

Project/Program Profile

Name of Project/Program: Adopt-an-Alleyway (AAA) Youth Project

Organization: Chinatown Community Development Center (CCDC)

Location of Project/Program: Chinatown's 41 alleyways

Year Project Completed/Program Began Operation: 1991

Funding Sources: City of San Francisco's Department of Children, Youth and Their Families, private donations from community banks and foundations

Populations Served: Neighborhoods and commercial areas within Chinatown

Number of People Served: About 50 Chinatown business and over 500 students that go through the AAA program are 1st generation low income youth.

Number of Staff: 13 elected youth leaders and approximately 60 general members, 1 project coordinator under CCDC

Total Cost of Development/Operation: \$170,000 per year

Partners: San Francisco Department of Public Works, Chinatown Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Collaboration, SRO Families United Collab, American Red Cross, Community Tenants Assoc. (CTA), Ping Yuen Residents Improvement Association (PYRIA)

Services Provided: High school students monitor and organize clean-ups and beautify Chinatown's 41 alleyways, provide services to the Chinatown community, and help these youth develop leadership skills.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Commercial District Improvements Program

Use these standards for a commercial district improvements program such as a façade improvement program, streetscaping program, and business improvement district.

(Italicized portions offer further explanation. If the standard is not fulfilled by the project, it is noted in the italicized explanation. Crossed-out portions are not applicable.)

Level 1: Program Feasibility Assessment

These basic criteria determine the feasibility of a commercial district improvement program. The focus is on the organizational and financial readiness of the program.

1. NEED

a. Community Need

i. The program serves a need in the local business community.

1. There was a need to beautify Chinatown alleyways in order to improve store fronts and business flow.

ii. The program serves a need in the local residential community.

1. Chinatown alleyways serve as the front doors for many businesses and residents and provide pedestrian-friendly access within Chinatown, free from Chinatown's crowded main thoroughfares. However, for the longest time, Chinatown's alleyways were neglected by the City and were littered and laden with graffiti. AAA youth brought public attention to the state of the alleyways when they started monitoring and grading the alleyway conditions and publishing those grades in the newspaper. Later, AAA youth started cleaning up and removing graffiti from the alleyways, painting murals and adding plants to beautify the alleyways.

2. Many youth are unsupervised during after-school hours, leaving them vulnerable to high-risk behavior. Their parents have limited English skills and often work low-wage, low-skill jobs, predominantly doing restaurant, garment factory, and janitorial work. CCDC's youth leadership programs provide youth with valuable community service learning and leadership skills to become responsible and productive adults and build future leaders for the community.

b. Market Study/Needs Analysis

i. The study confirms the need for, and viability of the program.

1. A market study was not conducted, however CCDC's planning team created an alleyway masterplan that identified the location and the conditions of the alleyways. The planning team solicited community input by conducting focus groups and surveys of Chinatown businesses, residents and other stakeholders for the Chinatown Alleyway Masterplan. The Masterplan was presented to the City of San Francisco with recommendations for redesign and renovation. The City accepted the plan. 31 of the 41 alleyways were addressed. The City's cleaning machines do not fit within several alleyways that were left out. AAA youth work with the City of San Francisco to monitor the alleyways, conduct clean ups and graffiti removal on a monthly basis.

ii. The market study informs the organization about demographics of the area and barriers to entry.

c. Local Support

i. The beneficiaries of the program, such as businesses within the area, support the program.

1. *Cleaner alleyways improve business storefront atmosphere. The program empowered high school students to learn about the community and build leadership skills.*

ii. Neighbors and local community members support the program.

1. *Students from local high schools build leadership skills to initiate events that include community partnerships with the San Francisco Department of Public Works, YMCA and SRO Families and other City and community-based organizations and grassroots groups. High school teachers and middle school youth programs also advertise AAA's services, and staff members attend school events to make presentations about the program.*

iii. The project is compatible with local land use.

1. *AAA improves the local land use by maintaining cleanliness in alleyways of Chinatown*

iv. The project is in alignment with local city, county, state and/or federal development and transportation goal(s)

1. *AAA provides a service of alleyway maintenance in Chinatown that was overlooked by government and private sectors.*

i. The project is not located in an area with a moratorium or interim control ordinance that cannot be bypassed.

2. ORGANIZATIONAL READINESS

a. The organization is willing and able to do the program.

b. The program is in alignment with the mission of the organization.

- i. *The program's mission is to develop youth leadership skills by providing services to the Chinatown community. This coincides with CCDC's mission to improve quality of life for San Francisco residents.*

c. The Board of Directors embraces a CED strategy and/or embraces the program as a part of the CED strategy.

d. The organization and/or its partners have a track record of participating in similar programs.

- i. *Youth for SROs Program (YSRO) engages young people in community service and leadership to improve the quality of life for single room occupancy (SRO) hotel residents. The program offers intergenerational service activities, including culinary and cultural exchanges between elderly Chinatown residents and youth. YSRO developed a culturally and linguistically appropriate disaster preparedness training for monolingual Chinese-speaking residents.*
- ii. *Campaign Academy is a leadership training and scholarship program designed to give young leaders the skills and knowledge to lead a campaign to make positive change in their community. The youth leaders research community issues, identify targets, develop strategies, and organize their peers and allies to achieve their campaign goal. Previous youth-organized campaigns include: advocating for healthier school lunches, improvements to the Community HUBS/Open Space Project in Chinatown, implementing Ethnic Studies in the San Francisco Unified School District, and most recently, Free MUNI bus passes for low-income youth.*

iii. *Advocates for Community Change, Empowerment and Social Services (ACCESS) encourages civic engagement in young adults to bring about change to the community.*

e. **The organization has the financial and operational capacity to undertake the proposed program.**

~~i. The organization can support the additional debt (if any) created by the program.~~

~~1. There is no debt created by AAA.~~

ii. **The organization has qualified staff that can undertake the program.**

iii. **The organization has access to reliable, qualified vendors and service providers.**

3. FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY

a. **Program cost**

i. **The program is affordable to the organization, and the projected cost is appropriate to the concept.**

ii. **The operator or staff providing the cost estimates is qualified and experienced with business improvement district programs.**

b. **Funding sources**

i. **There are enough sources of funding for the uses.**

1. *Supplies associated with graffiti removal and alleyway cleanup are provided by the San Francisco's Department of Public Works and supplemented by funding from other city and private sources.*

ii. **The organization has endeavored to secure all available competitive and noncompetitive funding sources for which the program qualifies.**

1. *In addition to CCDC solicited funding, AAA youth can apply directly for youth grants under San Francisco's Youth Philanthropy Board to fund their intergenerational tenant service activities and supplies, e.g., kitchenware to cook with seniors, iPads to teach seniors to use the internet in order to supplement cultural exchanges between the youth and the seniors.*

iii. **The actual disbursement of each source is timely and in sync with the needs of the program.**

1. *Funding provided by the Department of Children, Youth and Their Families (a major funding source) currently operate on a 3-year cycle.*

iv. **The organization is aware of the compliance implications of each source.**

c. *CCDC complies with the funding requirements of each source.*

d. **Cash flow**

~~i. The program produces enough cash flow to support the proposed debt structure (if any).~~

~~1. There is no debt created by AAA.~~

ii. **The program minimally pays for itself over time. It has a sustainable cash flow.**

1. **If the program is low-cost or free, it is subsidized enough to sustain the program.**

a. *The program is sustained by grants and other fundraising sources as well as probono services, volunteer support, and donations.*

b. *The beneficiaries of the program, such as businesses within the area, contribute financially to the program.*

Level 2: Practical Considerations

These criteria are essential for a successful, operating commercial district improvement program.

1. MARKET BARRIERS

a. The organization understands why past programs have not worked and instead addresses prior issues in innovative and alternative ways.

- i. CCDC did not have any youth programs before the implementation of AAA. After the success of AAA, CCDC has expanded its youth leadership development programs to Campaign Academy, CATS, YSRO, ACCESS, etc., increasing from originally a half-time staff to a 3.3 FTE staffing team.*

2. DEVELOPMENT TEAM & PARTNERSHIPS

a. The organization has assembled the best team for the program, including vendors, employees, trainers, translators, outreach coordinators, and management staff.

- i. CCDC staff act as mentors and advisors for AAA youth. Staff help provide guidance, technical assistance, mentorship, and any support that the youth need to develop themselves and run their projects. Staff provides educational presentations to prepare youth for leadership roles of the future.*
- ii. AAA is also supported by many alumni of the youth program (adult allies) who continue to volunteer with the program to provide training and serve as chaperones and mentors to the youth.*
- iii. CCDC provides buildings and sites for youth development.*

b. If the organization is lacking in any area (financial, experience), it has partnered with another entity to operate the program.

- i. AAA's annual events are supported by the community in donations. Tools and trash pick up is provided by San Francisco Department of Public Works. Chinatown SRO Collaboration conducts outreach, fire and disaster preparedness workshops for SRO tenants. Youth are trained on NERT and First Aid from San Francisco Fire Department and American Red Cross, respectively. Our youth work with Community Tenants Assoc. (CTA) & Ping Yuen Residents Improvement Association (PYRIA) on community services to their members (teaching CTA elderly computers, starting PYRIA's Sports Equipment program, weeding Ping Yuen community gardens). Youth alumni group offers workshops, chaperoning, mentoring, and in-kind professional services.*

c. The program is supported by public sector, private sector, and community partners.

d. Through an open dialogue with the community, the organization has sought and incorporated community participation in the program.

- i. The Chinatown Alleyway Master Plan was developed with public input from community businesses, residents, and stakeholders.*

3. SITE CHARACTERISTICS

a. The area which is served by the program makes sense.

- i. The locations of alleyway clean-up and graffiti removal are in core Chinatown.*

b. The program is located near or adjacent to transit.

4. PROGRAM DESIGN & OPERATION

a. The program is run in the appropriate language(s) for the businesses in the area.

- i. AAA addresses issues specific to the identity of the community. The program provides workshops in APA history and struggles (such as The Fall of the I-Hotel, Hate Crimes and racism against Asians, Ethnic Studies, etc.), along with workshops about Chinatown's century old stories.*

b. The program is culturally appropriate to the businesses in the area.

c. The program is tailored to the specific geography of the businesses in the area.

- i. AAA is specifically tailored for Chinatown alleyways which serve as front doors to many businesses and residents and provide pedestrian-friendly access within Chinatown, free from Chinatown's crowded main thoroughfares.*

Level 3: From Feasible to Exemplary

These criteria elevate a commercial district improvement program to an exemplary one.

1. FUNDING & FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

- a. The program uses a funding program or funding source that is new and innovative.**
 - i. CCDC encourages graduates and alumni of the AAA program to donate financially and provide networking for current AAA individuals.*
- b. Each funding source was heavily leveraged to gain further resources.**
- c. Certain features of the program were adapted to capture funding, but the program was not completely changed in order to capture one particular funding source.**
 - i. AAA youth generate ideas and respond to Requests for Proposals to compete for funding under the Youth Philanthropy Board. Grants may be up to \$10,000.*
- d. There are multiple stakeholders providing funding, and this mix of funding sources maximizes the feasibility of the program.**
- e. The program exceeds minimum standards required by funding sources.**
 - i. There is deeper low and moderate income targeting than required by funding sources.**

2. FUTURE PROJECTS

- a. The program strengthens the position (financial, political, capacity, experience) of the organization.**
 - i. AAA was CCDC's first youth program. The Chinatown Alleyway Tours Program (CATs), Youth for SROs Program, and Campaign Academy all stemmed out of the success of AAA.*
- b. Through the program, the reputation of the organization was enhanced. Issues that the staff faced were dealt with in a diplomatic manner, enabling future programs.**
- c. The success of the program will enable future funding on other programs.**
- d. The community is happy with the program and will participate in more/similar programs in the future.**
- e. The community is more knowledgeable about commercial district improvements.**
 - i. AAA hosts an annual Work-a-Thon where 200 volunteers do extensive cleaning to beautify Chinatown. Collaborations with other community groups were considered in event planning.*

3. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- a. The program has less environmental impact than traditional programs during operation.**
- b. The program fulfills the triple bottom line.**
 - i. AAA does not fulfill the triple bottom line (people, profits, planet).*
- c. The program incorporates green features.**
 - i. The program conserves energy and water.**
 - l. AAA does not conserve energy and water.*
 - ii. The program has an effective recycling program.**
 - l. Materials are recycled by the City of San Francisco.*
- d. The program takes advantage of green tax incentives.**
 - i. The program does not take advantage of green tax incentives.*
- e. The program provides green jobs.**
 - i. The program does not provide green jobs.*

4. ECONOMIC IMPACT

- ~~**a. The program creates jobs.**~~
 - i. AAA program is geared towards youth development to build skills in order to improve chances in the job market. Leadership training and workshops are included*

in the program to enhance youth's transferable skills for future career pursuits. Job creation is not the emphasis.

- ~~ii. Jobs created provide a living wage.~~
- ~~iii. Jobs created are for local hires.~~
- ~~iv. Jobs created are for low and moderate income individuals.~~
- ~~v. Jobs created provide life skills.~~
- ~~vi. Jobs created provide health benefits.~~
- ~~vii. Jobs created have potential for upward mobility.~~
- ~~viii. Jobs created require less funding per jobs created.~~

5. COMPREHENSIVENESS

- a. The organization provides or connects to other programs that provide multiple services e.g. social services.**
 - i. CCDC connects the AAA program with other youth programs like Youth for SROs Program (YSRO), Campaign Academy, and Advocates for Community Change, Empowerment and Social Services (ACCESS) and programs with resident services, community organizing, and planning and public policy.*

6. DIVERSITY

- a. The program serves a mixed income clientele.**
- b. The program encourages mixed age, gender, ethnic, etc. participation.**
 - i. AAA is open to all high school students throughout the city. Teachers and faculty from local schools encourage youth to apply and volunteer for the program.*
- c. The program supports minority businesses.**
 - i. AAA supports businesses located in Chinatown by improving the façade of the storefront (through removing graffiti from the buildings and sweeping debris from storefront entrances.). The majority of the businesses are small private minority businesses.*

7. PUBLIC BENEFITS

- a. The program provides a service that is needed by the community but is currently lacking.**
 - i. AAA provides a volunteer clean ups and graffiti removal for Chinatown alleyways that have been historically less maintained by City and private sectors. AAA also provides youth with an after-school program to keep away from high-risk behaviors.*
- b. The program alleviates existing conditions.**
 - i. The program improves the security of the area**
 - I. Clean visible alleyways discourage suspicious and illegal activities. Graffiti removal mitigates gangs from "owning" alleyways. Trash and litter are cleared, eliminating the health risk of animal infestation.*
 - ii. The program improves the quality of street life.**
 - I. Youth conduct fire prevention & earthquake preparedness workshops to residents; develop bilingual workshop materials; teach seniors computers; set up & organize food pantry; facilitate their meetings; conduct outreach; plan & run activities; speak at press conferences; & write grants for their programs*
- c. The program attracts customers and new businesses to the area.**
 - i. AAA improves Chinatown business storefronts. Clean environments encourage customers to visit Chinatown businesses.*
- d. The program helps retain existing businesses.**
- e. The program stimulates long-term job creation.**

- i. AAA participants learn leadership skills and become more advantageous in the job market.*
- ii. The environment becomes more appealing for customers to spend time drawing more business to Chinatown.*

f. The program results in other positive physical impacts.

- i. AAA enhances Chinatown's appearance by reducing the trash and graffiti in the alleyways.*

g. The program results in other positive social impacts.

- i. Our youth have also attended regional and national conferences (i.e., the National APA Women's Forum, Asian Pacific/Islander Youth Leadership Conference, API Youth Institute Conference, National Coalition for APA Community Development) all of which help to foster their sense of belonging to a community both inside and outside the program.*

8. REPLICABLE/SCALABLE

- a. This program can be replicated in other communities, regions, and/or states.**