What Happened Here

San Francisco’s Japantown, or Nihonmachi, established in the Western Addition in 1906, is the oldest of the three remaining historic Japanese American districts in the United States. The story of what happened here is a significant and integral part of our country’s history. Despite many obstacles, San Francisco’s Japantown has maintained its dignity and identity as a distinctly American place.

Return and redevelopment

In 1962 the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) and JACL San Francisco established the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) San Francisco Branch to work on behalf of the JACL’s goal of redressing the wrongs inflicted on Japanese Americans. This goal was accomplished in 1988 when President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which provided reparations to Japanese Americans who were forced into internment camps during World War II.

Redress – A quest for justice

In 1993 the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 created the California Redress Task Force, which was charged with investigating and informing the public about the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. The task force was chaired by San Francisco Mayor art Agopian and included representatives from throughout California. The task force issued its report in 1994, which called for the establishment of a California Redress Task Force to provide redress to the survivors of the internment camps.

3 Japantowns remaining in the United States

The point of origin for the first Japantown was San Francisco’s Japantown. After World War II, Japanese Americans were repatriated to the United States, and many settled in Los Angeles and Seattle. These communities also became Japantowns, with their own distinct cultures and histories.

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