



425 NORTH LOS ANGELES STREET | LOS ANGELES, CA 90012 | TEL: 213 485-8567 | WWW.CAMLA.ORG

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Linh Duong (213) 485-8568

FIRST LADY LAURA BUSH DESIGNATES LOS ANGELES' CHINATOWN A PRESERVE AMERICA COMMUNITY

The Friends of the Chinese American Museum To Serve as Lead Organization to Direct Program Activities In Partnership with the Newly-Created Chinatown Coalition

(LOS ANGELES, July 28, 2008)— Los Angeles Chinatown was recently honored when First Lady Laura Bush, Honorary Chair of the Preserve America initiative, designated it as one of the nation's newest Preserve America Communities. Such a distinction will provide Chinatown with national recognition as well as access to grant funds that will support preservation strategies through research, education, planning, marketing, and training. In addition, Chinatown's commitment to the preservation of its history and cultural heritage will be fostered through the concentrated efforts of the newly-formed Chinatown Coalition, a team consisting of prominent, community-based organizations that includes the *Chinatown Community Advisory Committee*, *Chinatown Business Improvement District*, *Chinatown Service Center*, *Chinese American Citizens Alliance*, *Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association*, *Chinese Historical Society of Southern California*, *Chinese Chamber of Commerce of Los Angeles*, *Friends of the Chinese American Museum*, and the *Historic Cultural Neighborhood Council*. The Friends of the Chinese American Museum (FCAM) will serve as the lead organization and will assist in collaborative preservation efforts of the Chinatown Coalition.

"Preserve America Communities demonstrate that they are committed to preserving America's heritage while ensuring a future filled with opportunities for learning and enjoyment," Mrs. Bush said. "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."

Dr. Pauline Wong, Executive Director of the Chinese American Museum (CAM) received a certificate of designation signed by Mrs. Bush announcing that Los Angeles Chinatown is now a Preserve America Community. In addition to receiving national recognition, communities designated through the program will have the authorization 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 Chinatown's preservation efforts and 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.

"The Preserve America Neighborhood designation is an important one for Chinatown. CAM's position as lead organization also strengthens the connection between historic Old Chinatown and New Chinatown. This designation will bring national recognition to the history and cultural legacy of Los Angeles' earliest Chinese American communities," Dr. Wong said.

Little Tokyo and Thai Two also won Preserve America Neighborhood designation as part of a guided effort by the city of Los Angeles to win the federal designation for its five central Asian American enclaves -- Thai Town, Chinatown, Little Tokyo, Koreatown and Historic Filipinotown. In 2006, Preserve America Grants totaling nearly \$5 million were awarded to 68 projects around the country. Nearly \$5 million will be awarded in 2007, as well. President Bush's fiscal year 2008 budget requests \$10 million in grant funds for which designated Preserve America Communities may apply. Grants of \$20,000 to \$150,000 are 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 a White House 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.

The Chinese American Museum (CAM) is jointly developed and operated by the Friends of the Chinese American Museum (FCAM) and El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument, a department of the City of Los Angeles. Located at 425 North Los Angeles Street within the El Pueblo Plaza in downtown Los Angeles, CAM is housed in the last surviving structure of the City's original Chinatown. CAM's mission is to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of America's diverse heritage by researching, preserving, and sharing the history, rich cultural legacy, and continuing contributions of Chinese Americans. For more information about CAM and its programs and exhibitions, please visit www.camla.org.