



## PRESERVE AMERICA INITIATIVE FOR JAPANTOWN

### A White House Initiative for Cultural and Natural Heritage

March 27, 2008 | San Francisco, California

Established in 2006, Preserve America is a White House Initiative that encourages and supports community efforts to preserve and enjoy America's unique cultural and natural heritage. The goals of this federal initiative include a greater shared knowledge about the nation's past and a strengthened sense of regional identities and local pride.

In 2007, JCCCNC applied San Francisco's Japantown for designation as a Preserve America community. Aside from receiving national recognition as a priceless American community, this designation would allow Japantown to be eligible for the Preserve America Grant Program, Preserve America Presidential Awards and other federal support.

Japantown's application received numerous letters of support for its nomination, including letters from Mayor Gavin Newsom, US Senator Barbara Boxer, Minority Leader in the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi, Congressman Mike Honda and Ambassador of Japan Ryuzo Kato. With the endorsement of many political leaders and the JCCCNC's exemplary community preservation projects, Japantown's application passed.

On March 27, 2008, Japantown earned federal recognition as a Preserve America community by First Lady Laura Bush, Honorary Chair of the Preserve America initiative. Ultimately, Japantown became the first neighborhood in San Francisco to be awarded this designation. Today, eight Preserve America signs adorn Japantown as a public display of its commitment to the preservation and continuation of a Japanese American cultural heritage in the United States.