

Rentify Chinatown

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PEOPLE



Identity: Resident
Age: 50-60

We moved to the US for a better life, but now we cannot even afford our rent.

I come here every day to send my grandkids to school. Then I play cards with my friends here.

Identity: Daily Visitor
Age: 50-60



I applied for the public housing and waited 10 years to get my own place to stay.

Identity: Regular Visitor
Age: 30+

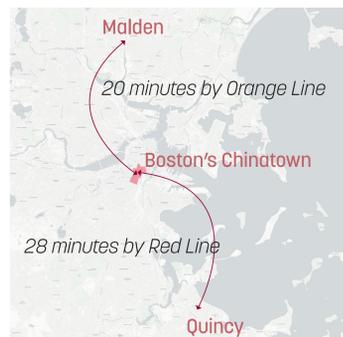


We are moving as we don't want to renew our lease here. The rent has gotten way too expensive.

Identity: Business Owner
Age: 50-60



Where do you live?



In-depth Interviewing

- Collaborating with Chinatown Community Land Trust, we conducted in-person interviews with the Chinatown community both at formal community meetings and during the day in the streets, shops, open spaces, and restaurants.

Digital Data Collection and Processing

- Collaborating with Alliance of Downtown Civic Organizations (ADCOC), we are currently applying computer vision techniques to review the building permit.
- Collaborating with Chinatown Community Land Trust, we are digitizing the historical files for Chinatown to highlight the community characteristics that have developed since the 1800s.

THE PAST



Hong Far Low
Believed to be the earliest Chinese restaurant.



Lee Family Association
After purchasing the building from Goon Family Association, the Lee Family Association occupied three floors for its member activities.



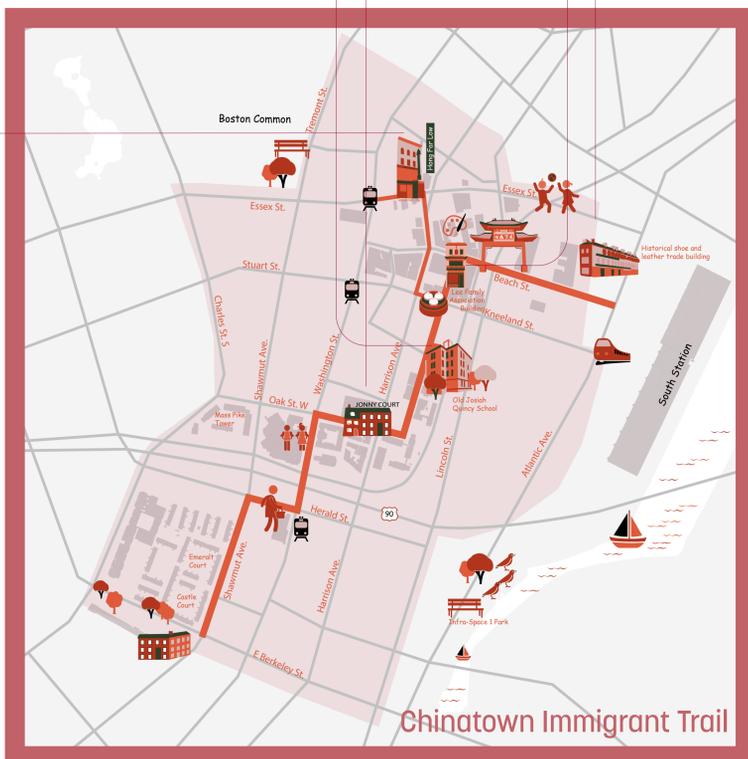
Garment District
Boston's garment industry grew as increasing urbanization raised demand for ready-made clothing and shoes.



Old Josiah Quincy School
Old Chinatown branch of Boston Public Library.

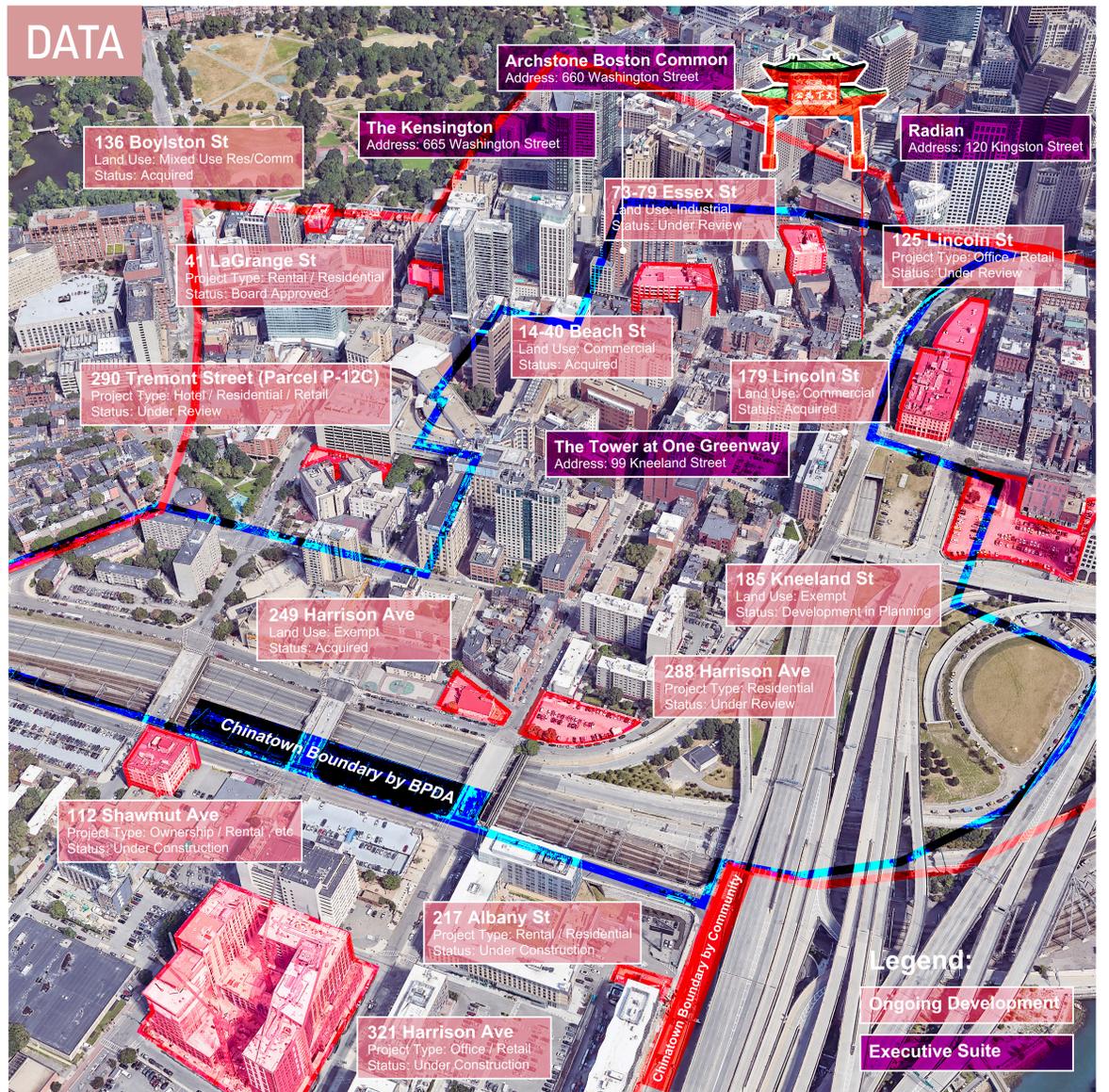


JOHNNY COURT
Johnny Court
Historical row house in Chinatown currently under discussion to be developed for affordable housing.

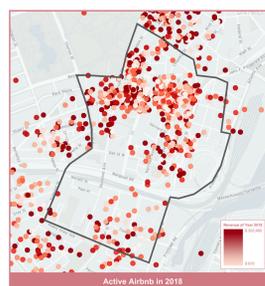


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@RentifyChinatown

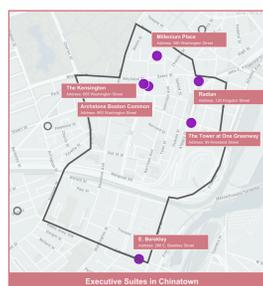
DATA



THE CURRENT



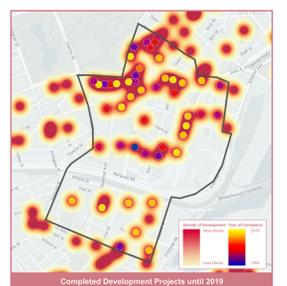
Active Airbnb 2018



Executive Suites 2019



Development current



Development completed

OUR MISSION

Rentify Chinatown is an initiative combining digital tools, data analytics, in-depth interviews, and placemaking strategies to visualize housing challenges and opportunities, document place identity, and help create a sense of belonging within the Chinese communities in American cities.



In Boston's Chinatown, the housing stock and land base of the traditionally working-class immigrant neighborhood are constantly reshaped by the influx of luxury residential developments, institutional expansions, gentrification, and short-term rental models such as Airbnb. As a result, many cultural facilities and amenities are driven out by increasing rents, leading to a loss of local identity. Rentify Chinatown researches into the vulnerable communities in Chinatown that are at risk of life and experience displacement due to gentrification. We focus our study on Chinese families under the threat of displacement and eviction in Chinatown, oftentimes identified as the elderly population, local low-income working class, and new immigrants with minimal English proficiency.

We are working with local community partners, such as the Chinatown Progressive Association and the Chinatown Community Land Trust, and building tools to visualize the gentrification issues faced by local communities, to engage low-income and aging communities in the planning and decision-making process, and to introduce the history and stories of Boston's Chinatown to the public.