

LITTLE SAIGON

PUBLIC REALM DESIGN REPORT



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This Public Realm Design Study is part of a collection of current works focused on the future development of the unique districts flourishing within Seattle's South Downtown District. Little Saigon, the subject of this study, is one of 6 sub-areas within this overall area. The others include Chinatown, Japantown, Pioneer Square, Stadium Area/1st Avenue and South of Dearborn.

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 other 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 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 neighborhood, with its strong cultural traditions and beliefs, 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 downtown community.



To do this, project goals responding to community desires and the South Downtown's future planning vision acted as targets 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 traditional Vietnamese art and architecture. Lastly, as a way of connecting Little Saigon with its urban and natural surroundings, sustainable design practices, predominantly in the area of stormwater management, are interwoven into the sites 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 big ideas that now must be enriched and informed through continued collaboration with the City of Seattle and, in particular, Little Saigon community members. Only with the contribution and endorsement of this group can a new Little Saigon become the true expression of those who live and work in this place.



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LITTLE SAIGON TODAY

Strong Local Businesses



History / Culture



Public Transport / Accessibility



Views / Proximity to Downtown



The unique character of the area is enriched by the many thriving local businesses that serve the residents and visitors of Little Saigon. From restaurants, markets, jewelry and home furnishings, the stores are the backbone to district.

Little Saigon is rich in culture and history. From generations of Vietnamese-Americans passing down their heritage through events and festivals as well as Seattle's jazz culture once thriving here. The people are the heart and soul of Little Saigon.

The district is well-served by the public bus system which runs routes through S. Jackson Street and 12th Avenue. Nearby, the International District Tunnel station will support the future light rail. A streetcar line is also proposed through the district.

Due to the significant amount of grade change throughout the district, there are opportunities for visual connections beyond the edge of the neighborhood. The views aid in way-finding and help to connect the district to the surrounding neighborhoods.

Streetscape



Vehicular Traffic



Pedestrian Connections



Identity



The overall streetscape is unfriendly and uninviting, with very little vegetation, open space or place to linger. There are opportunities encourage pedestrian activity by enhancing the connection between store fronts and the pedestrian realm.

Multiple vehicular lanes dominate the main streets while the secondary streets provide inadequate sidewalks, making them uncomfortable and unsafe for pedestrians. By creating a place that is less dominated by vehicular traffic would create a more pleasant atmosphere, encourage visitors and create a better atmosphere for residents and business owners.

Pedestrian movement competes with the dominating vehicular traffic within the neighborhood. Currently, pedestrians are forced to walk along barren and uncomfortable sidewalks. There are opportunities here to create pedestrians routes that move independently of the vehicular streets for safe and comfortable circulation throughout the district.

There is a lack of identifiable elements or distinctive features in the neighborhood. Aside from store signs, there is little to distinguish the unique heritage and culture of the Vietnamese-American residents and businesses owners. There are opportunities to enhance the unique identity and create a strong image within the district that is rooted in the Vietnamese culture.



Among many suggestions, participants called for the preservation of cultural jewels already thriving in the district. Successful restaurants, markets, and specialty stores help to keep this Vietnamese character strong. On the other hand, there was a clear consensus that, at the moment, there is a lack of space for the pedestrian, with priority being given to automobiles driving down busy thoroughfares like Jackson St or 12th Avenue. Participants expressed the desire for more open space to be used for various events, more pedestrian friendly streetscapes, as well as a central cultural focal point for the community, where Vietnamese culture and commerce can be celebrated and practiced.

On Monday, the 22nd of October, 2007 a community design workshop was held to address public opinion on the future development and identity of Little Saigon. The design team of Atelier Dreiseitl, along with The Seattle Department of Planning and Development and the Vietnamese American Economic Development Association (VAEDA), who has already been focusing on the future planning of the greater south downtown area in the "Livable South Downtown" Report, organized and conducted this event.

The response which was experienced for this first workshop indicates a strong desire within the Vietnamese and Seattle community to preserve and strengthen Little Saigon's unique cultural character within the district, as well as its place as an International District member and of the City of Seattle. During this 2.5 hour evening session, community member groups were formed and asked to assess the current situation within Little Saigon and what should be preserved or changed, and then to envision the district 25 years into the future.



Preserve and strengthen the unique cultural character

What is your vision of Little Saigon for the future (Business, Cultural, Personal)?

- "24 hour thriving destination, smaller scale, lively street culture"
- "Outdoor gathering spaces, informative/educational (culture and history) spaces"
- "A vibrant community that has co-existed for decades through business and residents"
- "Vietnamese Cultural & Community Center for festivals and community events"
- "I hope Little Saigon can keep its diversity and contribute to the prosperity and diversity of our beloved Seattle"



What 5 things do you feel should be left the same within the district?

- "Character and integrity of Vietnamese community"
- "Vitality of local businesses"
- "Lunar celebrations"
- "History"
- "Pop and Mom character – keep small"

What 5 things would you do to make Little Saigon a better place?

- "More pedestrian friendly"
- "Increase cultural identity, create a sense of belonging"
- "Park space, open public space"
- "Residences for the community"
- "Commitment to current Vietnamese owned organizations and businesses"

Workshop Questionnaire Responses

For what reason do you come to Little Saigon (Business, Shopping, Resident)?

- "Restaurants & Groceries"
- "To shop and to connect to my culture"
- "Business"
- "Social reasons and community gathering"
- "Shopping, as a community member, and for food"

Why do you think people usually visit the Little Saigon district?

- "For Vietnamese, shopping and socializing. For non-Vietnamese, shopping and experience something different"
- "To buy groceries and visit restaurants"
- "Eating, family, community"
- "Wedding events and little shops"
- "Culture - unique community of Vietnamese in the Seattle/Northwest Region"



Commitment to current Vietnamese owned organizations and businesses

PHILOSOPHY FOR THE FUTURE

The „Livable South Downtown“ study, a current report created by the Seattle Department of Planning & Development for the entire downtown area of which Little Saigon is a part, chose to base its urban design approach on the truth that in order to create a sustainable, active south downtown “public and private sectors must work together.” This mission statement goes further by saying, “Urban design planning for Livable South Downtown is based on public and private sectors sharing a common vision for the city. Public and private working together to maximize community life and minimize environmental impact by creating, restoring and sustaining public spaces, buildings, green infrastructure and economic viability. All of these factors contribute to a livable community, creating a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts.”

The philosophy behind the work done for this report is also based in this public/private partnership. Little Saigon is a bustling Vietnamese American neighborhood near downtown Seattle. Although it is located in the middle of an American urban metropolis, and is completely open to its many influences, it strongly maintains its unique Vietnamese character through an active and robust business and less prominent residential community.

In the future, as more and more are attracted to live in downtown Seattle, this international enclave will become an ever more valuable and intriguing piece of the downtown scene. Cultural diversity makes cities the rich and colorful places that they are. Little Saigon, with its location near the center of an expanding city, will also grow in size and visibility, and face outside challenges in its efforts to maintain its Vietnamese character.



Public and private sectors must work together

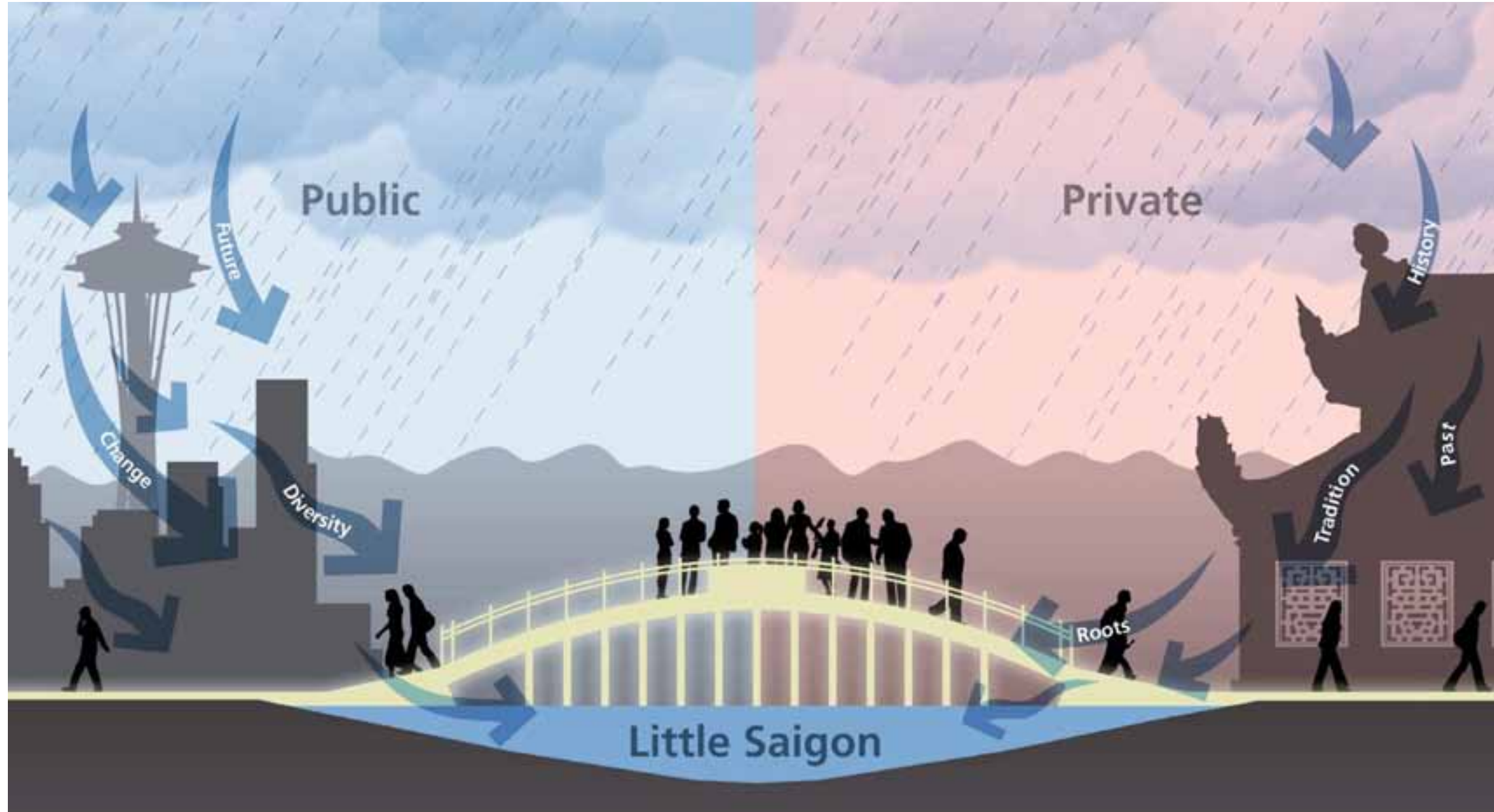


During this process, a mixing of ideas, customs, practices between the more **public, city-scale** Seattle and more **private, human-scale** ‘Vietnamese American community’ both strengthens the presence and identity of Little Saigon as well as enrich the overall urban life of Seattle.

Both sides have valuable qualities to offer. Together they will help form tomorrow’s Little Saigon.

Public, City-scale:
Future, Change, Diversity, Integration

Private, Human-scale
Roots, tradition, past, history



Sustainable stormwater management celebrates the cultural and environmental web

Water is a critical resource for all members of the Seattle community and a connecting universal element crossing neighborhoods, districts, and cultures.

From the point a rain drop hits a rooftop at 12th and Jackson, it must first cross through neighboring districts before it flows into the Puget Sound. Currently, the conveyance method is mostly through a pipe under the ground, hidden from view and disconnected from the communities that sit above it. Instead of hiding this connected flow of water through neighborhoods, sustainable stormwater management, which keeps stormwater on the surface and when possible allows infiltration to ground water where it falls, can become a practice that celebrates this cultural and environmental web comprising Little Saigon and Seattle.

By bringing the system to the surface, water can flow through public and private spaces and help to visually bridge the gap that currently divides these uses. Through a single need for natural resources and the desire to preserve and protect them, the people of South Downtown with their differing traditions and roots can be connected through a unified vision to embrace changes for the future while keeping a firm grasp on the deeply embedded culture and history of the people that live, work and visit Little Saigon and the neighboring communities within the district of South Downtown.

In response to the suggestions of community members voiced during the design workshop, and consideration of Seattle's future zoning and development vision, as well as keeping in mind the basic guiding philosophical idea of joining private and public, the following project goals have been divided into 2 categories; City-scale and Human-scale. Realizing both will promote the internal well being of the Little Saigon community as well as a strong connection to surrounding Seattle.



City Scale

- 1) Design feasible solutions that can be realized gradually
- 2) During design and implementation, strive for a strong public/private partnership
- 3) Find innovative solutions that together realize an outstanding overall future vision
- 4) Plan Little Saigon to become a pilot project for Urban Ecology
- 5) Establish Little Saigon as regional and national attraction

Human Scale

- 1) Create a pedestrian-friendly environment
- 2) Strengthen the Vietnamese identity of Little Saigon
- 3) Implement an urban pattern that promotes small business
- 4) Create vibrant urban nodes as catalysts of activity and movement
- 5) Design animated and functional public spaces as open forums of community and cultural expression

Promote the well being of the Little Saigon community

C O N C E P T U A L A P P R O A C H

In the future, as Seattle grows outwards from its central downtown, impacting adjacent neighborhoods, how Little Saigon connects to its surroundings will become more and more important. Public amenities like parks, hospitals, community centers, pea patches, and the network of public transportation routes servicing these locations will allow the use and enjoyment of the downtown area not only by vehicles but pedestrians walking and riding.

Little Saigon is not only a unique district unto itself, but also an intersection between many others, in addition to the downtown area. Important arterial streets like Jackson, Rainier, and 12th cross Little Saigon, connecting to nearby Chinatown and First Hill as well as more outlying areas. Focusing on the movement of people on foot and with mass-transit within this network, and ensuring that there are means to travel as well as destinations to travel to will be critical to the vitality of Little Saigon in the future.



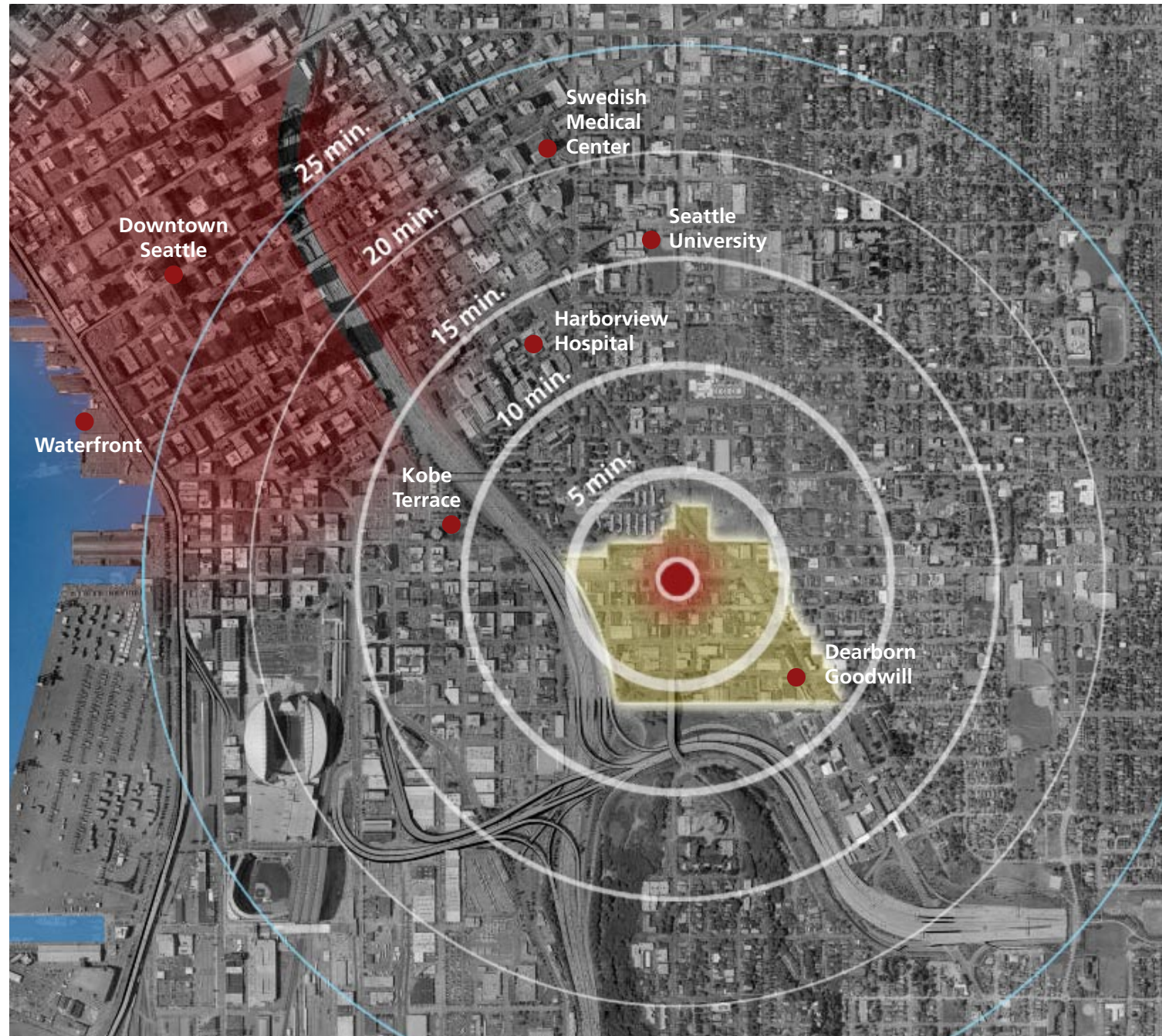
Strengthen the existing character of Little Saigon while addressing future projected growth



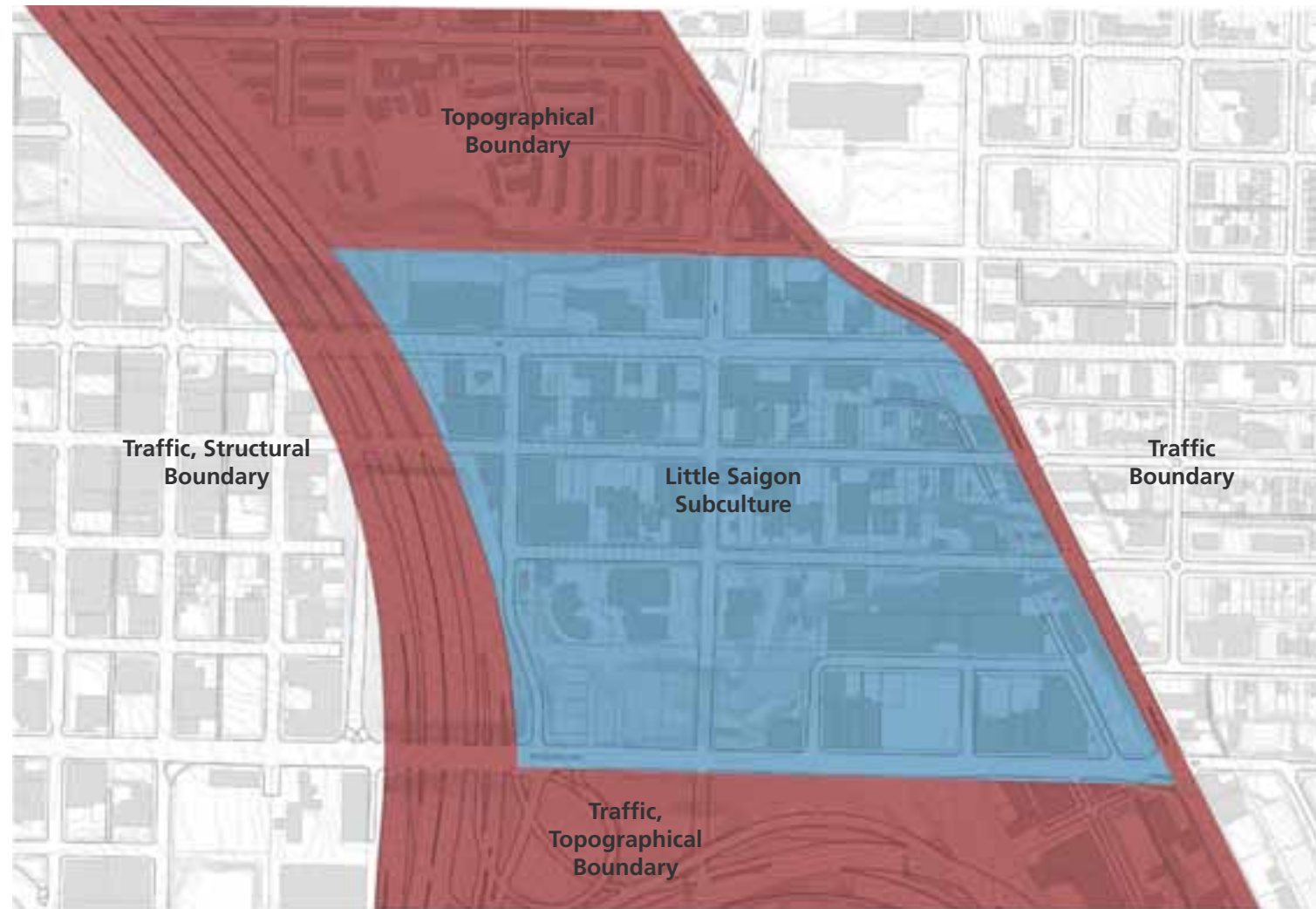
Currently there is a strong presence of small Vietnamese owned businesses within Little Saigon. The future development vision for Little Saigon increases residential development to compliment this daytime activity. With an increase of people living within the district, the demand for public space, cultural destinations which are so important to Little Saigon's Vietnamese identity, and a network of walking, riding and public transit routes, connecting these destinations will also hopefully increase.

Strengthen the existing character of Little Saigon while addressing future projected growth

Little Saigon is situated to the southeast of the main downtown core, east of the sports arenas and near many services such as Kobe Terrace, Harborview Hospital, Swedish Medical Center and the Seattle University. All of these things can be reached in 30 minutes or less on foot. The district sits in a very good spot to be close to all the amenities of a major city yet it can still maintain a smaller community feel.



Strengthen the existing character of Little Saigon while addressing future projected growth



The future vision for Little Saigon has already begun to take shape through much analysis and investigation performed for the Department of Planning & Development's (DPD) Livable South Downtown report as well as in several other works by hired consultants. This combined effort has been driven by the idea of continuing to strengthen the existing character of Little Saigon while also addressing future projected growth.

This idea will take shape in the gradual redevelopment of Little Saigon's building structure. To realize this vision of a Little Saigon that maintains and even improves its human-scale, Vietnamese charm, while at the same time, satisfies growth demand's, the DPD has created a development & zoning model which attracts more to live in the district and more life at street level by focusing on mixed-use development.

Within the Little Saigon district, 3 assembled parcels which are each greater than 40,000 sf, will be eligible for a development incentive. This will raise the maximum height of future residential development to 125', but only with the inclusion of public through-block connections, which become open spaces critically important to a people-friendly urban neighborhood.

In order to realize the goals community members and the City have for Little Saigon, future planning must be undertaken with visionary thinking that pushes the limits of what is thought possible, but which also is based on a practical approach that gradually and patiently progresses with feasible solutions. Without these farsighted dreams strongly rooted in the context of reality, the outstanding results desired may not be achievable.

Striving towards the best, most comprehensive result possible, the following spatial diagrams depict this more radical vision.



North - Topographical Boundary



East - Traffic Boundary



South - Traffic, Structural

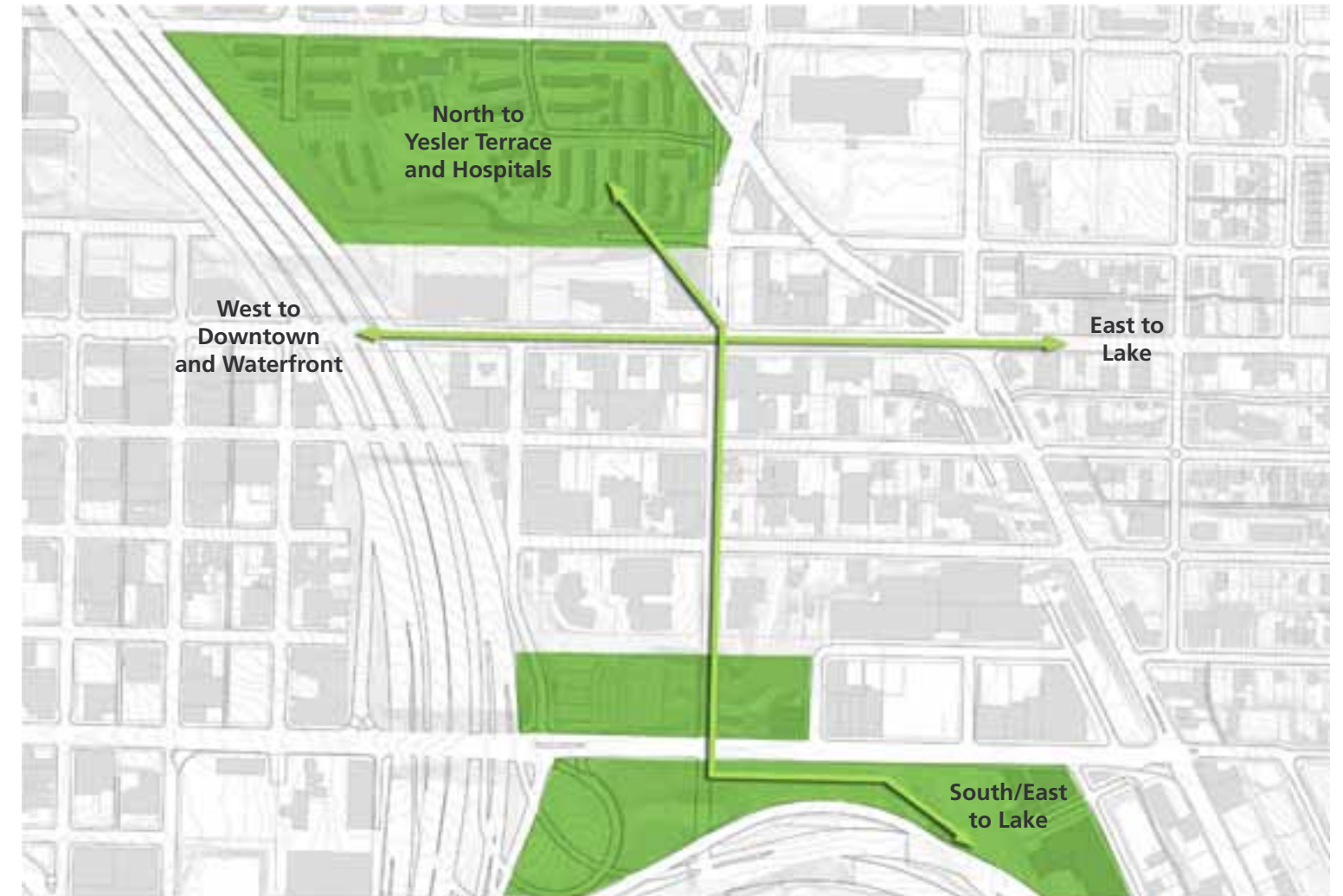


West - Traffic Boundary



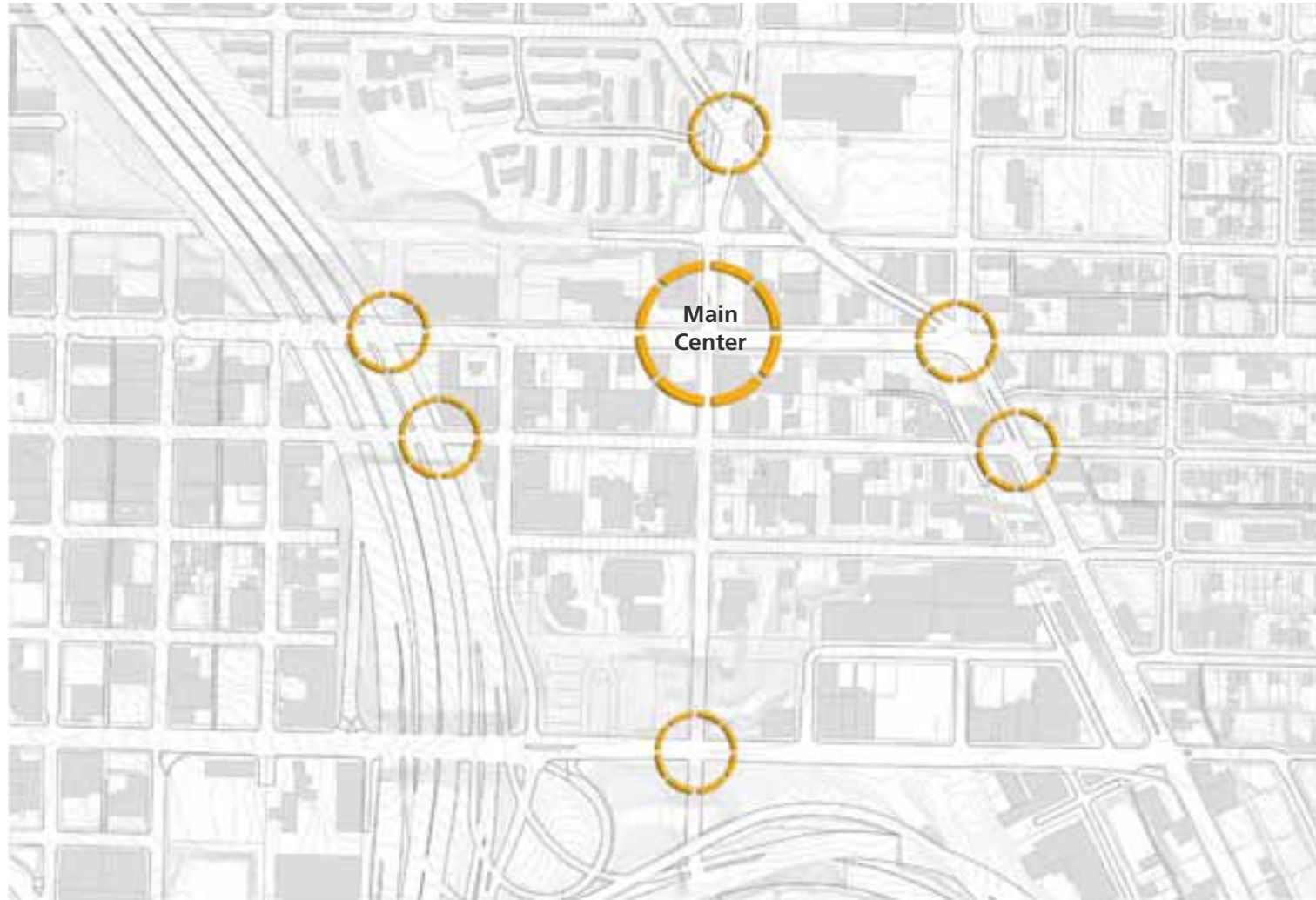
Two main public transit axes cross at 12th & Jackson, supporting this as the location for a prominent civic center and the transportation hub for the district and surrounding neighborhoods.





North/South and East/West corridors strongly connect Little Saigon with the downtown Seattle core, nearby water bodies, residential districts, schools and services.





Gateways are located on the neighborhood boundary at main vehicular and pedestrian routes to signify entrance into Little Saigon. Vietnamese architecture and design could be displayed in many forms at these locations, as distinct buildings or landscape, overhead structures, sculptural elements, and interpretive markers to give clear notice to one crossing into or out Little Saigon. Routes and crossings through gateways should be safe, attractive and balance the needs of the pedestrian and the car. Gateways should have a degree of visual impact and interest for both the car and pedestrian





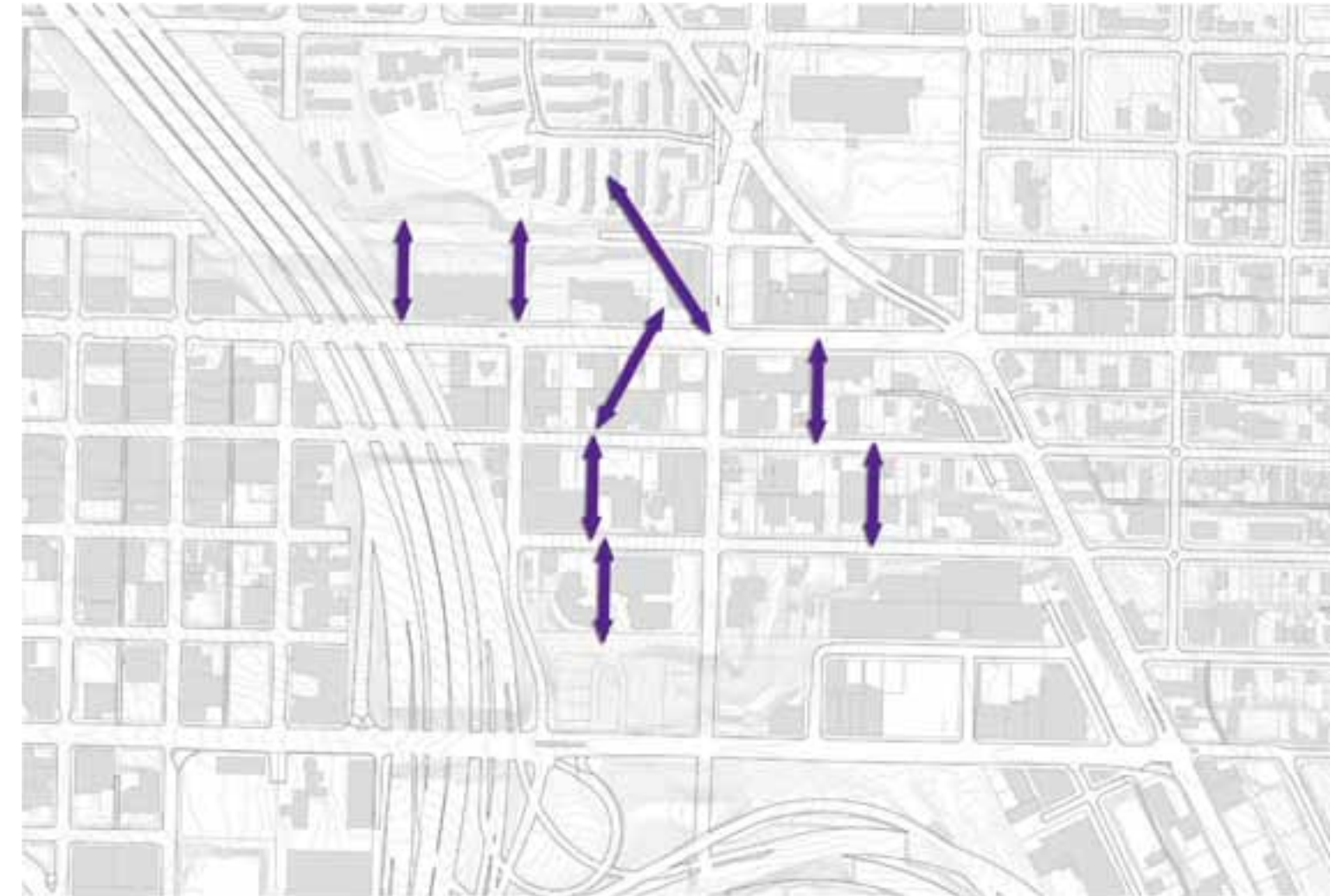
S. Jackson Street & 12th Avenue act as main connectors and locations for transportation and active, dense commercial use. While the pedestrian-friendly areas are concentrated on S. King and S. Weller Streets.





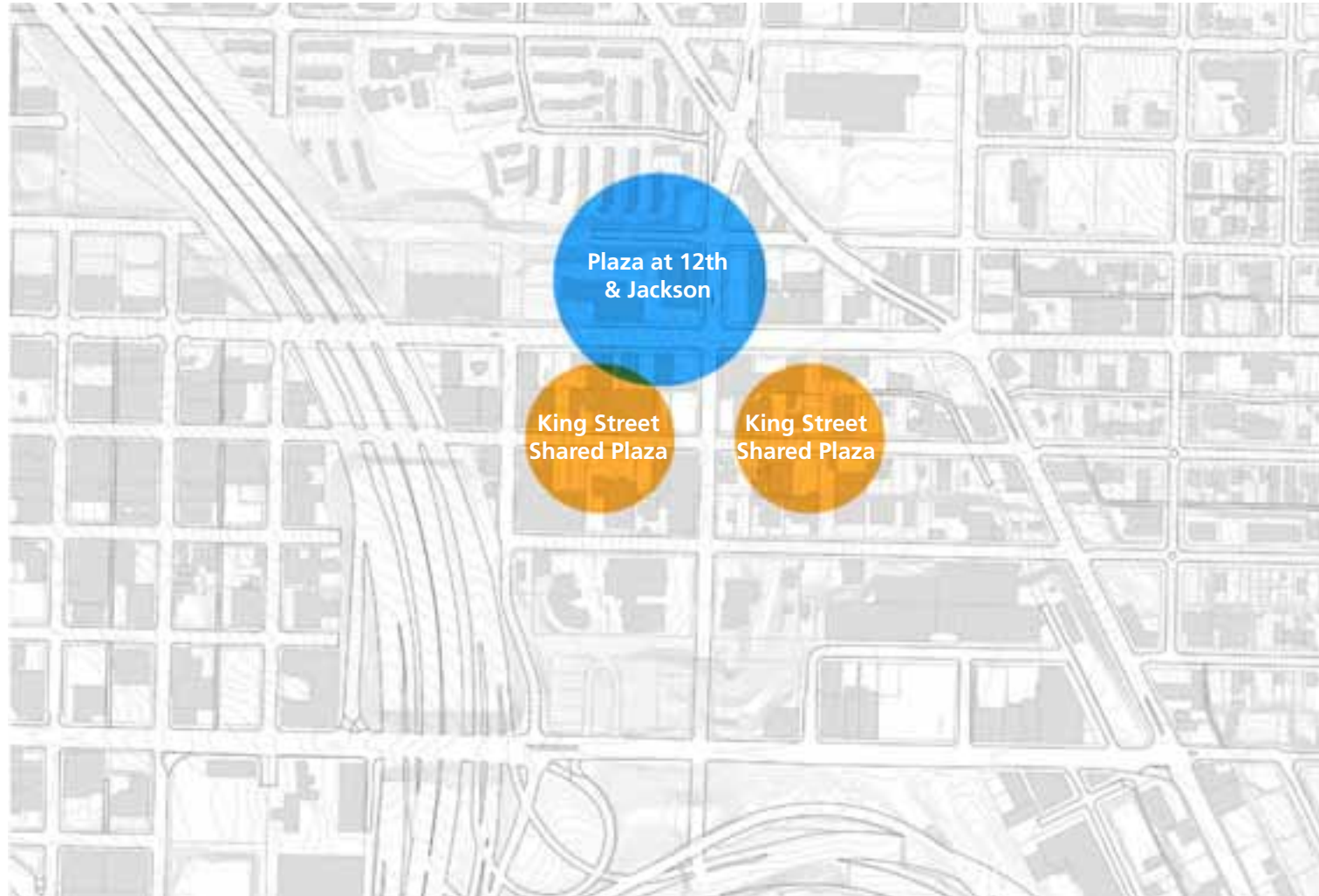
With 12th and Jackson marking the primary vehicular access routes, the Green Streets become pedestrian havens of comfort and convenience. By providing widened sidewalks and narrow, two-lane streets along with streetside parking and a stormwater planter system, the scale is greatly reduced from the commercial corridors.





One important strategy aimed at reducing the scale of Little Saigon's street and open space is the incorporation of public corridors which cross, in a north-south direction, the existing city blocks. These will bring a combination of public open space and walking routes through future mixed-use development as well as help to form stronger connections with adjoining future developments such as the Goodwill/Dearborn development to the south, and Yesler Terrace to the north.





The nodes provide needed center for public life, places to go to see others and to be seen. The Main Plaza at 12th and Jackson is a place for interchange, activity, expression and commerce. Whereas the Shared Plaza spaces provide pedestrian-friendly areas which strengthen the Vietnamese, small-business character of the neighborhood.



ENRICHING THE GRID

The streets crossing Little Saigon form a grid of roadways that is typical of many large American cities. For the automobile, this system allows for easy travel. But, if too much priority is given to cars, with wide multi-laned streets and narrow sidewalks, a person walking along these same streets most likely would feel squeezed and uninvited to linger.



As shown here in New York City, the typical American grid provides an uneasy pedestrian atmosphere with multi-lane streets and narrow sidewalks



Paris, France



Barcelona, Spain



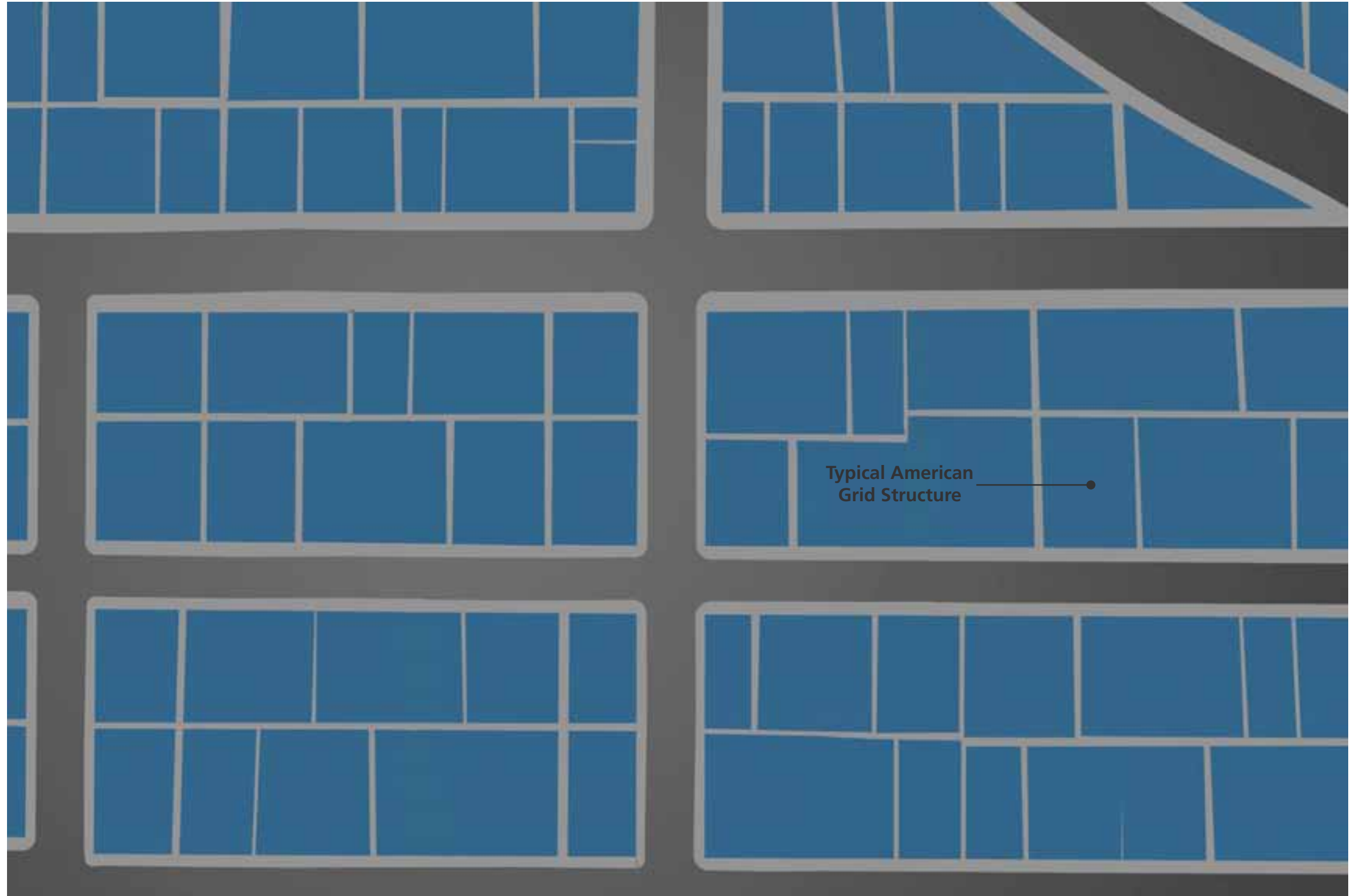
Saigon, Vietnam

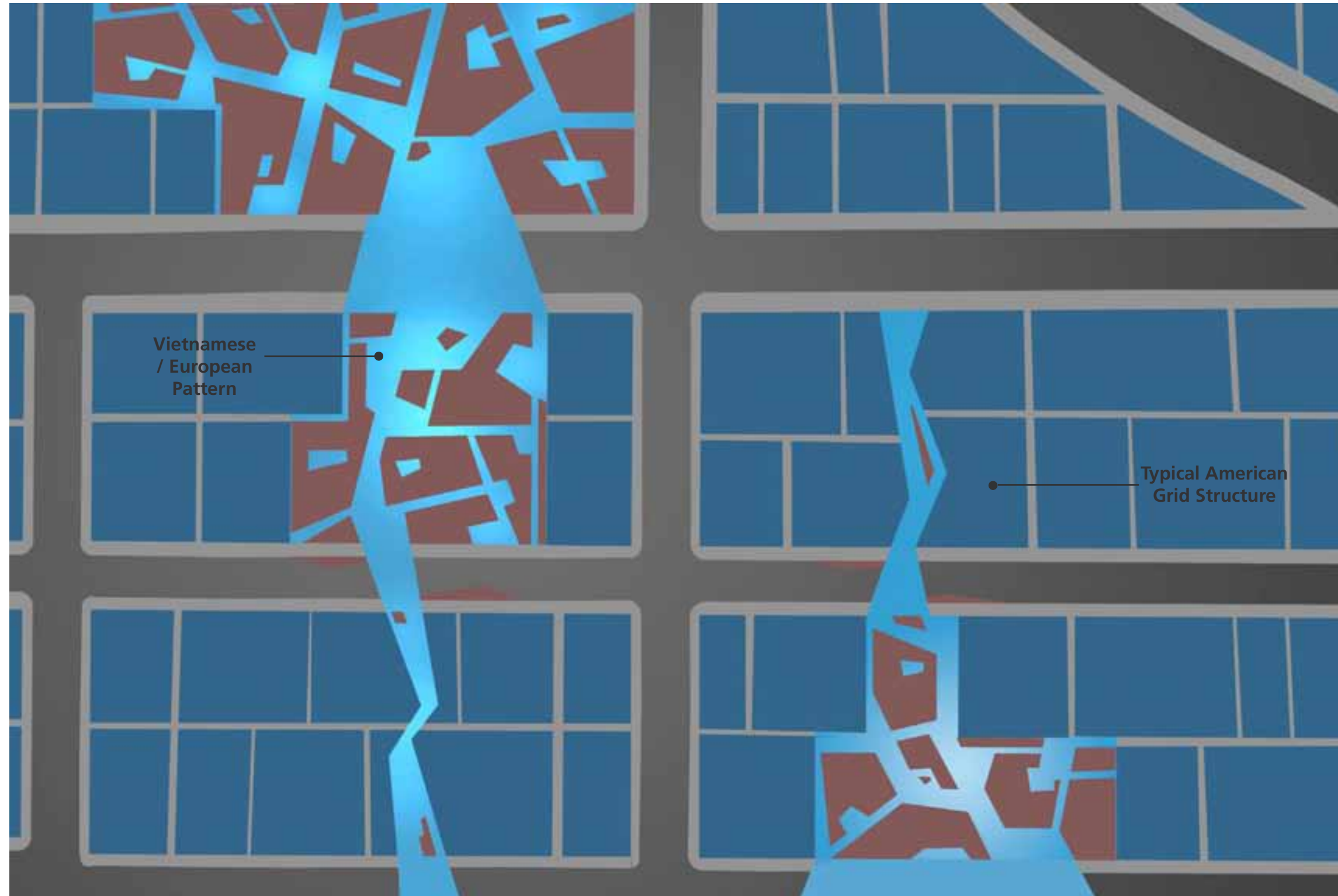
This urban pattern is inspired by cities which grew before the automobile, when walking was still the primary means of travel. Today these are often the most popular city districts, where people can stroll without interruption from streets or cars. Buildings are often no more than 3 or 4 stories and built in seemingly random fashion, creating a playful and mysterious, yet comfortable atmosphere.

In Saigon, Vietnam, pedestrian corridors wind through courtyards and plazas to create a series of human-scale spaces between the busy streets of the city. This structure also can be found in the older cities of Europe, where growth has occurred gradually over hundreds of years. Barcelona is filled with narrow passages that open up to sun-drenched terraces where locals sit for a café or gather with friends.

Although these places have a similar grid structure also to allow for car travel, within each square of the grid can be found a network of pedestrian spaces that provide a human-scale refuge within an often overwhelmingly large city. What Saigon and Barcelona show is the importance of both types of environments to the overall atmosphere of big cities, with the city-scale of the grid complimented by the human-scale within.

Currently, the district of Little Saigon displays the typical street and lot grid of most American cities. While this pattern works very well for vehicular navigation, it presents problems for pedestrians. The overall character is of large blocks that make it difficult for those on foot to travel from one side of the district to the other or even as simply as just one side of a block to the other. This lack of ease creates an atmosphere that is not conducive to pedestrian traffic and a lively streetscape.





This study proposes enriching this grid in a way that maintains the framework of vehicular efficiency, but at the same time creates a more pedestrian friendly environment. Sidewalks become wider, lined with street-trees, benches, lighting, public artwork, and overflowing storefronts offering food and other Vietnamese goods.

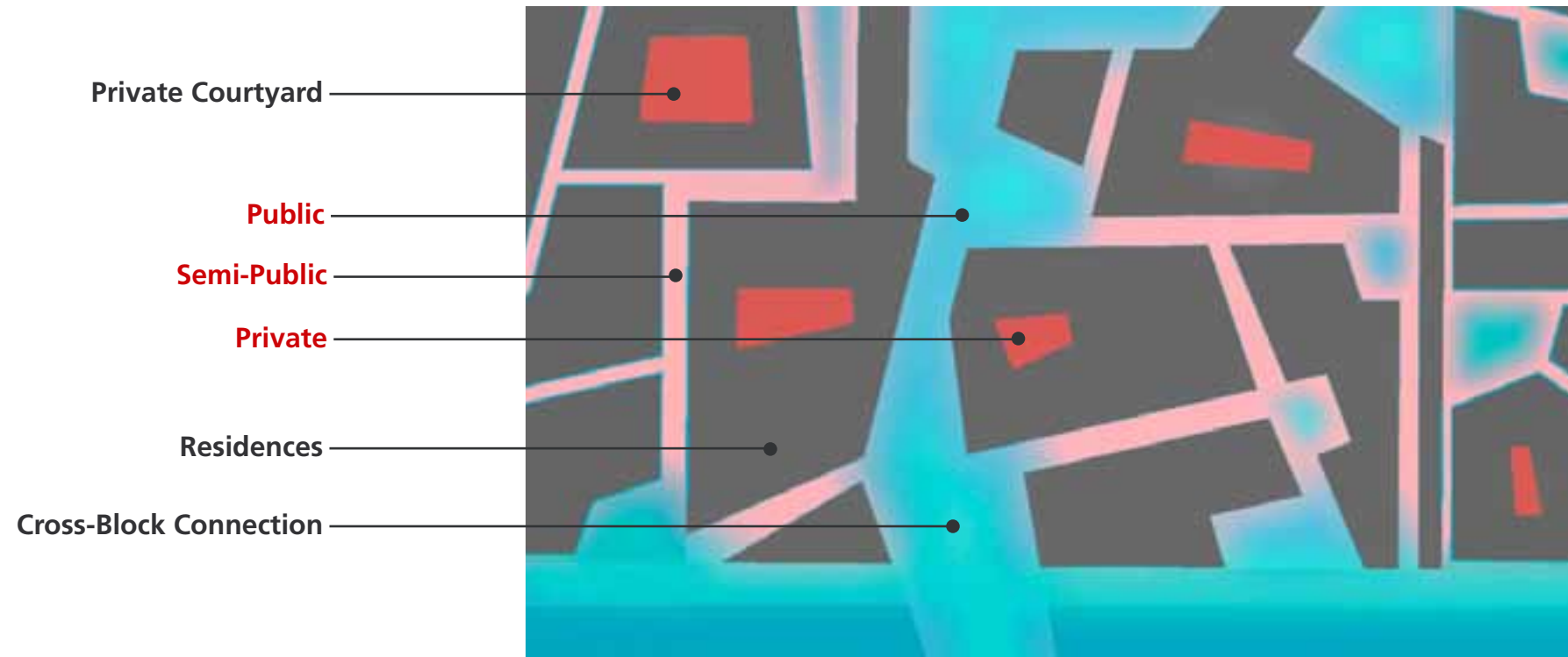
In 3 locations, at 12th and Jackson, between Jackson and King, as well between King and Weller, development incentives offered by the City propose bringing public cross-block connections that cut through entire blocks in return for allowing higher buildings. These pedestrian geared spaces would actually permeate the width of entire blocks and spill into the street, at some locations creating a shared space for people and vehicles, similar to that of Seattle's Pike Place Market.

Inspired by the world most walkable cities like Barcelona, Paris and Saigon, the interior blocks of Little Saigon can grow into a rich, permeable pattern that would allow pedestrians to flow more freely throughout the district and encourage the further growth of the district's local businesses.

This new pattern would create a dynamic environment with lively streets, spaces for both public and private/social gatherings of many scales and for restaurants to spill out, encouraging people to linger. Corridors would also be opened up for people to easily access the local businesses and community marketplaces while creating more areas for smaller shops, cafes and market stalls.

By working only on enhancing the blocks interior but keeping the vehicular-friendly grid structure, the district can appeal to both scales.





Taking a closer look within the permeable grid structure, three types of spaces would evolve.

The streetscape and designated cross-block connection corridors would be **public** spaces with a strong connection between business and pedestrian. These spaces are devoted to both movement on foot as well as containing spaces for anyone to linger, sit on a bench under a tree or enjoy a cup of coffee at their favorite local cafe.

Between the buildings that make up the interior pattern, passageways would grow and form a smaller network of pedestrians pathways. These **semi-public** spaces would allow both residents and visitors to permeate the block. These pathways would be simple ways to reach places like residence buildings or stores. These smaller pathways may or may not span from one side of the block to another and would likely contain little or no direct connection to businesses.

Within the residence building, **private** spaces would take shape in the form of inner courtyards. These enclosed areas would be devoted solely to the residents and could contain anything from a small area with trees and benches, large areas for gatherings or even spots for those living there to have a private garden. But the intent of the space would be to provide a rich environment for those living within the district.



PRIVATE



SEMI-PUBLIC



PUBLIC



FOCUS AREAS

The streetscape is a neighborhood's front yard and says a lot about the community, the people who live there and the history and culture they all share. The street should be full of life and rich in culture and with the right design and detailing it can be a vibrant place that supports a variety of uses and increases cultural identity while maintaining a good ecological balance through careful stormwater planning and landscape design.

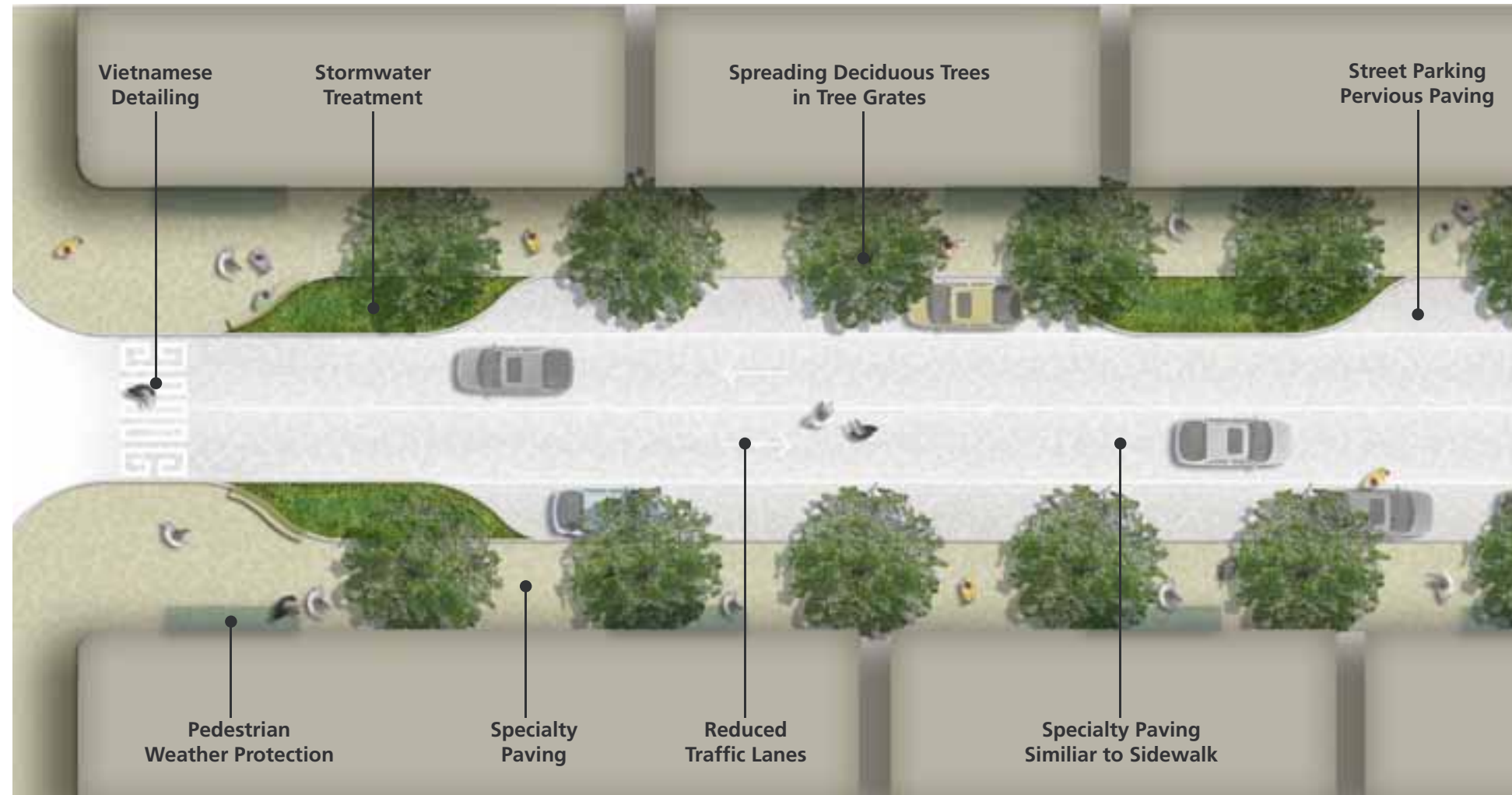
Both S. King and S. Weller Streets have been designated by the City of Seattle to be developed as Green Streets. With a shortage of adequate open space within the boundary of Little Saigon, it is important that the street right-of-ways be used to maximize the amount of open space and create a safe and active pedestrian-scale streetscape. This would also help the economic activity of Little Saigon by creating a welcoming place for both residents and visitors to enjoy the local restaurants, markets and specialty stores that give the neighborhood its unique character.

With enhancing and expanding the public open space and pedestrian circulation as the main objective, both S. King and S. Weller Streets should have a widened sidewalk and eliminate the traditional solid planting strip for tree grates to provide a more versatile and transparent edge between the pedestrian and vehicular zones. This also increases the amount of space that restaurants and markets can spread out into the sidewalk to help further activate the streetscape while maintaining a high-quality environment. Trees should be deciduous and spreading to keep the focus on the street level. Outdoor seating should be used to provide an attractive atmosphere for people to linger. Pedestrian-scale lighting should be used to light the sidewalk and provide a consistent vertical design element with possible incorporated event signage unique to the Little Saigon neighborhood.



Maximize open space and enhance pedestrian circulation while creating a safe and welcoming place for local businesses to grow and thrive





Create a more pedestrian-friendly environment with integrated stormwater management and a focus on providing access to and space for local businesses.

A textural paving pattern influenced by Vietnamese culture, art and architecture will help to provide a visual clue to incoming traffic that they are entering a pedestrian zone by encouraging a decrease in speed and overall awareness. The street and the pedestrian zone should have a unified paving scheme. This increases the sense of a shared space where people are allowed to move about the street in the same manner as that of Pike Place Market or Westlake Center today.

Storm water cleansing and infiltration would be supported through a series of planters that in turn act as traffic calming devices. Planters could be placed at the entrance to each block so that by pinching the street they encourage vehicles to slow down while at the same time providing a safe place for pedestrians to cross near the intersections. The street would contain only one lane of traffic in either direction with parking lanes on both sides of the street. Pervious paving options should be considered in the parking lanes.

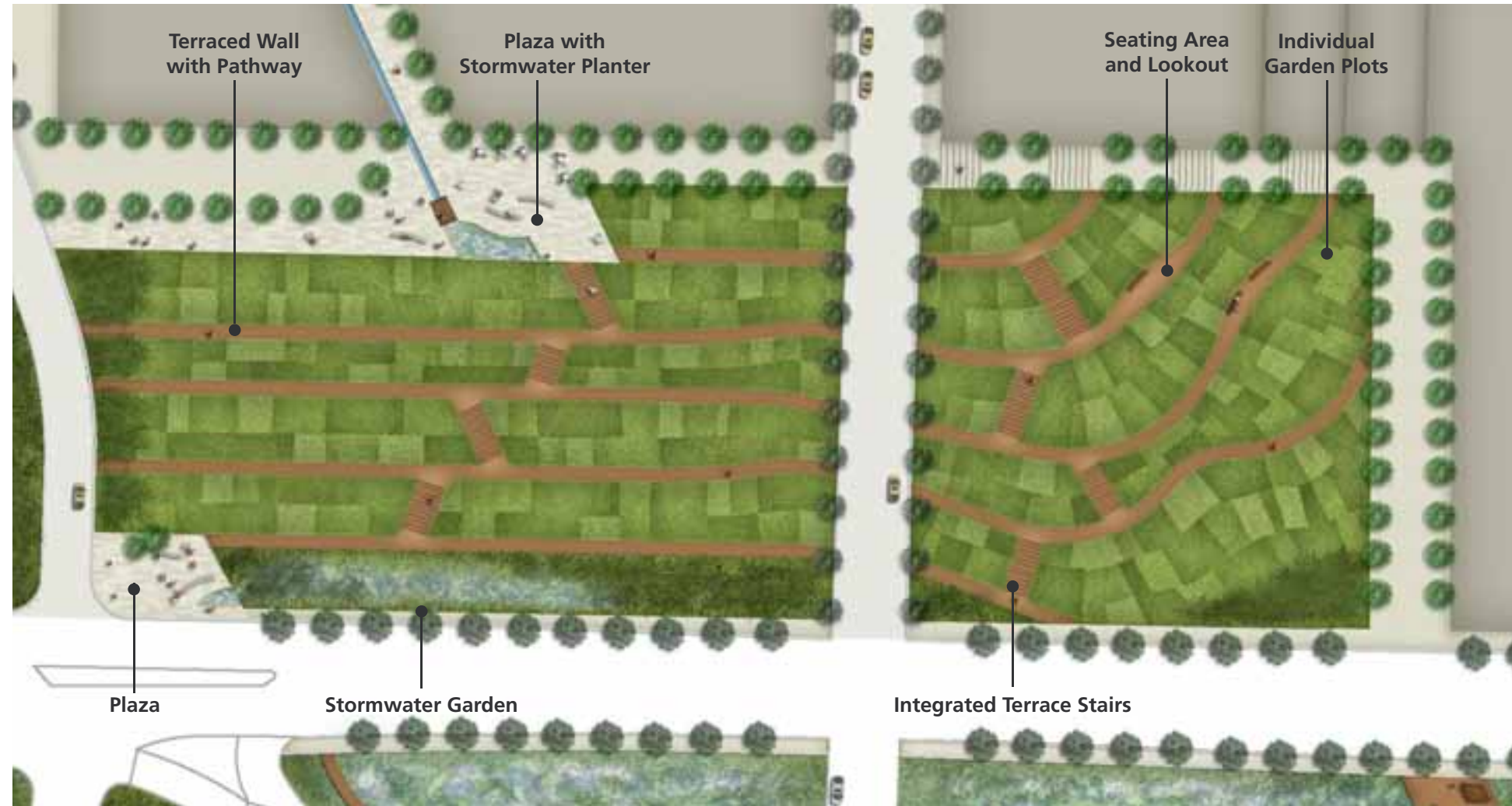
The storm water planters would be designed so that the shape and operation is both artistic and functional while taking into consideration the cultural significance of the surrounding neighborhood. The planters would be filled with plants that are suitable for wet conditions and water filtration in the Seattle area. The planters would take advantage of topography and the natural flow of the stormwater by designing a series of planters to work as a system.

DESIGN FEATURES

- Maximize streetscape for pedestrian use and high-quality open space
- Maintain pedestrian scale by putting focus on ground level
- Active and vibrant streetscape that supports a variety of uses
- Use landscape and built features to enhance and preserve the character of the Vietnamese culture
- Enhanced street functionality with areas for stormwater detention, cleansing and infiltration
- Pervious parking areas
- Special paving through both pedestrian and vehicular zones
- Roadway designed to keep speeds down and maintain low volumes





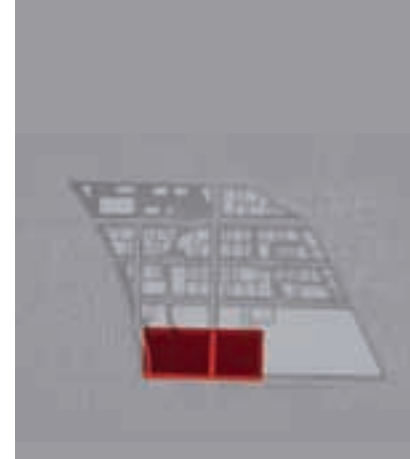


At the south end of the Little Saigon district lies a difficult space with a steep slope. By taking advantage of the steep grades, a terraced community garden would take shape. Reminiscent of the style in which traditional Vietnamese farmers work the land, elegant terraces would hug the steps and provide an attractive garden space.

Culture and need would come together to create a space deeply rooted in Vietnamese traditions but also personal garden space, a much desired amenity in the modern city. Stormwater conveyance and collection would be artfully integrated into the terrace system and then be reused for irrigation.

DESIGN FEATURES

- Community garden plots for Little Saigon residents
- Stormwater detention area along terraced areas
- Interface of culture and ecology in an urban area
- Attractive use of steep, difficult site
- Potential to act as southern gateway







A constructed wetland created to collect the stormwater from the district and provide an amenity for the community

The constructed wetland area south of Dearborn Avenue would collect the stormwater from the entire district. Here the wetland would hold and clean the stormwater as well as provide a park space to the residents and visitors. The wetland could connect with the regional bike trail system as well as contain a winding trail or boardwalk for pedestrians and cyclists to cross through the space. Various platforms to sit and enjoy the urban wilderness would be placed throughout with benches for those to enjoy bird watching or just relaxing.

DESIGN FEATURES

- Large-scale constructed wetland for sustainable stormwater detention/retention
- Important buffer area for urban runoff, which would cleanse stormwater before overflowing, when capacity is exceeded, to city storm/sewer system
- Designed to act as both ecological instrument and nature park within urban area
- Potential exists to incorporate wetland park into future bikeway planned to travel through general area



In the long-term vision for Little Saigon, pedestrian cross-block connections have been proposed between east-west vehicular streets, to allow for easier north-south pedestrian movement. These public open space corridors will offer many benefits to Little Saigon residents as well as surround neighborhoods who wish to access the area by foot. In addition to 2 more intensive connections between Jackson/King and King/Weller where open space and commercial will combine to create a bustling urban destination in itself, other more traditional green corridors will function primarily as connections from street to street.



Enhances the north-south pedestrian movement through the district while strengthening the connection with local businesses





Create a more pedestrian-friendly environment with integrated stormwater management and a focus on providing access to and space for local businesses.

Benefits

- Added public open space
- Mixed-use development with small business space at ground level and residences above
- A more pedestrian friendly neighborhood environment
- Walking routes connecting neighborhood with surrounding developments (Yesler Terrace, Dearborn Goodwill Development)
- Intensive Connections (Jackson to King, King to Weller)
 - Lively pedestrian connection between proposed Market Plaza and Transit Hub to King Street pedestrian core
 - Cafes, restaurants, shops with residential above will create a vibrant human-scale atmosphere
 - A flowing water axis fed by captured stormwater in each cross-block connection will add interest and movement to compliment pedestrian activity.

DESIGN FEATURES

- Additional public open space
- Enhance walkability of the district through safe and easy walking routes
- Integrated stormwater flowing through with the pedestrian movement and connecting the streets
- Cafes, restaurants, shops with residential above to create a vibrant human-scale atmosphere
- Directions connections with pedestrian nodes and plazas within the blocks
- Where the pedestrian areas hit the vehicular zone, a shared space is created making crossing the street safe and easy by giving the pedestrian priority







These spaces provide the feeling of an integrated, multi-use community area which enhances cultural identity and creates a sense of belonging

In areas where pedestrian cross-block connections meet with S. King or S. Weller Street, a special condition occurs combining the street, sidewalk and pedestrian cross-block connections to create what we call a Neighborhood Plaza. This space becomes a hybrid of the Green Street to incorporate features of a Shared Street. The plaza becomes a place for safe and leisurely crossing and the street could even be closed off in these areas for community and cultural events like street fairs and local markets. With inadequate space for neighborhood gatherings, these spaces would become an important part of the community and help to increase the cultural identity and create a sense of belonging among those who visit, work and live in the Little Saigon district.

The Neighborhood Plaza concept pulls some key elements of the Shared Street concept and incorporates them with the cross-block connections to transform portions of the street. These important spaces create the feeling of an integrated, multi-use community area which naturally slows traffic because vehicles feel that they are entering a pedestrian zone. Through careful attention to design details like special paving, the use of lower curbs where possible, addition of benches, pedestrian-scale lighting and planters and expansion of sidewalks, the area can become a lively "plaza". Occidental Mall, Westlake Center and Pike Place Market are good examples within Seattle that have incorporated the concept of a Shared Street.

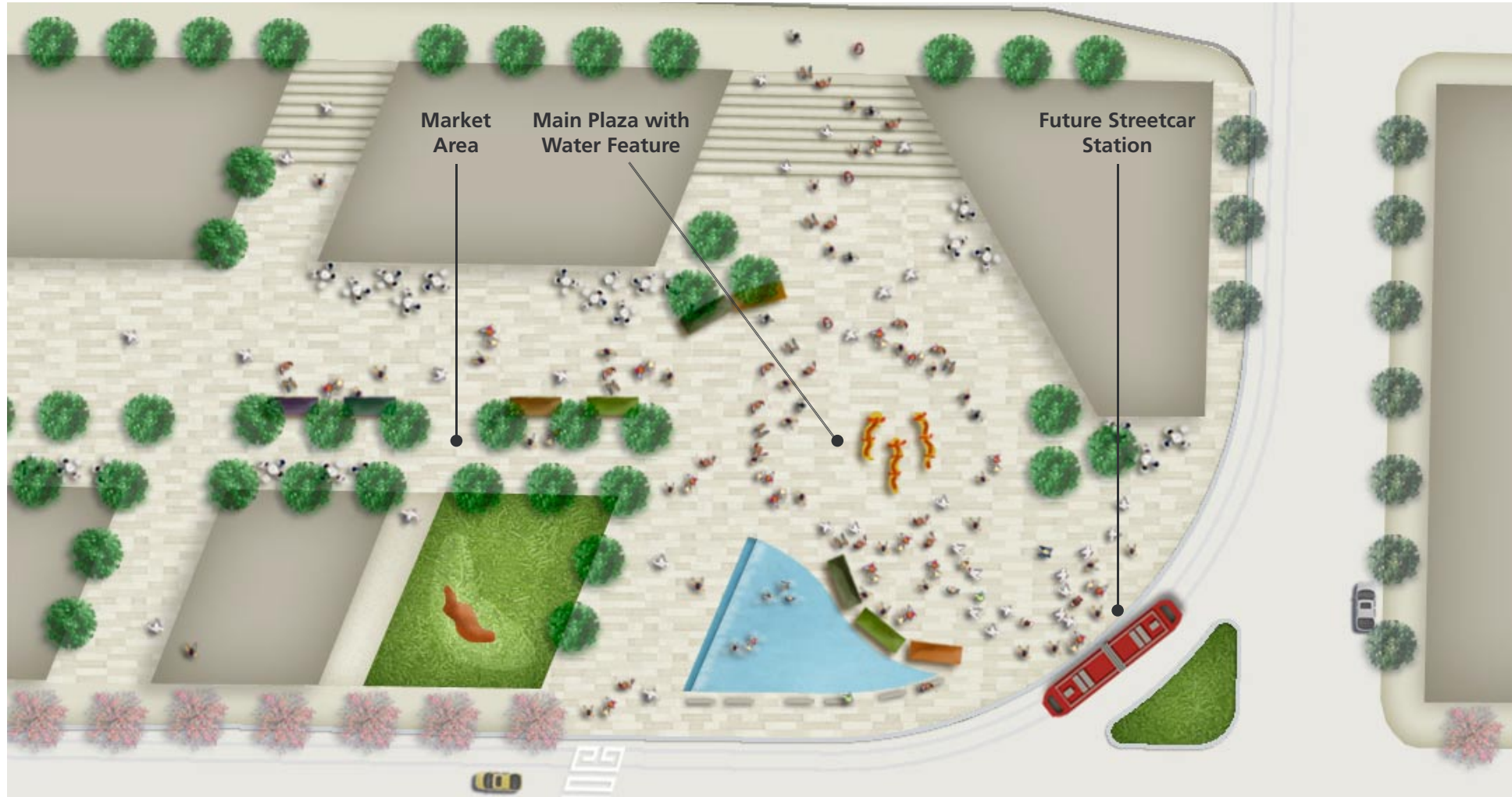
This is also an opportunity to create a pattern that is influenced by Vietnamese culture that can help as a way-finding element through the district. This paving could be more vibrant than that of the entire Green Street to set it apart as a special area, like a carpet that runs down the pedestrian cross-block connections and into the street, leading people safely through the district.

DESIGN FEATURES

- Maximize streetscape use
- Create an active and vibrant open space that supports a variety of uses
- By allowing open space to overtake the street, with accent paving replacing asphalt in the travel lanes, a dynamic shared space is created
- Neighborhood Plaza spaces provides unity, connecting the pedestrian cross-block corridors
- Roadway designed to keep speeds down and maintain low volumes
- Low curbs with bollards used in Neighborhood Plaza space to eliminate elevation difference between zones
- Maintain pedestrian scale with focus on ground level
- Use landscape and built features to enhance and preserve the character of the Vietnamese culture







As the center of culture and commerce, the main plaza at the corner of S. Jackson Street and 12th Avenue would also be the district's transportation hub. A wide open space, in conjunction with the future streetcar stop, would be available for large cultural events, markets, and festivals. Many smaller spaces extending out from the main plaza would feature intimate settings, outdoor seating areas and public art. A dynamic water feature could provide interest for all ages in addition to creating a separation from the busy streets and assist in noise dampening.

DESIGN FEATURES

- Flexible urban space to act as hub for Little Saigon, used for gatherings, markets, events, and mixed-use development
- Potential iconic location for Vietnamese Center for Culture and Commerce
- Important connection point between Little Saigon and Yesler Terrace
- With construction of new Streetcar line and the intersection of existing Metro lines on Jackson and 12th, plaza acts as a transit hub for surrounding neighborhoods.

The plaza is the hub of activity for transit, cultural festivals and community gatherings



I M P L E M E N T A T I O N

Implementation of this vision for Little Saigon will require a collaborative effort between the Little Saigon community, the City of Seattle and contributing consultants. Although immense in scope, if approached with feasible solutions applied gradually, the dream of a pedestrian-orientated, strongly Vietnamese-American, sustainable community can become a reality.

Continuing the open design process practiced by the DPD, consultants, and community members will be key to this mission. The general framework set in this study provides the big ideas that now must be enriched and informed through continued collaboration with community. Only with the contribution and endorsement of this group can a new Little Saigon become a true expression of those who live and work in this place.

Future work phases will closely relate not only to what's happening in Little Saigon but also in the entire South Downtown. When deemed appropriate, further design building from this study's general framework will begin to look at each area in more detail. Keeping in mind the desire to base the overall, visionary, and far-reaching concept on a practical approach which gradually can be realized, two design visions that follow the same framework and build on each other over time have been proposed. After gaining the support from both the private and public sectors, the planning and design stage can begin.



Through continued collaboration with the community and feasible solutions applied gradually, the dream can become a reality



ACTION PLAN

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

Continue design and begin construction on selected projects

ACTION PLAN

- Continue development of urban nodes
- 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 connection under S. Dearborn Street
- Design and develop stormwater retention area on south side of S. Dearborn Street



Continue design and construction of selected projects until completion



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