

# Legacy Business Registry Staff Report

HEARING DATE AUGUST 12, 2019

## NICHI BEI FOUNDATION

*Application No.:* LBR-2018-19-062  
*Business Name:* Nichi Bei Foundation  
*Business Address:* 1832 Buchanan Street, Suite 207  
*District:* District 5  
*Applicant:* Kenji G. Taguma, President  
*Nomination Date:* May 17, 2019  
*Nominated By:* Supervisor Vallie Brown  
*Staff Contact:* Richard Kurylo  
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

### BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

The Nichi Bei Foundation and its publication the Nichi Bei Weekly (2009 to present) is part of the Nichi Bei Shimbun (1899-1942) and Nichi Bei Times (1946-2009) legacy of community media. The Nichi Bei Shimbun was founded in 1899 by publisher Kyutaro Abiko, known by historians as one of the most influential Japanese immigrants in America. Upon his death in 1936, his wife Yona Abiko became the publisher of the Nichi Bei Shimbun until 1942. At its peak in the 1920s, the Nichi Bei Shimbun was the most widely read Issei (Japanese immigrant) newspaper in the United States, with a reported circulation of 25,000 and an office in Los Angeles. It reflected Abiko's beliefs that the Issei should shun intentions of returning to Japan in favor of setting up roots in America.

The Nichi Bei Times, which printed its first edition in 1946, was the oldest Japanese American bilingual newspaper in Northern California. It was established to get the Japanese American community "reconnected" after their wartime incarceration in American concentration camps. Although it retained many of the same staff as the pre-war Nichi Bei Shimbun, the Nichi Bei Times was set up as a corporation, as a rebuilding community pooled their resources together.

Since the paper's inception, it has been situated at three different locations. Initially, the Nichi Bei Times office was located at 1775 Sutter St. in San Francisco's Japantown. Within a year, the business had relocated to 1375 Eddy St. in the Western Addition. Due to the redevelopment of the area, the Nichi Bei Times was forced to relocate to its last location, 2211 Bush St., in November of 1972. Nichi Bei Times fell victim to a harsh economic climate and changing demographics among Japanese speaking persons during the Great Recession. As Nichi Bei Times was closing down in the summer of 2009, a group of Nichi Bei Times staff, community leaders and media professionals set out to establish the Nichi Bei Foundation, a nonprofit educational and charitable organization that launched the first nonprofit ethnic community newspaper of its kind in the country, the Nichi Bei Weekly. Without missing a week of publication, the nonprofit publication continued a legacy of keeping the Japanese American community connected, informed and empowered, while documenting the community's history, and preserving Japanese culture and community. The business is located on the east side of Buchanan Street between Bush and Sutter streets in the Japantown neighborhood.





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CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO  
LONDON N. BREED, MAYOR

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS  
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR

### **CRITERION 1: Has the applicant operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years?**

Yes, Nichi Bei Foundation has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years:

340 Mason Street from 1912 to 1916 (4 years)  
650 Ellis Street from 1916 to 1942 (26 years)  
1775 Sutter Street from 1946 to 1947 (1 year)  
1375 Eddy Street from 1946 to 1947 (1 year)  
2211 Bush Street from 1972 to 2009 (37 years)\  
1840 Sutter Street (JCCNC) from 2009 to 2010 (1 year)  
1832 Buchanan Street, Suite 207 from 2010 to Present (9 years)

### **CRITERION 2: Has the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community?**

Yes, Nichi Bei Foundation has contributed to the history and identity of the Japantown neighborhood and San Francisco.

The Historic Preservation Commission recommended the applicant as qualifying, noting the following ways the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community:

- The business is associated with the Japanese language and journalism.
- Kyutaro Abiko, the newspaper founder, remains one of Japanese America's most legendary Issei pioneers. He reportedly ran away to Tokyo at the age of 14 and arrived in 1885 in San Francisco with only a dollar in his pocket. He became a labor contractor and one of the founders of the Japanese American Industrial Corporation. His company, founded in 1902, became one of the largest labor contracting agencies in California, supplying Japanese laborers to various industries. In addition to founding the Nichi Bei Shimbun, he founded the American Land and Produce Company, which purchased 3,200 acres of underdeveloped desert land near the San Joaquin Valley town of Livingston. They were parceled into 40-acre lots and sold to Japanese farmers. In total he helped to form three Japanese farming colonies in the Central California towns of Cortez, Cressey and Livingston (also known as the Yamato Colony).
- The property has Planning Department Historic Resource status codes of "C" (No Historic Resource Present) because of the building is not age-eligible for listing on a historic resource registry (construction date 1982). The property is also located within the Japantown Cultural District.
- The business is referred to in the Japantown Historic Context Statement.
- Throughout history, the various incarnations of the Nichi Bei publications and its leaders have been referenced in numerous newspaper articles and historical books, such as:
  - "Issei: The World of the First Generation Japanese Immigrants 1885-1924" by Yuji Ichioka (1988, Macmillan, Inc.).
  - "Strangers From a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans" by Ronald Takaki (1998, Little, Brown and Company).





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- "Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America" by Eiichiro Azuma (2005, Oxford University Press).
- "Encyclopedia of Japanese American History: An A-to-Z Reference from 1868 to the Present" edited by Brian Niiya (2001, Checkmark Books).

Moreover, Shichinosuke Asano, the Japanese editor of the prewar Nichi Bei Shimbun and the main founder of the postwar Nichi Bei Times, has two biographical books written about him in Japanese, including an autobiography and "Nikkeijin no Yoake: Zaibei Issei Janarisuto Asano Shichinosuke no Shogen" (The Dawn of the Nikkei: Testimony Made by Shichinosuke Asano, Issei Journalist) written by Yoshimichi Nagae (1987, Iwate Nipponsha). Asano was featured as one of "100 Japanese Who Changed the World" on March 13, 2009 on Tokyo TV. The closure of the Nichi Bei Times and pioneering rebirth of the Nichi Bei Foundation and the Nichi Bei Weekly was widely reported in local and international media, including the San Francisco Chronicle, New America Media, ABC7, Kyodo News and Asahi Shimbun.

**CRITERION 3: Is the applicant committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms?**

Yes, Nichi Bei Foundation is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the organization.

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION**

The Historic Preservation Commission recommends that Nichi Bei Foundation qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) and recommends safeguarding of the below listed physical features and traditions.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Print newspaper publication and website.
- Educational programming.
- Vintage typewriter, linotype leads and old advertising plates.

**CORE PHYSICAL FEATURE OR TRADITION THAT DEFINES THE BUSINESS**

Following is the core physical feature or tradition that defines the business that would be required for maintenance of the business on the Legacy Business Registry.

- Publication covering the Japanese American community.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the San Francisco Small Business Commission include Nichi Bei Foundation currently located at 1832 Buchanan Street, Suite 207 in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

Richard Kurylo, Program Manager  
Legacy Business Program



# Small Business Commission Draft Resolution

HEARING DATE AUGUST 12, 2019

NICHI BEI FOUNDATION

LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

<i>Application No.:</i>	LBR-2018-19-062
<i>Business Name:</i>	Nichi Bei Foundation
<i>Business Address:</i>	1832 Buchanan Street, Suite 207
<i>District:</i>	District 5
<i>Applicant:</i>	Kenji G. Taguma, President
<i>Nomination Date:</i>	May 17, 2019
<i>Nominated By:</i>	Supervisor Vallie Brown
<i>Staff Contact:</i>	Richard Kurylo legacybusiness@sfgov.org

## **ADOPTING FINDINGS APPROVING THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY APPLICATION FOR NICHI BEI FOUNDATION, CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 1832 BUCHANAN STREET, SUITE 207.**

**WHEREAS**, in accordance with Administrative Code Section 2A.242, the Office of Small Business maintains a registry of Legacy Businesses in San Francisco (the "Registry") to recognize that longstanding, community-serving businesses can be valuable cultural assets of the City and to be a tool for providing educational and promotional assistance to Legacy Businesses to encourage their continued viability and success; and

**WHEREAS**, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years; or

**WHEREAS**, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for more than 20 years but less than 30 years, has had no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years, has significantly contributed to the history or identity of a particular neighborhood or community and, if not included in the Registry, faces a significant risk of displacement; and

**WHEREAS**, the subject business has contributed to the neighborhood's history and identity; and

**WHEREAS**, the subject business is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business; and

**WHEREAS**, at a duly noticed public hearing held on August 12, 2019, the San Francisco Small Business Commission reviewed documents and correspondence, and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry application; therefore







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LONDON N. BREED, MAYOR

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS  
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Small Business Commission hereby includes Nichi Bei Foundation in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Small Business Commission recommends safeguarding the below listed physical features and traditions at Nichi Bei Foundation:

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Print newspaper publication and website.
- Educational programming.
- Vintage typewriter, linotype leads and old advertising plates.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Small Business Commission requires maintenance of the below listed core physical feature or tradition to maintain Nichi Bei Foundation on the Legacy Business Registry:

- Publication covering the Japanese American community.

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I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Small Business Commission on August 12, 2019.

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Regina Dick-Endrizzi  
Director

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

Ayes –  
Nays –  
Abstained –  
Absent –





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## Legacy Business Registry

# Application Review Sheet

*Application No.:* LBR-2018-19-062  
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*District:* District 5  
*Applicant:* Kenji G. Taguma, President  
*Nomination Date:* May 17, 2019  
*Nominated By:* Supervisor Vallie Brown

**CRITERION 1:** Has the applicant has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years?       X       Yes                      No

340 Mason Street from 1912 to 1916 (4 years)  
650 Ellis Street from 1916 to 1942 (26 years)  
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1375 Eddy Street from 1946 to 1947 (1 year)  
2211 Bush Street from 1972 to 2009 (37 years)\  
1840 Sutter Street (JCCNC) from 2009 to 2010 (1 year)  
1832 Buchanan Street, Suite 207 from 2010 to Present (9 years)

**CRITERION 2:** Has the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community?       X       Yes                      No

**CRITERION 3:** Is the applicant committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms?       X       Yes                      No

**NOTES:** N/A

**DELIVERY DATE TO HPC:** June 20, 2019

Richard Kurylo  
Program Manager, Legacy Business Program



**Member, Board of Supervisor  
District 5**



**City and County of San Francisco**

**Vallie Brown**

Friday May 17, 2019

Office of Small Business  
Small Business Commission  
City Hall, Suite 110  
San Francisco, CA 94102

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to nominate Nichi Bei Foundation, located at 1832 Buchanan Street, for the Legacy Business Registry Program.

Founded in 1899, the Nichi Bei Shimbun is one of the oldest community organizations in San Francisco. Their legacy of education, outreach and supportive services to the Japanese American Community is unparalleled. Nichi Bei Foundation, which grew out of Nichi Bei Shimbun continues this legacy today. Their mission remains to empower, inform and connect the Japanese American Community. They are the sole proprietors of the Nichi Bei Weekly, a community newspaper and the Nichi Bei website which are essential community resources.

Nichi Bei Foundation aims to preserve Japanese culture while shining a light on issues impacting the community. They are committed to documenting Japanese American history for future generations. They were instrumental in launching other publications dedicated to similar causes such as the Japanese Culture and Cherry Blossom Festivals Guide, Obon and Summer Festivals guide, the Japanese American Community Resource Guide, and San Francisco's Japantown Map and Directory.

Nichi Bei was operational throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but was forced to close during the horrific and inhuman treatment of Japanese Americans during WWII from 1942 to 1946.

The Nichi Bei Foundation was the first nonprofit ethnic community organization and newspaper of its kind in the United States. I celebrate Nichi Bei's innovation and commitment to the Japanese American community and it is for these reasons that I elect to nominate the Nichi Bei Foundation for the Legacy Business Registry Program. For any additional questions about the Nichi Bei Foundation, contact Nikki Yoshikawa by email at: [nikkiyoshikawa@gmail.com](mailto:nikkiyoshikawa@gmail.com).

Should you have any further questions related to this letter, please do not hesitate to reach out to my office at (415) 554-7630 or [BrownStaff@sfgov.org](mailto:BrownStaff@sfgov.org). Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vallie Brown". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Vallie" and last name "Brown" clearly distinguishable.

Vallie Brown  
Supervisor, District 5  
City and County of San Francisco

## Section One:

### Business / Applicant Information. Provide the following information:

- The name, mailing address, and other contact information of the business;
- The name of the person who owns the business. For businesses with multiple owners, identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business;
- The name, title, and contact information of the applicant;
- The business's San Francisco Business Account Number and entity number with the Secretary of State, if applicable.

<b>NAME OF BUSINESS:</b>		
Nichi Bei Foundation		
<b>BUSINESS OWNER(S)</b> (identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business)		
The Nichi Bei Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. The president is Kenji G. Taguma.		
<b>CURRENT BUSINESS ADDRESS:</b>		<b>TELEPHONE:</b>
1832 Buchanan Street, Suite 207 San Francisco, CA 94115		((415) 673-1009
		<b>EMAIL:</b>
<b>WEBSITE:</b>	<b>FACEBOOK PAGE:</b>	<b>YELP PAGE</b>
www.nichibei.org	facebook.com/nichibei	

<b>APPLICANT'S NAME</b>	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as Business
<b>APPLICANT'S TITLE</b>	
<b>APPLICANT'S ADDRESS:</b>	<b>TELEPHONE:</b>
	( )
	<b>EMAIL:</b>

<b>SAN FRANCISCO BUSINESS ACCOUNT NUMBER:</b>	<b>SECRETARY OF STATE ENTITY NUMBER (if applicable):</b>
302083-001	C3220811

<b>OFFICIAL USE: Completed by OSB Staff</b>	
<b>NAME OF NOMINATOR:</b>	<b>DATE OF NOMINATION:</b>



## Section Two:

### Business Location(s).

List the business address of the original San Francisco location, the start date of business, and the dates of operation at the original location. Check the box indicating whether the original location of the business in San Francisco is the founding location of the business. If the business moved from its original location and has had additional addresses in San Francisco, identify all other addresses and the dates of operation at each address. For businesses with more than one location, list the additional locations in section three of the narrative.

ORIGINAL SAN FRANCISCO ADDRESS:	ZIP CODE:	START DATE OF BUSINESS
340 Mason Street, San Francisco, CA	94102	1899
IS THIS LOCATION THE FOUNDING LOCATION OF THE BUSINESS?	DATES OF OPERATION AT THIS LOCATON	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	1912 or earlier to 1916	

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
650 Ellis Street, San Francisco	94109	Start: 1916 End: 1942

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
1775 Sutter Street, San Francisco, CA	94115	Start: 1946 End: 1947

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
1375 Eddy Street, San Francisco, CA	94115	Start: 1946 End: 1947

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
2211 Bush Street, San Francisco, CA	94115	Start: 1972 End: Sept. 2009

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
JCCCNC, 1840 Sutter Street, San Francisco, CA	94115	Start: October 2009 End: November 2010

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
1832 Buchanan Street, Suite 207	94115	Start: December 2010 End: present

## Section Three:

### Disclosure Statement.

#### San Francisco Taxes, Business Registration, Licenses, Labor Laws and Public Information Release.

This section is verification that all San Francisco taxes, business registration, and licenses are current and complete, and there are no current violations of San Francisco labor laws. This information will be verified and a business deemed not current in with all San Francisco taxes, business registration, and licenses, or has current violations of San Francisco labor laws, will not be eligible to apply for the Business Assistance Grant.

In addition, we are required to inform you that all information provided in the application will become subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act.

Please read the following statements and check each to indicate that you agree with the statement. Then sign below in the space provided.

- ☒ I am authorized to submit this application on behalf of the business.
- ☒ I attest that the business is current on all of its San Francisco tax obligations.
- ☒ I attest that the business's business registration and any applicable regulatory license(s) are current.
- ☒ I attest that the Office of Labor Standards and Enforcement (OLSE) has not determined that the business is currently in violation of any of the City's labor laws, and that the business does not owe any outstanding penalties or payments ordered by the OLSE.
- ☒ I understand that documents submitted with this application may be made available to the public for inspection and copying pursuant to the California Public Records Act and San Francisco Sunshine Ordinance.
- ☒ I hereby acknowledge and authorize that all photographs and images submitted as part of the application may be used by the City without compensation.
- ☒ I understand that the Small Business Commission may revoke the placement of the business on the Registry if it finds that the business no longer qualifies, and that placement on the Registry does not entitle the business to a grant of City funds.

Kenji G. Taguma May 6, 2019

Name (Print):

Date:

Signature:





## **NICHI BEI FOUNDATION**

### **Section 4: Written Historical Narrative**

#### **CRITERION 1**

**a. Provide a short history of the business from the date the business opened in San Francisco to the present day, including the ownership history. For businesses with multiple locations, include the history of the original location in San Francisco (including whether it was the business's founding and or headquartered location) and the opening dates and locations of all other locations.**

The Nichi Bei Foundation and its publication the Nichi Bei Weekly (2009 to present) is part of a storied Nichi Bei Shimbun (1899-1942) and Nichi Bei Times (1946-2009) legacy of leadership through community media spanning 120 years. It is the longest-lasting business legacy in San Francisco's Japantown.

#### **Early Beginnings: 1899-1942**

The Nichi Bei Shimbun was founded on April 3, 1899, by legendary publisher Kyutaro Abiko, known by historians as one of the most influential Japanese immigrants in America. Abiko also founded a labor contracting company that brought laborers from Japan. In addition, he founded three farming colonies in California's Central Valley, established a bank, and with his wife Yona started a summer cultural program that sent second-generation Japanese Americans to Japan to learn more about their heritage. Upon his death in 1936, his wife Yona Abiko became the publisher of the Nichi Bei Shimbun until 1942.

At its peak in the 1920s, the Nichi Bei Shimbun was the most widely read Issei (Japanese immigrant) newspaper in the United States, with a reported circulation of 25,000 and an office in Los Angeles. It reflected Abiko's beliefs that the Issei should shun intentions of returning to Japan in favor of setting up roots in America. The Nichi Bei Shimbun decried California's Alien Land Laws of 1913 and 1920 and championed the fight for naturalization.

#### **Reconnecting a Scattered Community**

The Nichi Bei Times, which printed its first edition on May 18, 1946, was the oldest Japanese American bilingual newspaper in Northern California. It continued a legacy of community leadership established with the 1899 founding of the Nichi Bei Shimbun. The Nichi Bei Times was established in 1946 to get the Japanese American community "reconnected" after their wartime incarceration in American concentration camps.

"When we came back out here after the war, we didn't know where everyone was," recalled late former President Tsutomu Umezu in the late 1990s. "So we got together to make a newspaper ... It was a way to reconnect."

Nichi Bei Times founder Shichinosuke Asano, in a 1976 San Francisco Chronicle article, recalled the early beginnings. “Some of us who had worked for newspapers before pooled our money, and the community wanted a paper again so much that about 100 people put their own money, as an investment, into the Nichi Bei,” he told the Chronicle.

Although it retained many of the same staff as the pre-war Nichi Bei Shimbun — a sole proprietorship — the Nichi Bei Times was set up as a corporation, as a rebuilding community pooled their resources together. According to Umezu, the Nichi Bei Times was founded by six main individuals: Asano, the longtime head of the company; Yasuo Abiko, Kyutaro’s only child and longtime vice president; Tsugio Kobayashi and Kazumi Kawaoka, treasurers; Umezu, who initially served as secretary; and Kando Ikeda, a board member.

On the editorial staff was Asano, who served as chief editor and was also a longtime correspondent to Japan’s Asahi Shimbun; Shiro Uyeno, Japanese editor; Iwao Namekawa, Japanese editorial staff; Yasuo Abiko, English section editor; and Iwao Kawakami, sports editor.

When it first began, the Nichi Bei Times was printed every other day on painstaking linotype — with three pages in Japanese and one in English. Soon thereafter, the production was increased to six days a week. Issues covered have included Japanese American redress, struggle for community buildings in Japantowns, and many other stories.

Since the paper’s inception, it has been situated at three different locations. Initially, the Nichi Bei Times office was located at 1775 Sutter St. in San Francisco’s Japantown. Within a year, the business had relocated to 1375 Eddy St. in the Western Addition. Due to the redevelopment of the area, the Nichi Bei Times was forced to relocate to its last location, 2211 Bush St., in November of 1972.

### **Pioneering Rebirth**

Nichi Bei Times fell victim to a harsh economic climate and changing demographics among Japanese-speaking persons during the Great Recession. As Nichi Bei Times was closing down in the summer of 2009, a group of Nichi Bei Times staff, community leaders and media professionals set out to establish the Nichi Bei Foundation, a nonprofit educational and charitable organization that launched the first nonprofit ethnic community newspaper of its kind in the country, the Nichi Bei Weekly.

Without missing a week of publication, the groundbreaking nonprofit publication continued a legacy of keeping the Japanese American community connected, informed and empowered, while documenting the community’s history, and preserving Japanese culture and community. It was an inspired grassroots movement to save a cherished institution.

Nichi Bei Foundation was briefly located in the storage area of the National Japanese American Historical Society in 2009, then the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California for a year, before moving to 1832 Buchanan St., Suite 207 in Japantown in 2010.

The Nichi Bei Weekly and the Nichi Bei Foundation continues to connect, inform and empower the Japanese American community in ways that no other entity can. It's the glue that holds the community together — culturally, historically, socially, emotionally, spiritually and politically — particularly as community members have dispersed throughout the country. The Nichi Bei Weekly, celebrating its 10th anniversary this year, is part of a 120-year legacy and the last Northern California-based Japanese American newspaper serving a vital role in documenting the community's history for generations to come.

**b. Describe any circumstances that required the business to cease operations in San Francisco for more than six months?**

The forced relocation and incarceration of the Japanese American community forced the Nichi Bei Shimbun — and other Japanese newspapers on the West Coast — to close in 1942. The founders of the postwar Nichi Bei Times re-launched with its first edition on May 18, 1946, the first Japanese American community newspaper to form in Northern California after the war. It played a vital role in getting the now-scattered community reconnected after their devastating wartime incarceration.

**c. Is the business a family-owned business? If so, give the generational history of the business.**

The Nichi Bei Shimbun (1899-1942) was a sole proprietorship published by Kyutaro Abiko at first, and then his widow Yona Abiko upon his death from 1936 to 1942. After the war, some 100 community members, led in large part by Kyutaro and Yona Abiko's son Yasuo as well as other Nichi Bei Shimbun staff, formed the Nichi Bei Times as a closely-held corporation.

The present-day Nichi Bei Foundation, born out of the storied Nichi Bei legacy, is a nonprofit with no owners, although some grandchildren and even a great grandchild of Kyutaro and Yona Abiko are members of the Nichi Bei Foundation.

**d. Describe the ownership history when the business ownership is not the original owner or a family-owned business.**

The ownership history of Nichi Bei is as follows:

1899 to 1936:	Kyutaro Abiko.
1936 to 1942:	Yona Abiko.
1942 to 1946:	Operations ceased due to wartime incarceration.
1946 to 2009:	Corporation with major founders such as Shichinosuke Asano, Yasuo Abiko, Tsutomu Umezu, previous staff of the Nichi Bei Shimbun and appr. 100 shareholders in total who pooled their funds to rebuild the Nichi Bei.
2009 to Present:	501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

**e. When the current ownership is not the original owner and has owned the business for less than 30 years, the applicant will need to provide documentation of the existence of the**

**business prior to current ownership to verify it has been in operation for 30+ years. Please use the list of supplemental documents and/or materials as a guide to help demonstrate the existence of the business prior to current ownership.**

When Nichi Bei Times by the Nichi Bei Times Corp. was about to fold in 2009 due to hard economic times, the community and staff came together to keep the newspaper going by creating the nonprofit “Nichi Bei Foundation.” The foundation mostly kept the same staff and the same newspaper, renaming it the Nichi Bei Weekly to reflect it being a weekly paper instead of a daily paper. They kept producing the same guides, New Year's Edition and everything else the paper had been doing prior to 2009. Documentation of the existence of the business verifying it has been in operation for 30+ years is provided in this Legacy Business Registry application.

**f. Note any other special features of the business location, such as, if the property associated with the business is listed on a local, state, or federal historic resources registry.**

The historic resource status of the building at 1832 Buchanan Street is classified by the Planning Department as Category C, No Historic Resource Present / Not Age Eligible, with regard to the California Environmental Quality Act.

## **CRITERION 2**

**a. Describe the business's contribution to the history and/or identity of the neighborhood, community or San Francisco.**

Through Nichi Bei Shimbun, community leader Kyutaro Abiko encouraged Japanese immigrants to forget about returning to their native homeland of Japan and instead settle in the United States. Thus, the publication had a direct impact on the settling of Japanese America. It connected the immigrant community throughout the Northern California region and beyond, offering news and information, as well as useful resources like the Nichi Bei Directory that was published every three years from the early 1900s through the early 1970s. The directories featured the names and addresses of people and businesses throughout the country — as well as Mexico and South America — and were later used by the Preserving California's Japantowns project to piece together maps of historic Japantowns.

Recently, Stanford University's Hoover Institution digitized the prewar Nichi Bei Shimbun, offering a wealth of information for researchers around the world.

The San Francisco Japantown Map and Directory, published by Nichi Bei, offers a plethora of information for tourists to the area, including the most comprehensive map, a bilingual (English/Japanese) directory, a guide to new shops in Japantown, a historical walking tour, a calendar of events throughout the year, a map of how to get to Japantown and Japantown favorites.

**b. Is the business (or has been) associated with significant events in the neighborhood, the city, or the business industry?**

In addition to sponsoring events such as Nihonmachi Street Fair, holding food-related fundraisers and covering the numerous events in Japantown, the Nichi Bei Foundation hosts a number of events in San Francisco's Japantown throughout the year, such as:

- Films of Remembrance, a day-long showcase of films related to the Japanese American incarceration experience during World War II, held every February.
- Northern California Soy and Tofu Festival, a celebration of soy featuring cooking demonstrations, live performances, soy and tofu vendors, a scavenger hunt in Japantown and a Tofu Dessert Competition.
- Author events, featuring books by and about Asian America.

**c. Has the business ever been referenced in an historical context? Such as in a business trade publication, media, or historical documents?**

Throughout history, the various incarnations of the Nichi Bei publications and its leaders have been referenced in numerous newspaper articles and historical books, such as "Issei: The World of the First Generation Japanese Immigrants 1885-1924" by Yuji Ichioka (1988, Macmillan, Inc.), "Strangers From a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans" by Ronald Takaki (1998, Little, Brown and Company), "Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America" by Eiichiro Azuma (2005, Oxford University Press) and "Encyclopedia of Japanese American History: An A-to-Z Reference from 1868 to the Present" edited by Brian Niiya (2001, Checkmark Books).

Moreover, Shichinosuke Asano, the Japanese editor of the prewar Nichi Bei Shimbun and the main founder of the postwar Nichi Bei Times, has two biographical books written about him in Japanese, including an autobiography and "Nikkeijin no Yoake: Zaibei Issei Janarisuto Asano Shichinosuke no Shogen" (The Dawn of the Nikkei: Testimony Made by Shichinosuke Asano, Issei Journalist) written by Yoshimichi Nagae (1987, Iwate Nipponsha). Asano was featured as one of "100 Japanese Who Changed the World" on March 13, 2009 on Tokyo TV.

The closure of the Nichi Bei Times and pioneering rebirth of the Nichi Bei Foundation and the Nichi Bei Weekly was widely reported in local and international media, including the San Francisco Chronicle, New America Media, ABC7, Kyodo News and Asahi Shimbun.

Selected news articles:

- "Nichi Bei Times Closes, Nonprofit Hopes to Continue Legacy" by New America Media: <https://www.nichibei.org/2009/08/nichi-bei-times-closes-nonprofit-hopes-to-continue-legacy/>
- "Strong ethnic media market gets new weekly" in the San Francisco Chronicle: <https://www.nichibei.org/2009/09/strong-ethnic-media-market-gets-new-weekly/>
- "Leaders try to save Japanese American newspaper" in the San Francisco Chronicle:

<https://www.nichibei.org/2009/08/leaders-try-to-save-japanese-american-newspaper-by-the-san-francisco-chronicle/>

- From ABC7 KGO-TV News: <https://www.nichibei.org/2009/10/news-of-the-nichi-bei-times-closure-on-abc-7-kgo-tv/>
- Kyodo News: <https://www.nichibei.org/2009/10/kyodo-news/>

**d. Is the business associated with a significant or historical person?**

The Nichi Bei legacy is filled with examples of community leadership and bridging U.S.-Japan ties. As the founder of the Nichi Bei Shimbun on April 3, 1899, Kyutaro Abiko remains one of Japanese America's most legendary Issei pioneers. He reportedly ran away to Tokyo at the age of 14, and arrived in 1885 in San Francisco with only a dollar in his pocket.

He became a labor contractor and one of the founders of the Japanese American Industrial Corporation. His company, founded in 1902, became one of the largest labor contracting agencies in California, supplying Japanese laborers to various industries.

In addition to founding the Nichi Bei Shimbun — the most influential pre-war Japanese American newspaper — he founded the American Land and Produce Company, which purchased 3,200 acres of underdeveloped desert land near the San Joaquin Valley town of Livingston. They were parceled into 40-acre lots and sold to Japanese farmers. In total he helped to form three Japanese farming colonies in the Central California towns of Cortez, Cressey and Livingston (also known as the Yamato Colony).

Kyutaro Abiko's wife, Yona (Tsuda) Abiko, took over as publisher of the Nichi Bei Shimbun after his death in 1936. She raised money in Japan to help purchase the Japanese YWCA in San Francisco's Japantown. The building was the subject of some struggle in recent years, as when the YWCA decided to sell the building in 1996, community members found evidence that the property was purchased by the YWCA "in trust" for the Japanese American community, since Japanese immigrants themselves could not buy land due to the racist alien land laws of the time. The Nichi Bei Times wrote an editorial in support of the lawsuit that would keep the YWCA from selling the building to an outside entity. A settlement was reached, and today it serves as the home to Nihonmachi Little Friends.

Yona Abiko's older sister, Umeko Tsuda, remains a historical figure in Japan. After Commodore Matthew Perry forced Japan open in the 1850s, the government of Japan — which had been in self-isolation for several decades — sent a delegation to the United States and Europe in an attempt to renegotiate what it thought to be unfair treaties and to learn from the industrialized countries in what was referred to as the Iwakura Mission. Among the five young girls sent to study in America was seven-year-old Umeko. Tsuda would study at Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania and returned to Japan to be a pioneer of women's education. The college she founded for women in 1900, Tsuda College in Tokyo, remains to be a well-known institution of higher learning recognized by most Japanese.



Yasuo Abiko, the only child of Yona and Kyutaro Abiko, was one of the founders of the post-war Nichi Bei Times, serving as its longtime vice president and English section editor. His wife, Lily (Tani) Abiko, was also deeply involved with the company.

Ken Abiko, the son of Yasuo and Lily Abiko, grandson of Kyutaro and Yona Abiko and grandnephew of Umeko Tsuda, was the last chairperson of the Nichi Bei Times Board of Directors.

Among the Nichi Bei Times' many correspondents were Kunisaku Mineta, who served as the San Jose correspondent for both the Nichi Bei Shimbun and the Nichi Bei Times. Kunisaku Mineta was the father of Norman Mineta, himself a former Nichi Bei newspaper delivery boy who would go on to become the mayor of San Jose, a longtime congressman, and the Secretary of Commerce under President Bill Clinton and Secretary of Transportation under President George W. Bush.

In 1946, Nichi Bei Times founder Shichinosuke Asano led Bay Area efforts to raise money for post-war relief goods for a war-devastated Japan under the Licensed Agencies for Relief in Asia (LARA) program. Some 16 tons of relief goods — including food, dry milk, clothing, medicine, shoes, soap and school products — were sent to the war-torn country, with 20 percent of the goods coming from some 36 Japanese American groups throughout North and South America. While the Japanese American community had very little themselves — having just come out of wartime concentration camps in America — leaders such as Asano realized that those in Japan had less. In San Francisco, the Nihon Nanmin Kyusai Kai (Association for the Relief of Displaced People in Japan) was one of the Nikkei groups formed to support relief efforts. Asano wrote the group's prospectus and used the Nichi Bei Times as a vehicle to inform the public of relief efforts. For his efforts, Asano received an unusual three kunsho, or medals of honor, from the Japanese government. In 2004, he was enshrined in the Morioka Memorial Museum of Great Predecessors in his native prefecture of Iwate, Japan.

Asano was a protégé of Takashi (Kei) Hara, regarded as the first democratic prime minister of Japan, who was assassinated in 1921 by a Japanese nationalist. "He helped me get my first newspaper job in Japan," Asano said of Hara in the 1976 Chronicle article. "When I left for America, he told me, 'Do not go just to make money. Help people.'"

#### **e. How does the business demonstrate its commitment to the community?**

Nichi Bei has advocated for redress for Japanese American railroad and mine workers whose family heads were fired during World War II at the behest of the U.S. Government, as well as Japanese Latin Americans who were unjustly kidnapped and incarcerated on U.S. soil during the war. The railroad and mine worker group was awarded redress from the U.S. Government in 1998.

Nichi Bei helped save the Japanese YWCA by raising awareness, which ultimately led to Nihonmachi Little Friends securing the building in a settlement.

Nichi Bei's coverage of the potential sale of the Kokoro Assisted Living facility in the 2000s was credited with helping save the building. Nichi Bei's coverage helped keep the building in Japantown hands.

Nichi Bei continually covers news affecting San Francisco's Japanese American community, including community meetings of interest. Through its 28 publications per year, including the Japanese Culture and Cherry Blossom Festivals Guide and Obon and Summer Festivals Guide, Nichi Bei keeps the Japanese American community connected, informed and empowered not only in the Bay Area, but across the country as well. The Japanese Culture and Cherry Blossom Festivals Guide strives to preserve Japanese culture in America by providing listings of cultural arts classes and Japanese cultural festivals across the country, with an emphasis on San Francisco's Cherry Blossom Festival. The Obon and Summer Festivals Guide, likewise, features more than 150 community events in the summer, held throughout the country.

This year, Nichi Bei launched a total renovation of its San Francisco Japantown Map and Directory — the most comprehensive of its kind — and has initiated mass distribution across the Bay Area ensuring further visibility of the Japantown business and nonprofit community.

Nichi Bei also published a Japanese American Community Resource Guide, highlighting community-based nonprofits throughout the state, while providing historical walking tours of the last three remaining Japantowns in San Francisco, San Jose and Los Angeles.

Nichi Bei sponsors several events per year through Media Sponsorships. Also, Nichi Bei presents deeply meaningful educational events: Films of Remembrance, a day-long showcase of films related to the Japanese American incarceration during World War II, which is the premiere event of its kind; the Nikkei Angel Island Pilgrimage, which reconnects the community to the nearly forgotten legacy at the Angel Island Immigration Station; and Wakamatsu Pilgrimage, a multicity pilgrimage to the site of the first settlement of Japanese in America.

Nichi Bei presents an Author Series, empowering works by and about the Japanese American / Asian American experience. Its signature event is the Northern California Soy and Tofu Festival, which has brought tens of thousands of visitors to Japantown over the past eight years in a celebration of soy while empowering artists and serving as a vehicle for community-building and leadership development.

Nichi Bei also hosts interns throughout the year, including from San Francisco State University's journalism and Asian American Studies departments, and the Nikkei Community Internship program in the summer.

**f. Provide a description of the community the business serves.**

The customers of the Nichi Bei are varied. At its heart are the Northern California Japanese American community, but the publication also serves Japanese Americans across the country, as well as others who may be interested in culture and community. The Japanese Culture and

Cherry Blossom Festivals Guide and the Obon and Summer Festivals Guide are open to anyone who may be interested in Japanese culture.

**g. Is the business associated with a culturally significant building/structure/site/object/interior?**

Nichi Bei's previous location at 2211 Bush St. (1972-2009) was said to be the first building built specifically to house a Japanese American newspaper, with large bottom floors to accommodate a web newspaper press on one side, and the Nichi Bei Times' printing business on the other. It was opened to much fanfare in 1972, with elected officials such as Milton Marks and Quentin Kopp, as well as renowned artist Chiura Obata, in attendance. The current building at 1832 Buchanan St. has no known exterior or interior features, but does house some historical items such as old linotype with Japanese characters, advertising plates and a decades-old typewriter similar to that which noted author Ray Bradbury wrote on.

**h. How would the community be diminished if the business were to be sold, relocated, shut down, etc.?**

If the Nichi Bei were to close, the Japanese American community would, for the first time in 120 years, be without a trusted community news source, as it remains the last Bay Area-based Japanese American community newspaper — as well as the website [www.nichibei.org](http://www.nichibei.org). The community would also lose the only publication that documents the community's history, which has been an important source of research requested at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., among others. Moreover, the community would lose the last medium to keep the community connected and informed, while empowering countless others.

Nichi Bei also publishes the most comprehensive San Francisco Japantown Map and Directory, distributed to more than 300 locations throughout the Bay Area. This important source of visibility and history for Japantown businesses and community organizations would be lost if Nichi Bei were to close.

Moreover, five full-time employees and two part-time employees will be without jobs, and dozens of contributing writers will be without a venue for their writing.

### **CRITERION 3**

**a. Describe the business and the essential features that define its character.**

The Nichi Bei Foundation is an educational and charitable nonprofit organization dedicated to keeping the Japanese American community connected, informed and empowered — primarily through a community newspaper (the Nichi Bei Weekly) and website ([www.nichibei.org](http://www.nichibei.org)) as well as educational programming. Moreover, it strives to preserve Japanese culture and community, and document the community's history for generations to come.

**b. How does the business demonstrate a commitment to maintaining the historical traditions that define the business, and which of these traditions should not be changed in order to retain the businesses historical character? (e.g., business model, goods and services, craft, culinary, or art forms)**

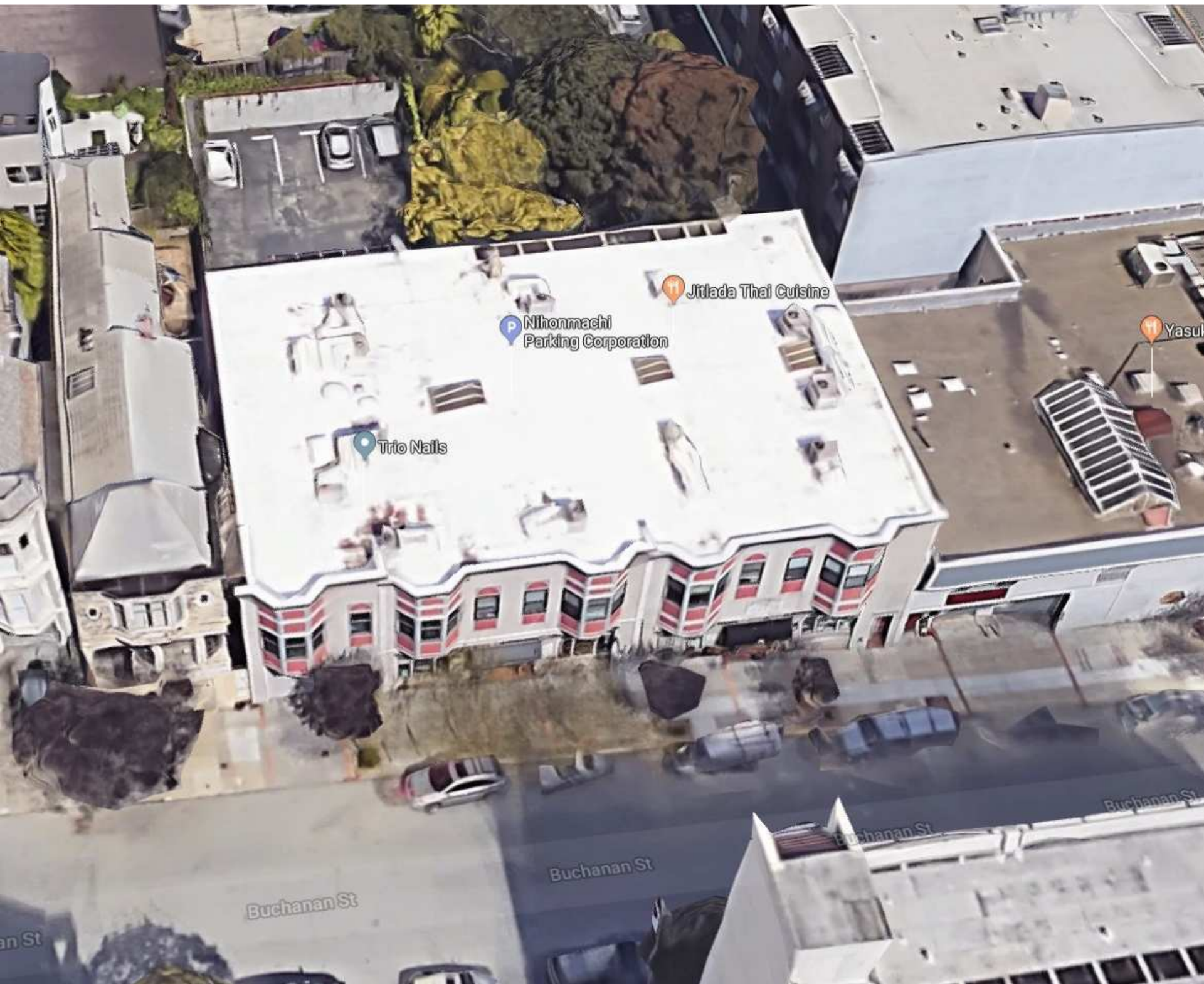
The Nichi Bei Foundation is committed to maintaining its historical tradition as a community-serving newspaper.

**c. How has the business demonstrated a commitment to maintaining the special physical features that define the business? Describe any special exterior and interior physical characteristics of the space occupied by the business (e.g. signage, murals, architectural details, neon signs, etc.).**

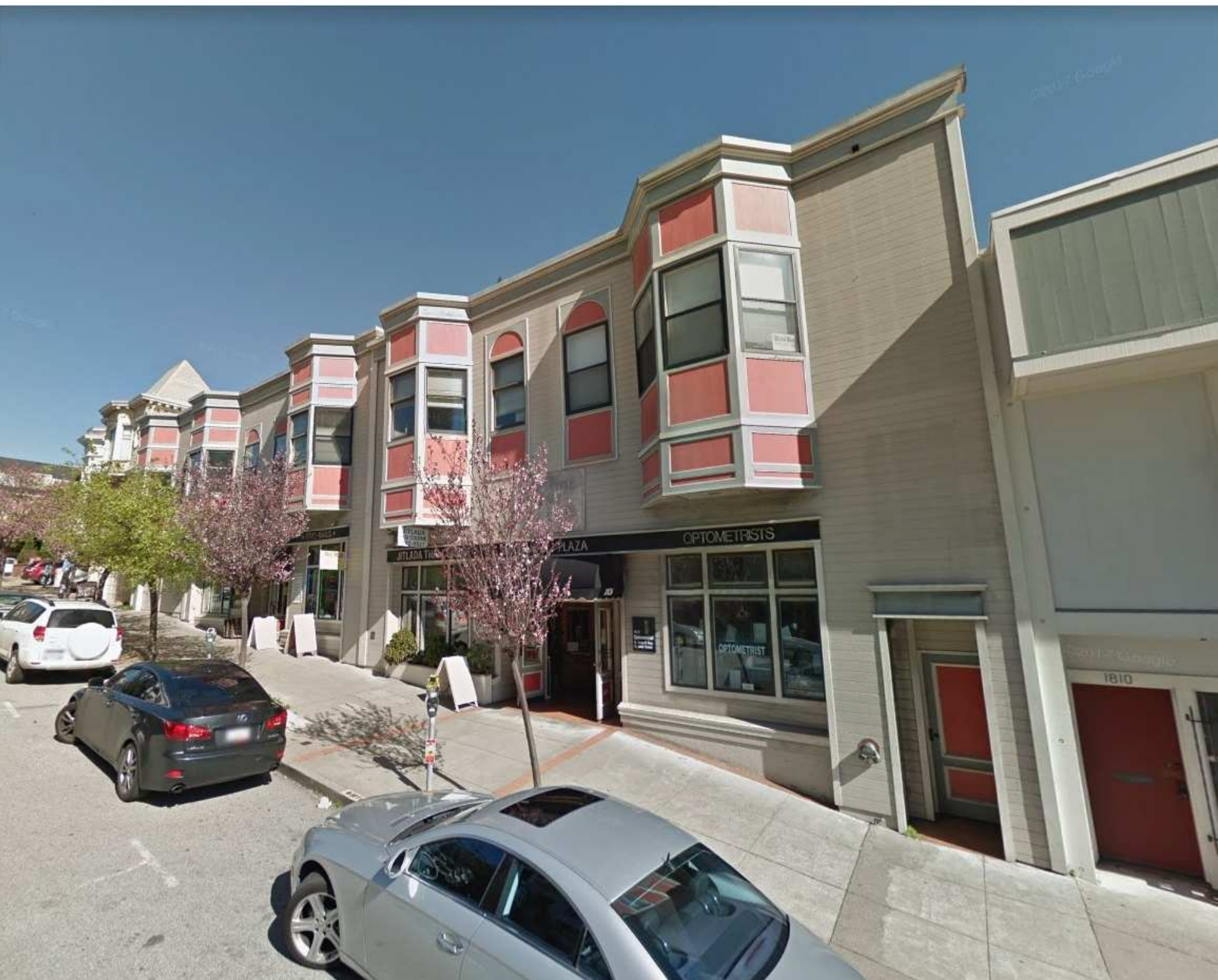
Nichi Bei has a vintage typewriter, past used linotype leads and old advertising plates.

**d. When the current ownership is not the original owner and has owned the business for less than 30 years; the applicant will need to provide documentation that demonstrates the current owner has maintained the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms. Please use the list of supplemental documents and/or materials as a guide to help demonstrate the existence of the business prior to current ownership.**

Documentation that demonstrates the business has been a community newspaper for 30+ years is included in this Legacy Business Registry application.











**TRIO NAILS**  
415 931 9261  
MANICURE 10  
PEDICURE 17  
MANI-PEDI 25  
FULL SET 20  
WAXING 30  
6" 6"





### KYUTARO ABIKO

**Born:** June 23, 1865 in Suibara, Niigata Prefecture, Japan  
**Died:** May 31, 1936 in San Francisco

- Perhaps the most influential Japanese immigrant to the United States.
- In 1899, he founded the *Nichi Bei Shimbun*, the most influential pre-war Japanese newspaper in America, in San Francisco.
- An early advocate of permanent settlement by the Issei.
- In 1905, Abiko published the first directory of Japanese Americans in the United States, called the *Nichi Bei Nenkan*.
- Founder of three Japanese farming colonies in California's Central Valley — the Yamato Colony in Livingston (1907), as well as the Cressey (1918) and Cortez (1919) colonies.
- Founded the Nichibei Kangyosha (Japanese American Industrial Company), which undertook contract labor and the acquisition of farmland, in 1902.
- Started the Nichibei Kinyusha, a savings and loan company, in 1899.
- Recognized with a *kunsho*, or medal of honor from the Emperor of Japan, for his untiring services to the cause of Japanese American friendship through the medium of the press. Conferred the Fifth Order of the Sacred Treasures in 1928.



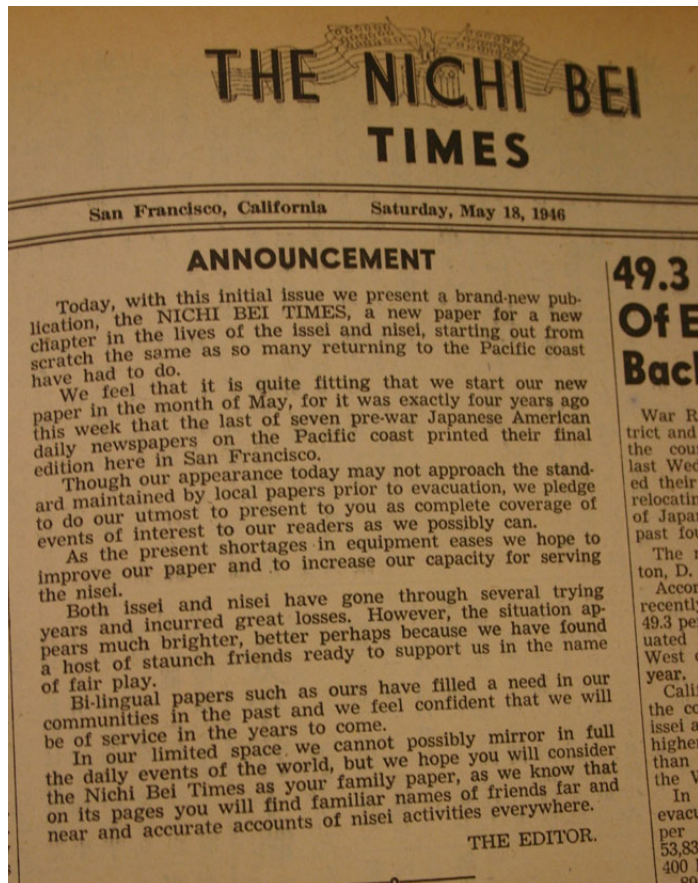
March 4, 1942 edition of the *Nichi Bei Shimbun*, informing the community of restricted zones after the bombing of Pearl Harbor.



### YONA (TSUDA) ABIKO

- Publisher of the *Nichi Bei Shimbun* from 1936-1942.
- Chief fundraiser, Japanese YWCA in San Francisco's Japantown.
- Younger sister of Umeko Tsuda, pioneer of women's education in Japan and founder of Tsuda College for women.





**POSTWAR RELIEF** — In 1950, *Nichi Bei Times* founder Shichinosuke Asano (L) met with Emperor Hirohito and Empress Nagako (C) at the Japanese Red Cross Society in front of goods sent by the Licensed Agencies for Relief in Asia. Emperor Hirohito expressed gratitude for Asano's relief efforts through the newspaper.

**LEFT:** The first edition of the postwar *Nichi Bei Times*.

### SHICHINOSUKE ASANO:

**Born:** November 29, 1894 in Morioka City, Iwate Prefecture, Japan.

**Died:** March 6, 1993 at the age of 98.

1921 — His mentor, Prime Minister Takashi "Kei" Hara, was killed on Nov. 4 at Tokyo Station. In November, he joined the staff of the *Nichi Bei Shimbun* in San Francisco.

1934 — Became the Editor-in-Chief of the *Nichi Bei Shimbun*.

1945 — Initiated the relief efforts for Japan and helped to form the *Nihon Nanmin Kyusai Kai* (Association for the Relief of Displaced People in Japan). During its operation until 1952, the Licensed Agencies for Relief in Asia shipped approximately 17 tons of food and other daily necessities to Japan. Roughly 20 percent of the 17 tons were contributed by Japanese and Japanese Americans in North America as well as South America.

1946 — Established the *Nichi Bei Jiji Shimbun* (*Nichi Bei Times*) in San

Francisco with the aim to support the reconstruction of the Japanese American community. Called for improving the civil rights of Japanese Americans, such as the entitlement of Japanese immigrants to naturalization rights and the invalidation of the California Alien Land Law of 1913, which prohibited *Issei* from owning land.

1961 — Commended by the California State Senate for efforts to oppose discrimination against Japanese Americans and the postwar relief efforts toward Japan. Also recognized with a *kunsho*, or medal of honor, from the Japanese government.

1968 — Conferred his second Medal of Honor from the Japanese government. Served as one of the Grand Marshals for the 1968 Northern California Cherry Blossom Festival Grand Parade.

1973 — Conferred his third and final Medal of Honor from the Japanese government — for contributions to promoting friendship between the United States and Japan, as well as

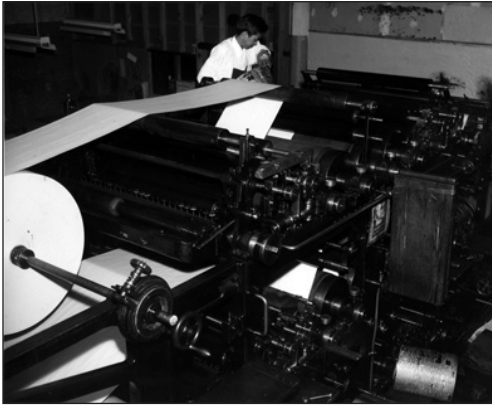


to improving the position of Japanese Americans in the U.S.

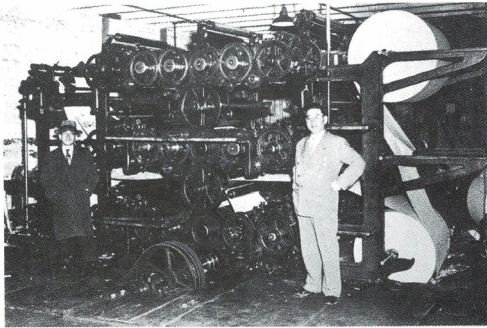
2004 — Inducted into the Morioka Memorial Museum of Great Predecessors in Iwate Prefecture.

2009 — Featured as one of "100 Japanese Who Changed the World," on March 13 on Tokyo TV.





**NEW BUILDING**  
— Nichi Bei Times founders Tsutomu Umezu (at microphone) and Shichinosuke Asano (R) at the opening of the new Nichi Bei Times building at 2211 Bush Street in 1972. At left are elected officials Quentin Kopp and Milton Marks. To the left of Umezu is noted artist Chiura Obata.



Nichi Bei Times building, 1375 Eddy St.



Nichi Bei Times building, 2211 Bush St.

Among the Nichi Bei staff was Kunisaku Mineta, left, the San Jose Branch Manager of the prewar Nichi Bei Shimbun and postwar Nichi Bei Times, from 1918 to 1968. He was the father of former San Jose Mayor and Congressman Norman Mineta, the first Asian American member of any Presidential Cabinet.

**Nichi Bei Times WEEKLY**  
JAPANESE AMERICAN NEWS SINCE 1946  
No. 16,817  
\$1.00  
MAY 15, 2009

**IN THE MIX**  
MULTIRACIAL / MULTICULTURAL EDITION

**CELEBRATING THE DIVERSE HERITAGE OF OUR COMMUNITY**

**IN THIS ISSUE:**  
• **RAISING A MIXED HERITAGE FAMILY**  
• **MULTIRACIAL HOME BARRIERS**  
• **POLE ON MOUNTAIN TOPS**  
• **MULTIRACIAL ENTERTAINMENT AND SPORTS STARS**  
• **AND SO MUCH MORE**

**Nichi Bei Times WEEKLY**  
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No. 16,816  
AUGUST 20-26, 2009  
\$1.00

**PERSPECTIVES PG.2**  
THE POWER OF WORDS

**COMMUNITY PG.5**  
NISEI WEEK QUEEN CROWNED

**TRAVEL+LEISURE PG.8**  
GO FOR LAUNCH

**ENTERTAINMENT+ARTS PG.9-10**  
SF J-TOWN'S J-POP CENTER UNVEILED

**58 TROOP 58 REUNION**

**Nichi Bei Times WEEKLY**  
JAPANESE AMERICAN NEWS SINCE 1946  
No. 16,289  
FEBRUARY 9-15, 2006  
\$1.00

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• **SAC TO Native News in Arts**  
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**SFI-Town Community Demands Explanation About Kokoro Assisted Living Loss**  
Second Community Meeting Scheduled for Feb. 16

**Kintetsu to Sell All SF Japantown Properties**

**Olson Co. Picked for Massive SJ Japantown Development**

**Nichi Bei Times WEEKLY**  
JAPANESE AMERICAN NEWS SINCE 1946  
No. 16,180  
\$1.00  
SEPTEMBER 10, 2009

**GLOBAL**

**WARNING**

**GREEN ISSUE**

**EXTRA!**  
BREAKING NEWS  
LAST ISSUE: THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2009

**THE DEATH OF NICHIBEI**  
OR IS IT? PG.3

**OR IS IT?**





**ABOVE:**  
Films of  
Remembrance



**RIGHT:**  
Nikkei  
Angel Island  
Pilgrimage



**ABOVE:**  
Pilgrimage  
to the  
Wakamatsu  
Tea and Silk  
Farm Colony.

**Northern  
California  
Soy and Tofu  
Festival**



**LEFT:** 20th  
Anniversary  
screening of  
“Picture Bride,”  
with actress  
Tamlyn Tomita (L).



**ABOVE:** Benefit screening  
of “Persona Non Grata: The  
Story of Chiune Sugihara,” with  
meeting between descendants  
of Sugihara and those he saved.



**ABOVE:** “United For  
Compassion” Japantown vigil  
against post-election hate.



**LEFT:** San Francisco  
Japantown Map and  
Directory, published  
by the Nichi Bei.



No. 16,816

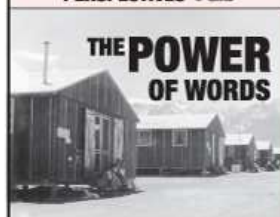
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AUGUST 20-26, 2009

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PERSPECTIVES PG.2



THE POWER  
OF WORDS

COMMUNITY PG.5



NISEI WEEK  
QUEEN  
CROWNED



TROOP 58  
REUNION

TRAVEL+LEISURE PG.8



GO FOR LAUNCH

ENTERTAINMENT+ARTS PG.9-10



SF  
J-TOWN'S  
J-POP  
CENTER  
UNVEILED

IN THIS ISSUE



August 20, 2009

POSTMASTER: Please Do Not Delay



# Nichi Bei Times Decides to Close; Nonprofit Hopes to Continue Legacy

By JUSTINE KOO DRENNAN  
New American Media Contributor

Published in the August 20, 2009 edition of the *Nichi Bei Times*

The *Nichi Bei Times*' board of directors has decided to close Northern California's oldest Japanese American newspaper on Sept. 30 of this year after 63 years of business. In its place, a group of *Nichi Bei Times* staff and community members plan to start the Nichi Bei Foundation, a separate nonprofit reincarnation of the paper.

Kenji G. Taguma, the *Nichi Bei Times*' vice president and English edition editor, has pioneered plans for the new Foundation because he believes the paper is an essential voice for Japanese Americans.

"Today, I see the paper as the glue that holds the community together," Taguma said.

Decline in circulation and advertisements were chief reasons for the decision to close the *Nichi Bei Times*, said Ken Abiko, board chair of the paper, whose circulation base of around 8,000 includes primarily Northern California readers.

As the growth of online news, changing audiences and the economic downturn force media to close or consider new business models, Japanese media have been hit harder than many other ethnic media.

"Japanese American press are not seeing the same pickup that other ethnic presses are seeing, because immigration from Japan is limited, and the advertisers know that," Abiko said. However, the ethnic media's financial troubles do not signal a diminished need for their services.

"Media in general is going through a great crisis and reorganization, but within that we need to keep remembering that the ethnic media is the voice of our community," said journalist, writer and activist Helen Zia. "As members of those communities, we have to support them or we're going to lose those voices."

Abiko said the *Nichi Bei Times*' financial decline began long before last year's economic downturn. In 2006, Taguma led a major overhaul of the paper that cut subscription prices in an effort to increase circulation and divided the bilingual daily into a Japanese edition on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays and an English weekly on Thursdays. However, revenues continued to decline, and now after three years of the new model, as the business' lease is about to expire, the board has decided it is time to close.

"I'm glad we did what we did in these last few years. Kenji did a tremendous job," Abiko said. "Hopefully it's a model for what it could be."

The *Nichi Bei Times* is the first for-profit ethnic news business that will be replaced by a nonprofit organization with the same aims, Taguma said. The new Foundation will attempt to avoid the *Nichi Bei Times*' financial problems by drawing on foundation funding and community fundraisers as well as traditional advertising for revenue, said Kerwin Berk, a Foundation board member.

Berk, who used to work for the *San Francisco Chronicle*, long ago became dissatisfied with the mainstream media's lack of ethnic coverage. "The joke was I was working for the white ethnic press," he said. "The way the mainstream media approaches news, there's an obligation to make money, so they tend to appeal to a demographic that can afford them: white America." With the *Nichi Bei Times* closing, Berk said, there will be "a huge gap to fill."

Helen Zia agreed. "Demographic trends show that we will have more and more different communities and cultural backgrounds, which points to the greater need for media that reflects those communities," she said. Zia noted the essential role of Spanish-language media in calling for immigration reform during the

Bush administration and Chinese-language media in lobbying for a City College campus in San Francisco's Chinatown. Ethnic media is "capable of tremendous organizing potential," Zia said.

It was organizing potential that motivated the *Nichi Bei Times* founders to start the paper in 1946 as a re-embodiment of the *Nichi Bei Shimbun*, which was founded in 1899 by Kyutaro Abiko, grandfather of Ken Abiko. The *Shimbun* had to shut down in 1942 when the U.S. government imprisoned Japanese Americans, including *Shimbun* staff, in concentration camps following Pearl Harbor. After the war, starting the *Nichi Bei Times* was "a way to get the community reconnected," Taguma said.

The young newspaper immediately began organizing donations to help rebuild postwar Japan. Since then, the paper has consistently covered hate crimes and other news important to Japanese Americans that the mainstream media has neglected. In 1998, the paper published a story by Taguma that helped win redress for families of railroad workers and miners fired after Pearl Harbor but left off the government's 1988 redress act.

"The *Nichi Bei Times* has been a vital communication link in the community for many years," said Andy Noguchi, contributor to the *Nichi Bei Times* and civil rights co-chair of the Florin chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League. "Their role in promoting Japanese rights, Japanese culture and political empowerment has been very important for the community."

The paper has promoted the rights of not only Japanese Americans, but also other groups who struggle with issues familiar to the Japanese American community. As many American Muslims faced post-Sept. 11 backlash, the *Nichi Bei Times* staff, remembering the wartime Japanese American incarceration, reported on their struggles.

"Coverage of the same-sex marriage issue has been very strong," Noguchi said, explaining that the *Nichi Bei Times* saw parallels with former anti-miscegenation laws that until 1967 forbade interracial couples marry in 16 states.

"One of the most awesome things about the newspaper is that it is a document of history," Taguma said. "People look back at old newspapers to see what the community was like."

While the Nichi Bei Foundation hopes to continue the *Nichi Bei Times*' activist role, it will be an entirely different entity on a business level. Regulations for 501(c)3 nonprofits prohibit a for-profit business like the *Nichi Bei Times* from simply converting to a nonprofit without making major changes in its governance and operations.

"Nonprofits aren't supposed to be operated in furtherance of private interest," said Gene Takagi, the Nichi Bei Foundation's nonprofit attorney. "There are limits on compensation, and they can't move their assets back to for-profit."

While these restrictions deter many businesses from going nonprofit, Takagi said, they have not stopped Taguma, Berk and the other Foundation board members.

"This group of board members is not really driven by making money," Takagi said. "They're interested in keeping this paper alive for the Japanese American community."

The *Nichi Bei Times*' board of directors has not yet announced whether it will agree to transfer assets such as the business' name, Website and archives to the Foundation.

As they await this decision, Taguma and others involved in the Foundation can give few specifics about the new paper, and the Foundation's need for start-up funds exacerbates the uncertainty. The new paper will not enter 501(c)3 nonprofit status for a few months, making it until then ineligible for foundation funding.

"It will depend really on support of the public through donations," Takagi said.

Despite these doubts, Taguma hopes that after the last *Nichi Bei Times* issue runs on Sept. 10, the Nichi Bei Foundation will not miss a beat in publishing its first issue on Sept. 17.

Given dwindling immigration from Japan, the Foundation's board is uncertain whether it will continue the Japanese-language side of the paper.

To appeal to the younger generation, Taguma hopes the Foundation will continue the *Nichi Bei Times'* modernization efforts, which have included expanded coverage of food, *anime*, *manga* and video games, introduction of online content, a mixed-race issue and a green issue, the first of its kind among Asian American publications.

Taguma also wants to continue the paper's Tofu Dessert Competition, where this year the winner was a strawberry *tofu* tiramisu.

Berk hopes that as a nonprofit, the Foundation can offer scholarships and increase community involvement. "Community columns and stories will be even more pivotal," Berk said.

Jon Funabiki, journalism professor at San Francisco State University, said he hoped the Foundation's nonprofit model "might offer lessons to other ethnic news media serving other Asian, Latino, African American, Middle Eastern and other communities."

*For more information about the Nichi Bei Foundation, visit <http://nichibeifoundation.org>.*

# San Francisco Chronicle

## Strong ethnic media market gets new weekly

### 日米 Nichi Bei WEEKLY

Keeping the Community Connected, Informed and Empowered

By Benny Evangelista  
Chronicle Staff Writer

Published Sunday, September 20, 2009

A group of community leaders and journalists did something seemingly unusual last week - they started a newspaper, the Nichi Bei Weekly.

But while its introduction comes as economic pressures are forcing publications to scale down or close, it also comes at a time when the audience for ethnic media is bigger than ever.

According to a study earlier this year by New America Media, a San Francisco group that represents 2,000 ethnic news organizations around the country, readership in this sector increased by 16 percent over the last four years.

Still, it won't be easy. Despite an increasing readership, the ethnic press hasn't escaped the same downturn in advertising that has hurt mainstream publications.

The fledgling Weekly, in fact, was born out of the demise of the Nichi Bei Times, Northern California's oldest Japanese American paper.

In the past, ethnic publications were more recession-proof because of the advertising from small community businesses, particularly restaurants, auto dealers, travel agencies and real estate offices, according to Sandy Close, New America Media's executive director.

Even in down times, those bread-and-butter advertising sources were enough to sustain ethnic media outlets, which were already used to operating on shoestring budgets. But given the current economy, "All of those small businesses are hurting and they can't afford to advertise," Close said.

But there are signs of hope.

#### Decline stabilizing

Recent reports suggest the recession has ended and the rate of decline in advertising spending is stabilizing. The challenge is for these publications to hold on long enough.

"We need to be here for the community," said former Nichi Bei Times editor Kenji Taguma, who heads the English-language Nichi Bei Weekly. "This effort is true to our mission of keeping the community connected, informed and empowered."

According to the New America Media poll released in June, the ethnic press is reaching 57 million of an estimated 69.2 million African American, Asian American and Hispanic adults in the United States.

Close said the organization was surprised that the poll showed that much of an increase from the 49 million in 2005.

Newspapers aimed at Chinese Americans and Korean Americans have made progress, now reaching 70 percent and 64 percent of their audience, respectively, the New America study said.

Papers such as Sing Tao, the World Journal, Korea Daily and Korea Times have substantially increased circulation, and a Filipino community biweekly, the FilAm Star, began publishing in the Bay Area, the report said.

Meanwhile, English language publications reached 2.8 million Hispanic and 500,000 Asian adults.

Close also said that ethnic media will probably get a big boost when government ads for the 2010 U.S. Census are directed toward people not reached by mainstream news organizations.

#### Not alone

Still, the Nichi Bei Times is hardly alone in its demise. This year, Bay Area community papers AsianWeek, Ming Pao Daily and Pinoy Today all closed.

Ling-chi Wang, professor emeritus of Asian American studies at UC Berkeley, noted that although the recession claimed the 5-year-old Ming Pao Daily, Chinese Americans in the Bay Area are still served by four vibrant papers.

"The ethnic media is suffering, though to a lesser degree than the mainstream press, perhaps because immigrant communities do not have as much access to the Internet, especially the working class," Wang said.

Also, he said Chinese language readers have a "different relationship" with their papers, which have a higher literary standard than American papers, including "poetry, short stories, essays about simple things, about life."

Kevin Weston, director of new media for New America Media, said long-standing African American newspapers such as the Oakland Post and San Francisco Sun-Reporter have survived numerous "waves of recessions" in part because of the passion of the staff.

"The folks that are in the field see it as a business, but to them this is also community work, this is their life's work," Weston said.

#### Hispanic growth

Hispanic newspapers have increased in number nationally from 735 in 2005 to 834 in 2008, although the number of daily publications fell from 42 to 29 as the recession hit, according to the Latino Print Network, an advertising group that represents 625 Hispanic newspapers and magazines.

Circulation rose from 17.6 million to 17.8 million



during that time. And those papers generated \$909 million in ad revenue in 2008, although that was down from \$996 million in 2005.

The 8,000-circulation Nichi Bei Times, started in 1946 as a successor to a paper founded in 1899, saw a "modest increase in subscribers" after the paper went from a daily bilingual schedule to publishing three times a week, with one weekly English edition, in 2006.

But the change didn't increase revenue enough for the paper to survive, prompting its board of directors to close the doors and leave the Northern California market to the rival Hokubei Mainichi, also based in San Francisco.

The Japanese American market is different because it's not growing substantially through immigration. That also means the demand for a Japanese-language publication has waned as its readers grow older.

#### Nonprofit status

So the Nichi Bei Foundation, the group that publishes the new weekly, decided to concentrate on an English edition. The group has applied for nonprofit status with the Internal Revenue Service, a process that could take months.

That delay makes it impossible to get grants from companies and community groups now, said Taguma, who is the foundation's president as well as the paper's editor. So the foundation is relying on individuals, who have donated as much as \$5,000 each.

The group, which has a Web site at nichibeifoundation.org, has raised about \$40,000, enough to cover about three months, and plans to publish a scaled down 12-page edition.

<https://www.sfgate.com/business/article/Leaders-try-to-save-Japanese-American-newspaper-3220047.php>

# San Francisco Chronicle

## Leaders try to save Japanese American newspaper

**Benny Evangelista, Chronicle Staff Writer**

**Published 4:00 am PDT, Friday, August 21, 2009**

The Nichi Bei Times, Northern California's oldest Japanese American community newspaper, said Thursday that it is shutting down, but a group of community leaders hopes to keep the presses rolling by forming a nonprofit organization.

The board of directors said in a letter printed in the 63-year-old publication's latest edition that they decided "with great sadness" to close on Sept. 10.

The paper, which has about 8,000 subscribers, changed in 2006 from a daily bilingual format to publishing three times per week, with one English-language edition inserted in one of the three Japanese-language editions. Board Chairman Ken Abiko said the board planned to give the new format three years to reverse a long, steady decline in circulation and advertising revenue.

But these same problems - exacerbated by the movement of readers to online sources of news - have beset the entire newspaper industry, causing numerous mainstream papers across the country to cut back or close this year.

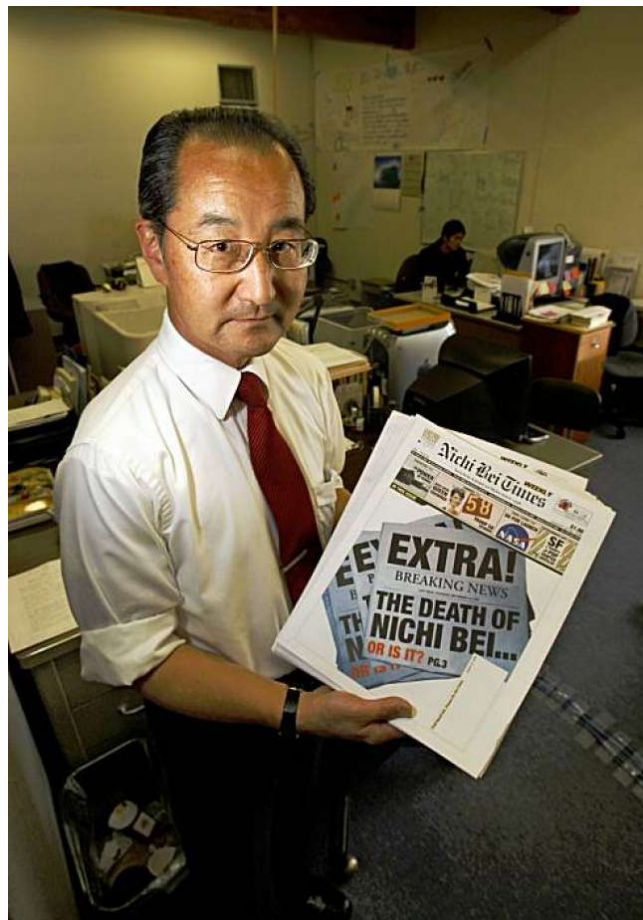
"The losses were deepening and there was no sense in continuing," said Abiko. "It was either now or soon."



Akibo's grandfather founded the paper's predecessor, the Nichi Bei Shimbun, in 1899, but it closed when Japanese Americans were sent to internment camps during World War II. The Nichi Bei Times began publishing after the war in 1946.

The closure of the paper would leave the market open for the rival Hokubei Mainichi newspaper. However, a group of journalists and community leaders is forming the Nichi Bei Foundation, which would try a novel approach to saving a for-profit newspaper by turning it into a nonprofit operation supported by donations, fundraisers and grants.

Nichi Bei Editor Kenji Taguma; Paul Osaki, executive director of the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California; Keith Kamisugi, communications director of the Equal Justice Society; and Kerwin Berk, a former sports desk editor for The Chronicle, are spearheading that effort.



*Photo: Frederic Larson, The Chronicle*

*Mikio Okada the president of Nichi Bei Times holds up a extra of his newspaper which is the Northern California's oldest Japanese American newspaper (based in SF) who announced today that it would close after 63 years in business in San Francisco, Calif., on August 20, 2009.*





Photo: Frederic Larson, The Chronicle

A copy of the first published edition of The Nichi Bei Times on May 18, 1946 which is recorded as Northern California's oldest Japanese American newspaper (based in SF). The newspaper announced today that it would close after 63 years in business in San Francisco, Calif., on August 20, 2009.

Getting away from the continuing search for profit could be a way for media outlets to stop "looking at the bottom line and squeezing every dime at the expense of quality news," Kamisugi said.

Newspaper industry analyst Ken Doctor of Outsell Inc. said the idea of a nonprofit foundation saving a newspaper has been discussed by the industry, but not yet attempted. Even The Christian Science Monitor, founded and supported by the Church of Christ, is struggling, he said.

Still, nonprofit groups usually provide seed or stop-gap funding, and Doctor said he questions whether the Nichi Bei Foundation could generate the ongoing subsidies that a newspaper requires.

Osaki said the community would lose an important voice if the paper folds.

"If it weren't for Japanese American newspapers, the community would not have rallied nor understood the meaning of the redress movement back in the '70s and '80s," Osaki said of the push to compensate Japanese Americans for losses they sustained when they were interned during World War II.



Photo: Frederic Larson, *The Chronicle*

*Metal type used to print The Nichi Bei Times in 1946 is displayed at the paper's San Francisco office on August 20, 2009. Northern California's oldest Japanese American newspaper announced today that it would close after 63 years in business.*

NJAHS



## National Japanese American Historical Society

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May 6, 2019

Mr. Richard Kurylo  
Legacy Business Program  
City and County of San Francisco  
Office of Small Business  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 110  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Mr. Kurylo,

On behalf of the National Japanese American Historical Society, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization headquartered San Francisco's Japantown, I would like to submit this letter of support for the Nichi Bei Foundation's Legacy Business Application.

I am proud to have served as an Advisory Council member of the Nichi Bei Foundation since its nonprofit transformation some 10 years ago. Moreover, we were happy to serve as the Foundation's first "home" as the Nichi Bei Foundation, set up its new operations in our back offices and published its first editions under the "Nichi Bei Weekly," community newspaper banner.

The Nichi Bei newspaper legacy, dates back to the prewar Nichi Bei Shimbun in 1899, and was critical to the development of Japanese American community in San Francisco and throughout the region and the United States, for that matter. As one of the most influential Japanese American newspaper prior to World War II, with offices in San Francisco and Los Angeles — and branches throughout Northern California — the Nichi Bei Shimbun encouraged Japanese settlements throughout the country. The Nichi Bei Shimbun's past publications serve as a rare historical record of the Japanese American experience for scholars, researchers, and planners. In addition, the Nichi Bei Foundation's programs have meaningful and lasting value.

Since 2014, the National Japanese American Historical Society has been a proud partner of the Nikkei Angel Island Pilgrimage, launched by the Nichi Bei Foundation to re-kindle the history and legacy of the Japanese Americans on Angel Island Immigration Station, where up to 85,000 immigrants of Japanese descent were processed between 1910 to 1940. Through four pilgrimages, we have collectively brought more than 1,700 visitors to the Immigration Station, while helping many to discover their family history through our partners at the California Genealogical Society.

The National Japanese American Historical Society has been the main fiscal sponsor of the annual Day of Remembrance consortium to commemorate the Presidential Executive Order 9066 of WWII which led to the mass removal and incarceration of 120,000 persons of Japanese ancestry from the West Coast. The Nichi Bei Foundation and Nichi Bei Weekly have participated in the Consortium as media sponsors. Likewise, the National Japanese American Historical Society has been a sponsor of the Nichi Bei Foundation's Films of Remembrance program, a day-long series of films on the Japanese American incarceration experience. These films help to uncover little-known stories of our wartime incarceration and the deprivation of civil liberties — important lessons for today.

The Nichi Bei also publishes the San Francisco Japantown Map and Directory, an important tool to empower one of the last three remaining Japantowns in the United States, which we distribute to visitors in our gallery.

Please support this vital institution in Japantown, as the last Bay Area-based Japanese American community newspaper. It continues to document our community's history and continues to be an important vehicle for continued preservation and community engagement for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Rosalyn Tonai, Executive Director





May 9, 2019

Mr. Richard Kurylo  
Legacy Business Program  
City and County of San Francisco - Office of Small Business  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 110  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Mr. Kurylo,

On behalf of the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California (JCCCNC/the Center), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in San Francisco's Japantown, I would like to submit this letter of support for the Nichi Bei Foundation's Legacy Business Application.

I am proud to have served as a founding Board Member of the Nichi Bei Foundation at its nonprofit transformation 10 years ago and as an Advisory Council member since leaving the Nichi Bei Foundation Board of Directors. Moreover, the JCCCNC was happy to serve as the first physical office location of the Nichi Bei Foundation from 2009 to late 2010.

When a group of community leaders, media professionals and staff gathered to establish the Nichi Bei Foundation and its publication the *Nichi Bei Weekly*, we knew we needed to continue its storied legacy not only to connect and inform us today but also to document our history for generations to come.

The Nichi Bei legacy, going back to the prewar *Nichi Bei Shimbun* in 1899, was instrumental in the formation of Japanese American communities in the United States as pioneer publisher Kyutaro Abiko encouraged Japanese immigrants to settle in America.

In addition to publishing the last Bay Area-based Japanese American community newspaper, the educational programs of the Nichi Bei Foundation have been meaningful as well, including the Nikkei Angel Island Pilgrimage — which has brought more than 1,700 people to rediscover our community legacy at the former Angel Island Immigration Station while uncovering their own family histories. Moreover, dozens of filmmakers — including my brother Jon — had their films on the Japanese American wartime incarceration experience screened at the Nichi Bei Foundation's annual Films of Remembrance, providing the public with important lessons not only to learn from the past but also to protect civil liberties today.

In addition, the Nichi Bei Foundation's main fundraiser, the Northern California Soy and Tofu Festival, has helped to bring tens of thousands into Japantown over the past eight years.

The Center is also happy to collaborate with the Nichi Bei Foundation in the publication of their San Francisco Japantown Map and Directory, an important tool to empower one of the last three remaining Japantowns in the United States, as we provide the Japantown History Walk portion of their Map.

I hope that you can support this important community institution.

Sincerely,

  
Paul Osaki  
Executive Director

*Filing Date:* June 20, 2019  
*Case No.:* 2019-013310LBR  
*Business Name:* Nichi Bei Foundation  
*Business Address:* 1832 Buchanan Street  
*Zoning:* Japantown NCD (Neighborhood Commercial District)/RM-3 (Residential-Mixed, Medium Density) Zoning District  
40-X/50-X Height and Bulk District  
*Block/Lot:* 0675/051  
*Applicant:* Kenji G. Taguma, President  
1832 Buchanan Street, Suite 207  
San Francisco, CA 94115  
*Nominated By:* Supervisor Vallie Brown  
*Located In:* District 5  
*Staff Contact:* Shelley Caltagirone - (415) 558-6625  
[shelley.caltagirone@sfgov.org](mailto:shelley.caltagirone@sfgov.org)  
*Reviewed By:* Jeff Joslin – (415) 575-9117  
[jeff.joslin@sfgov.org](mailto:jeff.joslin@sfgov.org)

## BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

The Nichi Bei Foundation and its publication the Nichi Bei Weekly (2009 to present) is part of a the Nichi Bei Shimbun (1899-1942) and Nichi Bei Times (1946-2009) legacy of community media. The Nichi Bei Shimbun was founded in 1899 by publisher Kyutaro Abiko, known by historians as one of the most influential Japanese immigrants in America. Upon his death in 1936, his wife Yona Abiko became the publisher of the Nichi Bei Shimbun until 1942. At its peak in the 1920s, the Nichi Bei Shimbun was the most widely read Issei (Japanese immigrant) newspaper in the United States, with a reported circulation of 25,000 and an office in Los Angeles. It reflected Abiko's beliefs that the Issei should shun intentions of returning to Japan in favor of setting up roots in America.

The Nichi Bei Times, which printed its first edition in 1946, was the oldest Japanese American bilingual newspaper in Northern California. It was established to get the Japanese American community "reconnected" after their wartime incarceration in American concentration camps. Although it retained many of the same staff as the pre-war Nichi Bei Shimbun, the Nichi Bei Times was set up as a corporation, as a rebuilding community pooled their resources together.

Since the paper's inception, it has been situated at three different locations. Initially, the Nichi Bei Times office was located at 1775 Sutter St. in San Francisco's Japantown. Within a year, the business had relocated to 1375 Eddy St. in the Western Addition. Due to the redevelopment of the area, the Nichi Bei Times was forced to relocate to its last location, 2211 Bush St., in November of 1972.

Nichi Bei Times fell victim to a harsh economic climate and changing demographics among Japanese-speaking persons during the Great Recession. As Nichi Bei Times was closing down in the summer of 2009, a group of Nichi Bei Times staff, community leaders and media professionals set out to establish the Nichi Bei Foundation, a nonprofit educational and charitable organization that launched the first nonprofit ethnic community newspaper of its kind in the country, the Nichi Bei Weekly. Without missing a week of

publication, the nonprofit publication continued a legacy of keeping the Japanese American community connected, informed and empowered, while documenting the community's history, and preserving Japanese culture and community.

The business is located on the east side of Buchanan Street between Bush and Sutter streets in the Japantown neighborhood. It is within the Japantown NCD (Neighborhood Commercial District)/RM-3 (Residential-Mixed, Medium Density) Zoning Districts and 40-X/50-X Height and Bulk Districts.

## STAFF ANALYSIS

### *Review Criteria*

1. *When was business founded?*

The business was founded in 1899.

2. *Does the business qualify for listing on the Legacy Business Registry? If so, how?*

Yes. Nichi Bei Foundation qualifies for listing on the Legacy Business Registry because it meets all of the eligibility Criteria:

- i. Nichi Bei Foundation has operated in San Francisco for 120 years with one break in operations caused by exceptional circumstances. The forced relocation and incarceration of the Japanese American community forced the Nichi Bei Shimbun — and other Japanese newspapers on the West Coast — to close in 1942. The founders of the postwar Nichi Bei Times re-launched with its first edition on May 18, 1946, the first Japanese American community newspaper to form in Northern California after the war. It played a vital role in getting the now-scattered community reconnected after their devastating wartime incarceration.
- ii. Nichi Bei Foundation has contributed to the history and identity of the Japantown neighborhood and San Francisco.
- iii. Nichi Bei Foundation is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the organization.

3. *Is the business associated with a culturally significant art/craft/cuisine/tradition?*

Yes. The business is associated with the Japanese language and journalism.

4. *Is the business or its building associated with significant events, persons, and/or architecture?*

Yes. Kyutaro Abiko, the newspaper founder, remains one of Japanese America's most legendary Issei pioneers. He reportedly ran away to Tokyo at the age of 14 and arrived in 1885 in San Francisco with only a dollar in his pocket. He became a labor contractor and one of the founders of the Japanese American Industrial Corporation. His company, founded in 1902, became one of the largest labor contracting agencies in California, supplying Japanese laborers to various industries.

In addition to founding the Nichi Bei Shimbun, he founded the American Land and Produce Company, which purchased 3,200 acres of underdeveloped desert land near the San Joaquin Valley town of Livingston. They were parceled into 40-acre lots and sold to Japanese farmers. In total he helped to form three Japanese farming colonies in the Central California towns of Cortez, Cressey



and Livingston (also known as the Yamato Colony).

5. *Is the property associated with the business listed on a local, state, or federal historic resource registry?*

No. The property has Planning Department Historic Resource status codes of "C" (No Historic Resource Present) because of the building is not age-eligible for listing on a historic resource registry (construction date 1982). The property is also located within the Japantown Cultural District.

6. *Is the business mentioned in a local historic context statement?*

Yes. The business is referred to in the Japantown Historic Context Statement.

7. *Has the business been cited in published literature, newspapers, journals, etc.?*

Yes. Throughout history, the various incarnations of the Nichi Bei publications and its leaders have been referenced in numerous newspaper articles and historical books, such as "Issei: The World of the First Generation Japanese Immigrants 1885-1924" by Yuji Ichioka (1988, Macmillan, Inc.), "Strangers From a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans" by Ronald Takaki (1998, Little, Brown and Company), "Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America" by Eiichiro Azuma (2005, Oxford University Press) and "Encyclopedia of Japanese American History: An A-to-Z Reference from 1868 to the Present" edited by Brian Niiya (2001, Checkmark Books).

Moreover, Shichinosuke Asano, the Japanese editor of the prewar Nichi Bei Shimbun and the main founder of the postwar Nichi Bei Times, has two biographical books written about him in Japanese, including an autobiography and "Nikkeijin no Yoake: Zaipei Issei Janarisuto Asano Shichinosuke no Shogen" (The Dawn of the Nikkei: Testimony Made by Shichinosuke Asano, Issei Journalist) written by Yoshimichi Nagae (1987, Iwate Nipponsha). Asano was featured as one of "100 Japanese Who Changed the World" on March 13, 2009 on Tokyo TV.

The closure of the Nichi Bei Times and pioneering rebirth of the Nichi Bei Foundation and the Nichi Bei Weekly was widely reported in local and international media, including the San Francisco Chronicle, New America Media, ABC7, Kyodo News and Asahi Shimbun.

### ***Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business***

**Location(s) associated with the business:**

- 1832 Buchanan Street

**Recommended by Applicant**

- Print newspaper publication and website
- Educational programming
- Vintage typewriter, linotype leads and old advertising plates

**Additional Recommended by Staff**

- None



# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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## Historic Preservation Commission Draft Resolution No. ###

HEARING DATE: JULY 17, 2019

1650 Mission St.  
Suite 400  
San Francisco,  
CA 94103-2479

Reception:  
**415.558.6378**

Fax:  
**415.558.6409**

Planning  
Information:  
**415.558.6377**

*Case No.:* 2019-013310LBR  
*Business Name:* Nichi Bei Foundation  
*Business Address:* 1832 Buchanan Street  
*Zoning:* Japantown NCD (Neighborhood Commercial District)/RM-3 (Residential-Mixed, Medium Density) Zoning District  
40-X/50-X Height and Bulk District  
*Block/Lot:* 0675/051  
*Applicant:* Kenji G. Taguma, President  
1832 Buchanan Street, Suite 207  
San Francisco, CA 94115  
*Nominated By:* Supervisor Vallie Brown  
*Located In:* District 5  
*Staff Contact:* Shelley Caltagirone - (415) 558-6625  
[shelley.caltagirone@sfgov.org](mailto:shelley.caltagirone@sfgov.org)  
*Reviewed By:* Jeff Joslin - (415) 575-9117  
[jeff.joslin@sfgov.org](mailto:jeff.joslin@sfgov.org)

**ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR NICHİ BEI FOUNDATION CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 1832 BUCHANAN STREET, BLOCK/LOT 0675/051.**

**WHEREAS**, in accordance with Administrative Code Section 2A.242, the Office of Small Business maintains a registry of Legacy Businesses in San Francisco (the "Registry") to recognize that longstanding, community-serving businesses can be valuable cultural assets of the City and to be a tool for providing educational and promotional assistance to Legacy Businesses to encourage their continued viability and success; and

**WHEREAS**, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years; and

**WHEREAS**, the subject business has contributed to the City's history and identity; and

**WHEREAS**, the subject business is committed to maintaining the traditions that define the business; and

**WHEREAS**, at a duly noticed public hearing held on July 17, 2019, the Historic Preservation Commission reviewed documents, correspondence and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry nomination.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the **Historic Preservation Commission** hereby recommends that Nichi Bei Foundation qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) as it has operated for 30 or more years and has continued to contribute to the community.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the **Historic Preservation Commission** hereby recommends safeguarding of the below listed physical features and traditions for Nichi Bei Foundation.

***Location(s):***

- 1832 Buchanan Street

***Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:***

- Print newspaper publication and website
- Educational programming
- Vintage typewriter, linotype leads and old advertising plates

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the **Historic Preservation Commission's findings and recommendations** are made solely for the purpose of evaluating the subject business's eligibility for the Legacy Business Registry, and the Historic Preservation Commission makes no finding that the subject property or any of its features constitutes a historical resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a).

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the **Historic Preservation Commission** hereby directs its Commission Secretary to transmit this Resolution and other pertinent materials in the case file 2019-013310LBR to the Office of Small Business July 17, 2019.

Jonas P. Ionin

Commission Secretary

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ADOPTED: