

DATE: September 23, 2021
TO: Friends of Little Sài Gòn and City of Seattle
FROM: ECONorthwest
WHAT: Little Sài Gòn Project Summary

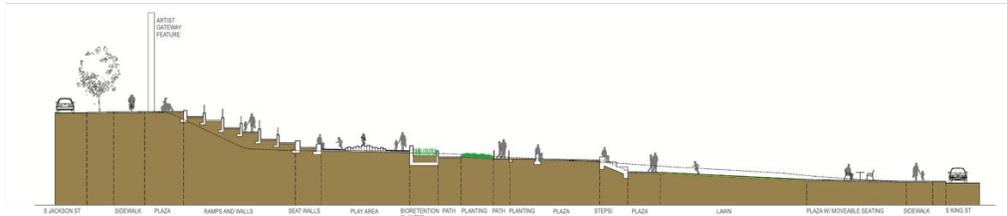
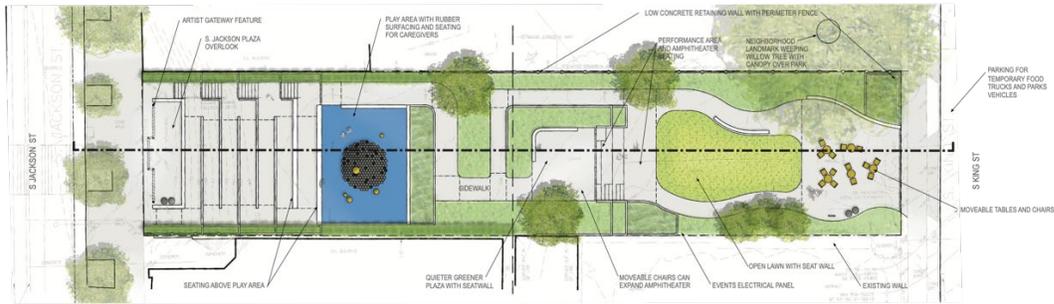
Project Summary

Background

Stretching north of Downtown Seattle, the Little Sài Gòn Neighborhood has become a centralized social, economic, and cultural hub for the Vietnamese and Southeast Asian communities in the greater Puget Sound region. Like other neighborhoods surrounding Downtown Seattle, pressure to substantially redevelop this unique neighborhood persists. Just in the past decade, the Little Sài Gòn Neighborhood has dealt with changes associated with rapid residential growth, loss of cultural resources, and greater competition with on street parking. In fact, around 1,145 new housing units were built in the area only in the last four years and the area is rated as having high risk for displacement. This dynamic urged the establishment of a neighborhood preservation organization referred to as the Friends of Little Sài Gòn (FLS) in 2011. The mission of the FLS is to preserve and enhance Little Saigon's cultural, economic, and historic vitality and they primarily carry this out by facilitating community improvement projects, organizing conversations and events for the community, and through strategic actions/initiatives.



In an effort to create a gathering space for the community, the Seattle Parks and Recreation Department in partnership with FLS is working to provide a park in the Neighborhood at a site that has been used as short-term parking for local businesses within the area. The prospect of losing this parking raised concerns from local businesses about impacts to their business vitality. A collaborative partnership between three City of Seattle departments – Parks and Recreation, the Department of Transportation (DOT), and the Office of Economic Development (OED) – and the FLS formed to help meet the local business and community needs. The City hired ECONorthwest to help them work collaboratively with local businesses to better understand the role that parking plays for a range of different small businesses and to identify possible strategies to pursue moving forward.



CURRENT CONCEPT PLAN AND SECTION
LITTLE SAIGON LANDBANKED SITE PARK PROJECT



Process

This work commenced with research on parking needs and analysis on how parking needs vary for different types of businesses – grocery stores, restaurants/deli, retail, and warehouses. Informed by this background information, the team engaged business stakeholders with two community meetings and interviewed business owners to learn about the range of parking needs for businesses and the associated operational impacts, employee needs, customer needs, and delivery needs. Also, the team interviewed City staff from different departments to understand how the City could help and learn about their concerns and available resources for strategies to help address the loss of parking issues.

Results

The team learned that many customers travel to Little Saigòn by automobile from other parts of the Puget Sound region – Little Saigon is a regional destination for Vietnamese and Southeast Asian communities. In addition, we learned about safety concerns with those walking long distances to parking and about the need for the City to consider parking needs differently for Seattle neighborhoods defined as a cultural anchor, particularly those neighborhoods bearing the burden of population growth. The team compiled possible actions, shaped by input, analysis, and background research. These actions are divided into four categories: short-term, medium-term, long-term, and ongoing. In each category, the responsible party (or parties) for delivering the action is identified along with a feasibility rating (low, medium, high), and an estimate of funding needs was provided to help inform prioritization and the implementation of actions. A total of 25 possible actions were identified that the City, business stakeholders, and community groups can take to support business vitality and economic recovery. The menu of actions was shared with business stakeholders and the community to garner additional

feedback. People added their thoughts to posters depicting the actions on display at the 2021 Celebrate Little Saigon event and for two weeks at Little Saigon Creative (see pictures below). The team is grateful for everyone that provided their input for this project.

Possible Actions

From the 25 possible actions, eight are short-term actions, six are mid-term actions, seven are long-term actions, and three are ongoing actions. A select few of the short and mid-term actions that received positive feedback are described below.

Short-Term Actions

- Expand time-limited parking (e.g., 2 hour parking), SDOT, high feasibility and low-cost
- Install bike parking on King Street, SDOT, high feasibility and low-cost, though more discussions are needed
- Pilot ORCA program for essential workers/employees, SDOT. **This project is underway already!**
- Evaluate Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies, (e.g., install better lighting or transit shelter features); SDOT, OED, and FLS would collaborate; high feasibility and medium-cost
- Provide local private/public parking info (map, parking costs, marketing material to help customers find off-street parking); SDOT, OED, and FLS would collaborate; high feasibility and low cost

Short-Term Action Options (can be completed within a year, high to medium feasibility, less complex process, no to limited new funding needed)	Who?	Feasibility Rating, Funding	Priority Rating	Comments
1. Expand time-limited parking (e.g. 2 hour parking)	SDOT	High, \$		
2. Install bike parking on King Street (esp. in no parking areas)	SDOT	High, \$		
3. Pilot ORCA program for essential workers/employees (underway)	SDOT, OED, Community Partner	Medium, staff time		partially done ✓
4. Provide local private/public parking info (map, parking costs, marketing material to help customers find off-street parking)	SDOT, OED, Community Partner	High, staff time		
5. Encourage/incent customers that can walk or take transit to do this (foldable grocery carts)	SDOT, Businesses	Medium, \$		feasible, discuss with FLS, SDOT, BLS
6. Businesses ask their employees to park further (such as - east of Rainier Ave)	Businesses	High, time		
7. Businesses provide employees carpool incentives	SDOT, Businesses	Medium, \$		
8. Evaluate Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies, (e.g., install better lighting or transit shelter features)	SDOT, OED, Community Partner	High, \$\$		

Mid-Term Actions

- Support improved access to rickshaws or other pedicab transportation options in the area; SDOT, OED, and FLS would collaborate; medium feasibility and cost
- Establish a City sponsored ORCA card for neighborhood residents and employees (broader than pilot program for essential workers/employees), SDOT and OED would collaborate, medium feasibility and cost
- Support strategies identified in the CPTED evaluation; SDOT and OED would collaborate; medium feasibility and low-cost

Mid-Term Action Options (can be completed in 2 to 5 years or should be delayed after short-term actions, requires more process, funding will be required)	Who?	Feasibility Rating, Funding	Priority Rating	Comments
1. If businesses willing to share off-street parking, establish shared hours to balance peak times	Businesses, Neighborhood	Medium, \$		
2. Establish a Commute Trip Reduction program for neighborhood employees (transportation demand management strategies, flex car access)	SDOT, Neighborhood	Medium, \$\$		
3. Establish a City sponsored ORCA card for neighborhood residents and employees (broader)	SDOT, OED	Medium, \$\$		
4. Organize a vanpool for employees	SDOT, Metro	High, \$		provide support of business, make carpooling more attractive
5. Support rickshaws or other pedicab transportation options to be available in the area	Neighborhood, SDOT, OED	Medium, \$\$		
6. Support strategies identified in Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) evaluation	SDOT, OED	Medium, \$		

Additional prioritization and action plan refinement is expected. This project is a great example of an effective cross-departmental collaboration working with the community to plan how to make meaningful action to help address a complex issue. To find out more about the proposed strategies and this project, please contact: the FLS at info@flsseattle.org and visit: www.flsseattle.org