

PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT For Immediate Release

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White House Recognizes San Francisco Japantown

San Francisco, CA (November 20, 2008) The White House has officially recognized San Francisco's Japantown as a Preserve America neighborhood. Eight Preserve America signs have been placed by the City and County of San Francisco along Sutter and Buchanan Streets, Post and Buchanan Streets and Geary and Buchanan Streets facing both west and east bound. San Francisco's Japantown is the first neighborhood in San Francisco to be awarded such a designation.

The award recognizes the cultural and historical significance of Japantown. The designation does not carry with it any historical restrictions, its goal is to designate and promote Japantown as a cultural heritage tourism site.



In a letter to Paul Osaki, Executive Director of the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California (JCCCNC), First Lady Laura Bush wrote, "Preserve America Communities demonstrate that they are committed to preserving America's heritage while ensuring a future filled with opportunities for learning and enjoyment. This community designation program, combined with the Preserve America Grant Program, Preserve America Presidential Awards, and other federal support, provides strong incentives for continued preservation of our cultural and natural heritage resources. I commend you for your commitment to preserving an important part of our nation's historic past for visitors, neighbors, and, most importantly, for children."

The letter was received on March 27, 2008. "We are very proud to be one of the few neighborhoods in the nation and the first in San Francisco to be bestowed this designation. The review committee was impressed with the JCCCNC's past efforts and many on-going community preservation programs, such as the

Japantown History Walk and the California Japantowns Landmark, as well as the many letters of support from community organizations, local and State politicians, and dignitaries, including Ambassador Kato. The San Francisco Japantown community should be proud of its history and this special designation,” stated Osaki.

Along with San Francisco’s Japantown, Little Tokyo in Los Angeles was also awarded.

Communities designated through the program receive national recognition for their efforts. Benefits include the right to use the Preserve America logo on signs and promotional materials; eligibility for Preserve America Grants; notification to state tourism offices; and listing in a Web-based directory that showcases San Francisco Japantown’s preservation efforts and cultural heritage tourism destinations. Preserve America Communities are also featured in National Register Travel Itineraries and in “Teaching With Historic Places” curricular materials created by the National Park Service.



In 2006, Preserve America Grants totaling nearly \$5 million were awarded to 68 projects around the country and in 2007 \$4.9 million was awarded to 72 projects. In 2008, \$10 million is available, with grants of \$20,000 to \$150,000 awarded on a competitive, matching fund basis to help communities develop sustainable management strategies and sound business practices for the continued preservation and use of their heritage assets. The grants support research, planning, marketing, interpretation and training efforts.

The Preserve America initiative is an Administration effort to encourage and support community efforts to preserve and enjoy America’s priceless cultural and natural heritage. The goals of the initiative include a greater shared knowledge about the nation’s past; strengthened regional identities and local pride; increased local participation in preserving the country’s cultural and natural heritage assets; and support for the economic vitality of our communities.

“Sustainable historic preservation is a wise investment in the future, not a cost for maintaining the past. Communities and the nation receive significant economic, educational and cultural benefits, including heritage tourism, in return for their preservation efforts,” said John L. Nau, III, chairman of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, which administers Preserve America programs for the White House in cooperation with the Department of the Interior.

The White House is working with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Education, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, and Transportation, the General Services Administration, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the President's Council on Environmental Quality, and the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities to implement Preserve America. For more information about the initiative and its programs, visit www.preserveamerica.gov.

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About the JCCCNC

Envisioned by the Japanese American community, the JCCCNC will be an everlasting foundation of our Japanese American ancestry, cultural heritage, histories and traditions. The JCCCNC strives to meet the evolving needs of the Japanese American community through programs, affordable services and administrative support and facilities for other local service organizations. The JCCCNC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit community center based in San Francisco.