

Recovery Snapshot: **LMDC Chinatown Tourism and Marketing Program**



Grantee: New York City	Businesses benefiting:	250
Administering Agency: Explore Chinatown Campaign / Chinatown Local Development Corporation	Non-Business Organizations Benefiting:	15
Program Started: 1/28/2004	Tourism Advertisements:	7,611
Program Ended: 6/30/2006	Website Visits:	1,247,956
	Materials Distributed:	577,000

Impact of Disaster: Tourism is a major economic driver in Lower Manhattan and was severely impacted by the September 11th attacks. The lack of a comprehensive tourism and marketing campaign threatens the economic recovery of Chinatown and its inhabitants. In a November 2002 comprehensive report, *Chinatown One Year After September 11th: An Economic Impact Study*, the Asian American Federation of New York noted that for nearly half of the restaurants and 60 percent of the jewelry stores surveyed, revenue generated from tourists was on average 40 percent lower the summer of 2002 as compared with the summer of 2001.

Program Description: CDBG disaster recovery funds underwrote a portion of costs of the Explore Chinatown Campaign. Activities included:

- Creation of a visitor website (www.ExploreChinatown.com).
- Construction of a visitor information kiosk in Chinatown.
- Creation of the *Explore Chinatown* brochure, which included a neighborhood map.
- Provision of one-on-one business development and marketing assistance to area business owners and Chinatown not-for-profit cultural organizations.
- Support for new and existing neighborhood events and festivals to highlight the arts and cultural community of Chinatown.
- Development of tourism packages and other Chinatown-related programs for key domestic and international travel industry partners.

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Coordinating the Disaster Recovery Effort:

LMDC issued an RFP in 2003 for a large-scale tourism and marketing campaign for Chinatown. The Explore Chinatown campaign was officially launched on May 10, 2004 and garnered with substantial main stream and tourism industry media coverage. The campaign's logo, website (www.ExploreChinatown.com), and brochure were introduced during this launch.

Under the campaign, community events that were previously not well known were expanded and promoted. The Explore Chinatown team transformed the Lunar New Year into a month-long celebration, creating the largest of these celebrations in the history of Chinatown. The campaign's advertising and public relations consultants, Dentsu Communications and M. Silvers Associates, developed and implemented a strategic media plan.

The Explore Chinatown Campaign won the Gold Prize for the Best Marketing Campaign for 2004-2005 by the Society of American Travel Writers, and a Silver Anvil award from the Public Relations Society of America. The latter award is regarded as the preeminent achievement award for public relations, and recognizes efforts to incorporate measurable and sound research, planning, execution and evaluation practices in programming. The award recognized various achievements, including brochure, website, map, kiosk, advertising, public relations, community outreach and services, tour product development, Advisory Committee involvement, and research.

As of March 31, 2005, the Chinatown information kiosk reported a total of 65,550 visitors to the kiosk since its opening on December 17, 2004, with a record 3,088 visitors on the day of the Lunar New Year Parade. The Explore Chinatown website also reported a heavy increase, with 100,600 visits during the first quarter of 2005.

LMDC allocated an additional \$160,000 to Explore Chinatown to support year three activities, which began in February 2006. As of the quarter ending June 30, 2006, the Explore Chinatown Campaign was transitioned to the Chinatown Partnership Local Development Corporation (LDC). All CDBG-assisted activities had been completed.

Because the Explore Chinatown Campaign was so successful, LMDC allocated up to \$7,000,000 in 2006 for a four-year budget for the Chinatown Partnership LDC, of which \$5,400,000 was allocated to the Department of Small Business Services to assist in implementing a clean streets program and \$1,600,000 was allocated for short-term community development projects, marketing, and public outreach efforts.

For more information, visit

<http://www.renewnyc.com/ProjectsAndPrograms/chinatown.asp>