



CHINATOWN RENEWAL NEWSLETTER

Fall 2017

A Project of The SDCB

MID-PENINSULA HOUSING PROJECT TO BREAK GROUND NEXT SPRING

MidPen Housing builds communities that change lives and revitalize neighborhoods. Since 1970, they have developed over 8,000 affordable apartment homes across 11 northern California counties from Monterey to Napa. As a non-profit organization, MidPen is driven by the mission to provide safe, affordable housing of high quality to those in need, establish stability and opportunity in the lives of residents and foster diverse communities that allow people from all ethnic, social and economic backgrounds to live in dignity, harmony and mutual respect.

For the site located at 21 Soledad Street in the heart of the Chinatown, MidPen has worked closely with the community leaders, services providers, and the policy makers to design a mixed-use development

that will serve as a catalyst for neighborhood revitalization. As proposed, 21 Soledad Street is a four story building with ground floor retail and artist spaces and 90 elevator-served apartments and community amenities above.

The 90 homes are primarily studio units that will provide permanent supportive housing for the community's most vulnerable residents. Apartment homes will be available to households earning

60% of Area Median Income (\$34,200 for a single person household, \$39,120 for a family of two) or below. Half of the homes will have specific preferences for households with special needs, while the other half will be open to the general population with a qualifying income. Specific preferences are still being defined, however, MidPen has committed to a minimum of 20 units to serve high utilizers of the health care system who are Medi-Cal members. The Central California Alliance for Health, the local managed care provider, has provided the Medi-Cal Capacity Grant to serve this population. Additional referrals will come through the County's Whole Person Care initiative, which is a patient-centered pilot program created to coordinate health, behavioral health, and social services, with the goal

of improving beneficiary health and wellbeing through more efficient and effective use of resources. Funds will be used to integrate care for Medi-Cal beneficiaries identified as high users of healthcare systems. This innovative linkage of housing and health at 21 Soledad Street is expected to become a best-practice model and is already garnering national attention as highlighted in a recent report sponsored by the California Endowment and Kresge Foundation (see Case Study #2). Furthermore, another 20 apartments will serve persons referred by Interim, Inc.

In addition to building and owning the property, MidPen will provide both on-site property management staff and services staff, including case workers dedicated to assisting residents with special needs. For applicants with histories that present challenges to qualifying for housing, such as poor credit or criminal histories, MidPen provides a process for "Mitigating Circumstances". Through this process,



The future MidPeninsula Housing building as seen from the corner of Lake and Soledad Streets.

applicants can demonstrate how they have changed or are working to change their lives in a way that will prepare them to successfully maintain their housing. Those interested in applying to live at 21 Soledad Street who have challenging histories are encouraged to begin working with local service providers, such as Dorothy's Place, CSUMB, Interim and others to address their challenges, so that they can successfully demonstrate

Mitigating Circumstances. Once housed at 21 Soledad, MidPen's Resident Services team will partner with a household's external service providers to ensure that individual/family remains housed. Housing is a reciprocal obligation, requiring a partnership between the household and the landlord, and MidPen is committed to assisting residents to retain their housing.

As the final piece of competitive development financing, MidPen has applied to the state for low income housing tax credits and is tentatively slated for award in September 2017. If awarded, MidPen will obtain building permits, negotiate and close on construction lending, and break ground in spring 2018. The construction period is 16 months and MidPen will welcome residents starting summer 2019.

FILIPINOS IN SALINAS

by Richard P. Villegas, President of FANHS, Monterey Bay Chapter

Filipinos have been part of Salinas and its surrounding Monterey County communities for over 100 years. During the early years before WWII, most of the Filipinos were young bachelors. Most of these men (*manongs*) worked in agriculture, where they did the backbreaking work of planting and harvesting. Some of them found work as houseboys, restaurant busboys, and other low skilled jobs. During the off-season in agriculture, some went to Alaska to work in the salmon canneries.

There were some Filipino families here at that time, but few and far between; it wasn't until after WWII that the Filipino families began to increase in this area. The First Filipino Regiment of the U. S. Army was formed in Salinas and trained at Fort Ord, Hunter Liggett, and other military training areas around California. After WWII, many veterans left the military and returned home. After WWII, veterans of the 1st and 2nd Filipino Regiment often returned to the U. S. with a Filipina war bride. Another group of Filipino soldiers who brought over war brides were Filipino Scouts of the Philippine Army. Many settled in Salinas, or if they stayed in the military were stationed at Fort Ord. Under the G. I. Bill, many veterans bought homes in Salinas and surrounding areas. This brought a large increase in the number of Filipino families in the area, resulting in the Baby Boom Generation.

Today, few Filipinos are found working in the agriculture fields and packing sheds of the Salinas Valley. Once limited to certain jobs, our parents made certain that we (Baby Boomers) received a good education. Many of us became professionals in education, business, and medicine, or were military enlisted and officers.



FILIPINO CHINATOWN HISTORY

By Al Baguio

The Filipinos were considered by most people as "The Forgotten Asian Americans". I'd like to give a brief background of Philippine History and Culture. The Philippines is an archipelago of more than 7,000 islands, bound by the Pacific Ocean on the east and the South China Sea on the west. It is situated off the southeast coast of Asia, between Taiwan on the north and Borneo on the south.

The islands were designated as the "Archipelago of St. Lazarus" by Ferdinand Magellan when he arrived there in 1521 to colonize the land for Spain. The name "Philippines", is derived from the name given to the islands by Lopez de Villalobos, a Spanish colonial, in 1543 to honor Prince Phillip of Austria, who later became Phillip II, King of Spain.

The country has a total land area of 300,780 square kilometers or 0.2% of the world's land mass. The country is divided into three land masses, namely Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. The land area of the Philippines is bigger than that of the United Kingdom, almost as large as Italy, and slightly smaller than Japan.

As of the end of the 20th century, the population of the Philippines was approximately 60 millions. Tagalog is the national language, although there are about 87 dialects spoken all over the islands. English is widely spoken. The majority of Filipinos are of the Catholic faith, but a good number of Filipinos are Protestant and Muslim.

The culture of the Philippines is rich with influences drawn from the indigenous peoples, the Spanish colonists, and the Chinese. The

Filipinos are a musical people, and their folk songs and dances depict their distinct customs and culture.

I'll try to address the following issues: how the Filipinos came to settle in the Salinas Valley, what impact they had and contributions made to the agriculture industry, the discrimination they had to face, which led to the Watsonville race riot in the early 1930s, and their involvement in the Salinas Chinatown area.

The Spanish-American war, which was won by the United States, made American "nationals" of Filipinos, and from the early 1900s through 1935, they were free to enter the United States as long as they had the price of a boat ticket. Filipinos who immigrated to the United States came from practically every island in the Philippines. As an example, my father came from the very small island of Siquijor in the southern Philippines. There were very few jobs to be had on the island. Most of the population subsisted on the vegetables they grew, and farm animals raised on what little land they owned or rented. The barter system was used among the island population because of the scarcity of money.

Like many young Filipinos who were faced with chronic poverty, my father, Casiano Baguio, left Siquijor and went to the larger neighboring island of Cebu. He worked cleaning fish on the docks of Dumaguete, a port city on the Island of Cebu, for different fishermen, earning one dollar for one day's work. He was about 12 years old. After some time, his cousin joined him in Cebu. One day, a huge passenger ship arrived in Dumaguete. On board were about a hundred "Sakadas" who had signed contracts to work in the sugar cane and pineapple plantations in Hawaii. My father and his cousin Leandro signed their contracts. They lied about their ages, as neither one was 18.

Sakadas were young Filipino men, mostly from the countryside barrios. They were unskilled, uneducated, and unsophisticated laborers, but possessed a determination to seek a better life for themselves. The combination of lures and enticements from the agri-business complex in Hawaii and California, along with the labor situation in the Philippines, made this opportunity too good to pass up. Hawaii then became a stepping stone for most Filipinos who eventually settled in the United States.

During the early 1920s, Filipino immigration into the United States increased by 900%. Forty-five thousand Filipinos had entered the United States. Out of that number, 67% lived in California. One glaring factor for the increased Filipino immigration was the passage of the Japanese Exclusionary Act in 1924. California farmers who had depended on Japanese labor had to look to the Philippines and Mexico as a new source of cheap labor. Due to the heavy influx of Filipino immigrants, certain segments of white society were developing a xenophobic outlook, which led to labor unrest and race riots during the late 1920s and 1930s.

Because of this sensitive situation, Filipinos began to congregate, socialize, and develop businesses in the Salinas Chinatown area.

During the decades of the 1930s through the 1960s, Filipinos owned or managed several businesses in Chinatown. One was the P. I. Market located on Soledad Street, right across from the Republic Café. There was a restaurant nearby called Loretta's Café, which was owned by Magdalena Rigunay. She named the restaurant after her only daughter. The café was also located on Soledad Street across from the Lotus Inn Bar, and next to Ahtye's Shell Gas Station. There was also another Filipino grocery store called the Valley Market on the corner of Market and California Streets, owned by the Bulilis family. The Filipino Congregational Church was also located on California Street. The original building is still standing, but is under a different religious denomination. Most significantly, the Filipino newspaper, the *Philippines Mail*, which was the voice of the Filipino community in Monterey County, was located at 37½ California Street. The City of Salinas placed a literary marker at the site where the *Philippines Mail* was published. The Filipinos also had a social club located on Lake Street in Chinatown. There, they could relax after working six days in the agricultural fields. They could play cards, shoot a game of pool, and enjoy talking about their hometown in their own language.



Filipino banquet at the Republic Café.

Donations requested

The Salinas Downtown Community Board is a non-profit tax-exempt organization. Your donation can be sent to:

**SDCB
P O Box 574
Salinas, CA 93902**

CHIEF FRESE'S LETTER TO THE SALINAS POLICE DEPARTMENT:

The City of Salinas has undertaken a Chinatown Revitalization Plan and is investing heavily by contributing both work and budgetary resources. Three main provisions to the plan include health and safety, coordinating services, and housing, including rapid re-housing. The

City's financial support, some of which stems from CDBG funds, goes to several entities and infrastructure including:

- Health Center 115-125 Eastlake – Capital Improvements - \$194,000
- Franciscan Workers for Health Center Operations - \$100,000
- Women Alive Shelter (Franciscan Workers) - \$64,000
- Haciendas Senior Center (Phase 4) - \$400,000 in funding, plus \$400,000 fee deferral
- Haciendas (Phase 1 & 2) (100 units family housing) - \$1 million
- Haciendas (Phase 3) (50 units of family housing under construction) - \$1.6 million
- Mid-Pen Housing - \$600,000 (\$200,000 – predevelopment & \$400,000 for site clean-up)
- Mid-Pen Housing disposition of land at 21 Soledad
- Mid-Pen Housing – Commitment of up to \$1.4 million with a tax credit award
- Demolition of 45 Soledad - \$380,000
- Chinatown Clean-Ups – At least \$365,000 last year
- Chinatown Revitalization Plan - \$225,000

The total City of Salinas Chinatown investment is over \$6.7 million

At the California Police Chief's Association Annual Conference this year, police officers and supervisors from two agencies presented model programs on addressing the issues of Homelessness and Mental Illness from a law enforcement perspective. The Salinas Police Department has requested a Peer Exchange from the DOJ's COPS office to learn more from these California cities that have demonstrated best practices and/or otherwise are experiencing success. I have invited those stakeholders involved in the delivery of services as well as those closely impacted by these issues to join us in the Peer Exchange. In the best interest of our city and the Chinatown Revitalization Plan, I have asked all parties to keep an open mind as we learn from those that have "walked the walk" and are experiencing success with equally challenging communities. The stakeholders invited to join us include representatives from the Salinas Downtown Community Board, Dorothy's Place, the City's Community Development Department, and Pastor Lundin from the Methodist Church, all of whom have accepted. Depending on approval from the COPS office, we may also invite representatives from Social Services, The Coalition for Homeless Services, and Veterans Transition Center. This is considered a formidable collaborative undertaking in the scope of community policing. Last week we received notice from the COPS office that the request has been approved. This means the USDOJ will pay for all stakeholders, including SPD, to attend the Peer Exchange together with the intent to bring back a workable solution, customized to our community.

In addition to the extensive investment in the Chinatown Revitalization Plan, the city recognizes the long standing businesses and churches that have hung in there and desire to stay there. There is a school bus stop in Chinatown and over 200 children populating the area.

Every department within the Salinas city government has a role to play to realize the vision of the Revitalization Plan. We are in Phase 1 of the SPD's Chinatown Operations Plan.

Our task at the Salinas Police Department is to make Chinatown as safe as possible and to support the City's efforts in cleaning it up to its greatest potential to clear the way for the substantial investment and Revitalization Plan that is underway.

Adele Fresé

Chief of Police, City of Salinas

Shadows on Main Street Memoirs, Vol. I.



Filipino American National Historical Society
Monterey Bay Chapter
2017

Shadows on Main Street

Memoirs, Volume I

This Filipino American National Historical Society (FANHS) book contains stories by local Filipinos which will bring back memories for those who grew up in Salinas and will share experiences of the Filipinos who located in the Salinas area.

If you are interested in obtaining this book please contact Richard Villegas, President of FANHS, 831-751-3024. Cost of the book is \$15.

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About Us

The Salinas Downtown Community Board, SDCB, is a non profit 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 collaborative effort of the city of Salinas, CSUMB, and SDCB.