WELCOME!

Japantown Osaka Way/Buchanan Mall

OPEN HOUSE #2
AGENDA

➔ Introduction (3 min.)
➔ Project Overview (3 min.)
➔ Ruth Asawa’s Legacy (5 min.)
➔ Outreach & Engagement Summary (7 min.)
➔ Site Analysis (3 min.)
➔ Design Concepts (15 min.)
➔ Next Steps (2 min.)
➔ Brief Q&A (10-15 min.)
San Francisco Planning acknowledges that we are on the unceded ancestral homeland of the Ramaytush Ohlone, who are the original inhabitants of the San Francisco Peninsula. As the indigenous stewards of this land and in accordance with their traditions, the Ramaytush Ohlone have never ceded, lost, nor forgotten their responsibilities as the caretakers of this place, as well as for all peoples who reside in their traditional territory. As guests, we recognize that we benefit from living and working on their traditional homeland. We wish to pay our respects by acknowledging the Ancestors, Elders, and Relatives of the Ramaytush Ohlone community and by affirming their sovereign rights as First Peoples.
PROJECT OVERVIEW

Japantown’s Osaka Way (Buchanan Mall) is the pedestrian portion of Buchanan Street that runs for one block between Post and Sutter streets.

Along with Peace Plaza, it’s the geographic and cultural heart of the neighborhood allowing residents and visitors to experience Japantown’s culture in a pedestrian environment.
PROJECT GOALS

1. ENHANCE ACCESSIBILITY
   Enhance accessibility of Osaka Way for seniors and people with disabilities and limited mobility.

2. RESTORE THE RUTH ASAWA FOUNTAINS
   Rehabilitate the Ruth Asawa fountains that are iconic to Osaka Way.

3. SUPPORT THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY
   Support the business community by embellishing the sense of cultural authenticity and enhancing the commercial edges of Osaka Way.
PROJECT TIMELINE

YOU ARE HERE

2022
- Cherry Blossom Festival Outreach
- Public Life Studies

2023
- Initial Project Outreach
- Public Workshop Series

2024
- Conditions & Needs Assessment
- Design Refinement

2025
- Environmental Review Begins
- Construction Begins

Open House #2

Peace Plaza Construction Begins
SITE HISTORY / RUTH ASAWA LEGACY

- Site History
- Origami Fountains
- Cobblestone River
- Concrete Benches
SITE HISTORY

1963

1970s

1970s

1970s

1976

1999

2007

NIHON MACHI
March 15, 1963
Rai Y. Okamoto
San Francisco Redevelopment Agency
Van Bourg/Nakamura
An Urban Design Study in the Western Addition Area 2

URBAN DESIGN STUDY
RUTH ASAWA COMMISSION
CONSTRUCTION

PROJECT COMPLETION
FOUNTAINS RECAST IN BRONZE
RENAMED OSAKA WAY
ORIGAMI FOUNTAINS

All Artwork © 2023 Ruth Asawa Lanier, Inc./Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York, Courtesy David Zwirner
COBBLESTONE RIVER

All Artwork © 2023 Ruth Asawa Lanier, Inc./Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York, Courtesy David Zwirner
CAST CONCRETE BENCHES

All Artwork © 2023 Ruth Asawa Lanier, Inc./Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York, Courtesy David Zwirner
OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

- Timeline
- Main Takeaways
  - Ruth Asawa Elements
  - Lighting
  - Planting
  - Other Features / Programming
- Focus Groups
  - Youth
  - Seniors
  - Merchants
OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT TIMELINE

2022

STAKEHOLDER SITE VISIT
March 31, 2022

NIHONMACHI STREET FAIR
August 6, 2022

CHILDREN’S DAY FESTIVAL
May 5, 2022

CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL
April 9-18 & 19-26, 2023

2023

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT
July 2023

OPEN HOUSE #3
December 2023

OPEN HOUSE #2
October 3, 2023

OPEN HOUSE #1
May 31, 2023

SENIOR ENGAGEMENT
Surveys with: "IDP" at the Consulate, Japanese
August 2023

1ST MERCHANT FOCUS GROUPS
8/10 In-person Focus Group
9/15 Virtual Focus Group (September 2023)

Thank you to our community partners at the Japantown Task Force for supporting and leading our outreach and engagement efforts!
# FEEDBACK - RUTH ASAWA ELEMENTS

## MAIN TAKEAWAYS

**Create accessible walking surface at river while maintaining the essence of Ruth’s design**

**Improved visibility of Ruth Asawa signage**

**Working fountains will help activate plaza**

**Consider making fountain walls more comfortable to sit on**

### Open House #1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Security”</td>
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<td>“Would like to see [fountains] working again”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Great drainage [at fountains]”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Smooth walkway”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Is there possibility of moving Ruth Asawa Fountains onto Peace Plaza?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Smooth the surface of the cobblestone for ADA”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Cover stones with glass/resin”</td>
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<td>“Is there a way to mitigate uneveness of cobblestone yet still retain the look/feel of rugged texture?”</td>
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<td>“Not sure if there is signage mentioning that the fountains were made by Ruth but maybe this can be made clear or more attention can be drawn to that fact?”</td>
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<td>“Can the Osaka Way Mall be a kind of al fresco gallery that tells story of Asawa's community-based artwork? QR codes about her life + art?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“I like the uniqueness and design of the cobblestones. However, I know people worry about the uneven surface. Could a smooth path cut through some of the cobbles to offer a passage way/path from one side of the mall to the other? Some physical therapists would say uneven surfaces help to improve your balance!”</td>
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FEEDBACK - LIGHTING

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Add more street and pedestrian scale lighting to enhance character of Osaka Way and surrounding neighborhood

Mixed opinions on Japanese language latern posts

Open House #1

“Please keep lights!!”

“I like the paper lamps. I'd like more of them.”

“The hanging lights should be addressed — would it be possible to incorporate more traditional-looking lighting into the space?”

Feedback from Cherry Blossom Festivals (2022 & 2023)

“Keep string lights year round”

“Alternating bistro lights more fluid to the times and daylight”

“More lighting”

“Lighting to support the new outdoor dining spaces”

“Festive lanterns”
FEEDBACK - PLANTING

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Desire for more trees/larger canopies

Improved appearance and locations of planters

Culturally relevant planting appropriate for local environment

Regular maintenance of planting

Feedback from Cherry Blossom Festivals
(2022 & 2023)

“Some areas of shade”
“Maple trees”
“Plant more cherry trees”
“Keep the [cherry] trees, like the blossoms”
“Circular garden [at fountains]”
“More cherry blossom trees!”
“More trees! Gardens! Modular/Movable gardens :)”

“The round concrete planters are unsightly and irregularly spaced. Perhaps more traditional looking planters?”
- Open House #1 Participant

“Add hanging planters to areas like the torii gate.”
- Youth Engagement
FEEDBACK - OTHER FEATURES / PROGRAMMING

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Improved wayfinding, signage, seating, and outdoor dining to support day-to-day functions and festival days

Consider tables if space allows

Complementary art opportunities

Feedback from Cherry Blossom Festivals (2022 & 2023)

“Add a sign indicating this is Japantown”

“I really love the idea of preserving the artwork while making the space much more wheelchair accessible”

“Cafes/outdoor patios to dine”

“More micro-community activations”

“Paper crane display”

“A performance stage for presenting Japanese culture”

“Cultural shops, food and art”

“Sitting areas”

“Please remodel this plaza. Need access for wheelchair and more table for people eat out :)”

“Wishing wall (write wishes and hang them)”

“I like the torii gate. It’s a welcome and reminder of why/how this area came to be. To redo the gate would require balancing authenticity and whitewashing.”

“More obvious signage about Osaka Way’s history and Ruth Asawa work”

- Open House #1 Participant

“More seating”

“table/board games”

- Open House #1 Participant
FOCUS GROUPS - YOUTH, SENIORS, MERCHANTS

- Japanese Community Youth Council Workshop
- JCYC Nikkei Intern Tour & Roundtable
- 7+ Senior Living Facilities surveyed
- More than 120 respondents

- In-person Merchant focus group at Fermentation Labs
- Virtual focus group
MOOD/VISION BOARD
SITE ANALYSIS

- Accessibility Improvements
- Circulation and Pinch Points
- Sun and Views
REQUIRED ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS
OUTDOOR DINING AND CIRCULATION PINCH POINTS
SUN EXPOSURE AND VIEWS
DESIGN CONCEPTS

- Design Concepts Overview
- Existing Site
- Conceptual Design
  - Option 1 - Kanso
  - Option 2 - Datsuzoku
- Tree Species
- Paving Upgrades
- Lighting Upgrades
- Summary Comparison
DESIGN CONCEPTS OVERVIEW

Option 1:  
**Kanso (簡素): simplicity**

A preservation-minded approach that refreshes the existing geometries of the space using mostly city-standard materials and furnishings.

Option 2:  
**Datsuzoku (脱俗): unbounded by convention**

An alternative vision for the space inspired by Japanese gardens featuring new materials and furnishings.

*At the heart of both concepts is celebration of the Ruth Asawa fountains*
OPTION 1 - KANSO | USE DIAGRAMS
OPTION 2 - DATSUZOKU | PERSPECTIVE
OPTION 2 - DATSUZOKU | USE DIAGRAMS
TREE SPECIES

OPTION 1: KANSO
Cherry blossom (existing)

OPTION 2: DATSUZOKU
Cherry blossom (existing)

SEASONAL COLOR

KANSO:
- Spring: White blossoms
- Summer: Green leaves
- Fall: Orange leaves

DATSUZOKU:
- Spring: White blossoms
- Summer: Green leaves
- Fall: Yellow leaves

SIZE COMPARISON

KANSO:
- Height: 15ft to 20ft

DATSUZOKU:
- Height: 25ft to 50ft

Japantown Osaka Way/Buchanan Mall Upgrades Project | OPEN HOUSE #2 | OCTOBER 3, 2023
SPECIAL PAVING

1. Patterned concrete
2. Aggregate paving
3. Contrasting curves & textures
4. Stone & Metal Inlays
5. Unit pavers
6. Metal inlay
SPECIAL LIGHTING

1. Catenary lighting
2. Overhead lanterns
3. Peace Plaza light pole
4. Fountain lighting
5. Torii gate lighting
6. Bollard lighting
7. Pole banners
OPTION COMPARISON

OPTION 1: KANSO

1. Repairs Ruth Asawa fountains
2. Addresses code compliance issues
3. Fewer changes
4. Maintains overall existing site layout
5. Uses mostly standard materials (paving, furnishings, etc.)
6. Less opportunity for unique design elements
7. Keeps existing cherry trees with new under-planting
8. Restores existing cobble in a code-compliant condition

OPTION 2: DATSUZOKU

1. Repairs Ruth Asawa fountains
2. Addresses code compliance issues
3. More changes
4. Introduces an alternative site design
5. Uses more custom and non City-standard materials
6. Greater opportunity for unique design elements
7. Adds more planting types, including canopy trees
8. Replaces cobble with new paving
STAY INVOLVED!

SPRING 2023
PUBLIC WORKSHOP #1
FOCUS: Project overview, Goals and objectives, Site history, Existing conditions, Community feedback, Projected timeline

SUMMER 2023
FOCUSED CONVERSATIONS & SURVEYS
Focused outreach with merchants, children and youth, seniors and people with disabilities

TODAY!
PUBLIC WORKSHOP #2
FOCUS: Initial conceptual design alternatives, gather feedback on preferred options

FALL 2023
PUBLIC WORKSHOP #3
FOCUS: Present a revised conceptual design and address remaining concerns

PROJECT TIMELINE  (subject to changes)

• Spring 2022 - Winter 2023
  Conditions & Needs Assessment, Initial Project Outreach

• Spring 2023 - Fall 2023
  Public Workshop Series and Conceptual Design Development

• Fall 2023 - Spring 2024
  Design Refinement, Environmental Review

• Summer 2024
  Detailed Design

• Spring 2025
  Construction begins
Q&A

Any Questions or Comments?

➔ If you’re joining via Zoom, please add your comments in the chat for us to read out loud
➔ If you’re joining in person, please step forward and line up behind the microphone
THANK YOU!

SFPlanning.org/JapantownBuchananMall

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