



CITY OF SALINAS

COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

DATE: FEBRUARY 20, 2018

DEPARTMENT: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

FROM: MEGAN HUNTER, DIRECTOR

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TITLE: CHINATOWN HOUSING UPDATE AND SALINAS DOWNTOWN
COMMUNITY BOARD STATEMENT AND
RECOMMENDATIONS TO CITY COUNCIL REGARDING THE
CHINATOWN REVITALIZATION PLAN

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

No motion is required as this report only provides an update on Chinatown Housing and recommendations for the Salinas Downtown Community Board.

RECOMMENDATION:

As this item is an Administrative Report, no recommendation is being made as no action is required. This Report provides an update on Chinatown from City staff and an update from the Salinas Downtown Community Board on their recommendations regarding the Chinatown Revitalization Plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The City has been working on the Chinatown Revitalization Plan since November 2016. The development of the plan is well under way and is expected to be completed in late summer. Throughout the planning process the City has been working closely with multiple stakeholders including our Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) and the Salinas Downtown Community Board (SDCB). Because of our collaboration with our CHDOs and the significant housing development taking place in Chinatown, City staff wanted to provide a housing update to City Council. The SDBC requested an opportunity to present their recommendation to City Council regarding the Chinatown Revitalization Plan as it is under development.

Chinatown Housing

The City and its Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) have invested over \$104 million in the Chinatown area with their developments; these developments have/will create 280 low-income units and supportive housing units. The table below details each development.

Development	Units	Amount Project Investment
Haciendas Phase I – Haciendas Place	53	\$16 Million
Haciendas Phase II– Haciendas Place	46	\$18 Million
Haciendas Phase III	50	\$21 Million
Haciendas Phase IV – Dai-Ichi Village	41	\$12 Million
21 Soledad Street Community Housing – MidPen	90	\$37 Million
Total units/Investment	280	\$104 Million

The Salinas Downtown Community Board (SDCB) Statement and Recommendations

The recommendations focus on three areas of importance in the Chinatown neighborhood: crime, violence, and encampments. SDCB supports legal codes, ordinances and resolutions that help the neighborhood reduce these factors. SDCB supports the Resolution Designating No Parking and No Stopping Along East Lake and Bridge Street between 10pm-4:30am (Resolution No. 21292) and Revised City Ordinance Amending Camping in Public Places (Ordinance No. 2599).

SDCB is concerned with the increase violence in Chinatown and the lack of enforcement and application of the City ordinances and resolutions. Another concern is the potential parking issues that might may result from enforcement of the No Parking and No Stopping Resolution along East Lake and Bridge Street. Business owners on California Street are worried that this resolution may negatively impact them because more vehicles will move and park along California Street.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Salinas initiated the Chinatown Revitalization Plan as an important and much needed effort to revitalize and enhance the economic, social, and cultural fabric of the City’s Chinatown neighborhood, the only other Chinatown between Los Angeles and San Francisco. This planning effort is the precursor of two previous efforts, the “Chinatown Renewal Project Plan: A Report to the City of Salinas Redevelopment Agency” in 2007 and the “Chinatown Rebound Plan” in 2010. The main goal of these planning efforts was to revitalize Chinatown and create a vibrant, mixed-use and cultural district. The Chinatown Revitalization Plan is taking these ideas and creating a vision to develop an innovative, community-driven effort that builds off the Chinatown community’s cultural assets and historical character.

The revitalization of Chinatown involves environmental justice, social equity and private investment. Challenges specific to Chinatown include current public infrastructure, homelessness, high levels of unemployment, poverty, crime, and blight. Despite these challenges, Chinatown has tremendous assets including active existing businesses, cultural institutions and places of worship, and a network of service providers. The issues and concerns raised by the SDCB regarding crime, violence and encampments are of great importance and need to be addressed to continue making positive progress in the revitalization of Chinatown.

A sign that progress is starting to be made are all the housing projects that have been and are being built in and around Chinatown. In fact, the outstanding work of the City’s Housing and Community Development Division and CHDOs was highlighted at the annual National Community Development Association (NCDA) Conference, which was held January 22-26. Anastacia Wyatt, Planning Manager, who sits on the Board of NCDA, provided a short presentation highlighting

our CHDOs and housing work with emphasis in Chinatown. This was the first time NCDA requested the City of Salinas present at the NCDA conference.

DISCUSSION:

The Chinatown Housing Update highlights the City's collaboration with our Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDO's) and the impact of their projects in helping revitalize Chinatown.

The SDCB Statement and Recommendations focus on three areas: crime, violence and encampments; all of which are of vital importance for the neighborhood's revitalization. The SDCB Statement and Recommendations are described in further detail in the below paragraphs and the original statement from the SDCB is included as an attachment. This report was reviewed by members of the Chinatown Business Committee, which is a committee under the umbrella of the SDCB, and City staff.

SDCB supports legal codes, ordinances and resolutions that help reduce these factors for the whole neighborhood. As a group, SDCB supports the below ordinances and resolutions:

- Resolution Designating No Parking and No Stopping Along East Lake and Bridge Street between 10pm-4:30am (Resolution No. 21292). This resolution was passed and approved by City Council on November 7, 2017. SDCB supports this resolution because it helps reduce drug dealing in the neighborhood.
- Revised City Ordinance Amending Camping in Public Places (Ordinance No. 2599). This ordinance was passed and adopted by City Council on October 10, 2017. This ordinance allows for camping from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. and has greater emphasis on enforcement. SDCB considers that this ordinance can only be effective if it is enforced, and to enforce it, the community also needs to address the homelessness issue by providing services and access to housing to those in need on top of enforcing this ordinance.

The SDCB has the following concerns:

- Violence in Chinatown – There has been an increase in violence in Chinatown and the SDCB considers this factor has made the neighborhood an unsafe environment for everyone to interact with other people. SDCB requests greater police presence for a safer neighborhood for the residents, workers, business owners and visitors.
- Enforcement Issues – Resolutions and Ordinances must be uniformly applied and enforced across the City, not just in Chinatown.
 1. No Parking and No Stopping Along East Lake and Bridge Street - Initial increased police presence in Lake Street saw an improvement in safety. Police presence has been reduced and the neighborhood has repopulated even worse than before. Enforcement of no stopping, no overnight parking in those zones must continue.
 2. Camping in Public Places –The City needs to have a sustainable plan for uniformly enforcing this ordinance across the City, not just in Chinatown.
 3. Property owners and businesses in Chinatown continue to need support from the Police Department to maintain access and viability to their businesses and properties due to tents.
- Parking Issues – SDCB supports the No Parking and No Stopping on Lake and Bridge as it reduces open-air drug dealing. SDCB is concerned this resolution may cause parking

problems for property owners on California Street, but they support it because the benefit outweighs the potential problems. SDCB recommended the City consider a Permit System to legitimate parking for property owners, businesses and workers, which was not considered previously.

CEQA CONSIDERATION:

Not a Project. The City of Salinas has determined that the proposed action is not a project as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378).

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVE:

This Chinatown Housing Update and SDCB Statement and Recommendations to City Council Regarding the Chinatown Revitalization Plan supports the following City Council strategic goals: 1) Economic Diversity and Prosperity; 2) Safe, Livable Community; and 3) Quality of Life.

FISCAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

This is a presentation only and no motion is required. Therefore, there will be no impact on the City's General Fund.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Salinas Downtown Community Board Recommendation to Salinas City Council



Salinas Downtown Community Board

"To create a safe, welcoming, revitalized and accessible neighborhood that embraces its cultural history, richness and diversity, offering housing, economic opportunities and community services".

Crime, Violence and Encampments in Chinatown

Salinas Downtown Community Board Statement and Recommendations to Salinas City Council

We wish to speak respectfully and acknowledge up front that the concerns stated here involve complicated and overarching issues. Nonetheless, no other neighborhood in Salinas has quite the same intensity of dysfunction as Chinatown, and the Salinas Downtown Community Board is compelled, clearly and transparently, to inform you of our position on crime, violence and encampments.

Crime, violence and encampments are everyday occurrences in Chinatown. The Salinas Downtown Community Board (SDCB) has recommended actions to the City Council with varying degrees of support. SDCB supports any legal and appropriate code or ordinance that remedies or reduces any of these issues. We have future concerns of the impact of these regulations, but feel the current need to reduce crime, violence and encampments outweighs effects that can be dealt with later.

We support:

1. Chinatown Overnight Parking Restriction on Lake and Bridge Street – reduces the drug dealing capabilities in the area
2. Revised City Ordinance for Camping in Public Places – As a policy, the SDCB does not support encampments in Chinatown. However, considering the number of available beds for homeless persons is far less than demonstrated need, the SDCB supports the revised ordinance which allows for camping from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. with emphasis on enforcement.
3. The revised Ordinance can only be enforceable if the community as a whole addresses the homelessness issue by providing services and access to housing and the revised Ordinance can only be effective if it is enforced. To create this Ordinance and not enforce it consistently throughout Chinatown and the City as a whole can only be interpreted as strategies that serve another agenda, and not the health and safety of Chinatown and the Salinas community.

Concerns:

1. Violence in Chinatown – Recently there was a rash of violence in Chinatown which made it a very unsafe and often deadly environment. At the request of SDCB there was an effective increase in police presence and reduction in violent crimes. It is our understanding that due to budgetary restrictions, the increased police presence (overtime funded) cannot continue. We have attempted to go through the Salinas Police Department chain of authority, without a complete response. We need this police presence for a safe neighborhood for the residents, businesses and visitors.
2. Enforcement Issues – Any resolution to improve Chinatown and the City of Salinas is no better than the commitment to uniformly, aggressively, and consistently apply these regulations.
 - a. Chinatown Overnight Parking – The initial increased police presence cleared Lake Street, but has since been repopulated even worse than before. There will need to be diligence in enforcement of no overnight parking in those zones.
 - b. Camping in Public Places – This ordinance refers to the City of Salinas, not just Chinatown. The City needs to have a sustainable plan for uniformly enforcing the ordinance.
 - c. Property owners and businesses in Chinatown continue to need support from Police Department to maintain access and viability to their businesses and properties due to tents. There have been many issues of critical safety and neglect, both with campers and property owners that have not been satisfactorily addressed.
3. Parking Issues – SDCB agrees that eliminating overnight parking on Lake and Bridge may reduce open-air drug dealing. SDCB recommended the investigation of a Permit System for that area for legitimate parking which was not considered. SDCB is concerned that the ordinance may cause parking problems on California Street, but will work with the City as we feel the benefit outweighs the potential problems. The property owners and businesses on California Street are very concerned about the potential impact. Again, the pressing need for more resources remains a critical need.