



# CHINATOWN RENEWAL

## NEWSLETTER

FALL 2010

“CREATING A THRIVING COMMUNITY”

IN ASSOCIATION WITH SDCB

### CAL-TRANS UPDATE-NOVEMBER 10, 2010 COMMUNITY INPUT

The Salinas Downtown Community Board (SDCB) and the Salinas Redevelopment Agency have been working to refine the 2007 Chinatown Renewal Plan.

Four expert consultants have been working with the action teams established by SDCB to address specific plans for traffic circulation, social services, cultural and historic preservation, economic development and housing. Hosted by the Local

Government Commission, the SDCB has held community meetings. At these meetings, many variations of the 2007 Renewal Plan have been discussed. As a result, careful analysis of social services and traffic circulation has been prepared. These discussions have been shared with the Salinas City Council. The City Council is open to creating a historic district. The City Council is also open to establishing a master plan for the

29-acre community and to pursuing “form based codes” (in place of the formal Zoning Codes). The SDCB analyzed the consultants’ reports and provided detailed comments to the Local Government Commission as they completed their draft report. The report recommends 50,000 square feet building and office space for social services and up to 400 apartments compared to the 1,800

*(Cal-Trans on page 2)*

### CHINATOWN SYMPOSIUM DRAWS BIG CROWD



Dr. Jack Tchen’s presentation included a “tour” of the Museum of Chinese in America in New York

Dr. Jack Tchen, keynote speaker at the Salinas Chinatown: Once and Again Symposium on Oct. 15, told the gathering of 200 people at California State University, Monterey Bay, “We, too, are in search of America.” He was referring to John Steinbeck’s book, *Travels with Charley*. “In some ways,” he said, “the legacy of Steinbeck’s writing is what keeps us going.”

Dr. Tchen, a historian, professor at New York University and a co-founder of New York’s Museum of Chinese in America, as well as several other museum professionals and artists were invited to the university to talk about the Salinas Chinatown Cultural Center and Museum, which will be housed in the former Republic Café on Soledad Street. They were joined by university faculty members, students and community members.

He pointed out that the museum will be important nationally, because it will share a history that is often overlooked. Most Asian cultural museums represent the urban experience. The one in Salinas will cover the rural and agricultural history of the Chinese, Japanese and Filipino communities who lived there from the nineteenth century into the 1950s.

Karin Higa, curator of the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles, advised the group to define

*(Preservation Forum on page 2)*

### SDCB MEMBER PROFILE - DEANNA SMITH AND GERALD CHEANG



Deanna Smith

Deanna Smith is co-chair of the SDBC. She is the Executive Director of the Oldtown Salinas Association, an organization that manages and promotes the commercial vitality of the historic Oldtown business district. She has a degree in Public Administration from the University of San Francisco and is a former Oldtown Salinas business owner.

*(Smith cont. on page 2)*



Gerald Cheang

Gerald Cheang has represented the Salinas Confucius Church/Chinese Association of Salinas on the Salinas Downtown Community Board for the past five years. He currently serves as co-chair of the SDBC. Gerald has been a resident of Salinas since 1963, when he and his family moved here to establish his dental practice which he

*(Cheang cont. on page 2)*

## SDCB MEMBER PROFILE

*(Smith cont. from page 1)*

Deanna understands the value of downtown revitalization and redevelopment, and she is committed to working with the Salinas Downtown Community Board to initiate and implement a restoration of Salinas' historic Chinatown District. She understands that creating a cultural, historic destination celebrating the rich traditions and heritage of the Asian community's Salinas story has the potential to act as a catalyst for economic development, cultural tourism, and positive social change. ✨

*(Cheang cont. from page 1)*

maintains to this day. It is his hope to see the Soledad Street Chinatown area restored and revitalized to its once vibrant personality and that its rich cultural history be retained for all in the City to enjoy and appreciate. In addition, adequate housing and commercial enterprises must be established to make the neighborhood complete. ✨

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

## SYMPOSIUM

*(Continued from page 1)*

“community” broadly as it goes about the work of preparing the museum to open its doors. Wellington Lee, Wally Ahtye, Alfred Baguio and Larry Hirahara – community members with ties to Chinatown – talked about their experiences.

A plea for community members to share their artifacts and their memories of Chinatown was made by Dr. Lila Staples, who teaches museum studies classes at CSUMB. In collaboration with the National Steinbeck Center, Dr. Staples and her students are assembling the material that will be displayed in the center. The last words came from architect Richard Fe Tom, who drew up plans for the museum.



About 200 people attended the daylong symposium at CSUMB

“You guys are going to get there. It’s just a matter of time,” he told the group.

The Salinas Downtown Community Board website for more pictures of the symposium. ✨

## CAL-TRANS UPDATE

*(Continued from page 1)*

recommended in 2007. The report also defines the catalyst sites and recommends the re-building of the housing on Rossi Street as the first step. Lastly, the report supports the preservation of the cultural heritage of Chinatown, and the establishment of Soledad Street as the main retail anchor for the neighborhood.

On November 10, 2010, there will be an opportunity to comment on the conclusion of this report. It is the community support and input that has carried this project forward for the past five years. The community will be pleased to see how their input and advice has influenced these plans. The meeting will be at the Confucius Church, 1 California Street in Salinas at 5:30 p.m. ✨

## EVENTS



**First Friday Art Walk, 5-9 pm**  
December 3  
19 Soledad Street,  
(831) 455-5964  
[bythtree09@yahoo.com](mailto:bythtree09@yahoo.com)



**Chinatown Renewal - Moving Forward: Community Meeting**  
November 10, 2010 5:30 pm  
Confucius Church,  
1 California Street

## HOMELESS CENSUS 2011

The Coalition of Homeless Services Providers is gearing up for its biennial countywide homeless census in January 2011. The census provides valuable insight into the scope and causes of homelessness in our community and, as a requirement of Continuum of Care funding, secures approximately \$1.7 million in continued annual funding for homeless housing and services in our community. This year, as in previous censuses, the Coalition is partnering with United Way and the Departments of Social and Employment Services and Behavioral Health to fund and conduct planning for the Census. ✨



## CONTACT INFORMATION

CSUMB Community Learning Center  
✨ 22 Soledad St., Salinas, CA 93901  
✨ 831-770-1770  
✨ Ken\_Feske@csumb.edu  
✨ [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.**