Chinatown Renewal Project
CSU Monterey Bay
Chinatown remembered…

And do you remember how an easterly breeze brought odors in from Chinatown, roasting pork and punk and black tobacco and yen shi?

And do you remember the deep blatting stroke of the great gong in the Joss House, and how its tone hung in the air so long?

-John Steinbeck, East of Eden
Chinatown Today
Downtown Salinas and Chinatown

- Soledad Street
- The “Tracks”
- National Steinbeck Center
- Main Street
Homeless Services in Chinatown

Victory Mission

Dorothy’s Place
A Neighborhood Forgotten
Christa Miles and Katie Beckerson, TAT 2005
Neighborhood Summit
March 4, 2005
“I want to DANCE on Soledad Street”
- Mayor Caballero

• Creating a Thriving Community: A Neighborhood Summit About the Future of Chinatown

• Visioning the future; acknowledging the challenges

• Birth of the Salinas Downtown Community Board (SDCB) and the Chinatown Renewal Project
Three HUD HSIAC Grants

• Phase I (2005-2008)
  – Community planning process
  – Community garden
  – Community Learning Center
  – Micro-Enterprise

• Phase II (2008-2010)
  – “Green Jobs Corps”
  – “Green Technology Demonstration Park”
  – Chinatown oral history and cultural preservation

• Phase III (2010-2012)
  – Construct Chinatown Cultural Center and Museum
  – Symposium on Asian museums and community revitalization
CSUMB Engagement: 2005-2011

- Every college involved
  - 901 students involved
  - Over 20 different faculty

- Capstone Projects
  - Homeless policy study
  - Documentary film
  - Garden impact analysis
  - Women’s health and nutrition study
  - Business plans for co-op

- A whole lot of connections... healing... and growing...
Community Planning Process

- 300 community participants; diverse constituencies

- Social services, affordable housing, safety, walkable neighborhoods, cultural preservation

- Dreams and visions for future: a thriving community

- Plans developed
  - Chinatown Renewal Project Plan (2007)
  - Chinatown Rebound (2010)
Community Renewal

- Salinas Downtown Community Board a 501(c)3
- Asian Cultural Encounter a 501(c)3
- Asian Festival
- Street Fairs and Community Clean-ups
Chinatown Community Unity Garden

• 30,000 sq ft
• 40 “adopted” garden beds
• Growing veggies and herbs for Dorothy’s Place
• Worm composting enterprise
• Solar energy demo
Job Training for Homeless

• “Garden Crew”
  – 14 enrolled; 13 graduated;
  – 5 currently working
  – 2 getting further training

• “Green Corps”
  – 11 graduated
  – 4 currently employed
  – 2 enrolled in college
  – 1 drug rehabilitation
Soledad Street
Community Learning Center

- Broad-band access
- Computer literacy courses
- Job preparation
- Community meetings
Oral History

- 60 interviews conducted and archived
  - Chinese
  - Japanese
  - Filipino
- Community presentations
- “Virtual” Chinatown Tour
Museum Studies

- 3 exhibits mounted at National Steinbeck Center
  - Chinese (2010); Japanese (2011); Filipino (2012)

- National symposium on Asian cultural museums & community revitalization (Oct. 2011)

- Republic Café listed on “National Registry of Historic Places
Transformative Learning

By listening to and validating individuals within the community you begin to create space for a dialogue of how the community can move forward. Having a repository of community history allows younger members of the community to have the opportunity to understand, appreciate and learn about their “place” in the community.

-Oral History student
...the proposed revitalization of “Chinatown” is entangled with the issues of the homeless who currently live there. They now have a historical presence as well, and how that presence is addressed, is an important ethical decision that must be faced by both the academic community working there, the mainstream Salinas community, the homeless community and the Asian American communities.

-Museum Studies student
The Fiscal Impact

Cost to educate a formerly homeless person. (job skills, life skills, computer literacy)

$11,000

$61,000

Green Corps net annual savings: $366,000.

$3.6 million over a decade

Annual cost of one chronically homeless person. Incarcerated and/or using Emergency Room services.

Source: The 2004 San Francisco Plan to Abolish Homelessness
In the old Republic Café building, at one time the site of a thriving Chinese Restaurant...
Salinas Chinatown
Cultural Center and Museum

- Rebirth of the Republic Café

- Ribbon cutting on *Make a Difference Day*, Saturday, Oct 22!

- You are invited! Come and Dance!
Wayne Ross and Lewis Harrison
Green Corps Graduates
Salinas Chinatown
A rich past...

Chinese School 1936

Chinese School 2010

...and a promising future