



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF JAPANTOWN BOWL'S CLOSURE

The following provides a summary of findings on the social, cultural and economic impacts of Japantown Bowl's closure, formerly located at 1790 Post Street, San Francisco ("subject site"). The findings are based on a recent survey of 355 people at Japantown Bowl, in addition to economic and financial analyses. The survey methodology and computer printouts of cross-tabulated survey results are provided in Appendix A. An economic impact analysis of Japantown Bowl compared to alternative uses of the existing building is provided in Appendix B. An illustrative financial analysis of new construction and alternative uses for the Japantown Bowl site is provided in Appendix C.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL IMPACTS

Purpose of Analysis

The purpose of the social and cultural impact analysis is to assess the qualitative benefits to the community and overall impact of Japantown Bowl's closure, beyond the economic impacts. The analysis is focused on the significance of Japantown Bowl to the children, youth, families, seniors and league bowlers who patronized the facility and provide a context for its importance to not only Japantown, but also the larger San Francisco community. The analysis of social and cultural impacts associated with the closure of Japantown Bowl is based on the survey of 355 people at Japantown Bowl conducted one week prior to the center's closure.

Findings

Japantown Bowl was a social and recreational amenity that served all of San Francisco and the greater region; however, the Bowl's closure will most likely result in a particularly adverse impact on the fabric of the "Japantown Community".

Supporting Data

- Japantown's most representative constituency included both Japantown and Western Addition neighborhood residents, including people of Japanese and Asian origin and African Americans, as illustrated in the Japantown Bowl survey results (see Attachment A). The greatest number of respondents resides within a mile from Japantown Bowl, representing one-third of the sample.



- Japantown Bowl was a neighborhood, city-wide and regional destination as indicated by the survey respondents' place of residence:

1-mile Radius ¹	34%
Richmond District	17%
Sunset/West of Twin Peaks	11%
Remaining Areas of San Francisco	23%
Outside San Francisco	14%
<u>Not Available</u>	<u>1%</u>
Total	100%

- Japantown Bowl served a multicultural clientele, with a strong Asian representation as indicated by the ethnicity of the survey respondents. More than half the Japantown Bowl patrons surveyed were people of Asian origin. Of the Asian patrons, people of Japanese origin represented 20 percent of the Asian population or 12 percent of the total sample:

Total Asian	53%
Japanese	12%
Korean	3%
Chinese	24%
Southeast Asian	4%
Filipino	9%
Other Asian/Pacific Islander	6%
African-American	8%
Latino	9%
<u>Caucasian</u>	<u>34%</u>
Total	109% ²

- Patrons of Japanese and Asian origin frequented the Japantown Bowl most often relative to all other ethnic groups. Japantown Bowl was also an important resource for the African American and Western Addition community. For example, 58 percent of patrons of Japanese origin, 42 percent of all Asian patrons and 39 percent of African American patrons frequented the Japantown Bowl about 3 times per week. In contrast, only 21 percent of Caucasian patrons and 29 percent of Latino patrons frequented the center as often.

¹ Commentary on the date of the survey (i.e., conducted one week prior to the facility's closure when many leagues were no longer active) indicated concern that the patronage data may be skewed toward greater neighborhood representation.

² The total adds to more than 100% due to 32 respondents (9 percent of the sample) identifying as more than one ethnicity.



The majority of Japantown Bowl clientele utilized the center primarily for entertainment, recreation and socializing.

- The two main reasons people visited Japantown Bowl were for fun and recreation and to get together with friends: 94 percent of the respondents agreed, including 75 percent who strongly agreed, with the statement that “Japantown Bowl has given me a major opportunity for recreation and/or exercise.”
- Japantown Bowl provided a neighborhood social and recreational amenity for a range of activities, in addition to bowling. For example, one-fifth of the survey respondents were not bowling during the survey but rather were visiting Japantown Bowl for other activities such as meeting friends, playing video games, accompanying bowlers, participating in a party or using the bar.
- When asked about the “main effects on your life when Japantown Bowl closes”, the most often selected reasons from a list of five choices were “I won’t be going to Japantown as much” (55 percent) and “I will lose a place where I can regularly meet with friends” (48 percent). These were the main effects in all population groups.
- Survey participants were asked to indicate the importance of key Japantown destinations to their social and cultural life. Japantown Bowl was the most important, followed by Japan Center, the AMC Kabuki Theaters, and community events, like the Cherry Blossom Festival. The following summarizes the proportion of respondents ranking each venue as “very important” to their social and cultural lives.

Very Important

Japantown Bowl	69%
Japan Center	49%
AMC Kabuki Theaters	46%
Community events	42%
Community and cultural organizations	38%
Other restaurants and shops	32%
Religious institutions (churches and temples)	30%
Peace Plaza	29%
Kabuki Hot Springs	19%

- Half of the respondents bowled in a league at Japantown within the past year. Among bowlers, league affiliation was most common among seniors (90 percent), African-Americans (79 percent) and those of Japanese ancestry (72 percent).



The social and cultural impacts on Japantown Bowl patrons will be somewhat diminished by the availability of other bowling alleys in San Francisco; however, intangible losses will result as patrons reduce their exposure to and support for Japantown's unique cultural amenities and environment.

- The majority of Japantown Bowl patrons (64.5 percent) will continue to bowl at other locations. Of the patrons who will continue to bowl, most of them will join other leagues and/or bowl as often (65 percent). Nevertheless, 35 percent of the patrons will continue to bowl but not as often.
- Seniors are the most likely to continue bowling in a league or as often (69 percent), compared to youth, which are the least likely (22 percent).
- Although the availability of other bowling alleys in San Francisco satisfies major elements of the demand for Japantown Bowl, the other bowling centers will not provide the intangible benefits of attracting or exposing a diverse population to Japantown's unique cultural experiences. A large proportion of Japantown Bowl patrons purchased Japanese products and services as part of their bowling experience. Respondents indicated that they visit the following venues frequently to every time they came to Japantown Bowl:

Japantown restaurants and bars	55%
Japantown grocery stores	33%
Other retail stores	32%

Although the majority of seniors will continue to bowl at other centers, Japantown Bowl's closure will negatively impact the health and social lives of a significant portion of the Japantown Bowl's senior community.

- Every senior respondent strongly agreed that "Japantown Bowl has given me a major opportunity for recreation and/or exercise." Approximately 62 percent of Japantown Bowl's senior population stated exercise is one of the main reasons for bowling. More than one-third of the seniors stated they would get less exercise as a result of Japantown Bowl's closure.
- Approximately 86 percent of seniors responded that Japantown Bowl is a very important part of their social and cultural life.
- Approximately 55 percent of Japantown Bowl's senior population went to Japantown Bowl to meet with friends; and 28 percent of the seniors believe they will not see their friends as often.



- The correlation between the importance of active participation in cultural/social networks and health was documented in a 1976 landmark public health study revealing that the prevalence of coronary heart disease was always higher in Japanese men (residing in California) “who had retained less of their traditional cultural matrix . . . and lost important sources of social support.”³

The closure of Japantown Bowl will have a particularly adverse impact on the cultural and social life of youth.

- Approximately 64 percent of Japantown Bowl’s youth population went to Japantown Bowl frequently (at least once per week).
- More than three-quarters of Japantown Bowl’s youth population cite their two main reasons for going to Japantown Bowl was to meet friends and for fun and recreation.
- The Japantown Bowl’s youth are the most likely (relative to all other age groups) to stop bowling due to the closure of the center (29 percent).

DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT OF JAPANTOWN BOWL’S CLOSURE

Purpose of Analysis

The purpose of this analysis is to calculate the direct economic impact of the Japantown Bowl within the Japantown community. The direct economic impacts on other businesses in Japantown, due to Japantown Bowl’s closure, is based on the survey conducted of 355 people at Japantown Bowl. The survey included numerous questions about the Japantown expenditure patterns of Japantown Bowl patrons.

Findings

In association with visits to Japantown Bowl, patrons and employees purchased approximately \$4.2 million annually at Japantown businesses, in addition to almost \$1 million annual expenditures at the AMC Kabuki Theaters. As a result of the Japantown Bowl closure, Japantown businesses are projected to experience a loss of approximately \$2.4 million in sales annually.⁴

³ John Cassel, “The Contribution of the Social Environment to Host Resistance,” American Journal of Epidemiology, Vol. 104, No. 2 (1976), 107.

⁴ The economic impact figures do not include the gross revenue collected by Japantown Bowl, estimated at \$2.5 million for the year 2000.



Supporting Data

- Approximately 55 percent of Japantown Bowl's patrons will not visit Japantown as often due to the bowling center's closure. Based on Japantown Bowl's estimates, 225,000 people visited their facility annually, with patrons visiting the center an average of once per week.
- The average per capita expenditure by Japantown Bowl patrons was \$896 annually at Japantown businesses including restaurants, grocery stores, other retail and local services. In addition, Japantown Bowl patrons reported spending an average of \$212 per capita annually at AMC Kabuki Theaters.
- The average employee expenditure at businesses proximate to the workplace is \$3,900, based on market data compiled by the International Council of Shopping Centers.
- Restaurants will experience the greatest economic losses as a result of Japantown Bowl's closure.
- Japantown Bowl's closure will result in the loss of approximately \$24,000 in Japantown retail sales taxes collected by the City and County of San Francisco annually.
- In sum, Japantown Bowl's closure is projected to result in a loss of approximately \$2.4 million of restaurant and retail business revenue in Japantown. Some businesses that disproportionately served Japantown Bowl clientele will be uniquely impacted by the closure. Furthermore, the potential cumulative impacts resulting from closures of other destination-oriented venues in Japantown could result in significant economic impacts.