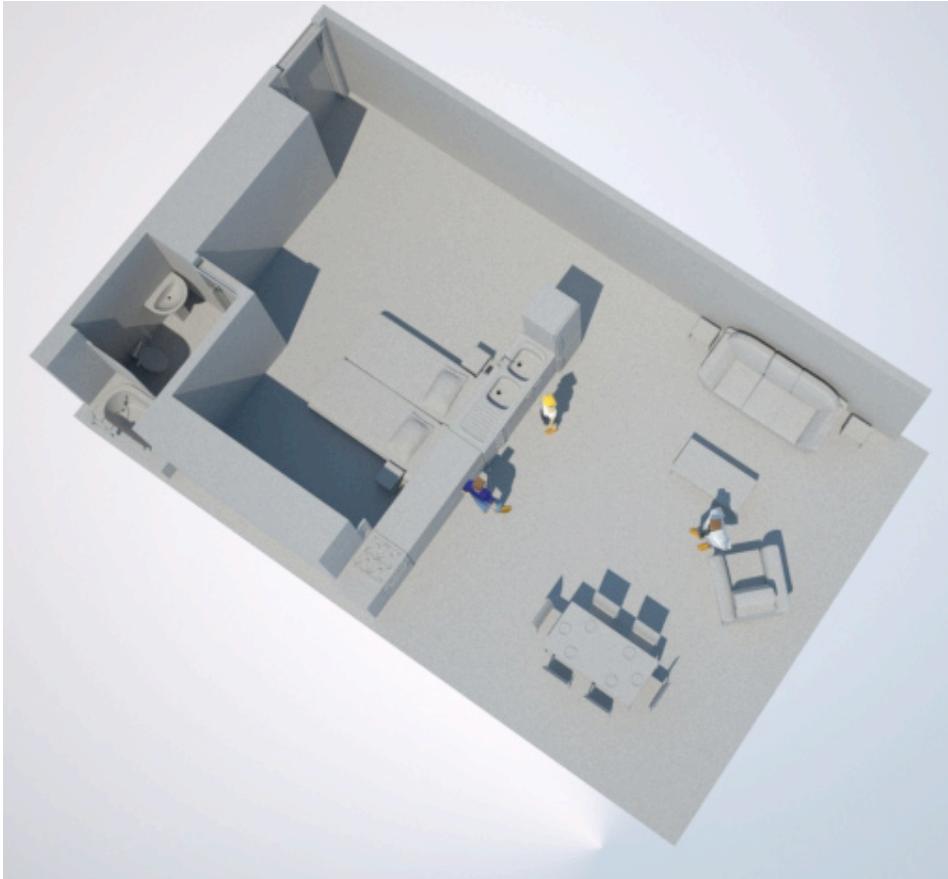


Basement floor plan

- Affordable to 30% AMI
- Affordable to 60% AMI
- 1 Bedroom / Loft
- 2 Bedroom
- 3 Bedroom

Unit Design

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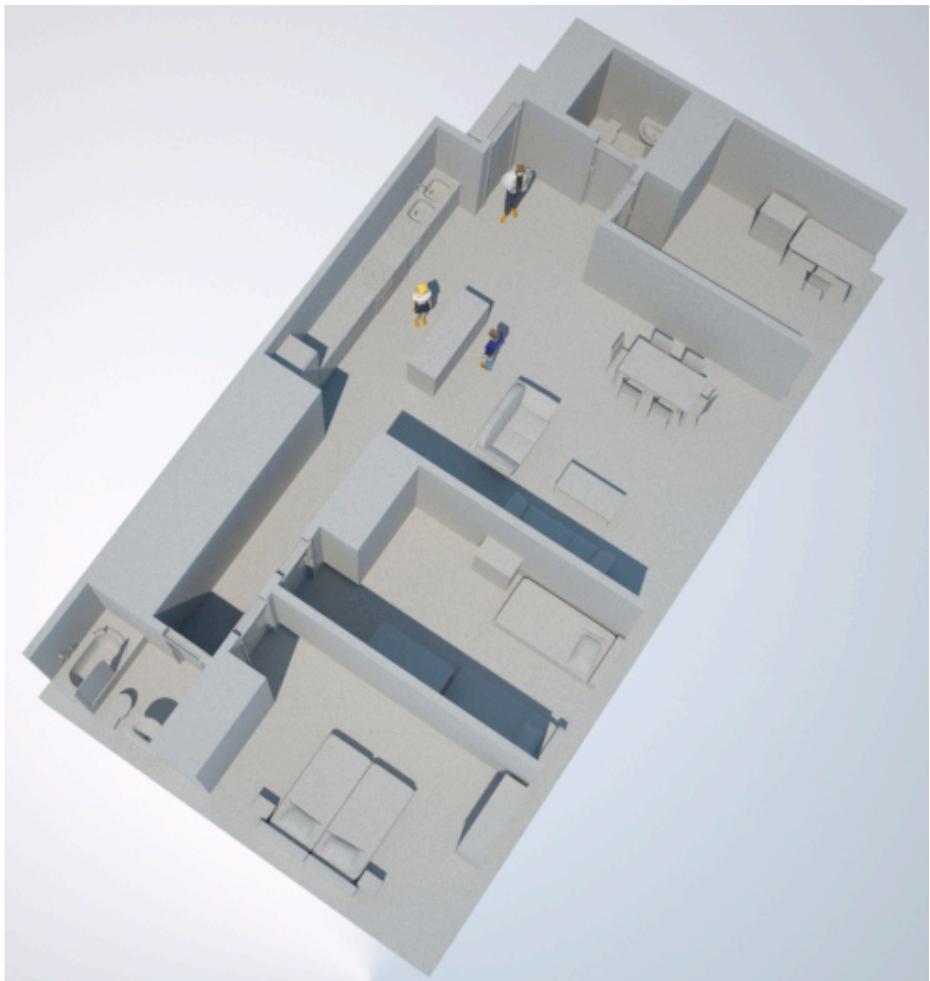
One Bedroom Loft
Combined Living/Dining
1 Bath
Washer/dryer hook-up



Two Bedroom
Combined Living/Dining
1 Bath
Washer/dryer hook-up



One Bedroom
Combined Living/Dining
1 Bath
Washer/dryer hook-up



Three Bedroom
Combined Living/Dining
1 1/2 Baths
Washer/dryer hook-up

LEED & Smart Growth

Redeveloping an existing building in a busy downtown location which is already well-served by public transit sets the tone for creating an environmentally sustainable development. We propose using two established frameworks for measuring sustainability: The US Green Building Council's (USGBC) LEED rating system and the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Smart Growth criteria. The LEED credits we focus on will help reduce operating and utility expenses (important for low-income housing) as well as improve the quality and comfort of the spaces.



LEED point calculation:

Sustainable Sites	8/14 points
Water Efficiency	4/5 points
Energy + Atmosphere	6/17 points
Materials + Resources	6/13 points
Indoor Environmental Quality	12/15 points
Total:	34/69 points
Pre-certification Estimate:	LEED Silver

Smart Growth

From the EPA guidelines, the principles of Smart Growth are:

1. Mix land uses
2. Take advantage of compact building design
3. Create a range of housing opportunities and choices
4. Create walkable neighborhoods
5. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place
6. Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas
7. Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities
8. Provide a variety of transportation choices
9. Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective
10. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions

Our project embodies the following principles of smart growth:

- Mixed use: residential, commercial (retail), and civic use (library)
- A higher FAR than is existing with efficient building design
- Development of an under-used site in an existing urban neighborhood
- Residents will be able to take advantage of multiple non-auto transportation modes, including walking, subway, buses, trains
- Restoration of part of the old street grid through the construction of a new park, thereby reinforcing sense of place within the Chinatown neighborhood
- Creation of a new open space within the city.

LEED Credits

Sustainable Sites

Credit 1 - Site Selection

Our site consists of two existing buildings and does not violate any of the preexisting land use criteria: prime farmland, previously undeveloped land, land identified as habitat, within 100 feet of wetlands or public parkland.

Credit 2 - Brownfield Redevelopment

Given the project's location within the thriving Chinatown neighborhood, our project meets Option 1: construct or renovate building on a previously developed site AND in a community with a minimum density of 60,000 square feet per acre net.

Credit 4.1 - Alternative Transportation - Public Transportation Access

The project is half a mile from several MBTA subway stations as well as South Station, a major hub for the commuter rail, regional trains and buses.

Credit 4.4 - Alternative Transportation - Parking Capacity

The project greatly reduces the spaces required by zoning by limiting the number of overall spaces and providing more than half of required spaces off-site at existing garages via a shared parking strategy. Zoning requires 1 space per unit, and we are providing 0.5 spaces per unit. 2 on-site spaces will be reserved for Zipcars.

Credit 5.2 - Site Development - Maximize Open Space

Following neighborhood demand for open space, our project provides several new open spaces. The first is a new public park based on the BRA Crossroads Initiative Plan, which redevelops the existing roadway and traffic island along Harrison Street. Second is a new courtyard, which provides air and light to the apartments and a social space adjacent to the library. These open spaces equal more than 20% of the project's site area.

Credit 6.1 - Stormwater Design - Quantity Control

Through the design of the new open space, our project increases the pervious surface area of the site, helping to absorb stormwater runoff. (The site is currently completely covered in impervious surfaces). These improvements include pervious paving throughout the courtyard and a stormwater retention cistern for irrigation and result in a 25% decrease in the volume of stormwater runoff from the two-year 24-hour design storm.

Credit 7.1 - Heat Island Effect - Non-Roof

All on-site parking is provided in a garage under the building, thus exceeding the minimum requirement of putting 50% of parking spaces under cover.

Credit 7.2 - Heat Island Effect - Roof

Both the existing building and the addition will have a new light-colored TPO membrane roof, fulfilling LEED's requirements for Solar Reflectance Index.

Water Efficiency

Credits 1.1 + 1.2 - Water Efficient Landscaping

Specifying drought-resistant plants and providing stormwater storage for irrigation, we eliminate potable water consumption for landscaping.

Credits 3.1 + 3.2 - Water Use Reduction

Our project will reduce water usage by 30% with high-efficiency fixtures in all units: lavatory faucets, showers and kitchen sinks, and dual-flush toilets throughout. Additionally, fixtures in the library will be equipped with occupancy sensors.

Energy + Atmosphere

Credit 1.5 - Optimize Energy Performance

Our project provides for a 17.5% improvement in the building performance rating through installation of Energy Star appliances and high-efficiency water heaters and furnaces in each unit.

Credit 3 - Enhanced Commissioning

In order to make the HVAC systems operate most

efficiently, we will begin the commissioning process early during the design process and execute additional activities after systems performance verification is completed.

Materials + Resources

Credit 1.1 - Building Re-Use

By rehabbing an existing building, our project retains 75% of existing walls, floor and roof overall, selectively creating new window openings in the existing brick facades.

Credits 2.1 + 2.2 - Construction Waste Management

The general contractor will be required to divert a minimum of 75% of construction waste from landfills, through on-site recycling throughout the construction process.

Credit 4.1 - Recycled Content

A minimum of 10% of the total volume of construction materials used will be recycled content. These materials will include all carpet, steel framing studs, and cellulose insulation.

Credit 6 - Rapidly Renewable Materials

The project will use rapidly renewable building materials (defined by LEED as those made from plants that are typically harvested within at ten-year cycle or shorter) for at least 2.5% of the total value of the project. Materials used will include bamboo floors in the library and units in the addition, linoleum floors in service areas and kitchens within units in the addition, and wheatboard cabinets throughout.

Credit 7 - Certified Wood

The project will use a minimum of 50% of wood-based materials and products that are certified in accordance with the Forest Stewardship Council.

Indoor Environmental Quality

Credit 2 - Increased Ventilation

In the mechanically ventilated spaces of the Library, the air ventilation rate will be increased to 30% above the ASHRAE minimum. Within the residential portion, mechanical ventilation of units will be supplemented with operable windows.

Credits 4.1 - 4.4 - Low-Emitting Materials

The use of low-emitting materials will not only improve the quality of air in the units, but also help the Library meet high standards for storage of archive materials. Low-emitting materials will include: adhesives, sealants, paints, carpeting, and composite wood products.

Credit 5 - Indoor Chemical + Pollutant Source Control

The project will minimize building occupants' exposure to potentially hazardous particulates and chemical pollutants through vestibules with walk-off mats entries, a parking garage exhaust system, and the provision of air filters at each HVAC unit.

Credits 6.1 + 6.2 - Controllability of Systems

Thermal comfort, or temperature modulation, has a high degree of individual control. The offices within the library will be on separate VAV boxes, and each residential unit will have its own high-efficiency furnace and thermostat. Further, operable windows within the units allow for room-by-room temperature and air control.

All units have individually controlled lighting. Library lighting will be programmable for a variety of uses, particularly in the community room: for daytime or nighttime meetings and for performances.

Credits 8.1 + 8.2 - Daylight + Views

All occupiable spaces in the building, basement excluded, will receive a minimum daylight illumination level of 25 footcandles. The courtyard's south-facing orientation creates a light well with a high degree of reflected daylighting in the units.

In all regularly occupied areas, with the exception of the basement, there will be a direct line of sight to the outdoors. Within the units, the open kitchen/dining/living spaces provide clear sightlines.

Sources & Uses

SOURCES OF FUNDS	Amount	% of Total
Permanent Loan	\$ 16,091,992	35%
MHP Permanent Rental Financing	\$ 11,274,062	29%
LIHTC - 9%	\$ 7,087,500	16%
HOME (City)	\$ 750,000	2%
HOME (State)	\$ 750,000	2%
CDBG	\$ 750,000	2%
Housing Stabilization Fund	\$ 750,000	2%
Affordable Housing Trust Fund	\$ 1,000,000	2%
Neighborhood Housing Trust/Linkage Funds	\$ 1,801,291	4%
Leading the Way III Funds	\$ 1,369,452	3%
Deferred Developer Fee	\$ 2,021,114	5%
TOTAL	\$ 44,464,511	100%

Unit	Market	Affordable
Loft	14	0
1 BR	14	0
2 BR	35	14
3 BR	0	28
Total	63	42

Affordable	2 BR	3 BR
60% AMI	10	21
30% AMI	4	7

Affordable	40%	42 Units
Market Rate	60%	63 Units

USES OF FUNDS	Amount	Per GSF	Per Unit
Acquisition	\$ 2,000,000	\$2.17	\$ 19,048
Land	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Building	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 2.17	\$ 19,048
Hard Costs	\$ 31,199,858	\$ 33.82	\$ 297,142
Building Construction	\$ 28,501,750	\$ 30.89	\$ 271,445
Building Construction (New)	\$ 7,900,750	\$ 8.56	\$ 75,245
Building Construction (Rehab)	\$ 20,601,000	\$ 22.33	\$ 196,200
Building Construction (Garage)	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1.08	\$ 9,524
Building Demolition	\$ 212,400	\$ 0.23	\$ 2,023
Construction Contingency (5%)	\$ 1,485,708	\$ 1.61	\$ 14,150
Soft Costs	\$ 3,253,425	\$ 3.53	\$ 30,985
Permitting Consultant	\$ 60,000	\$ 0.07	\$ 571
Survey	\$ 27,500	\$ 0.03	\$ 262
Traffic Engineer	\$ 45,000	\$ 0.05	\$ 429
Parking Engineer	\$ 36,000	\$ 0.04	\$ 343
Environmental Engineer	\$ 225,000	\$ 0.24	\$ 2,143
Geotechnical Engineer	\$ 130,000	\$ 0.14	\$ 1,238
Civil Engineer	\$ 45,000	\$ 0.05	\$ 429
Architecture & Engineering	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1.08	\$ 9,524
Permits & Approvals	\$ 40,000	\$ 0.04	\$ 381
Legal Expenses	\$ 400,000	\$ 0.43	\$ 3,810
Title and Recording	\$ 100,000	\$ 0.11	\$ 952
Accounting/Audit	\$ 100,000	\$ 0.11	\$ 952
Insurance	\$ 100,000	\$ 0.11	\$ 952
Real Estate Taxes	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Clerk of the Works	\$ 100,000	\$ 0.11	\$ 952
Marketing/Lease-up	\$ 680,000	\$ 0.74	\$ 6,476
Appraisal & Market Study	\$ 10,000	\$ 0.01	\$ 95
Soft Cost Contingency (5%)	\$ 154,925	\$ 0.17	\$ 1,475
Financing Costs	\$ 3,969,000	\$ 4.30	\$ 37,800
Construction Loan Interest	\$ 797,000	\$ 0.86	\$ 7,590
Construction Loan Fees	\$ 650,000	\$ 0.70	\$ 6,190
Lease-up Period Interest	\$ 800,000	\$ 0.87	\$ 7,619
Construction/Operating Reserve	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1.08	\$ 9,524
Financing Fees (1% & 1%)	\$ 500,000	\$ 0.54	\$ 4,762
Lender's Legal	\$ 75,000	\$ 0.08	\$ 714
Lender's Inspections	\$ 116,000	\$ 0.13	\$ 1,105
DHCD LIHTC Fee	\$ 1,000	\$ 0.00	\$ 10
Market Reserve	\$ 30,000	\$ 0.03	\$ 286
Developer Fee (10%)	\$ 4,042,228	\$ 4.38	\$ 38,497
USES OF FUNDS	\$ 44,464,511	\$ 48.19	\$ 423,472

Units

The affordable units will be comprised of two and three bedroom apartments that target low-income (60% AMI) and extremely low-income tenants (30% AMI). Forty-two units will be for low-income tenants with rents ranging from \$1,218 for a two-bedroom to \$1,407 for a three-bedroom. Eleven units will be subsidized additionally through Project-Based Section 8 through the Boston Housing Authority. All of the above rents are based on Tax Credit Rent Limits derived from 2009 family median income (FMI) in Boston, Massachusetts.

Development Costs

For the 105 units, which include affordable units, Section 8 Project-Based units, and market rate units, the estimated hard cost per unit is \$297,142.

Property Management

ACDC will release a bid for management companies with whom the developer has good working relationships. Such companies include Winn Management Company, Maloney Properties (manager of Oak Terrace), and Peabody Property Management (manager of the Metropolitan). The winner of the bid will manage the market rate and affordable units.

Description of Sources

Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP) Financing

MHP is the main provider of additional financing for LIHTC properties in Massachusetts. MHP offers both construction and permanent loans for affordable housing at competitive interest rates. Because MHP offers subsidized interest rates, it requires that one of many defined levels of affordability be achieved, one of which is sixty percent of units be affordable to people earning 60 percent of AMI. The maximum loan allotted is \$15 million, and loan -to-value ratio may not exceed 85 percent. For a 20 year term, 30-year amortization loan, the interest rate is 5.84%. Using a debt service coverage factor of 1.20, the annual constant for the MHP permanent loan is 7.01%.

Permanent Loan

The permanent loan used for the development is a standard 20-year loan with an interest rate of 7.50%. Using a debt service coverage factor of 1.20, the annual constant for the permanent loan is 9.00%.

Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) – 9%

The third largest source of funding that we are using is equity raised through 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credits, which are allocated by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development and support the construction, rehabilitation, and preservation of affordable rental units throughout the state. LIHTC award amounts are based on a complicated scoring system that evaluates a project’s financial feasibility, design, development team, marketability, readiness to proceed, and many other contributing factors. We have closely reviewed the scoring criteria and used it to develop our project proposal. Our project includes affordable and deeply affordable units, sustainable design principals, transit-oriented development, community support, and is located in a priority district for affordable housing.

We use the \$250,000 maximum basis cap per affordable unit since our per unit development costs exceed this amount. Given this limit and the current lower syndication yield of 0.75 cents to the dollar, we expect to raise approximately \$7.087 million of equity.

9% LIHTC CALCULATION	
Total Development Cost	\$ 44,464,511
Non-Depreciable Expenses	\$ 0
Less Non-Depreciable Expenses	\$ 44,464,511
Qualified Census Tract (30% Boost)	\$ 57,803,864
Total Units	105
Affordable Units	42
% Tax Credit Units	40%
Eligible Basis	\$ 23,121,546
Eligible Basis per Affordable Unit	\$ 550,513
Maximum Allowed Basis per Aff. Unit	\$ 250,000
Eligible Basis	\$ 10,500,000
Applicable Rate	9.00%
Maximum Tax Credit	\$ 945,000
10-Year Eligibility	\$ 9,450,000
Syndication Yield	\$ 0.75
Equity Raised	\$ 7,087,500

HOME Investment Partnership Program (City & State)

HOME funds are administered through both the State of Massachusetts and the City of Boston separately. The maximum award, in the form of a thirty-year deferred payment loan, from both is \$750,000 and requires that all HOME-funded units be affordable to households earning no more than 60% AMI and 25% of those units be affordable to households earning no more than 50% AMI. Of the units for which we are applying for HOME funding, all are affordable to households earning 60% AMI and 27% are affordable to households earning 30% AMI.

There is currently a Request for Proposal (FRP) from the City of Boston for \$4,000,000 that has been made available through the Department of Neighborhood Development to finance the creation of affordable rental or cooperative housing. The funding award, however, relies on a matching allocation from the state. HOME, CDBG, and Leading the Way all have available funding according to this RFP. As for the state, the current Neighborhood Stabilization Plan states that HOME funding will be made available through the Department of Housing and Community Development.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

Community Development Block Grants, which are administered through the City of Boston, help fund a variety of initiatives including affordable housing and infrastructure. We believe that our proposal will be awarded the maximum award of \$750,000.

Housing Stabilization Fund

The Massachusetts Housing Stabilization Fund provides financing for affordable housing acquisition, preservation, and rehabilitation and aims to support comprehensive neighborhood redevelopment efforts. Under certain circumstances the HSF will fund new construction, and the maximum allotment is \$750,000. Our proposal supports both goals of the HSF.

Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF)

The Massachusetts Affordable Housing Trust Fund provides flexible financing for the acquisition, development, or preservation of housing that is affordable to people at or below 100% AMI, but does not prohibit the inclusion of market rate units if permitted under accompanying subsidy programs. There is currently \$35 million in the 2009 budget for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Given this funding availability and the compliance of our development with AHTF requirements, we believe that we will receive the maximum award of \$1,000,000.

Neighborhood Housing Trust (NHT)/Linkage Funds

The City of Boston Neighborhood Housing Trust provides funds for the construction and preservation of affordable housing units. The trust is funded by linkage fees that are exacted from large-scale commercial developments in Boston. Based on mixed-income developments funded through NHT, the average award per unit has been \$17,155. In addition, NHT funding is targeted at neighborhoods that have not received past funding. Relative to other Boston neighborhoods, Chinatown has received minimal NHT funding (approximately three projects), and we believe this will help secure funding for our development. Given this preference for Chinatown development and the per unit average for similar projects, we believe we will receive \$1,749,825 for our development.

City of Boston Leading the Way

Leading the Way III, as the name suggests, is the third initiative of its kind created by Mayor Menino, and was released in March of 2009. This policy initiative and funding source has many goals for housing, a few of which include developing market rate rentals and creating affordable rental housing for Boston's service workers. Specifically, there is a goal to create 1,000 affordable rental units in Boston by 2012. Based on previous allocations through Leading the Way, \$32,606 has been awarded per affordable unit. Using this amount, our development is eligible for approximately \$1,369,452.

Project-Based Section 8

Because of our desire to target extremely low-income households, which constitute a significant portion of the Chinatown population, we have included eleven units that are affordable to households earning no more than 30% AMI. Because these deeply affordable units cannot support themselves financially, we are converting these units to Project-Based Section 8, which subsidizes rents up to 60% AMI. These subsidies last for a ten-year period, which is determined by a Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contract with the Boston Housing Authority (BHA). After this ten-year period, the contract with BHA will be renewed.

Preservation of Long Term Affordability

As a not-for-profit developer, Asian Community Development Corporation plans to maintain the affordable units in perpetuity. Our proposal secures funding for, and preserves affordability of the affordable rental units for fifteen years, after which affordability will be preserved through additional funding sources. We expect to apply for funding from sources that assist in affordable housing preservation such as the Massachusetts Capital Improvement and Preservation Fund (CIPF), which assists with the preservation and improvement of existing affordable rental units at risk of losing affordability. Other sources include the standard HOME and CDBG funds that can be reapplied for in future years. Lastly, given that 11 of our units are Project-Based Section 8, our proposal ultimately preserves the location of affordability assuming that the HAP contract will be renewed.

Financial Model Assumptions

The creation of an accurate financial model relies on a number of assumptions for both the revenues and expenses generated by the property.

Rental Income

Market rate units range in price from \$2,465 to \$3,675. The rents increase from the least expensive unit (1-bedroom units) to the most expensive unit (2-bedroom units). The prices decrease for the allotted 60% AMI affordable housing units and the designated Section 8 units. The unit breakdown is as follows:

Rent is assumed to increase with inflation at a rate of 3 percent annually. The rental figures provided are for 2009 and thus will increase with inflation beginning in 2010. Although lease-up will begin in 2011, occupancy and rental income will not begin until January 2012. It is estimated that 2012 will have an average occupancy rate of 75% for market, affordable, and Section 8 units. By 2012, market rate units will have an average occupancy rate of 90% while affordable and section 8 units will have an average occupancy rate of 95%.

Parking Income

The property will only have 20 of the total 51 spaces available. The 20 spaces in the on-site garage will lease for \$365/month while the 31 off-site spaces will lease for \$340/month. The spaces will not begin generating income until January 2012 when the building is ready for occupation. The on-site and off-site spaces will have an occupancy rate of 75% in 2012 and 90% in 2013 and beyond. The spaces will only be offered at market rate and will be available to tenants for the life of the building. The parking rent will increase with inflation at 3% annually.

Commercial Income

The 2,300 square feet of commercial space will be available for rent at \$55 per square foot. The commercial space is prime space in the heart of Chinatown. It's proximity to the new public library, the numerous restaurants, the tenants, and heavy foot traffic will command above the upper bound of the rents in the area. Rents in Chinatown normally range from \$35 - \$45 for retail space.

The commercial space will be leased at market rate. It is estimated that the space will be have 75% occupancy in 2012 and 95% in 2013 and beyond. The commercial rent will increase with inflation at 3 percent annually.

Library

The library will be provided to the city in a swap agreement within the land and building acquisition agreement. The library will not provide any income for the property and will be fully maintained by the city. The library is 23,115 square feet and is located in the basement and part of the ground floor.

Courtyard and Park

The 12,989 square foot courtyard and park cost \$40 per square foot to build. The BRA Crossroads Initiative will reimburse 50% of all costs. With reimbursements, the total cost of the courtyard and park will be approximately \$260,000.

Parking Expenses

The off-site parking will be leased for a 99-year period at \$200/month. The property will be responsible for paying this lease, leasing the spots, and collecting the rents.

General Building Expenses

Operating expenses in 2012 are \$1.449M. It is estimated that these expenses will increase with inflation at a rate of 3 percent annually.

Construction Expenses

Planning begins in May 2009. The construction process continues through the end of 2011. It is assumed that 20% of the construction expenses will be used in 2009, 30% in 2010, and 50% in 2012. Lease-up and marketing will begin in 2011 in order to achieve 75% occupancy by 2012.

Commercial expenses are assumed to be an average of \$200 per square foot while rental expenses are assumed to be \$275 per square foot for new construction and \$200 per square foot for rehab. Garage expenses are assumed to be \$50,000 per spot. There are a total of 20 spots developed on the property. Total construction expenses will be \$28.2M by the end of 2011. The construction loan fee is 2% of the total expense, \$1.13M.

Taxes

The marginal tax rate is 39.6%. The marginal tax rate is similar to that of the Metropolitan, located within Chinatown Boston, MA.

It is assumed that taxes will not be payable until 2012. Verizon will hold possession of the property until possession is transferred and will be responsible for all taxes until 2012. The acquisition cost of the property takes into consideration the taxes from May 2009 through January 2012.

Property Financing

The property will be financed with a Massachusetts Housing Program Permanent Rental loan (5.84% interest rate over 20 years with a 30 year amortization) and a private bank loan (7.5% interest rate over 20 year with a 30 year amortization). The total loan amount accounts for 47 percent of the total property costs.

The construction loan will be an interest only loan over the construction period. The interest rate will be 10.5% and will be carried through until the building has reached a 95% lease-up.

Property Reversion

It is appropriate to assume a 7.5% capitalization rate in 15 years for the property. Based on year 15 net operating income, the property's market value will be about \$95.2M in 2023. The market value assumes that the property will continue to increase in value annually at the rate of inflation (3 percent). The property value is for the entire building (minus the library) and includes the continued ability to lease the 31 parking spaces at the \$200 per month rate.

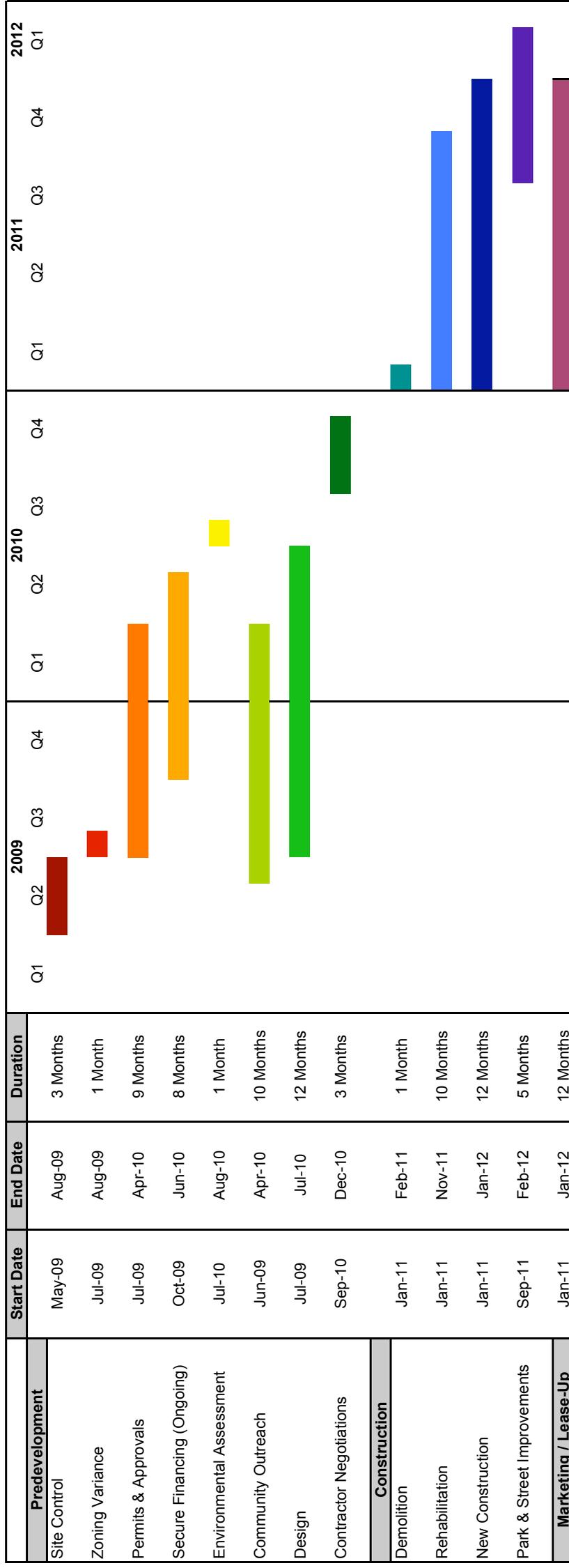
Development Schedule

We estimate that the land swap and acquisition process among the Boston Redevelopment Authority, Verizon, and the Asian Community Development Corporation will take approximately three months to complete and finalize. Once site control has been established, the zoning variance, permitting, and approvals process will begin. Currently, the Boston Redevelopment Authority has zoned the site as industrial. A variance will have to be submitted to change the zoning code for the location to mixed-use to accommodate our development proposal. After speaking with officials at the BRA, it was affirmed that the City would support the appeal, given that the development furthers City interests, and that it would take one month for the zoning variance to be granted.

Because the project is over 50,000 square feet, the development plan triggers the BRA's Article 80, Section B-2 for large project reviews. Large Project Review provides a procedure for the comprehensive review of such proposals before and during the schematic design stage and affords the public the opportunity for review and comment. The purpose of this review is to assess a project's impacts on its surroundings and City resources and to identify necessary mitigation measures. The process usually takes 6-9 months, as shown in the development schedule, and must overlap with design work and community outreach.

Construction on the site will begin once all predevelopment work is completed. New construction is slated to take place immediately after demolition so community members will not have to live or work near a dark and potentially unsafe vacant lot. We propose completing new construction and rehabilitation simultaneously in order to reduce the length of inconvenience caused by negative noise and traffic impacts.

Development Schedule



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