



CAST

Community Arts
Stabilization Trust



For Immediate Release: December 16, 2024
San Francisco, California

Filipino-American community is transforming SOMA as a cultural destination through real estate

Filipino American Development Foundation purchases a permanent home at 457 Minna

SAN FRANCISCO, CA – December 16, 2024 - The [Filipino American Development Foundation \(FADF\)](#), a cornerstone community organization in San Francisco's SOMA Pilipinas Cultural District, has purchased their first permanent home at 457 Minna Street. This milestone, achieved through a \$2.89 million grant from San Francisco's \$30 million [API Equity Fund](#), marks a pivotal moment for the Filipino-American community in securing its presence and cultural heritage in the South of Market (SOMA) neighborhood.

This acquisition reflects the resilience and determination of the Filipino community, which has long faced displacement and financial challenges, including the dot-com bubble, the Great Recession, and the recent pandemic. Since its founding in 1997, FADF has anchored the community through initiatives such as the Bayanihan Community Center on Mission Street and [San Francisco's Annual Parol Lantern Festival and Parade](#) which brings together thousands of Filipino Americans from all over the Bay Area. FADF also fiscally sponsors both established and emerging community-based Fil-Am organizations like the Filipino Education Center Galing Bata, which leads an afterschool youth program at Bessie Carmichael Elementary and Middle School, and the Filipino Mental Health Initiative (FMHI), which serves San Francisco Unified School District youth and their families, adults, and seniors to access mental health and wellness services. At 457 Minna, FADF along with Galing Bata and FMHI will have a permanent place to call home.

"This is a monumental step for FADF and the broader Filipino-American community in San Francisco," said FADF Executive Director Gayle Romasanta. "Owning a permanent home allows us to expand our role as a fiscal sponsor and cultural steward, ensuring that essential services for arts, education, and mental health remain accessible for future generations. It also provides much needed space where our community can get multigenerational services in one building."

A Partnership for Cultural Preservation and Community Growth

The acquisition was made possible through a partnership with [Community Arts Stabilization Trust \(CAST\)](#), a real estate nonprofit dedicated to securing and stewarding affordable spaces for arts and culture. CAST's adjacent property [447 Minna](#) at 447 Minna Street, complements this effort, creating an affordable community hub for arts and cultural activities in SOMA.

The real estate purchase closed on December 13, representing a significant milestone for the project. CAST's \$1 million investment and FADF's \$400,000 contribution, combined with the \$2.89 million grant, covers the \$3.2 million property acquisition and tenant improvements, allowing for FADF to move into the building in Spring 2025. "This is just the initial phase—with ownership comes the opportunity to dream beyond their day-to-day realities and really create a welcoming home for the organization and all the families and community members that they serve. They get to move in, and live in the space for a little bit to try things out and understand what works and what they still need to guide future phases of build-out," said CAST Director of Real Estate Development and Partnerships Carolyn Choy.

Cultural and Economic Significance

The purchase comes at a time when San Francisco's commercial real estate market faces unprecedented vacancies, providing a rare opportunity for community organizations to secure ownership.

"Immigrant communities have long been told they don't belong," said Supervisor Connie Chan. "That's why I worked with our AAPI community to establish the API Equity Fund - to stabilize our nonprofits that provide critical services for our AAPI communities and ensure they can not only continue to survive and serve our most vulnerable, but grow and thrive. This is especially important as we face a return to the targeted attacks from another Trump administration. I look forward to working with Mayor Elect Lurie to tackle these ongoing challenges."

FADF is the third Filipino group in recent months to purchase property for arts and cultural uses through the API Equity Fund, joining [Bayanihan Equity Center on 616 Minna](#) and [APICC/KulArts on 65 Langton St.](#)

"We've seen in our work just how pivotal stability and permanence can be for a nonprofit's operations. Ownership for FADF has added importance because they understand how they are contributing to and strengthening cultural infrastructure. This is an investment in space for vital arts, wellness, and youth services, with an immense public benefit that Minna Street and the entire SOMA Pilipinas Filipino Cultural District will feel," said CAST CEO Ken Ikeda.

Vision for the Future

The building's central location ensures accessibility for low-income families, seniors, and other community members, further integrating it into the vibrant network of other Filipino cultural institutions in SOMA, including the Bayanihan Community Center, Kapwa Gardens, and Bindlestiff Studio.

"We are so happy that the fund was able to support the stabilization of 11 API organizations with 5 of them legacy and anchor cultural organizations within the SOMA Pilipinas ecosystem. We are very thankful to the leadership of Supervisor Connie Chan for championing this and hope this can serve as a model for stabilizing small community organizations that are the heart of our cultural communities," added Raquel Redondiez, Director of SOMA Pilipinas.

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About the Filipino American Development Foundation

The Filipino American Development Foundation (FADF) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization based in the South of Market (SoMa) area. FADF's mission is to strengthen the social, physical, emotional, cultural, and economic well-being of the Filipino American community in San Francisco by providing access to resources, financial support, and opportunities to connect and network in a vibrant community of families, educators, students, elders, artists, community leaders and organizers. Founded in 1997 to assist in transforming the Delta Hotel into a community center, FADF's role expanded after a fire gutted the hotel, leading to its rebirth as the Bayanihan Community Center in 2006. Today, FADF builds upon its history of building social capital by providing direct services to support the growing needs of marginalized, low-income Filipinos in San Francisco through culturally and linguistically competent programs. As a respected touchstone organization, FADF provides critical organizational development, funding, fiscal and HR management, compliance, payroll/accounting, mentorship, and oversight to programs, artists, cultural arts groups, and fiscally sponsored organizations which make up the SOMA Pilipinas ecosystem. While FADF focuses on the Filipino American community in San Francisco, its reach also touches the lives of Filipino American communities in the SF Bay Area and beyond. Learn more at fadf-sf.org

About Community Arts Stabilization Trust (CAST)

Community Arts Stabilization Trust (CAST) is a community-centered real estate organization committed to ensuring artists and cultural workers can stay anchored where they create. Founded in 2013, CAST works in deep partnership with communities across the San Francisco Bay Area, particularly communities that have endured systemic oppression and historical underinvestment. CAST models new ways to secure and steward affordable, inclusive spaces for creative and cultural expression by applying real estate financing tools and structural models in innovative ways, building community knowledge and agency, and creating and holding space for visioning and arts activation. Its programs and services have helped arts organizations like CounterPulse and Luggage Store Gallery in San Francisco build pathways to ownership, enabled artists to secure long-term affordable leases, and created dedicated spaces for cultural connection and exchange. Learn more at cast-sf.org or follow CAST [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [Twitter](#).