Application form:
RTA Community Planning Program and
CMAP Local Technical Assistance Program

DEADLINE: Noon on Thursday, June 29, 2017

This application form is online at www.rtachicago.org/applications. You may submit the form by email to applications@rtachicago.org. Upon receipt of application, you will receive an e-mail verifying that your application has been received.

1. Name of Applicant

The Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community (CBCAC)

2. Main Contact for Application

Name: Debbie Liu
Title: Community Development Coordinator
Phone number: 312.791.0418 EXT 3328
Email: debbie_liu.cbcac@caslservice.org

3. Type of Applicant (please check any that apply)

____ Local government

____ Multijurisdictional group* Please list the members of the group (including government and nongovernmental organizations):

__________________________________________
__________________________________________
__________________________________________

x__ Nongovernmental organization* Name of local government partner(s):

25th Ward Alderman Solis
11th Ward Alderman Thompson
2nd District Representative Mah
Chicago Department of Transportation

*Applications submitted by multijurisdictional groups and nongovernmental organizations must include a letter indicating support from each relevant local government. See the FAQs for more information.
Nongovernmental applicants are strongly encouraged to contact CMAP or the RTA prior to submitting their application to discuss their project and the demonstration of local support.

4. Project Type (please check any that apply)

Please check all statements below that describe characteristics of your project.

- [ ] My project involves preparation of a plan.
- [ ] My project involves updating an already existing plan.
- [x] My project helps to implement a past plan.
- [x] My project links land use, transportation, and housing.
- [x] My project has direct relevance to public transit and supports the use of the existing transit system.
- [ ] My project is not directly related to transportation or land use, but implements GO TO 2040 in other ways.

5. Local Match Requirement (please initial to indicate you are aware of the local match requirements)

I am aware that a local match will be required for most projects, and understand that if my project is selected it is up to the project applicant to contribute a local match. (See the program guide for further details on local match requirements.)

- [x] Yes, I understand that applicants will be required to contribute a local match.

6. Project Location

Please provide a brief description of the location of your project. You may include a map if that helps to describe location, but this is not required. If your project helps to implement a past plan, please include a link to that plan.

Bounded by the transit rails to the east and north, the Chicago River to the west and highways to the south, Chinatown’s core is a mix of commercial corridors on Archer, Cermak, and Wentworth and residential areas in between. The parking needs reflect the diverse neighborhood as well as a tourist destination as stated in the CMAP comprehensive community plan of 2015. The parking management study area of Chinatown will match the Chinatown Community Vision Plan Study Area (image below).

Chinatown Community Vision Plan calls for a further study on parking management (pg. 22):
7. Project Description
Please tell us what you would like to do in your community, and what assistance is needed. If you have more than one idea, please submit a separate application for each project. Please be specific, but also brief (less than two pages per project idea)—we simply want to have a basic understanding of what you want to do. For plan updates please tell us how you will be building upon (or replacing) the previous work. Program staff will follow-up with you if we need any additional information to fully understand your proposed project.

Chinatown worked with Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) and 25th Ward Alderman Solis to adopt the Chinatown Community Vision Plan in May of 2015 with over 2000 community members providing input over the two-year process. The Vision Plan identifies the need for a parking management study with additional technical assistance. Chinatown’s core (study area) has very limited space available for growth and few opportunities for development. The existing parking lots are prime for future development (IE into TOD sites). As the real estate market pressure continues in the Near South Side, it is increasingly important to fully determine the amount and type of metered, restricted, and unrestricted parking as well as opportunities for shared parking for the Chinatown area for residents and tourists alike.

Many residents have voiced frustration about finding parking in their own neighborhood particularly on the weekends. The neighborhood has easy access to and from interstate highways and is located near downtown, visitors often find it easy to drive to Chinatown but difficult to park their cars. Discontent with parking may be a deterrent for tourists to spend more time in the neighborhood compared to other communities as even businesses have cited insufficient parking as a major barrier for commerce. It can also be an obstacle to promoting the full utilization of public amenities such as Ping Tom Park or the new Chinatown Library. The neighborhood has very limited space available for the creation of additional parking. In addition, the community has limited ability to alter parking prices and regulations, which are governed by the City and a privately contracted company. Also, the large parking lots by the Cermak-Chinatown CTA station are managed by a community-controlled non-profit corporation (Chinatown Parking Corporation) but the land is owned by IDOT. Due to the density of Chinatown and its potential for development, parking management is an inevitable concern that should be community-led and -driven while aligning to CMAP’s Parking Toolkit and other city initiatives.

Transportation is among the top three concerns in the public survey when developing the Chinatown Community Vision Plan. As recommended strategy in the Vision Plan, it is clear more data is needed regarding actual parking demand and availability at different times of the day, week, and year in different key areas of Chinatown. A comprehensive parking study will determine actual demand and availability of parking, identify methods for managing existing parking supply and demand, and assess needs and options for structured parking in different locations within the community.

8. Previous Plan Implementation Efforts
Please describe actions you have taken to implement previous plans in your community – whether your efforts were successful or not – to achieve infrastructure improvements, development investment, policy changes, advocacy, volunteer involvement, or other actions. If you do not have experience implementing previous planning work, please describe what you will do to make sure that your plan is implemented. Illustrating a commitment to implement plan recommendations is very important to both agencies as we consider new planning projects.
The Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community (CBCAC) has hired a full-time staff to implement the Vision Plan with Committee members. Since the adoption of the Vision Plan in May of 2015, there have been 5 committees formed with diverse stakeholders with varying interest and expertise on Transportation, Education, Parks, Residential, and Development. These committees have consistently met every six months to strategize and execute the plans for the years ahead. The Transportation Committee wrote and support this CMAP LTA parking management proposal. The Transportation Committee is made up of members from Chicago Department of Transportation, Chicago Department of Planning and Development, Chicago Transit Authority, Site Design, Near South Planning Board, Active Transportation Alliance, Chinatown Parking Corporation, Chinatown Chamber of Commerce, Chinese American Service League, Chinese American Civic Council, Chinese American Benevolent Association, and Pui Tak Center.

Lastly, the Chinatown Community Vision Plan has been selected by the Illinois Chapter of the American Planning Association to receive the 2016 Strategic Plan Award. The thoughtful planning including over 2000 individuals providing input to the Chinatown Community Vision Plan serves as a testament to CBCAC’s commitment and dedication to working with stakeholders and the community at large to effectively plan and implement for years to come.

9. Additional Strategic Partnerships
Please list any additional partners you may want to include in this planning project. Please specify if you have made contact with them in advance of submitting this application.

As a coalition of organizational members, CBCAC maintains relationships with Chinese American Service League, Pui Tak Center, Chinese American Civic Council, Chinatown Chamber of Commerce, who all have endorsed this parking management study as well as the Chinatown Parking Corporation.

(Please include any additional information that is relevant, preferably by providing links to online documents.)
June 28, 2017

Tony Manno
Senior Planner
Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
233 South Wacker Drive, Suite 800
Chicago, IL 60606

Dear Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning,

I am pleased to endorse the Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community (CBCAC)’s proposal to the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning’s Local Technical Assistance (LTA) program to conduct a parking management study for the Chinatown community.

As the first Asian American to serve in the General Assembly, now representing Illinois House District #2, I am honored to represent an ethnically diverse district that includes Chinatown/Armour Square, Brighton Park, McKinley Park, Back of the Yards, Bridgeport, and Pilsen. I am confident that together with the Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community we will be able to build upon the Chinatown Community Vision Plan of 2015 that calls for parking to be better understood and managed for a neighborhood that is both a thriving residential community and a tourist destination. Among all the Chinatowns in the United States, Chicago’s Chinatown is one that continues to grow each year. However, both residents and visitors find it difficult to find parking. For example, the traffic build-up on Wentworth between 18th Street and Archer Avenue is highly congested and poses a danger to pedestrians and drivers due to only having two lanes. If drivers are waiting to park in the Chinatown Parking Lot, other drivers who are passing through must wait until the cars have entered the parking lot before driving to their destination.

I am excited to participate in this proposal that will bring the community together with others to explore transportation in, out and within Chinatown. With a new parking management study, we would able to look at the results and begin the process of improving the community that complements the new additions to Chinatown, including the public library and park fieldhouse.

I support this proposal and look forward to assisting you in any way I can. If you have any additional questions about my participation, please contact me at rep.theresamah@gmail.com or (872) 281-5775.

Sincerely,

Theresa Mah, Ph.D.
Illinois 2nd District State Representative
June 27, 2017

Anthony Manno  
Senior Planner  
Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning  
233 South Wacker Drive, Suite 800  
Chicago IL 60606

Dear Mr. Manno,

I am writing this letter in support of the Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community (CBCAC)’s proposal to the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning’s Local Technical Assistance (LTA) program to conduct a parking management study for the Chinatown area.

I am confident that together with the community and CBCAC, we will be able to build on the Chinatown Community Vision Plan of 2015. This plan calls for parking to be reviewed and maintained for an area that is a thriving commercial and tourist destination as well as a growing residential community. Currently, parking in Chinatown is unsystematic and is in need of further examination.

I am excited to participate in this proposal that will bring the community together to explore the parking study in Chinatown.

Again, I support this proposal and look forward to working together on this issue. If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact my office at (773) 254-6677.

Sincerely,

Patrick D. Thompson  
Alderman, 11th Ward
Thursday, June 29th, 2017

Mr. Tony Manno
Senior Planner
Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
233 S Wacker Drive, Suite 800
Chicago, IL 60606

Dear Mr. Manno,

I am pleased to support the Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community (CBCAC)'s Local Technical Assistance Program application from the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), to conduct a parking management study for the Chinatown community.

As Alderman of the 25th Ward, the Chinatown neighborhood is a vibrant economic, commercial and tourist hub that continues to grow. With numerous proposed commercial and mixed-use developments and the additions of a field house, boathouse and the completion of the 2nd phase of Ping Tom Memorial Park to the North, it is evident that the neighborhood and City, is responding to a demand to expand. With 21,000 visitors per month to Chinatown’s library, it is the Chicago Public Library’s busiest facility in the City of Chicago. Chicago’s Chinatown remains the only Chinatown in the nation that is expanding. Between 2000 and 2010, there has been a 24% increase in Chinatown’s population, according to the 2010 Census Bureau data. Additionally, census data strongly suggests further growth over the next few years. Asian’s make up almost 90% of the population in Chinatown, with nearly 10% of all foreign-born Asians living in the neighborhood, arriving in the last three years. All of this speaks to the need for a comprehensive parking management study to understand better the uniqueness of this growing neighborhood and community.

With the City’s interest to alleviate vehicular congestion and provide more multimodal transportation options, they aim to reduce parking through the Transit-Oriented Development ordinance, and encourage the use of public transportation through the addition of bike lanes and public bike-sharing program, Divvy; and investing in upgrading public transportation infrastructure, such as the Loop-Link and Union Station’s new bus terminus. Given the exceptional growth and expansion we are seeing in Chinatown, there is a need to understand if this model is also applicable to Chicago’s Chinatown. A parking study will greatly impact and subsequently shape the development and growth of Chinatown.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (312) 744-6845. Additionally, you can reach me through my assistant, Ms. Man Men Lee at manmen.lee@cityofchicago.org. Thank you for your time and consideration.
Respectfully,

Daniel Solis
Alderman, 25th Ward
Chairman, Committee on Zoning, Landmarks and Building Standards

CC:  CW Chan, Chairman, Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community
     Ernie Wong, Chairman, Transportation Committee, Chinatown Vision Plan Coalition
     Alderman Patrick Thompson, 11th Ward