



Building Community, Chinatown Style: A Half Century of Leadership in San Francisco Chinatown

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Gordon Chin, nationally recognized community leader and activist, tells the compelling story of the rise of civic and political power in San Francisco's Chinatown from the 1960s through the election of a Chinese American mayor in 2011. This grass roots community leadership has made San Francisco Chinatown a model for community development across the country.

The narrative covers the birth of Asian American activism and how, despite natural disasters, civic neglect, and racism, it spearheaded affordable housing, open space, accessible transportation, and effective community and youth leadership.

The Chinatown Community Development Center, which Chin founded and led for three decades, fought evictions from the International Hotel, organized the Ping Yuen rent strike, and convinced the city to extend the Central Subway to Chinatown, among other accomplishments that have significantly shaped life in San Francisco. This is a firsthand view on how to produce meaningful and positive social change.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gordon Chin is the former Executive Director of San Francisco's Chinatown Community Development Center, which he co-founded and ran for thirty-four years before retiring in October 2011. Recognized nationally as a leader in community development and affordable housing, and as a pioneering Asian American activist, he led Chinatown CDC in developing thousands of units of affordable housing for low-income seniors, working families, and formerly homeless residents. From the beginning of the Asian American Movement in the turbulent 1960s, he has devoted himself to building community, organizing tenants and immigrant families, and developing youth leaders. Mr. Chin lives in San Francisco, where he continues to be involved in community issues and is an avid Giants fan.

PRAISE FOR THE BOOK

"Community activist, housing developer, policy and land-use guru, commissioner and collaborative leader- this is what Gordon Chin has meant to our City and the Chinese Asian communities he has served and advocated for. He has a lot to say about our City's history for the past fifty-five-plus years, and I am grateful he has put it into words for all of us to appreciate."

-Ed Lee, Mayor of San Francisco

"Gordon Chin is one those movers and shakers who has made San Francisco worth living in. His fight to keep the city's legendary Chinatown a vibrant and affordable community is a model for righteous activism. Now we need a new generation of bravehearts, young men and women willing to fight to save wonderfully multi-dimensional cities like San Francisco so they don't become a jeweled preserve of the one percent. Building Community, Chinatown Style is full of crucial lessons for the next generation of urban warriors and dreamers- and for those of us old ones who still haven't given up. Read and learn-and get inspired."

-David Talbot, author of Season of the Witch: Enchantment, Terror and Deliverance in the City of Love

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