

CHINATOWN 紐約華埠

Avenue NYC FY22

Commercial District Needs Assessment- Preliminary Findings
商業區需求調查- 初步調查結果

心目
華埠
THINK CHINA
TOWN

NYC
Small Business
Services

careers
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CHINATOWN B.I.D.
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT
華埠商業改進區

District Needs Assessment

1. **Chinatown** in Context
2. Key Findings from Business Inventory
3. Key Findings from Storefront Observations
4. Key Findings from Streetscape Observations
5. Key Findings from Merchant Surveys and Engagement
6. Key Findings from Consumer Surveys and Engagement
7. **Strengths**
8. **Challenges**
9. **Opportunities**
10. What is happening now?



CHINATOWN IN CONTEXT

- Family, roots and richness in culture
- Immigrant neighborhood with a layered history

“Since I can’t speak English, opening a business in Chinatown allows me to communicate/do business in Chinatown”

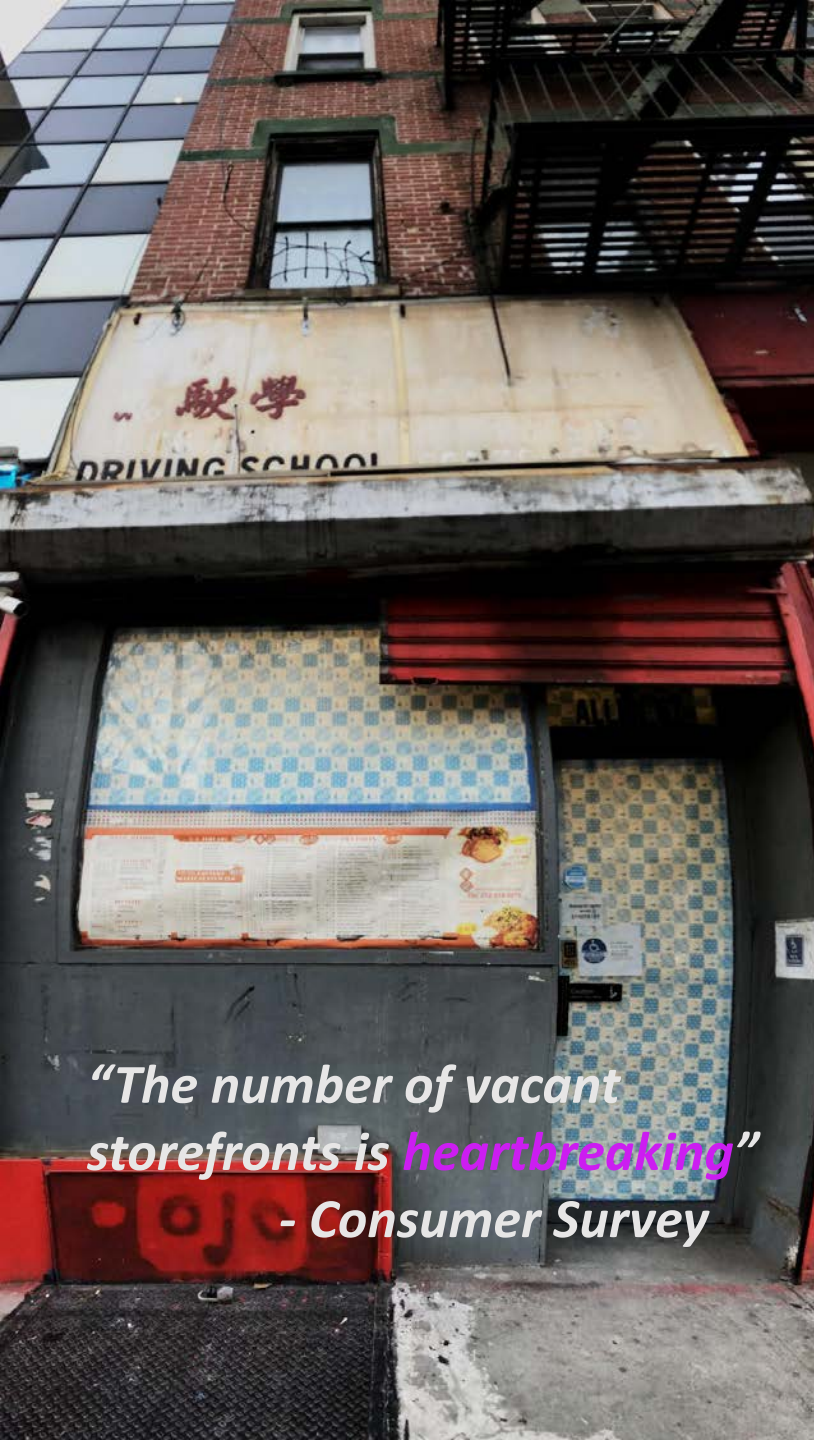
- Business Owner



Chinatown Commercial District Needs Assessment
Study Area

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- Naturally-Occurring **Retirement Community** (NORC)
- **Low-to-Moderate Income** (LMI) tenants live in rent stabilized apartments
- Proposed site for development of **megajail and several shelters**



Key Findings: Business Inventory

- **1652** Storefronts, 379 of which are vacant, and **294 eateries** (restaurants, cafes, bakeries, bubble tea shops) are the most common type of business.

*“The number of vacant storefronts is **heartbreaking**”
- Consumer Survey*

Chinatown Business Inventory



Key Findings: Storefront Observations

- **Malls and “Mini malls”** have numerous businesses not visible or known at street level
- **Malls** have nearly double the storefront vacancy rate
- Basement commercial spaces **rely on descriptive signage** at street level
- Historic tenement facades are less visible at night time
- Some storefronts have **Chinese-language signage only**



Key Findings: Streetscape Observations

- Key Arteries:
 - East Broadway and Division Streets (especially under the Manhattan Bridge Overpass)
 - Allen Street Mall
 - The Bowery and Canal Streets
- Confucius Tower **pedestrian walkway is demapped** and underutilized
- The Moxy Hotel construction
- Streets lack adequate **public seating**
- Lack of **greenery**
- **Public transit** has bottlenecks or is unwelcoming



Key Findings: Merchant Survey Responses

(216 Surveys collected)

Top three concerns:

- 1) Crime/Safety
- 2) Commercial Rent/Lease
- 3) Loss of foot traffic

Weeknights cumulatively generate **16%** of Chinatown's storefront revenue

2 in 5 businesses would appreciate **lease support** right now

*"Business revenues sales look like going down with **mega jail construction** too"*

*"Considering closing if things don't get better soon; considering **relocating to Flushing** but not sure"*

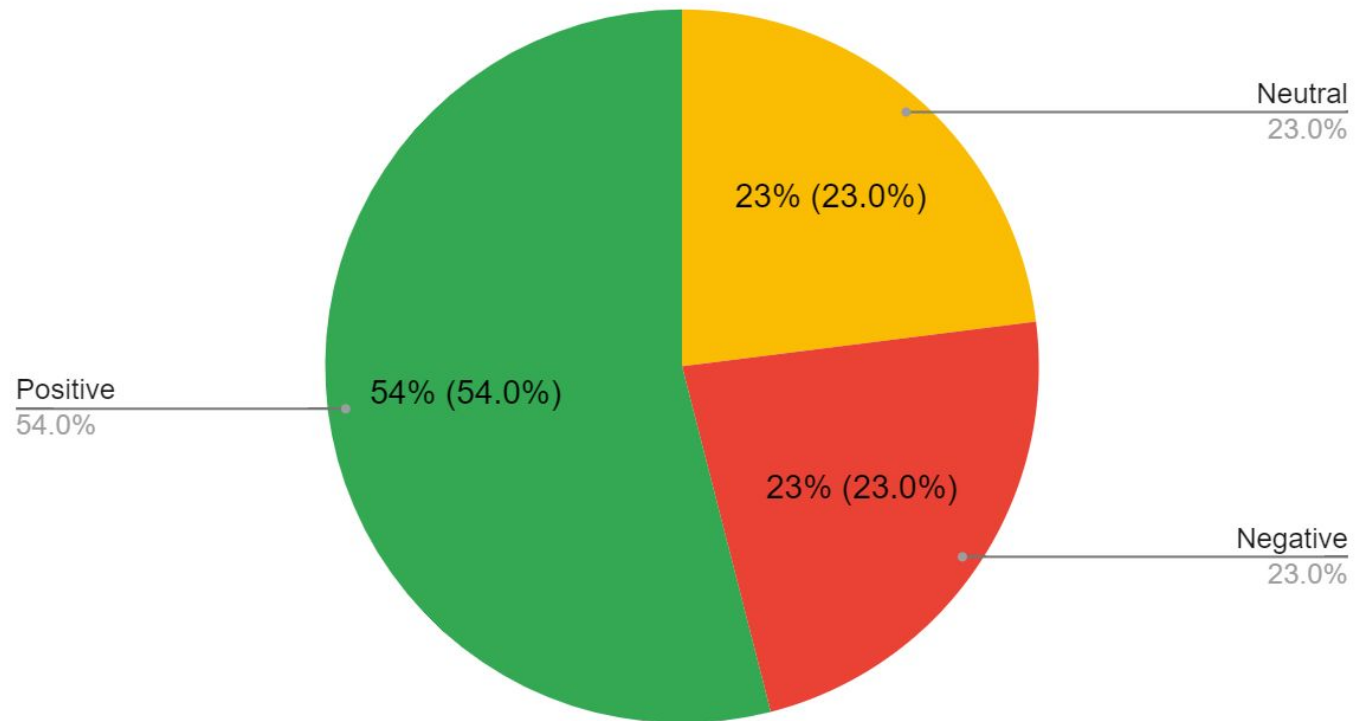
*"COVID **hurt** the business"*



Creative responses to COVID-19



Outdoor Dining, Outdoor Business Activity Consumer Opinions



“We don’t take the subway anymore because of attacks.”



3 out of 4 shoppers reported feeling less safe in Chinatown at night than they do during the day.

Key Findings: Consumer Survey Responses

(479 total responses)

- **1 in 5** of Chinatown customers spend over \$100 per shopping trip
- **2.5 hours** is the average time spent per trip to Chinatown
- **Shoppers want** to see more...
 - Art / Gallery / Cultural Spaces (Community Center)
 - Theatres / Movie Theatres
 - Book Stores, Stationery stores
 - Kids activities

*“As an Asian-American actor, I wish we had more opportunities to **put on our own shows in our own theatres**, because we really did have theatre houses for shows, operas and movies in the past.”*

Strengths



- **Resilience**, density and resourcefulness to use limited public space
- **Affordable** food & wares (EBT accessible)
- Hub of the Chinese/Asian diaspora, with historical and cultural value, and **intergenerational** connections
- Mass Transportation hub



Challenges

Public Realm

- Use of space is overrepresented by city/government, and is a **burden to our community**
- Major commercial corridors **geographically divide** Chinatown
- **Limited access** to greenery



Marketing

- Payment by **cash, only** is common
- No **single marketing campaign** will appeal to all Asian-American customers

Safety

- **Race-related hate crimes** are increasingly reported

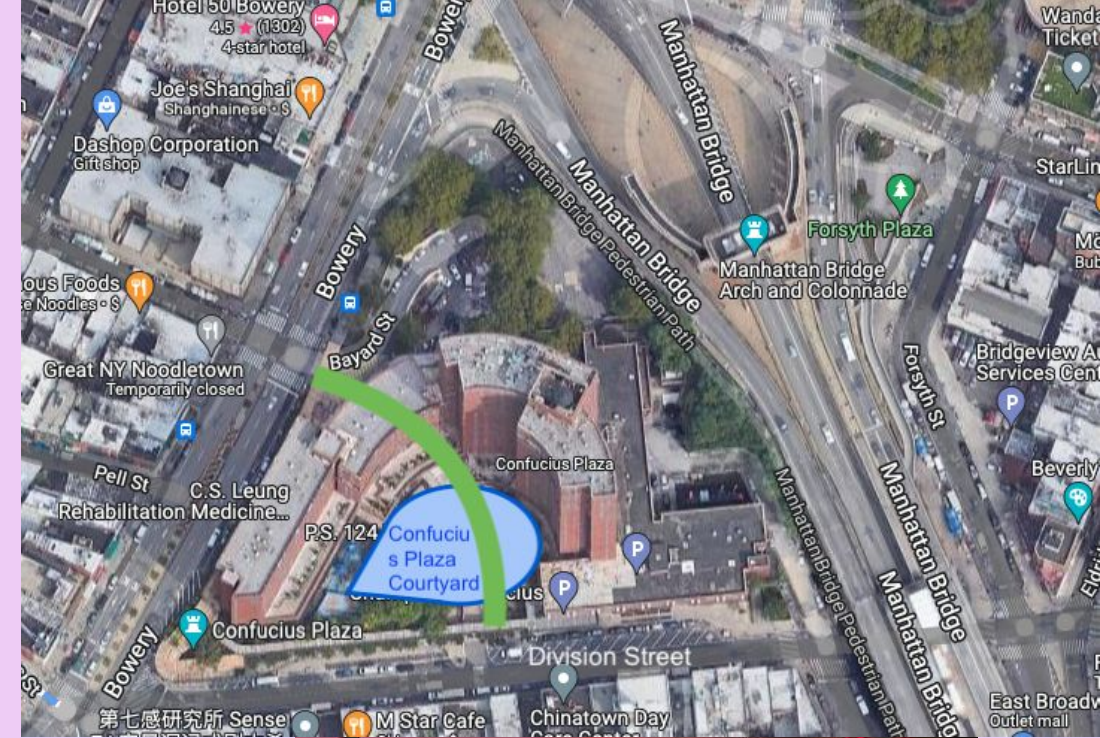
Access to Resources

- Informal organization of community activity in such as parks or community rooms
- COVID-19 related **supply chain concerns**
- **Language barriers** in applying for financial assistance



Opportunities

- A **Cultural Center for Chinatown** with late-night operating hours
- Marketing campaign to reach **interstate coach buses**
- Cultural Directories; Mini mall directories
- **Nighttime** activations to increase safety and commercial activity after sundown
- Legitimize street vending (i.e. with **built space** and infrastructure)
- Chinatown-wide **low-tech POS solutions** for small businesses that want to accept cashless payments
- Open up **Confucius plaza** to enliven Division street and connect the foot traffic from the center of Chinatown to the Eastern corridors
- **Younger generation** of Chinese Americans are engaged in the economic stability of Chinatown
- Evaluate impact of global supply chain costs and work with restaurant owners to broadly reframe **delivery / takeout practices** with **zero waste** end goals
 - *“Delivery is now 80% of my business” - Business owner*



Next Steps

- SBS Avenue NYC grant to provide Think!Chinatown with \$100K/yr for the next 2 years to implement projects based on CDNA findings.
- Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI)
- Mega Jail
- Shelters
- CDNA
 - Street vendors survey
 - Public Plaza survey - Forsyth Street Plaza



What did we miss? Questions? Comments?

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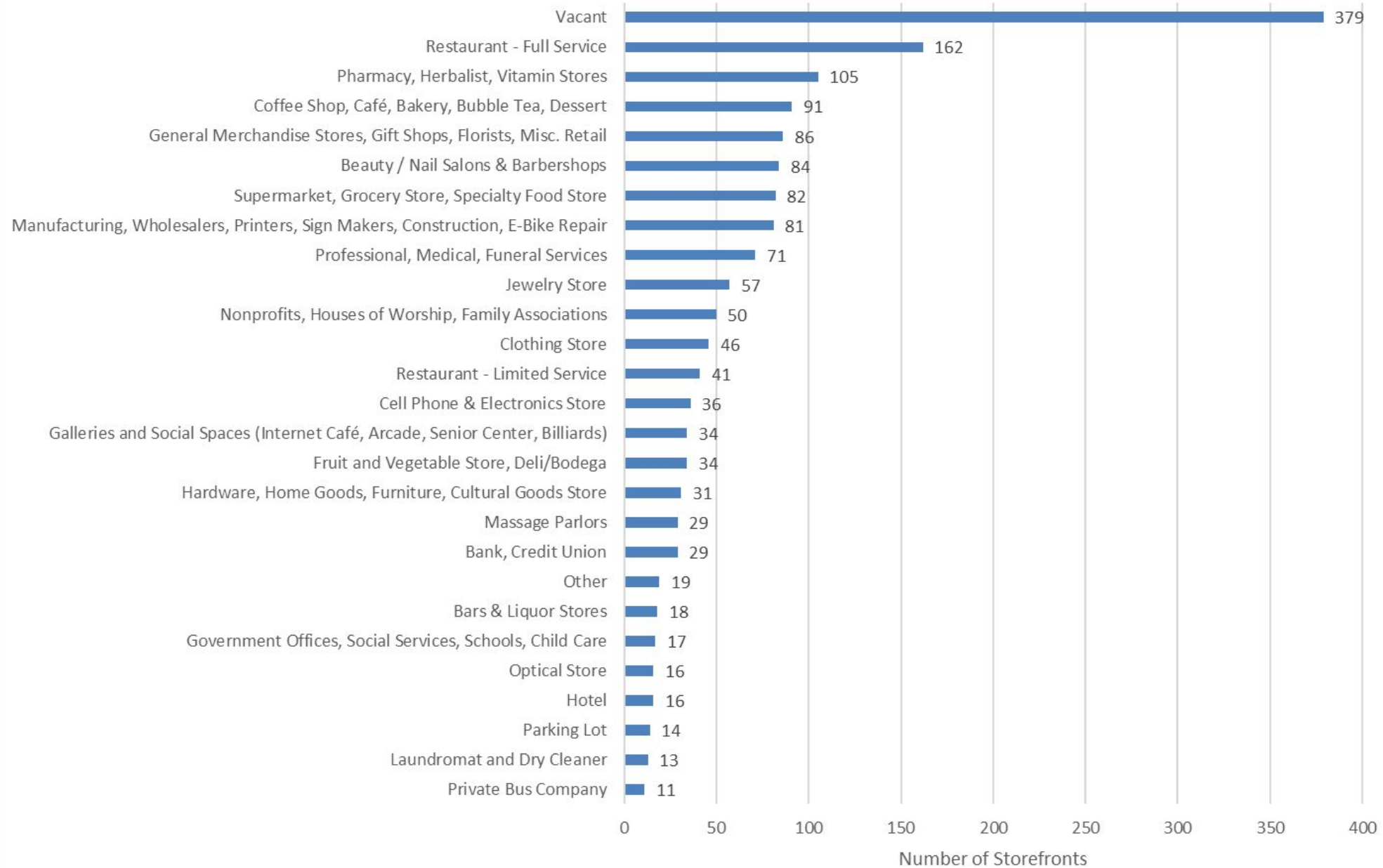
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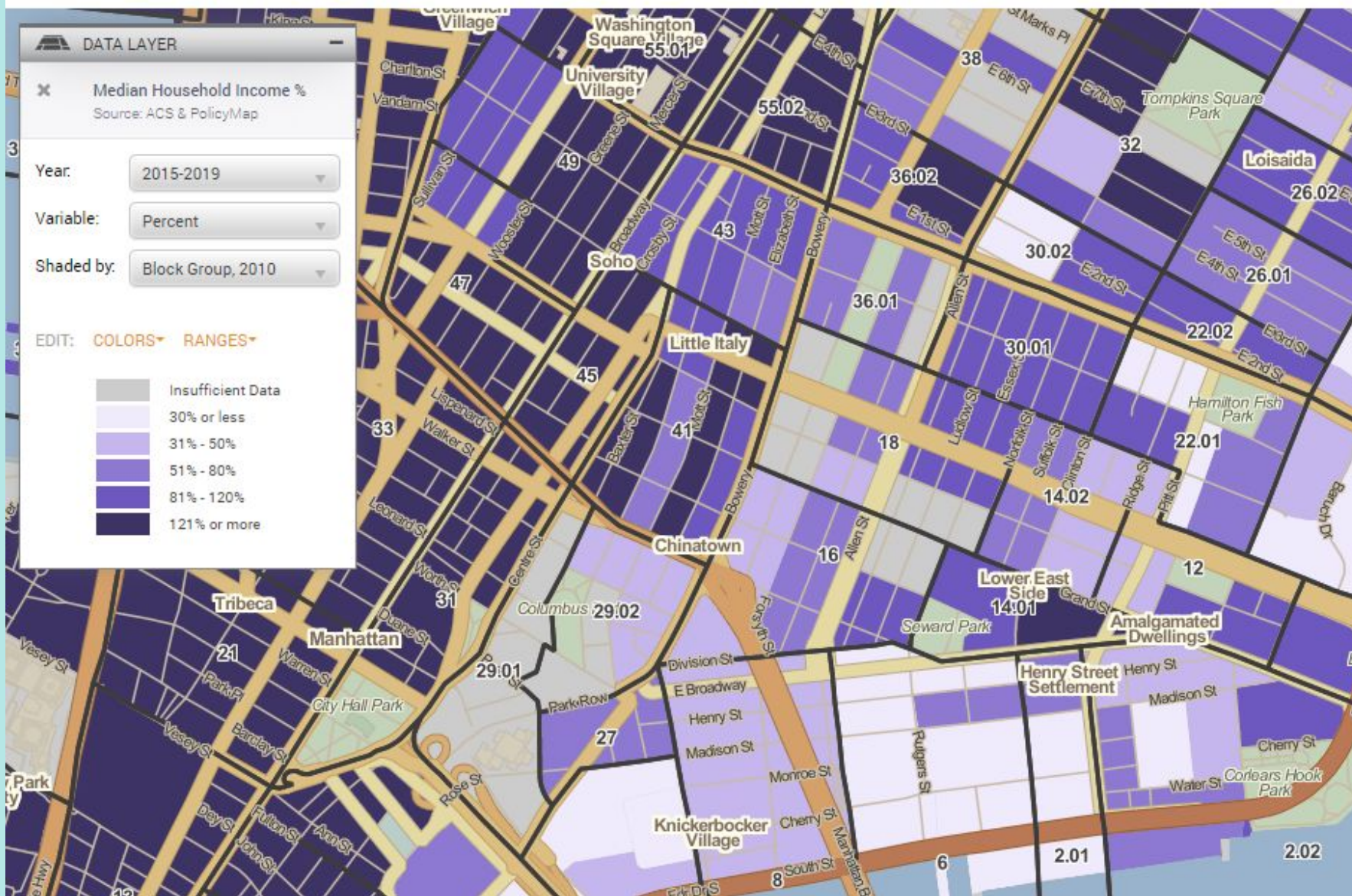


Chinatown Business Inventory





Local Median Household Income as a share of Area Median Household Income between 2015-2019. ▾



Source: policymap.com