

LITTLE SAIGON

PUBLIC REALM VISION REPORT



PRESENTATION OF FINAL WORK

DIETER GRAU, ATELIER DREISEITL

WITH

City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development (DPD)

And

Washington Vietnamese American Chamber of Commerce (WAVA Chamber)

DATE: Wed. June 11, 2008

TIME: 6:00 pm

LOCATION: Nisei Veterans Hall

Thank you for showing your interest in the future of Little Saigon by attending this evening.

This Public Realm Vision is part of the current work focused on the future development of the unique districts flourishing within Seattle's South Downtown District.

The scope of this study included coordination with concurrent ongoing projects such as the future redevelopment of Goodwill-Dearborn Street and Yesler Terrace, a potential streetcar extension through Little Saigon, South Jackson street design project and zoning and land use work by the Department of Planning and Development. Considering the overall planning vision, design concepts were developed specifically for the Little Saigon neighborhood.

This design process was undertaken in close collaboration with the DPD and WAVA as well as Little Saigon community members through a public workshop format, in order to reach visionary and meaningful, but at the same time, feasible landscape solutions that can be realized gradually over time.

The design philosophy for the proposed long-term vision is based on a strong public/private partnership. Particularly for Little Saigon, this was seen as a way to bridge the gap between this Vietnamese-American neighborhood, with its strong cultural traditions, and the rest of Seattle. In this relationship, both sides combine to form a Little Saigon that is both rooted in its past and reaching for its future as a vital member of the Center City community.

To do this, project goals responding to community desires and the South Downtown's future planning vision acted as a starting point for open space concepts. Creating a pedestrian-friendly urban environment is of key importance. Proposed schemes also strengthen the overall Vietnamese-American identity of Little Saigon by providing venues for cultural expression and design details inspired by Vietnamese art and architecture. Lastly, as a way of connecting Little Saigon with its urban and natural surroundings, sustainable design practices, predominantly stormwater management, are interwoven into the urban spaces. Stormwater, flowing visibly through Little Saigon, becomes a primary transition tool between Little Saigon, Seattle and the surrounding natural landscape.

The general framework proposed in this study provides the vision that now must be enriched and informed through continued collaboration between the City of Seattle, WAVA and Little Saigon community members. Only with the contribution and endorsement of all participants can Little Saigon become the true expression of those who live and work in this place.

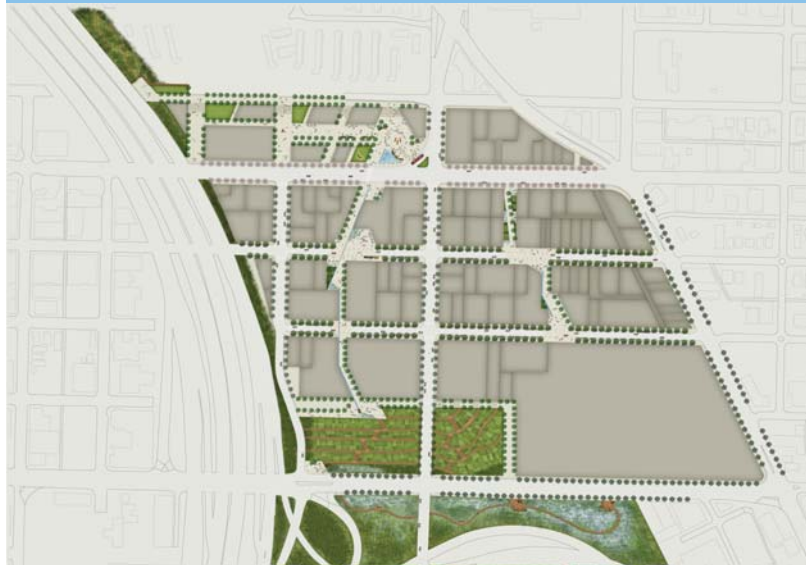
We hope you will support us in this effort.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dieter Grau', written over a thin horizontal line.

Dieter Grau
ATELIER DREISEITL

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RECOMMENDED PHASED ACTIONS

SHORT-TERM ACTIONS

- Amend zoning per Livable South Downtown to allow zoning height incentives in exchange for through-block connections and public plazas.
- Establish Class 1 Pedestrian Overlay on S. Jackson Street and 12th Avenue S.
- Designate S. King and S. Weller Streets as Green Streets. Develop street design concept plans.
- Designate S. Jackson Street and 12th Avenue S. as Main Streets. Develop a street design concept plan that includes both streets.
- Design and plan streetscape improvements with integrated urban stormwater recycling features.
- Develop a neighborhood identity plan for signage, storefronts and other features in Little Saigon based on a new Southeast Asian-American aesthetic.
- Design gateway improvements at key Little Saigon intersections.

MID-TERM ACTIONS

- Design and begin development of Urban Nodes within public rights-of-way at 3 selected sites.
- Design and develop pedestrian through-block connections within district and to Yesler Terrace and Dearborn Street developments using new zoning height incentives.
- Design and develop plaza (urban node) at 12th and Jackson intersection with streetcar stop, cultural amenities and connection to Yesler Terrace housing redevelopment.

LONG-TERM ACTIONS

- Continue development of urban nodes at 3 selected sites using new zoning height incentives to enable through-block connections, public plazas and a new urbanist building pattern based on Southeast Asian/ European cultural models.
- Develop additional open spaces and street improvements along edges of district to create stronger connections with surrounding communities.
- Design and develop terraced community garden with integrated stormwater management on north side of S. Dearborn Street.
- Design and develop stormwater management connections under S. Dearborn Street.
- Design and develop stormwater retention area on south side of S. Dearborn Street.