



# CHINATOWN RENEWAL

## NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2010

“CREATING A THRIVING COMMUNITY”

IN ASSOCIATION WITH SDCB

### ANNUAL ASIAN FESTIVAL AND NATIONAL EXHIBITION TO CELEBRATE SALINAS CHINATOWN

#### COME CELEBRATE THE HISTORY AND RENEWAL OF SALINAS CHINATOWN!



The 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Asian Festival will offer a day of free cultural entertainment, demonstrations, and displays, walking tours of Chinatown and the Buddhist Temple. The public will enjoy freshly prepared ethnic food for sale. Opening ceremonies begin at 11 a.m. on Soledad Street near the old Republic Café with taiko drumming, martial arts demonstrations, and Chinese lion dancing. At 11:30 a.m., the various Festival programs will be presented at the Salinas Confucius Church and Buddhist Temple; the Filipino Cultural Center; the Chinatown Community

Garden, Dorothy’s Place, @risk Gallery, and CSUMB Community Learning Center; and Ted Ponton’s Glass Shop. The Festival, a special event of the ongoing Salinas Chinatown Renewal Project, is aimed at bringing the public to the Chinatown area and sharing the contributions, histories, and cultures of the three ethnic groups—Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino—that had lived and worked in the Chinatown area since 1893. For more Festival information, go to [www.salinasianfestival.com](http://www.salinasianfestival.com). Also on April 24, the National Steinbeck Center opens its doors to the first-ever Salinas Chinatown Exhibition, specifically telling the story of the Chinese in Chinatown since it was established over a hundred years ago. The exhibition will continue until July 4. Steinbeck Center Curator Deborah Silguero has worked with Chinatown native Wellington Lee and former Chinatown resident Wally

Ahtye to gather a plethora of historic photographs, documents, and artifacts that will be on display. The exhibition will tell the good and “bad” of Chinatown life—from large Chinese families to tong war shootings. In between are other stories of Chinese laborers, merchants and their shops, the Exclusion Act, celebrations, joss houses, illegal gambling, floods, fires, opium dens, Chinese School, the “Mayor of Chinatown,” the backyards and alleyways, parade floats, bound feet, the Republic Café, herbs, Chinese clothes, Chinese coins hanging, and the children of Chinatown. For more Exhibition information, go to [www.steinbeck.org](http://www.steinbeck.org). 🌸



Bonsai display at the Buddhist Temple of Salinas during the 2008 Asian Festival.

#### CALTRANS UPDATE: SEEKING INPUT

The update and refinement of the 2007 Chinatown Renewal Plan is moving forward to the City Council June 1, 2010. Since the October 15, 2009 Community Meeting held at the Buddhist Temple, five consultants have been working with the local action teams to create land-use, and sign implementation plans. A draft of this implementation plan

was shared with the SDCB Wednesday March 31, 2010. During the past six months, a 16-page study concerning the ability to reconnect Chinatown to the rest of the community has been distilled into two or three serious considerations. Soledad Street will be the focus of the development, and

*(Caltrans on page 2)*

#### CHAT MOVING FORWARD

The Chinatown Homeless Action Team (CHAT) is moving forward with an emerging new vision of services for those in need. CHAT’s consultant on this project is Homebase, a nationally renowned expert on homeless/housing issues based in San Francisco, with over 10 years of assistance to nonprofits in Monterey County. Taking to heart community feedback and need, this emerging new vision has several components and themes, at its core being a “multi-service center campus”, to maximize flexibility and adjust to the

neighborhood’s needs over time. This ‘campus’ concept has been very successful in other communities around the country, and creates co-located services to improve access by the public while concurrently fostering a deeper collaboration among providers. Services available will be comprehensive, including employment opportunities, and have strong linkages to shelter and housing, both within Chinatown and in adjacent neighborhoods of the city. Stay tuned as this exciting new vision develops! 🌸

## CHINATOWN COMMUNITY GARDEN



Our Chinatown Community Garden is in full swing. 39 garden beds have been adopted by a diverse group of Salinas locals. Javier Rodriguez, the new Steward is working hard making improvements. Service Learning

students conducting special projects are enhancing our Garden's composting, natural building, and community outreach efforts. Salinas Youth volunteers from United Way are increasing their connection. Mark Marino from Cinagro, Inc. is dedicating his farming expertise to support effectiveness and beauty of the garden.

Come and take the opportunity to garden with us! Volunteer work days are Wednesdays and Fridays from 9 am to 4 pm. Enjoy the Garden any day of the week, gates are open seven days a week from 9 am to 4 pm. 🌸

## CALTRANS

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the main attraction. The design guidelines are evolving to match the hey-day of the community reflected in the neon sign "Old Republic Café." The Consulting Team will be recommending a Specific Plan for Chinatown be created, to include special flexible land-use designations, in conjunction with the establishment of an historic district. The draft sketch is an excerpt of a similar plan shared in March with SDCB. It is

undergoing further revisions, but provides a glimpse of the details being considered. The City Council and the community will be contemplating details concerning the future of Chinatown in upcoming months. The strength of Chinatown's progress originates from your input. Please join the SDCB and the City Council on June 1 at 4 PM, 200 Lincoln Avenue to discuss the plan and the concepts summarized above. 🌸



## EVENTS



**First Friday Art Walk, 5-9 pm**

April 2, May 7, June 4  
14 Soledad Street,  
(831) 455-5964

[bythtree09@yahoo.com](mailto:bythtree09@yahoo.com)



**Asian Festival**

April 24, 2010



**National Asian Pacific Islander  
Historic Preservation Forum**

June 25, 2010  
San Francisco, CA

Visit the SDCB website!

[www.salinasdcb.org](http://www.salinasdcb.org)

## NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION FORUM

Larry Hirahara will participate in the National Asian Pacific Islander Historic Preservation Forum in San Francisco on June 25. This is the first national gathering of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders who are concerned about preserving their historical community resources. Larry will present information on ACE and their proposed Salinas Chinatown Cultural Experience. The name of the workshop is "Shared Histories, Shared Sites", detailing sites that share a broader Asian American history; such as: Angel Island Immigration Station, Seattle's International District, Fresno's Chinatown, or Salinas' Chinatown Cultural Experience. Major sponsors for the forum include the National Historic Preservation Trust and National Parks Service. If you have questions contact Larry, [seedyguy@aol.com](mailto:seedyguy@aol.com) or for more information about the forum: <http://www.apinhpforum.org/index.html>.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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[www.salinasdcb.org](http://www.salinasdcb.org)



**About Us** - The Salinas Downtown Community Board, SDCB, is a nonprofit agency whose mission is to provide advice and recommendations to local government, government agencies and other community stakeholders on issues focused on improving the quality of life for individuals and businesses located in the downtown Salinas area. **The Chinatown Renewal Project is a collaborative effort of the City of Salinas, CSUMB, & the SDCB.**