Brooklyn Chinese community anticipates opening paifang this fall

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A nine-roof, two-pillar structure standing 40 feet high and 12 feet wide will span 60th and 61st streets along Eighth Avenue.  
The Friendship Archway, a gift from the Chaoyang District in Beijing, will be adorned with indigo-blue glazed tiles and sculptures of mythical creatures similar to the Temple of Heaven in Beijing, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.  
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While several Chinatowns in major American cities such as San Francisco, Seattle, Chicago, Washington, Philadelphia and Boston have   
"I want to thank our friends from Beijing's Chaoyang District for the generous gift of the Friendship Archway. We look forward to this archway giving Sunset Park the recognition it deserves — serving as an everlasting bridge between New York City and Beijing, two of the world's great cities," de Blasio said at a ceremony in October 2017.  
That the arch, years in the making, will be in Sunset Park and not in the famous Manhattan Chinatown is reflective of the Brooklyn neighborhood's rise as a center of Chinese-American life in the city.  
Former Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz first unveiled the plans in 2013; Community Board 7 endorsed it in 2015; the city's Public Design Commission approved it in July 2017; and the Department of Transportation will manage its installation. The borough has allocated $2 million to the effort.  
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"The project of the archway is so important for the Chinese community in many ways," Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams told Xinhua recently.  
"It's sending a clear and loud message that it is continuing expansion of the strength of the power and the respect that the Chinese community has in this city," he said.  
The first Brooklyn Chinatown was originally established in the Sunset Park area and has since expanded into parts of Bensonhurst, Bay Ridge and Sheepshead Bay.  
Brooklyn's Chinatown is now home to immigrants mostly from Fuzhou, capital of East China's Fujian province, succeeding the mostly Cantonese community before them. A growing community of immigrants from Wenzhou in East China's Zhejiang province also calls the area home.  
Adams said Chinatown's growth is creating "a great level of excitement and energy. A lot of small businesses are opening; many things have been done to encourage the continued expansion of the Chinese community in the borough."  
The arrival of the archway is the fulfillment of a decade-long effort by Winnie Greco, president of the Sino America New York Brooklyn Archway Association, helped by community members and politicians.  
"It's exciting we're close to accomplishing the task," she told Xinhua. "If everything goes smoothly, the arch will be installed in October."  
"By having an archway in Sunset Park, it becomes a magnet with the gravitational pull that will allow a large number of Chinese visitors, tourists and residents to go deeper into the heart of Brooklyn," Adams said.  
"It would infuse a great deal of capital and resources into not only the borough of Brooklyn, but into the city. A large number of Chinese tourists ... will now have a reason to go to see one of the largest archways in the country," he said.

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