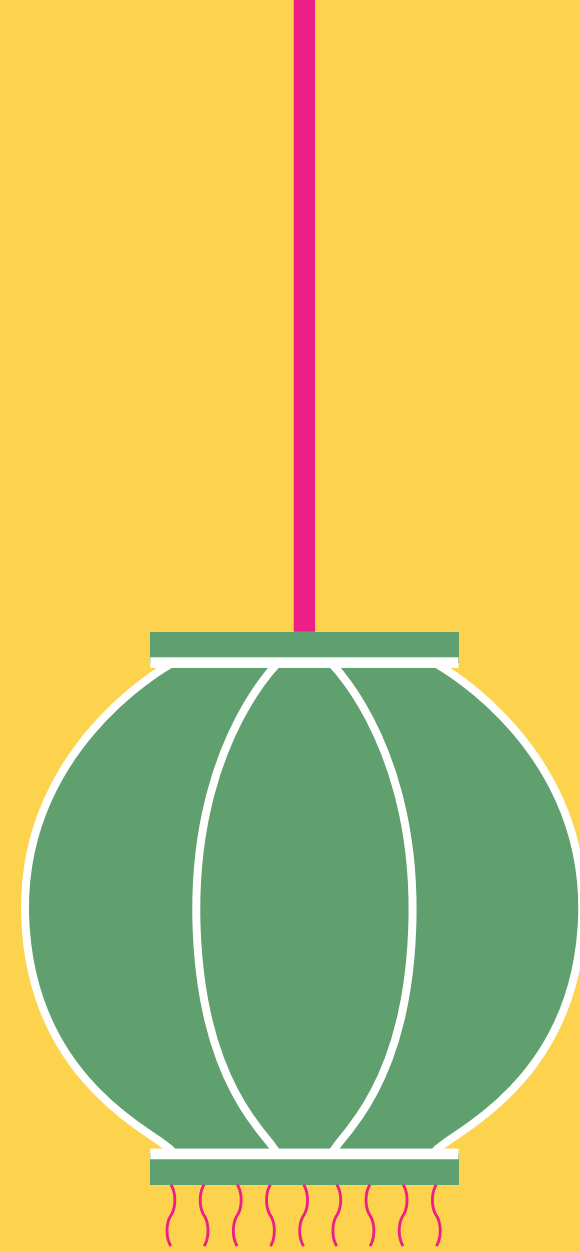


# Little Saigon

BLUEPRINT FOR INVESTMENT

MAY 2021



PREPARED BY

streetsense.



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Streetsense is an experience-focused strategy and design collective that creates brands people love and places people love to be. Powered by in-depth insights and an interdisciplinary approach, we enhance brands and places, drive consumer demand, and foster community.

Information conveyed, data gathered and analyzed, and recommendations made within this report are intended to provide information in regard to the subject matter covered. The content presented and conclusions reached are, on the date presented, believed to be an accurate representation of facts and conditions.

## Blueprint for Investment

### What is it?

The Little Saigon Blueprint for Investment is a **community development effort** commissioned by the City of Westminster (the Client) in 2020 to develop a suite of place-based, implementable strategies to boost the economic vitality and quality of place of Little Saigon.

The study, conducted by Streetsense (the Consultant Team), is focused on building upon existing district assets and will aim to identify key improvements to retain and attract diverse businesses and visitors to Little Saigon.

The district improvements fall under the following categories, which were closely refined with input from community stakeholders during a robust engagement process.

1. Business Retention and Attraction
2. Redevelopment (Public Realm)
3. Redevelopment (Private Realm)
4. District Promotion and Marketing
5. Organizational Capacity

### Why do we need it?

This document serves to establish a unified vision for Little Saigon and to guide the investment strategy of the City and its partners over the next few years as Westminster continues to enhance attractiveness for doing business and build upon its unique offerings while preserving its history and cultural diversity on Bolsa Avenue.

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**Community development is defined as a “process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems.”<sup>2</sup>**

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<sup>2</sup> “Community Development,” *The United Nations Terminology Database (UNTERM)*, United Nations. Accessed January 12, 2021, //www.unterm.un.org/.

## Why is the Little Saigon Blueprint for Investment critical to post-recovery efforts?

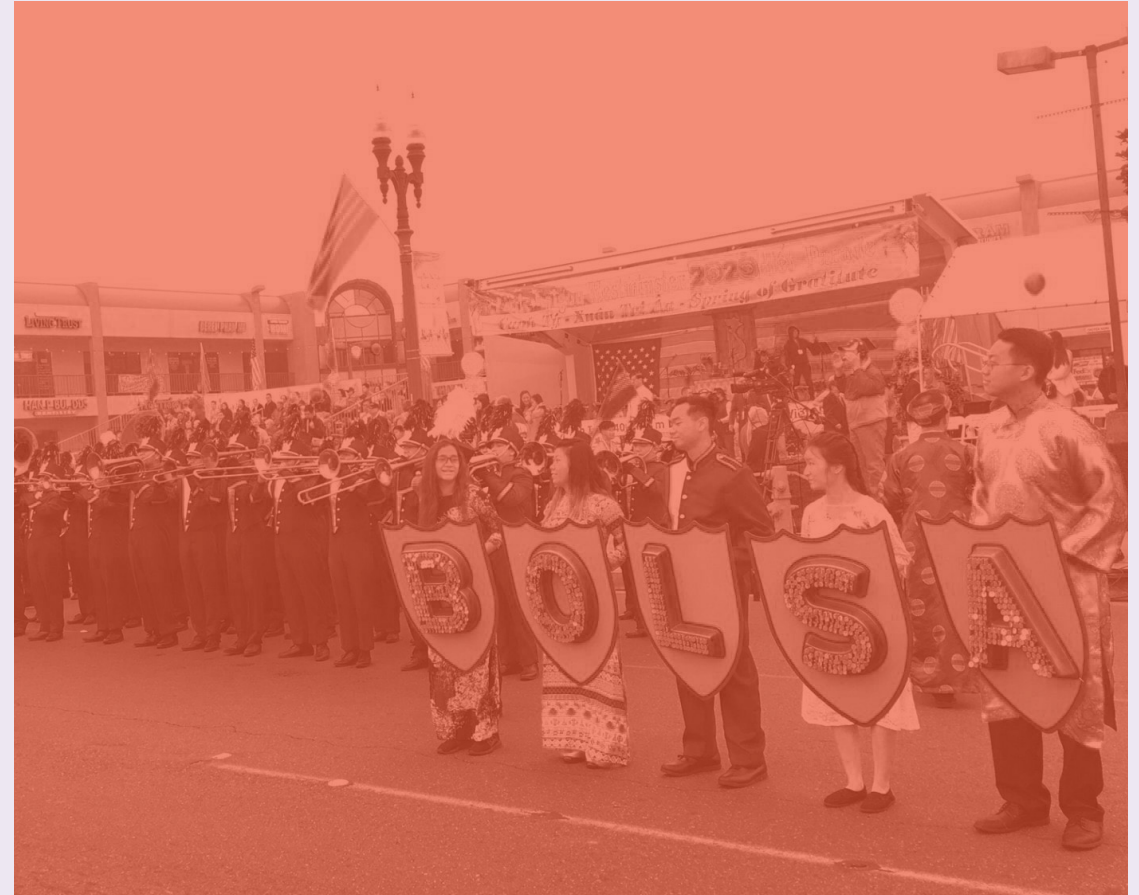
This report documents some consequential realities facing Little Saigon. At this time, many properties appear dated or run down. Older businesses have been slow to adapt to changes in the retail landscape, most notably with implementation of technology from credit card processing to claiming their own businesses on location services like Google Maps or review platforms like Yelp. A lack of cohesive forward motion has allowed competitive districts in Garden Grove and Fountain Valley to strengthen their market presence, while sales tax revenues from Little Saigon have consistently decreased over the last ten years. Moreover, younger Vietnamese generations tend to view the district as a place of their parents and grandparents, and not somewhere they seek out for their own experiences.

The Covid-19 pandemic has only exacerbated many of these challenges. Businesses that were already missing or poorly equipped with an online presence found themselves unable to pivot to online ordering and curbside pick-up opportunities. As tenants struggled to make rent, property owners were even less incentivized to invest in their

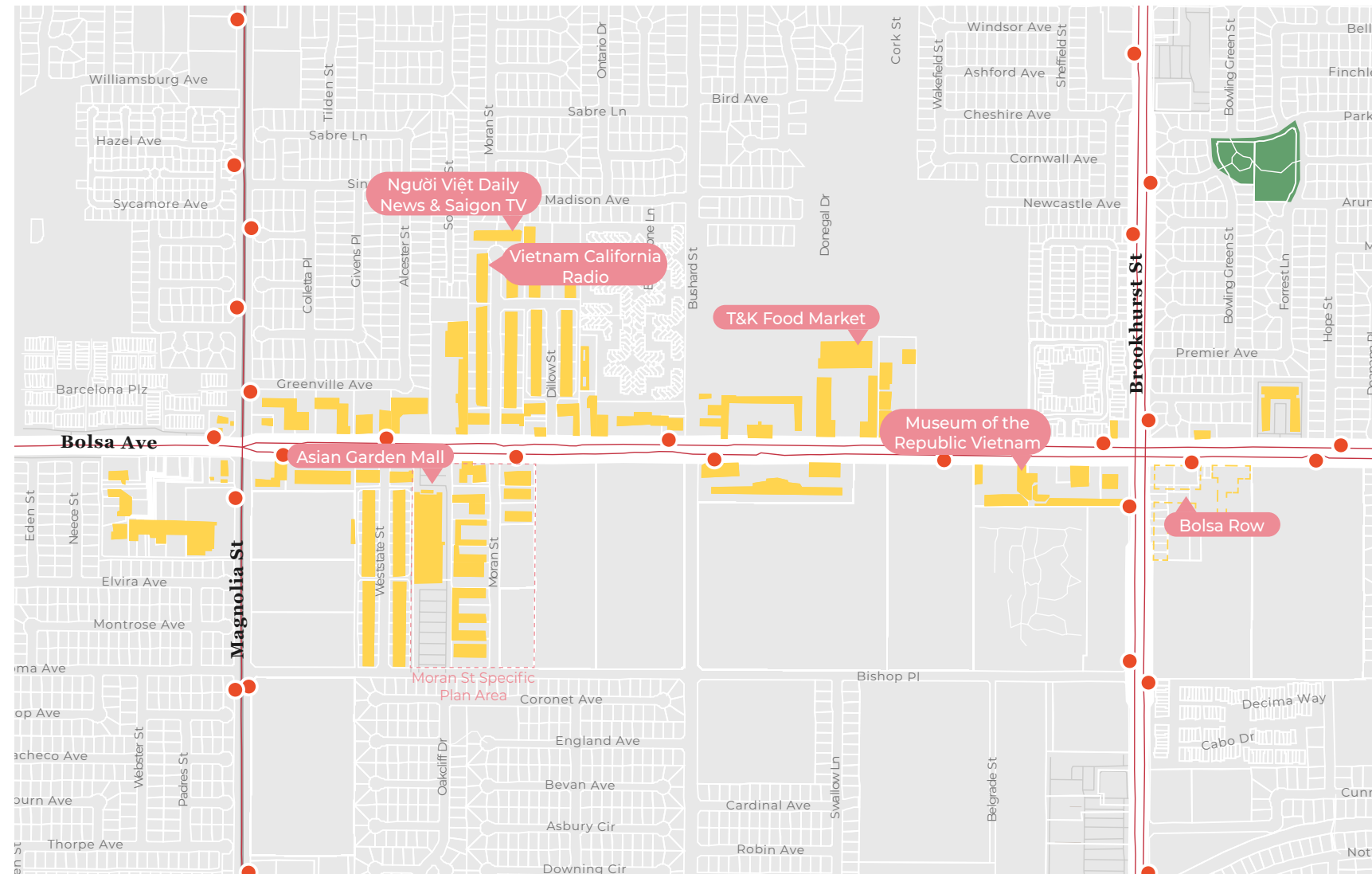
properties to attract patrons. Lock-downs diminished the overall number small business patrons, trading them for Amazon orders. These trends, both of the last decade and the last year, send clear warning signals of a district threatened with decline.

This is not to say that recovery and even resiliency are impossible. The last 5 years have seen younger business owners enter the marketplace, the development of Instagram-ready dessert shops, and the approval of the Bolsa Row project, which authorizes the development of four-star hotel, the first in the city. More importantly, Little Saigon still retains its status as an elite cultural hub for the Vietnamese community, unlike any other competitive district. The opportunity to share and expand its cultural relevance is substantial.

With over 722 businesses, \$938.6 million in annual sales, and immeasurable intrinsic value as a cultural center, immediate and decisive action is needed to put Little Saigon on a path towards sustainability – and hopefully – something even more dynamic.



## Study Area



In recent decades, the Vietnamese-American resident population in Westminster has grown and since expanded out to surrounding adjacent cities as well as up and down the state. With this migration, several other commercial districts catered to serving this population, and also similarly known as Little Saigon, have also grown in places like Garden Grove and Fountain Valley - although none have scaled up to the size of offerings in Westminster.

For the purposes of this study, the Consultant, with input from the Client, has delineated Little Saigon as the 1.25 mile stretch of Bolsa Ave between Magnolia Street (West) and Brookhurst St (East), including commercial properties within 0.25 mile of each end.



## Approach + Methodology

### Commercial DNA

To create a blueprint for investment that outlines a suite of short-, medium-, and long-term capital, programmatic, and policy initiatives to boost the economic vitality and quality of place of Little Saigon, the Consultant conducted a comprehensive diagnostic of the study area to understand the existing conditions of Little Saigon. The diagnostic, conducted over the course of three months (Nov 2020-Jan 2021), is based in the nationally-recognized Commercial-DNA approach<sup>2</sup> and consists of mixed method research utilizing qualitative and quantitative data.

The Commercial DNA framework assesses each district's commercial viability by looking at four key categories of data collection and analysis: organizational capacity, physical environment, business environment, and customer preference/demand.

**Organizational Capacity** refers to who gets things done, how, and with what resources and tools, including but not limited to people (public/private/non profit sectors), funding, partners, and regulatory and zoning frameworks that are available to advance corridor improvement efforts.

**Physical Environment** refers to three main components that form initial impressions for visitors and customers to a commercial district: public realm (streets/sidewalks/open spaces), private realm (storefronts/buildings), access +visibility (transportation networks that offer customers convenient accessibility, whether by private vehicle, car share, foot, bike, or public transit, and the visibility of businesses to customers and passersby).

**Business Environment** refers to the quantity, density (nodes/clusters), and type of offerings (tenant mix, anchors/destinations) in a district. These elements are often a reflection of underlying business conditions and market dynamics, and they also offer insight into the overall health of local businesses.

An understanding of **Consumer Base/Demand** is necessary to better target district brand, merchandise, tenant mix, and amenities to the existing customer base and their lifestyle preferences.



#### PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Public Realm  
Private Realm  
Access  
Visibility



#### BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Anchors/Destinations  
Tenant Mix  
Nodes/Clusters  
Competitive Districts  
Promotion/Marketing



#### CONSUMER BASE

Trends  
Customer  
Profiles



#### ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

Management/  
Operations  
Regulations/Zoning  
Partners  
Funding

<sup>2</sup> LISC, 2020. "Preparing a Commercial Diagnostic" Accessed online via [https://www.lisc.org/media/filer\\_public/ec/6c/ec6c7d26-cc91-4c2d-910f-e459ea1a1d4d/cdna\\_manual\\_022720\\_1.pdf](https://www.lisc.org/media/filer_public/ec/6c/ec6c7d26-cc91-4c2d-910f-e459ea1a1d4d/cdna_manual_022720_1.pdf)

## Stakeholder Engagement

Central to the success of this planning effort is community input and buy-in. To ensure improvements and strategies that are driven not only by market forces, but community needs and demands, the Consultant conducted several engagement efforts between December 2020 and March 2021 to gather stakeholder input on existing challenges/issues in living, shopping, or doing business locally and key opportunities for improvement.

Furthermore, to ensure a bottom-up planning approach, the Consultant was overseen by additional layers of governance, including an internal working group of City staff and an advisory committee of local experts.

The **advisory committee** of local experts represents a diverse set of stakeholder interest groups – from business owners to real estate developers, property owners, and local communities – including first generation and second generation Vietnamese communities. Its main function included:

1. **Supporting stakeholder engagement efforts** for the project by connecting the City and Consultant to key stakeholder groups throughout the planning process, acting as ambassadors of the project, and communicat-

ing progress to existing networks of stakeholders in Little Saigon.

2. **Providing oversight to the project team to ensure the delivery of a plan that reflects community vision** and needs by participating at key milestone meetings to review project deliverables

Toward the first phase of the study, the **Consultant Team conducted 1-on-1 interviews with cross-sector stakeholders (Public/ Private/ Non-Profit)**. These 1-on-1 interviews are intended to offer closed-door environments for individual stakeholders to provide honest feedback on existing conditions in the district without bias. Each interview, scheduled

as a 45-60-minute session, was structured around guiding questions that covered topics relevant to the interviewee, including Physical Environment (Access/ Safety/ Visibility/ Public Realm/ Building Conditions), Business Environment (Retail Mix/ Competitive Districts), Administrative Capacity/ Regulatory Environment (Local agencies/Funding/ Zoning/ Permits).

### LITTLE SAIGON ADVISORY COMMITTEE

<b>Kathy Buchoz</b>	Bridgecreek Development
<b>Jessica Fernandez</b>	Southern California Edison
<b>Alan Vo Ford</b>	Tet Parade
<b>Hang Harper</b>	Vietnamese Chamber of Commerce
<b>Phong Ly</b>	Office of Congressman Alan Lowenthal
<b>Khanh Nguyen</b>	Westminster School District
<b>Linda Nguyen</b>	Wells Fargo Foundation
<b>Father Nguyen Tuyen</b>	Blessed Sacrament Church
<b>Tracy La</b>	VietRise



Amidst the pandemic, the Little Saigon Advisory Committee Members Kick Off meeting was held via Zoom on December 11, 2020.

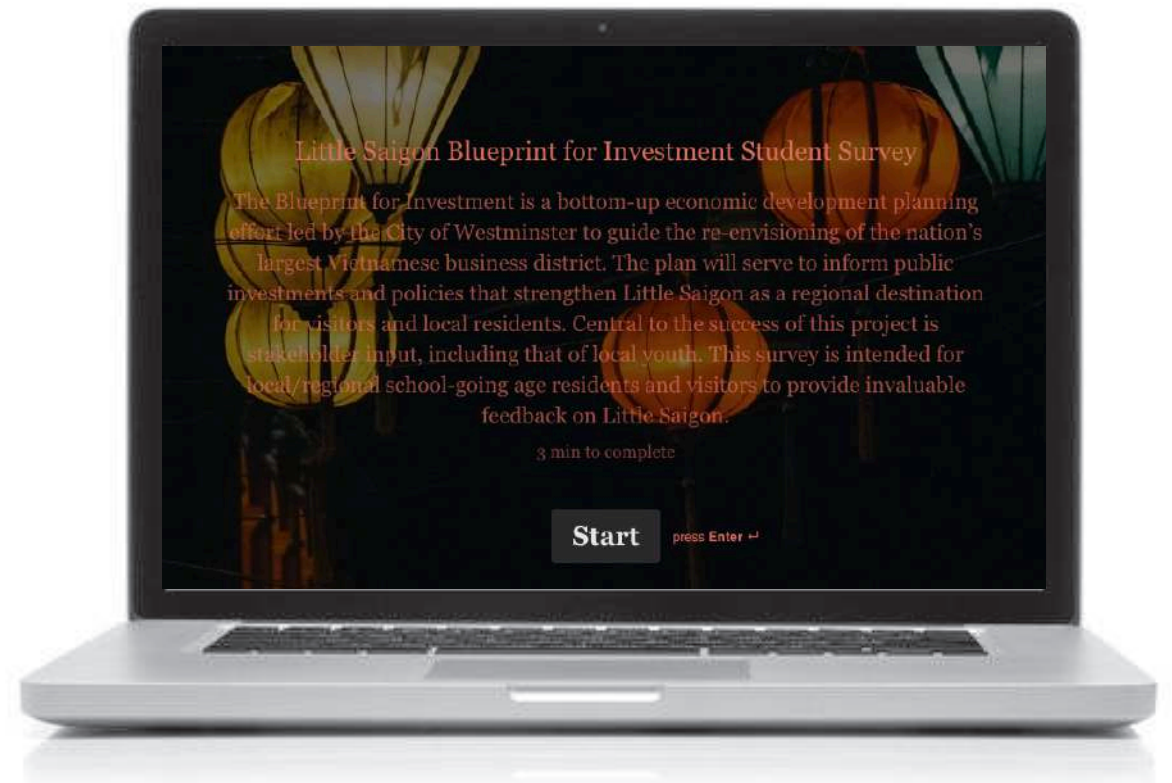
Early stakeholder interviews highlighted a gap in perspective from younger local residents who reportedly have different impressions of Little Saigon and needs/desires that may be addressed in the re-envisioning of the district. The exclusion of youth from the planning process would have been short-sighted, therefore to close this gap in perspective the Consultant designed and distributed a **short 5-minute online survey for school-going age residents** to share feedback on Little Saigon and their vision for the district moving forward.

The survey, made public for three weeks in January 2021, was distributed through the City's youth committee networks and via local institutions, Westminster High School and La Quinta High School. Overall, it reached 147 respondents\*. The findings from the survey are included in this report.

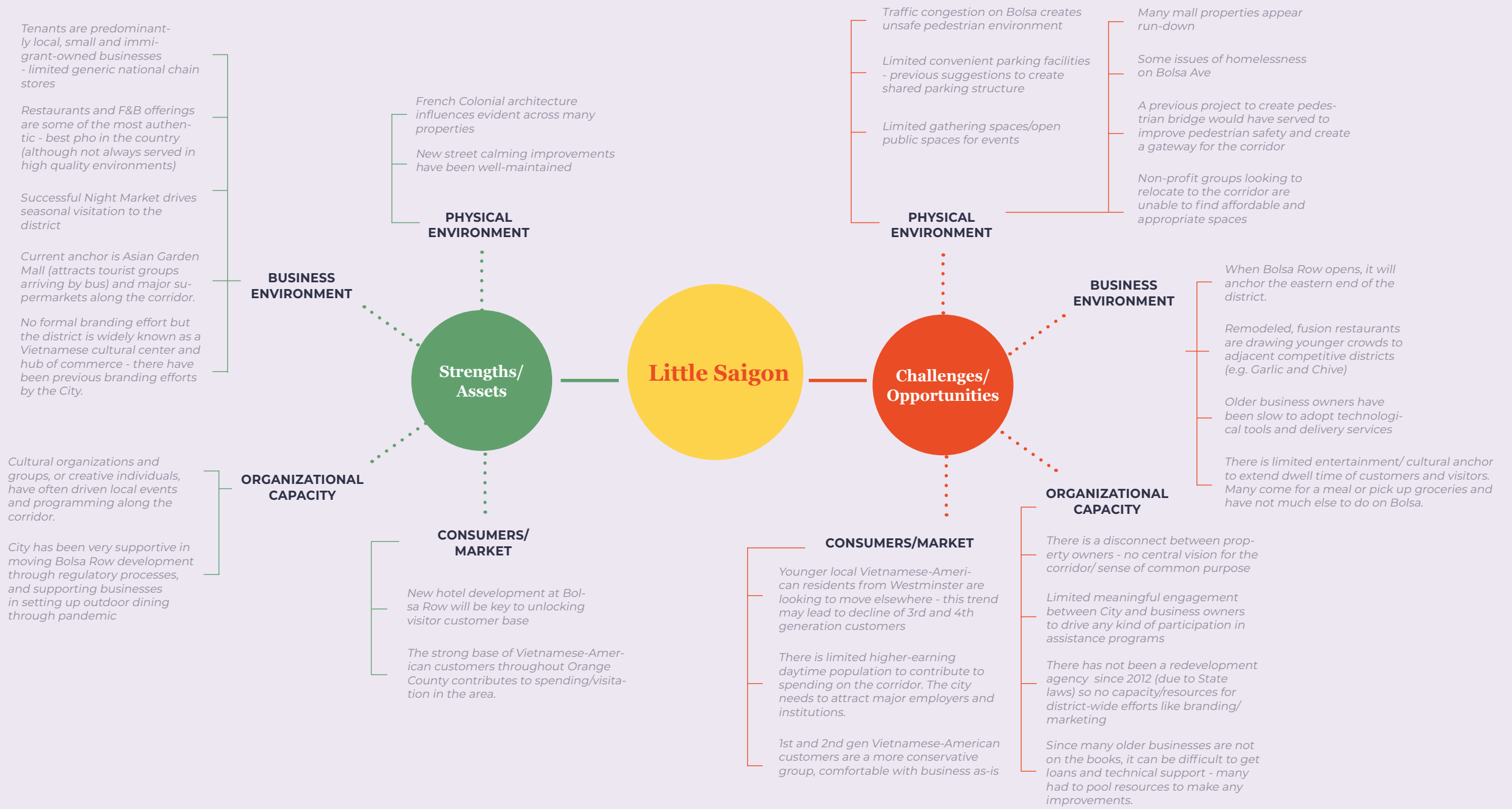
**We would like to also thank the following stakeholders who contributed their perspectives and stories on Little Saigon.**

<b>Congressman Alan Lowenthal</b>	US Congress
<b>Mayor Tri Ta</b>	City Council
<b>CM Charlie Nguyen</b>	City Council
<b>CM Kimberly Ho</b>	City Council
<b>CM Carlos Manzo</b>	City Council
<b>CM Tai Do</b>	City Council
<b>Mike Daniels</b>	SBA Small Business Development Center
<b>Lisa Kim</b>	City of Garden Grove
<b>Julie Castro-Cardenas</b>	City of Santa Ana
<b>Khang Bao</b>	Westminster High School
<b>Prof. Tam Nguyen</b>	Cal State Fullerton
<b>Dr. Linda Vo</b>	UC Irvine
<b>Dr. Thuy Vo Dang</b>	UC Irvine
<b>Jack Toan</b>	Wells Fargo

*\*The total number of responses evaluated include all responses submitted prior to Feb 15 during which an initial push for survey responses was conducted with the support of the City's youth committee networks and local schools. A secondary push for responses by partner organization, VietRise, resulted in a more public distribution of the survey amounting to 82 new responses. These responses will be evaluated separately.*









## Physical Environment

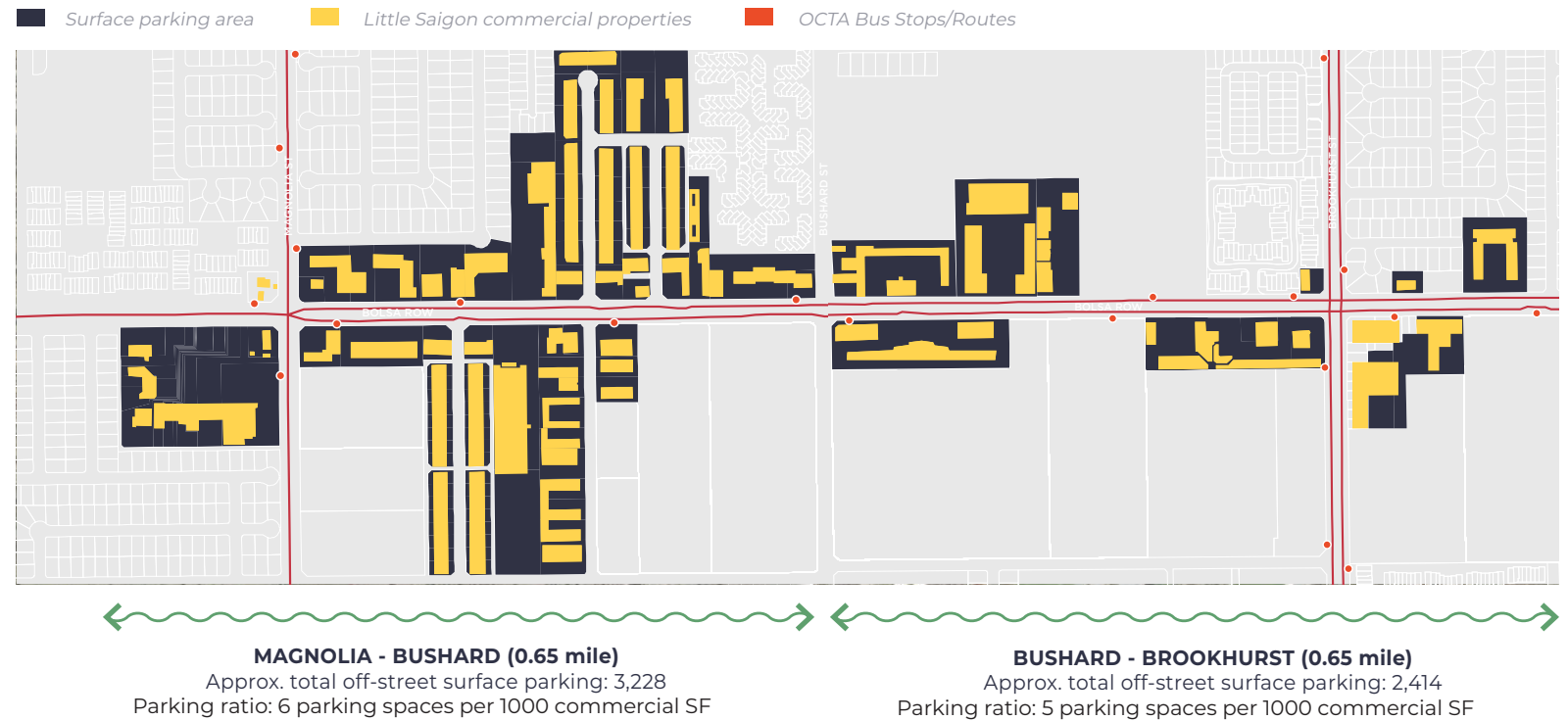
## Access to Little Saigon

### Getting Here

Similar to many other shopping center and strip mall corridor destinations across the country, Little Saigon's customers primarily arrive by car.

Use	Parking Req (per 1,000 SF)
Banks and financial services, medical, business and professional offices, public or private utility offices	5
Restaurants (Freestanding)	10
Bars/night clubs (Freestanding)	10 + 1 space per every 30 SF of dance floor area
Take-out restaurants and cafes (≤12 seats)	4
Outdoor dining (<25% of enclosed restaurant GFA)	0
Retail and service uses	4
Retail shopping centers up to 100,000 SF	4
Retail shopping centers above 100,000 SF	4

Source: Westminster Municipal Code (Accessed online via [https://qcode.us/codes/westminster/?view=desktop&topic=17-3-17\\_320-17\\_320\\_030](https://qcode.us/codes/westminster/?view=desktop&topic=17-3-17_320-17_320_030))



Although not significantly higher than most other major thoroughfares in the region, the average daily traffic along Bolsa Avenue is estimated between 32,000-34,000 vehicles<sup>3</sup>.

Despite the existing supply of nearly 5,000 parking spaces across the various commercial properties fronting Bolsa Avenue, visitors and customers frequently face issues of

finding convenient parking. This is likely due to the inflated demand for parking as a result of employees at the shopping centers. The estimated number of employees within the study area in 2020 alone totaled 4,302<sup>4</sup>.

Although the district is served by Orange County bus 64 (along Bolsa Ave), 35 (along Brookhurst St) and

33 (along Magnolia St), public transit is not a generally popular mode of transportation in the region, except amongst seniors and students. In fact, ridership has reportedly been declining in recent years, and following the pandemic, the transit authority has reportedly run at approximately 60% of its pre-pandemic capacity<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> 2020 Kalibrate Technologies (Q4 2020) via ESRI Business Analyst Online

<sup>4</sup> Sitewise, 2020. Business data provided by Infogroup Inc. Demographic data provided by Claritas 2018.

<sup>5</sup> "Pandemic heightens the loss of bus ridership in Orange County". Daily Titan, Sep 13, 2020. Accessed online via [https://dailytitan.com/news/campus/pandemic-heightens-the-loss-of-bus-ridership-in-orange-county/article\\_ed53df36-f634-11ea-94e1-8f8afa4d28e5.html](https://dailytitan.com/news/campus/pandemic-heightens-the-loss-of-bus-ridership-in-orange-county/article_ed53df36-f634-11ea-94e1-8f8afa4d28e5.html)

## Getting Around - Customer Journey

With about 32,000-34,000 vehicles traveling on Bolsa Avenue daily, the roadway is currently designed to move vehicles through quickly. It features 6-7 lanes of moving traffic although there have been recent improvements to promote pedestrian safety along the corridor, including the implementation of landscaped traffic medians, curb cuts, and brick crosswalks.

Despite these improvements, the corridor still poses challenges for customers seeking safe and comfortable opportunities to walk between malls and cross-shop. For example, the large swathes of surface parking lots that front each property add distance for pedestrians hoping to shop at another mall just across the street.

The lack of mid block crossings and long distances between signal crossings on Bolsa Avenue also create an inconvenient experience for pedestrians. As such, it is likely that customers arriving by car will be inclined to use their private vehicles when shopping across several malls along the corridor.

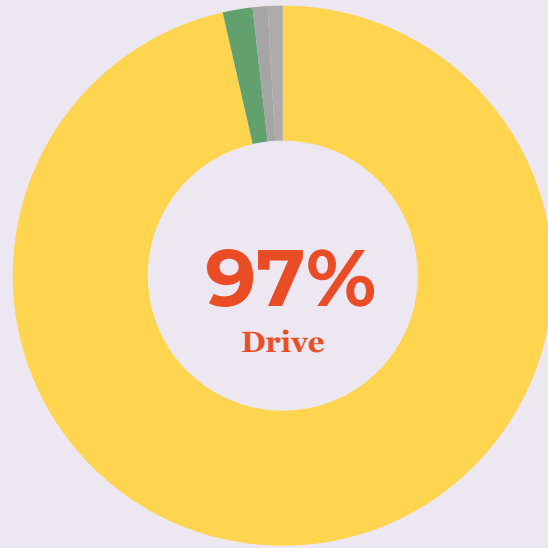
Finally, the typical amenities for pedestrians such as street trees and benches are lacking along public sidewalks across Bolsa Ave.



Surface parking lots dominate the landscape along Bolsa Ave, creating challenges for pedestrians and limiting walkable cross-shopping experiences

235 ft -----	370 ft -----	435 ft -----
		
Little Saigon (Larkin St) San Francisco, CA	Main St Garden Grove, CA	Little Saigon (Jackson St) Seattle, WA

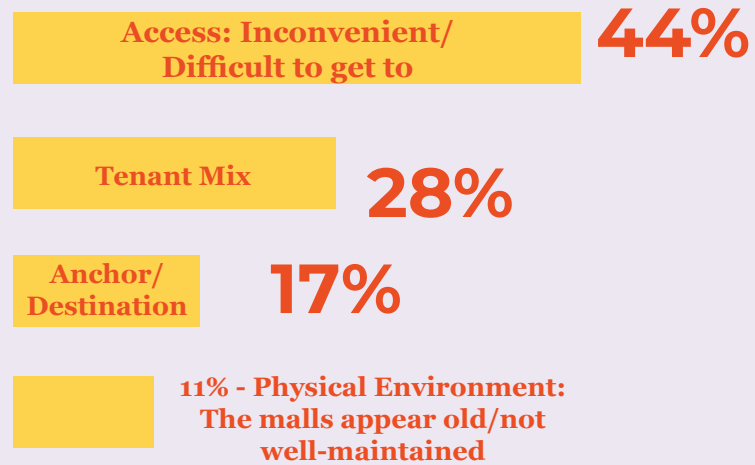
## Getting to Little Saigon



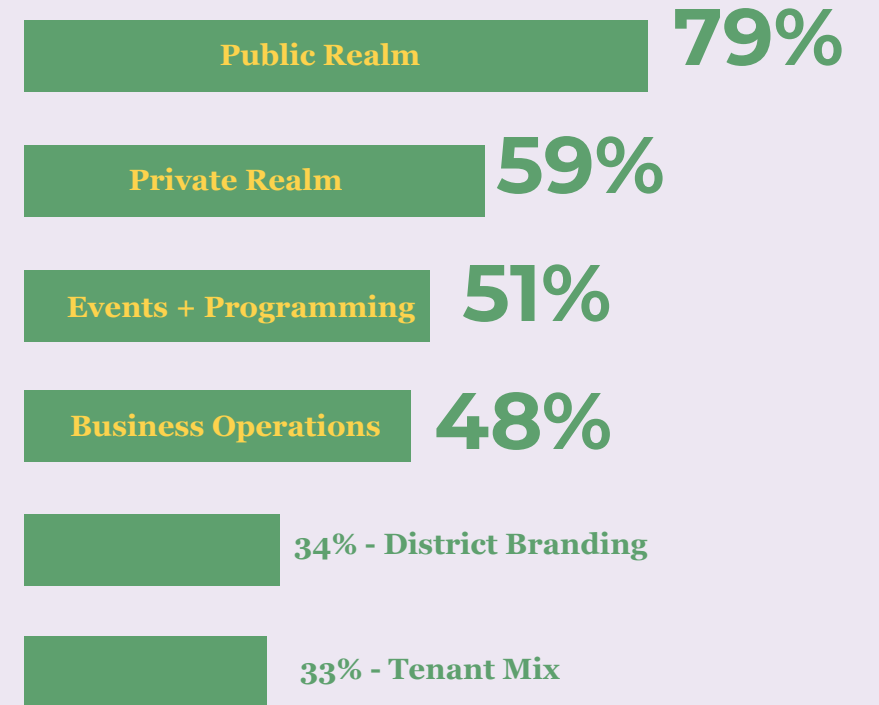
2% - Taxi/Rideshare  
 1% - Local Bus  
 1% - Walk  
 0% - Bike

## Why don't you visit Little Saigon?

(Only for those who indicated they 'Never' visit Little Saigon)



## What are priority improvements you'd like to see in Little Saigon?



Source: 2021 Little Saigon Youth Survey

## District Identity + Visibility

**Signage and wayfinding** in Little Saigon are limited to individual retail store signs and mall directories. There is little in an overarching district brand that unites the myriad properties spanning the 1.25 mile corridor.

Retail storefront signage along Little Saigon distinctly features Vietnamese names and words, particularly for professional office tenants such as doctor's and lawyer's offices that are largely tied to names of proprietors. Most tenants, however, have adapted their signage to also include English translations.

Despite the lack of an established district-wide brand identity, **Vietnamese culture and the identity of the local people** are expressed in other ways along the corridor through **historic landmarks, cultural emblems, design, and architecture.**

Statues of war figures and a museum of the Republic of Vietnam pay homage to the history of the home country of many Westminster residents, while pagoda designs and Corinthian columns reflect the architecture of old Saigon.



### DISTRICT BANNER

Although this type of sign often helps define visitor's arrival in a special district from a major roadway, the banners along Bolsa Ave appear faded and make no recognition of the unique commercial district of Little Saigon.



### MOTORIST DIRECTION SIGNS

These overhead signs, are consistent throughout the corridor and are critical in providing directional instructions to motorists driving down Bolsa Ave. These signs, however, highlight the priority given to motorists over pedestrians along the corridor.



### RETAIL SIGNS

Most mall properties along Bolsa Ave are distinguished by a full tenant directory at each entrance. Although many have adopted basic designs and color schemes, others such as Asian Garden Mall and T&K Food Market have uniquely designed signs to incorporate Vietnamese cultural motifs such as pagodas and dragons.



### STATUES & FOUNTAINS

Key mall properties have invested in decorative elements that respect historic figures or that signify wealth and fortune in Vietnamese culture - including dolphins, lions, and dragons.



### BUS SHELTER

The bus shelters along Bolsa Ave have been designed as pieces of art themselves, featuring the Buddhist pagoda roofs common across Vietnam.



### MALL ARCHITECTURE

In addition to nods to more traditional pagoda designs, the district also features French colonial architecture in select properties like Catinat Plaza and Liberty Square Shopping Mall.

A cultural landmark in the area that has grown and evolved along Moran Street (North) is what is also known as “Media Lane”. The cluster of offices and studios belonging to various Vietnamese news and media outlets is important to the community as many of the older generation Vietnamese continue to consume news and updates through traditional forms of media such as newspapers, radio, and television.

According to representatives of local non-profit organizations, these spaces also support events and celebrations held by non-profit arts and culture groups. Since many of these cultural events and experiences are organized by volunteer groups with limited budgets, they often seek affordable spaces that are only available through relationships cultivated with tenants along Media Lane.



**VIETNAM WAR MEMORIAL MUSEUM**

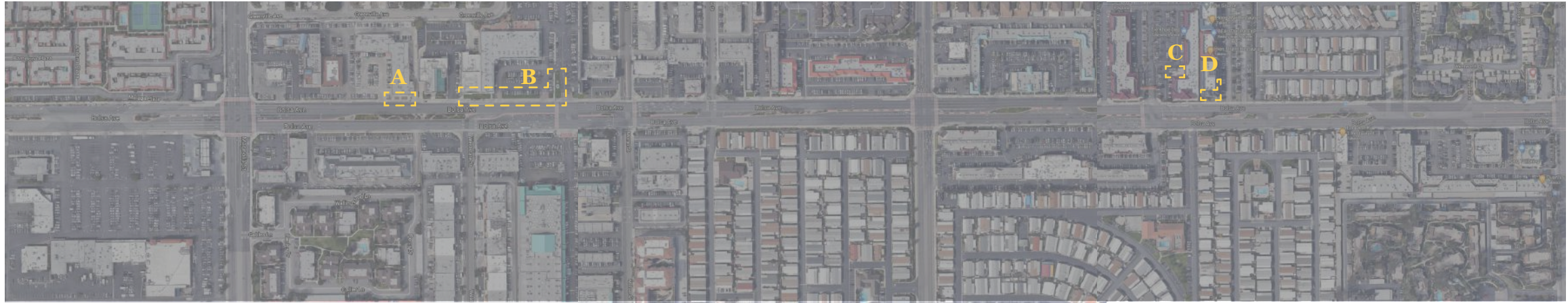


**MEDIA LANE**

Moran Street, north of Bolsa Ave, is home to key media outlets such as SaigonTV and Viet-Nam California Radio. These media companies are major news distributors within the Vietnamese community and should be further elevated as cultural organizations anchoring Little Saigon.



It is clear that the Vietnamese heritage of local residents and business owners remains central to the corridor’s identity and should further be leveraged in murals and public art to create interesting place experiences for visitors and to allow a deeper appreciation for the place’s history.



## Open Spaces

At this time, the corridor lacks intentional open spaces for social gathering and community events. While there are a few pockets of green spaces that function as buffer between the roadway and retail storefronts on mall properties (as shown in examples A, B, and D), they may not accommodate large events and currently are not designed for rich cultural experiences.

**Conversely, the surface parking lots that occupy acres of land along the corridor may become better utilized as open spaces for public use.** In fact, during the warmer months of the year and amidst the pandemic, many parking lots were temporarily transformed into outdoor market spaces (see next page).



A



C

The T&K Food Market mall property features the only existing inward-facing plaza along the corridor. It measures approximately 1,700 SF, however, is not being utilized for outdoor dining or programming. When Bolsa Row is completed, it will feature a 13,000 SF Festival Plaza designed to accommodate sidewalk cafes, outdoor seating and community events.



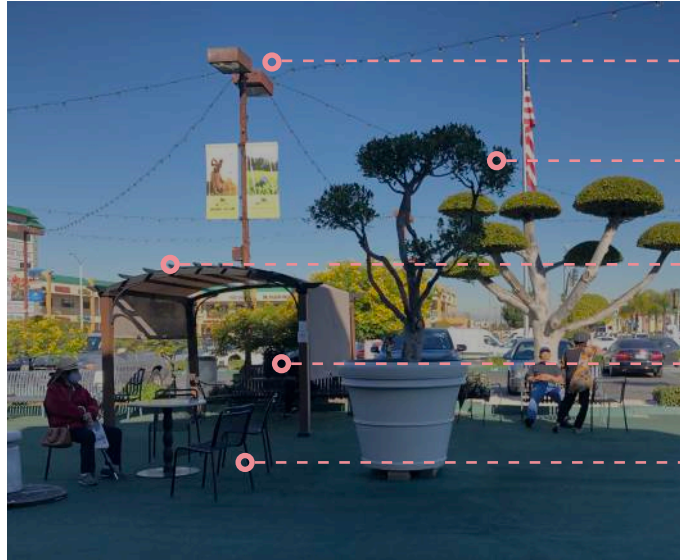
B



D



## Case Study: Asian Garden Mall



Lighting for night-time use of public space

(combination of decorative and functional lights)

Landscaping to balance hard materials and surfaces

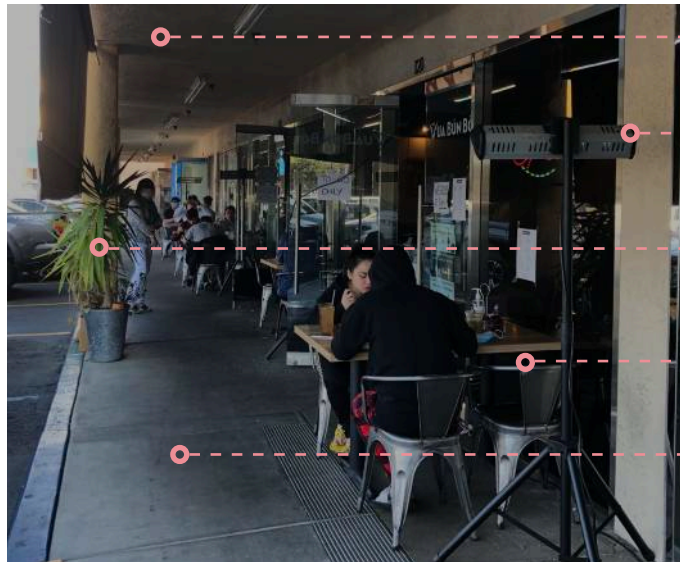
Shaded areas to protect users from natural elements

Stage/Performance space

(to accommodate Vietnamese music and dance performances)

Movable tables and chairs to give agent to users of the space

## Case Study: Asian Village Mall



Shaded areas to protect users from natural elements

Heating equipment for customer comfort

Landscaping to act as environmental/protective buffer between parking spaces and outdoor dining area

Comfortable and socially-distanced tables/chairs

4' clearance to enable circulation

## Placemaking in the pandemic

COVID-19 has radically altered the way communities gather, interact, and shop in commercial corridors, including Little Saigon. Given that early pandemic research found the risk of COVID-19 transmission to be significantly higher in indoor shared spaces than outdoor open spaces, cross-sector stakeholders - from mall owners to public agencies - have had to react and think creatively to find ways to create new kinds of safe and public gathering spaces.

In Little Saigon, two key ways that business and property owners have reacted are through **creating informal public plazas on parking lots** and **outdoor dining in walkways**. Combined, these tactical placemaking strategies have not only enabled safe dining and gathering in the corridor amidst the pandemic but also heightened visibility of businesses through spillover of activity outdoors.

Starved for comfortable and vibrant gathering spaces along Bolsa Ave, the community has continued to flock to the informal plaza at Asian Garden Mall (despite store closures throughout most of the pandemic) and leverage all opportunities for dining with friends and family at available outdoor dining locations. The community has clearly indicated the desire to create an amenity and flexible open space for use and enjoyment by locals and visitors in Little Saigon.

## Private Realm/Storefronts

Conditions of mall properties and their associated storefronts vary from high quality, well-maintained and visible spaces such as those located east of Bushard to older and less maintained properties on Magnolia St. The following list of qualities determine the efficacy of mall properties and storefronts in serving existing and prospective tenants.

### Space Quality

<b>Location</b>	where the space is located within the context of the larger district, and how the quality of this location is affected by customer traffic, visibility, and retail fundamentals
<b>Frontage</b>	amount of storefront surface area given to a space for merchandising and advertising. Frontage is also determined by the quality of the entrance and level of cleanliness and maintenance
<b>Visibility</b>	the degree to which a space is visible to the customer; visibility is affected by frontage, sightlines, grading, and location
<b>Serviceability</b>	rear or secondary entrance serviceability for deliveries and trash removal



Qualitative assessment conducted by Streetsense through visual survey/site visit.

■ High    
 ■ Medium    
 ■ Low    
 ■ Other Automotive/ Light Industrial Uses



**Dated exteriors and signage**

The dated appearance of the property is worsened by low levels of cleanliness outside storefronts.



**Vacant and boarded up storefront**

This property does not front Bolsa Avenue and was recently damaged in a fire. Condition of interior space is unclear.



**Uniform colors** are used across many properties on the corridor creating a monotonous visual experience for visitors



**Busy landscape of storefront signs** on many building facades create a confusing mix of messages for the visitor.



**Unique design and architecture**

Some properties incorporate design elements that are striking and make properties visible and attractive



**Well-constructed with outdoor display spaces**

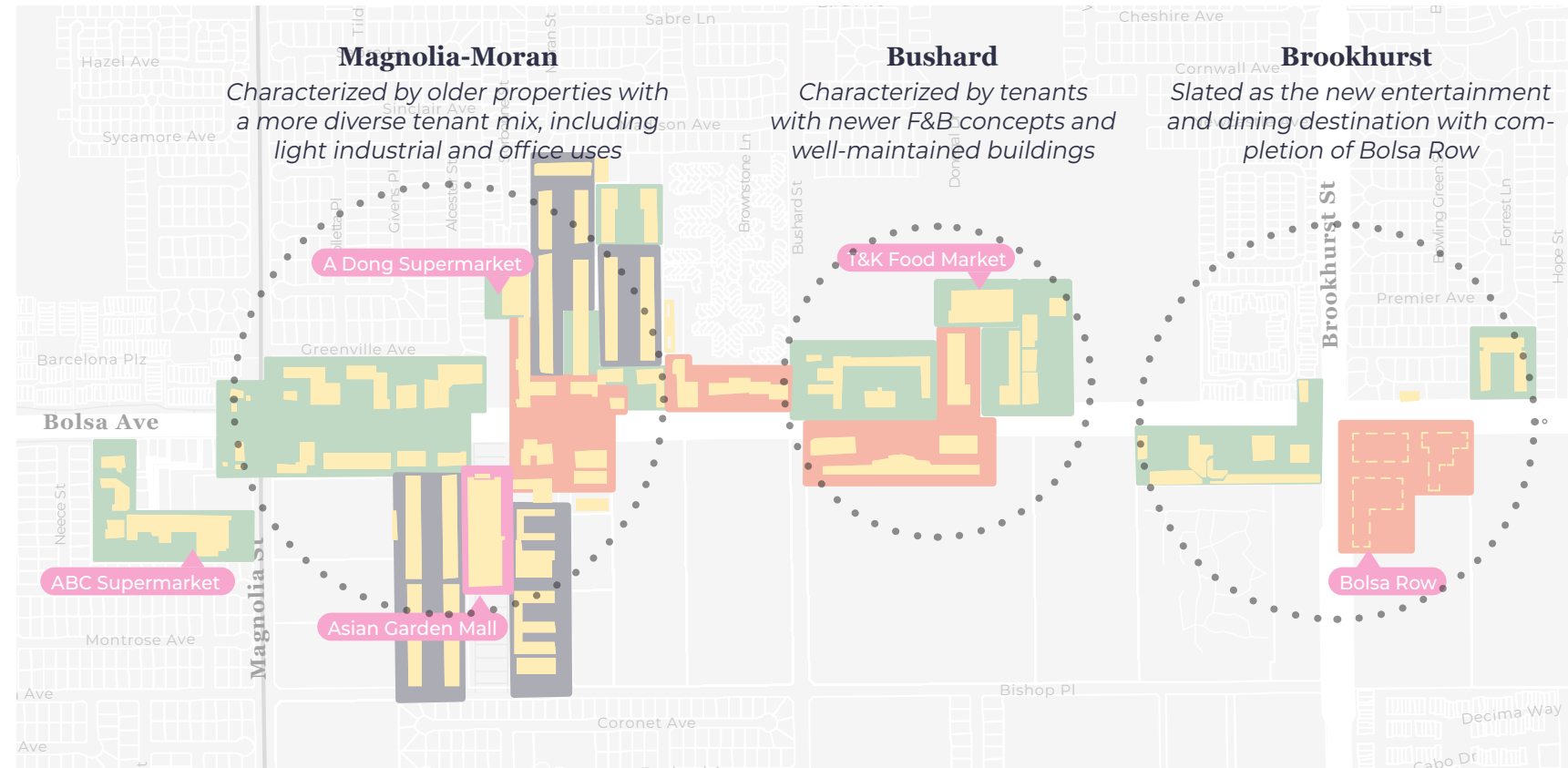
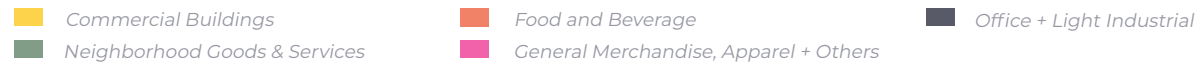
Storefronts with floor-to-ceiling height of 14 ft or more and at least 20 ft wide gives tenants enough space to creatively display merchandise and offerings.



## Business Environment

# Tenant Mix

## Nodes/Clusters



**Magnolia-Moran**  
 Characterized by older properties with a more diverse tenant mix, including light industrial and office uses

**Bushard**  
 Characterized by tenants with newer F&B concepts and well-maintained buildings

**Brookhurst**  
 Slated as the new entertainment and dining destination with completion of Bolsa Row

The district boasts over 1 million SF of commercial space. Most of this is concentrated to the west of the corridor (Magnolia to Bushard St), where Asian Garden Mall is also located.

An anchor for the district, Asian Garden Mall (also known as Phước Lộc Thọ in Vietnamese) was completed in 1987 and features over 150,000SF of retail and dining spaces, attracting visitors from all around the state and country. The mall

continues to be featured as a key tourism destination for Orange County and is often synonymous with Little Saigon as a district.

Although the district's total commercial square footage includes a mix of retail and office spaces, the spaces collectively form a central hub for the Vietnamese community. Vietnamese families across generations visit Little Saigon for its vast culinary offerings and specialty Southeast Asian grocery, and to participate in year-round community and family events such as reunions, weddings, and New Year parades. Many families also continue to use healthcare and financial services available on the corridor, and many continue to be employed or own businesses in the area.

Despite its critical role and status in the lives of Vietnamese immigrants across the State and country, Little Saigon lacks an all-encompassing historic and cultural center or institution to preserve and incubate the Vietnamese arts and culture in the years to come. Today, small Vietnamese language, arts, and cultural organizations with varying capacities and resources are spread across the district - including local media outlets, Người Việt Daily News and the Museum of the Republic of Vietnam.

## What Businesses Do You Frequent in Little Saigon?

Source: 2021 Little Saigon Youth Survey (City of Westminster)



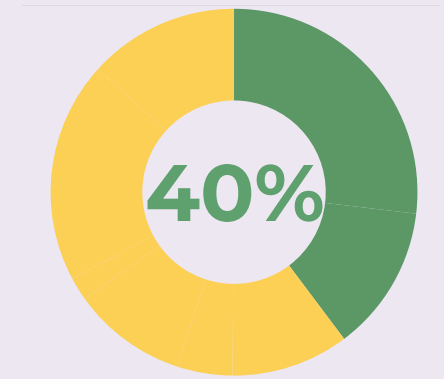
- 12% - Department Store
- 11% - Apparel/Accessories
- 10% - Miscellaneous Goods
- 7% - Neighborhood Services
- 7% - Personal Care Services

## By Number of Business

Source: 2020 Claritas



**Total No. of Direct to Consumer Businesses (incl. professional service offices)**

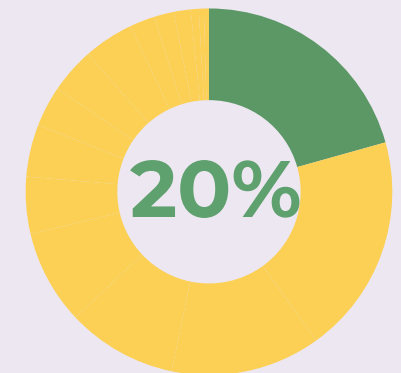


**Retail+ Restaurants**

## By Annual Sales



**Total Sales (incl. D2C and B2B businesses)**



**Wholesale Trade (Mainly concentrated in Magnolia-Moran node)**

## Business Operations

### Sales Diversification

Even before the pandemic, businesses across the country had begun to diversify sales to allow greater volume of goods and services sold online - whether through social media, websites, or with support of third party platforms such as GrubHub and Postmates.

This trend is largely driven by a **growing share of younger consumers who are technologically savvy** and leaning

towards e-commerce, or at least researching prices and products online.

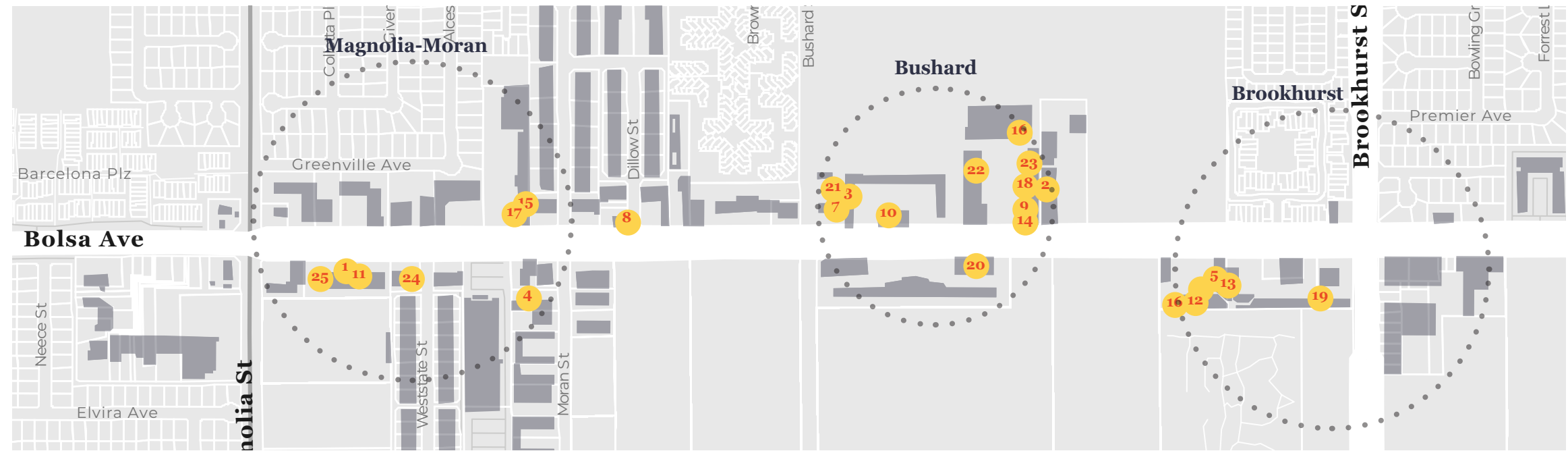
Despite this, **small businesses around the country were still disproportionately reliant on sales in storefronts**. According to a nationwide survey by the National Main Street Center, over 63.3% of small businesses entered the pandemic without an online sales component<sup>6</sup>. This trend is not dissimilar in Little Saigon.

In fact, of the hundreds of Food Services and Drinking Places in Little Saigon, there are only **25+ businesses active on GrubHub**, with a handful of others using their own delivery platforms (Toast) or other third party delivery service such as Postmates.

Most of these businesses are **clustered in the Bushard node**, where there is also a growing number of 3rd Gen restaurant

business owners and newer food concepts.

These businesses are likely already set up with newer point-of-sale systems that have the ability to easily set up an online menu or integrate with third-party delivery services. According to stakeholders, however, **many legacy businesses continue to operate with cash-only systems making any digital transactions challenging**.



Active businesses listed on GrubHub by customer review, based on Streetsense survey.

<sup>6</sup> "The Impact of COVID-19 on Small Businesses: Findings from Main Street America's Small Business Survey". National Main Street Center, September, 2020. Accessed online <https://www.mainstreet.org/howwecanhelp/resourcecenter/mainstreetforward/research>

## Marketing

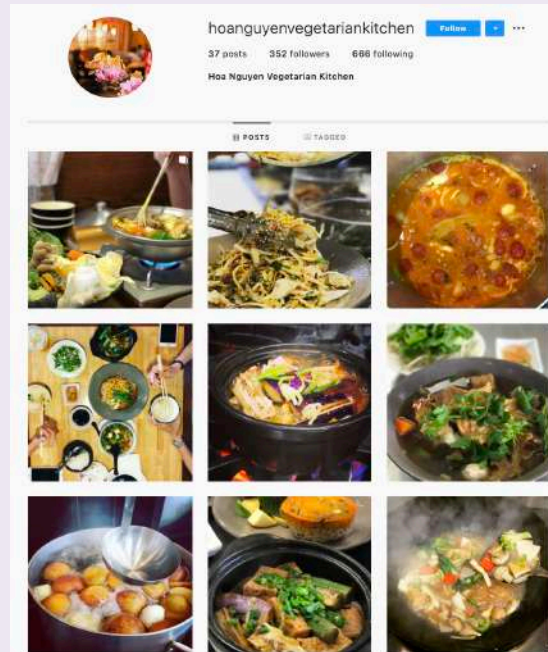
Businesses that have made the shift to online sales have also been more open to leveraging digital marketing practices. Instead of relying on traditional media - newspaper/radio/TV ads - these businesses have claimed their businesses on Google and set up social media accounts on platforms like Instagram and Facebook to push messaging and remain top of mind to consumers that are accessible online.

## Business Planning - Succession

In recent years, as legacy business owners in Little Saigon have entered retirement years, a key operational challenge that has arisen in the district is succession planning - according to Advisory Committee member, Linda Nguyen of Wells Fargo Foundation. Although some businesses may be easily able to pass down ownership and management internally to younger family members, many others do not.

In such circumstances, businesses are at risk of closure, potentially reducing the wealth of businesses owners and leaving a gap in the community. These businesses need the tools and support to prepare for the transfer, sale, or closure of a business - including fair valuation and taxation and legal assistance, to ensure growth and continuation of the business.

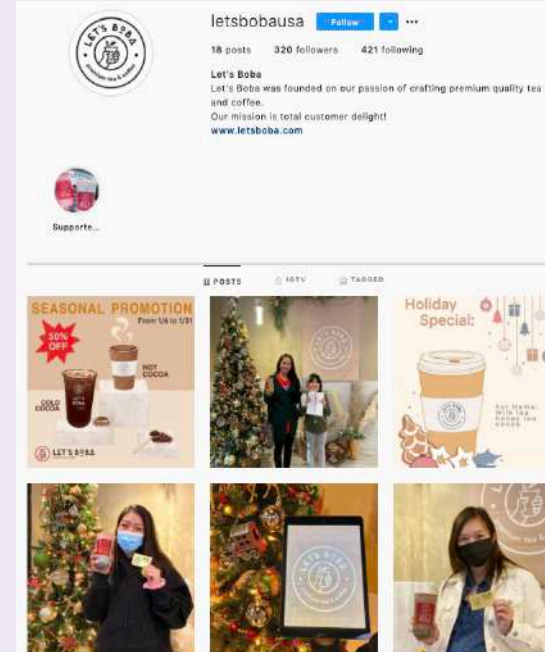
### Instagram



### Luc Dinh Ky Tap 2 Restaurant

4.2 ★★★★★ 502 reviews · \$  
Vietnamese restaurant

### GoogleMyBusiness



### NhuMi's Food Corner

3.0 ★★★★★ 4 reviews  
Vietnamese restaurant

### Facebook







## Market Positioning

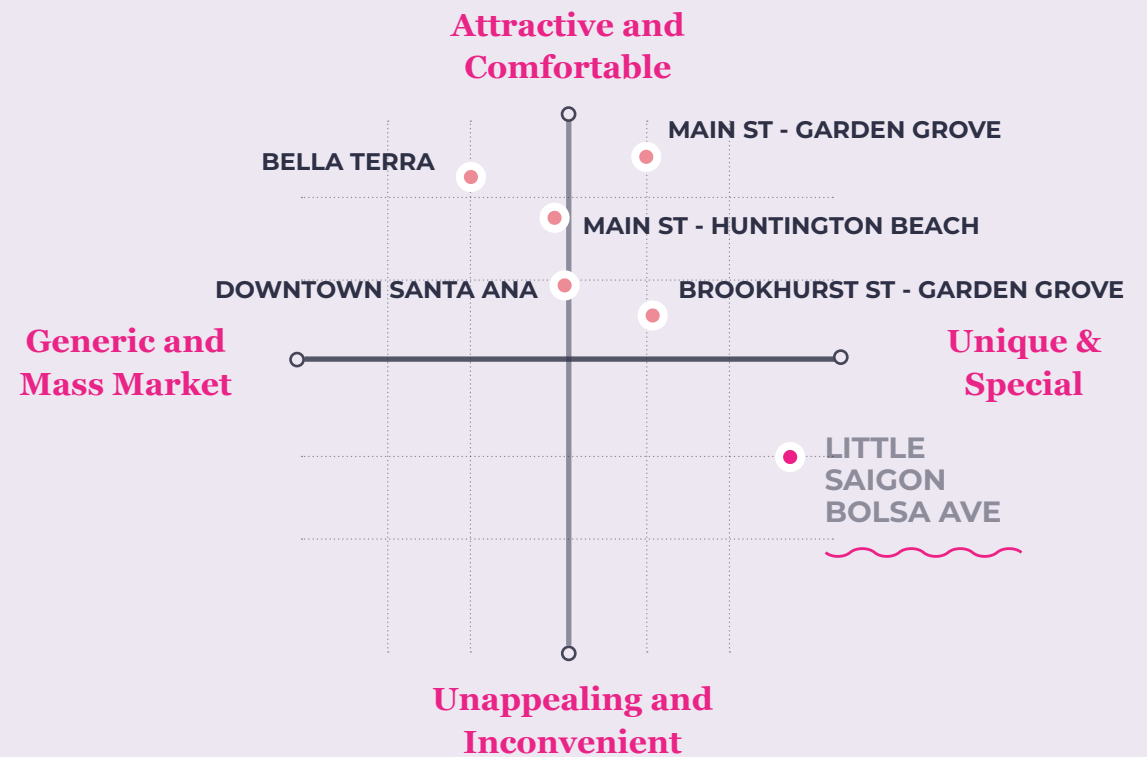
The reality is that customers in the region have a wide range of destinations to select from when choosing where to shop, dine, and entertain.

In particular, other commercial districts, downtowns, and retail destinations in the region have walkable environments with strong place qualities, including outdoor spaces for gathering and dining, as well as newer retail concepts and tenants that appeal to younger customers today.

In order to remain competitive, Little Saigon on Bolsa Avenue will need to elevate its niche mix of small and local restaurants and retailers, and create

new opportunities for these businesses to better reach the customer base through marketing, branding, and physical space enhancements that impact initial impressions, customer dwell time, and return visits.

Place improvements that have had significant impact on the vibrancy of Main Streets in Huntington Beach and Garden Grove include bike infrastructure (bike lanes and bike parking facilities); sidewalk amenities - dining, trees/planters, historic pavement markers, pedestrian-scale lighting, narrow crossings; signage and wayfinding (gateway arch).



## Competitive Districts



### STRENGTHS

Growing new gen Vietnamese restaurants  
Well-maintained Class A retail properties

### SHORTCOMINGS

Local tenants mixed in with national chains (Target, McDonalds)  
No district brand/identity

### STRENGTHS

Compact, walkable district  
Street-facing outdoor dining  
Historical archway  
Cohesive storefronts & old town west architecture  
Adjacent to GEM Theater, City Hall and colleges

### SHORTCOMINGS

Unremarkable tenant mix - primarily bars and restaurants

### STRENGTHS

Walkable outdoor lifestyle mall  
Convenient cross-shopping opportunities with wide mix of tenants  
Large open spaces for programming and events  
Accessible parking

### SHORTCOMINGS

Generic national chain stores

### STRENGTHS

Compact, walkable district  
Clear wayfinding and signage  
Active sidewalks with outdoor dining  
Strong 'beach town' identity - conveyed through tenant mix

### SHORTCOMINGS

Limited on-street parking

### STRENGTHS

Compact, walkable district with strong investments in public realm  
Strong mural art  
Distinctly LatinX-serving district

### SHORTCOMINGS

Older tenants in GAFO retail sector that are moving to online sales  
High rates of ground floor vacancy

### SHORTCOMINGS

No cohesive district brand identity  
Limited parking availability  
Auto-centric layout  
Deteriorating mall properties  
No open space for public gatherings and community events  
Lacks an entertainment/cultural anchor

## Comparative Districts



### STRENGTHS

Mix of F&B and neighborhood services and co-located with other ethnic retail offerings (Afro-Caribbean, Mexican, Middle East)  
Some district branding in light posts, trash bins, and murals

### SHORTCOMINGS

Deteriorating Class B mall properties in need of cleaning, maintenance and repair  
Some complete streets improvements, although not as walkable as an urban district should be  
No open space for public gatherings and community events

### STRENGTHS

Some placemaking present - street murals and creatively painted crosswalks  
Walkable, urban and mixed-use neighborhood (with new Class A developments)

### SHORTCOMINGS

Limited offerings - mainly take-out/casual dine-in restaurants and supermarket  
Class B properties in need of cleaning, maintenance and repair  
Wide sidewalks, however, in need of cleaning/maintenance and better lighting

### STRENGTHS

Restaurants feature outdoor dining  
Growing new gen Vietnamese restaurants  
Well-maintained properties  
Strong influence of French colonial architecture

### SHORTCOMINGS

Retail and dining offerings limited to two major properties spanning 0.25 linear miles  
Suburban mall layout

### STRENGTHS

Walkable, urban and mixed-use neighborhood  
Well-served by public transit  
Historic architecture

### SHORTCOMINGS

Limited offerings - mainly take-out/ casual dine-in restaurants  
Deteriorating storefronts in need of maintenance  
Widespread homelessness affecting customer safety

### STRENGTHS

Mix of F&B and neighborhood services  
Well-maintained Class A retail properties  
Saigon Houston Plaza reflects French colonial architecture

### SHORTCOMINGS

Auto-centric layout  
No open space for public gatherings  
Lacks an entertainment/ cultural anchor and community events  
No cohesive district brand identity

### STRENGTHS

Largest cluster of Vietnamese retail and dining offerings in the country  
Anchored by Asian Garden Mall



Customers/Market  
Preferences



## Customer Groups

**Little Saigon primarily serves the large Vietnamese American community in the city of Westminster and across Southern California. However, its appeal to younger customers in the region, including the 3rd and 4th generation Vietnamese Americans is fast waning.**

As the corridor continues to evolve, commercial tenants will need the support and resources to adapt to the needs and preferences of younger customers - including families, youth, and early professionals in the community. In doing so, the district may also further expand its appeal to international visitors of Orange County who are already coming for larger tourism destinations such as Disneyland Resort, Knotts Berry Farm, and the region's beaches.

It is important to note that, in the coming years, the predominant customer will still likely remain local residents who are Vietnamese Americans by heritage (about half of

local residents). As such, merchandise and tenant mix, as well as design and programming of the corridor, will need to remain rooted in the history and culture of Little Saigon and its legacy businesses and families. These residents have moderate purchasing powers with median household incomes rising to \$72,972 by 2025.

When considering customer groups in Little Saigon, we must acknowledge key differences between locals and visitors, and 1st/2nd Gen Vietnamese Americans and 3rd/4th Gen Vietnamese Americans.

**The Value and Influence** each customer group places on the offerings and characteristics in a commercial district

such as Little Saigon offers a framework for prioritizing improvements that will improve the visitor experience.

● A 'high' value is assigned if customer groups make travel and spending choices based on a value.

● A 'medium' value level is assigned if customer groups are likely to spend or travel more based on a value.

○ A 'low' value is assigned if customer segments do not traditionally make any travel and purchasing choices based on a value.

### Convenience & Efficiency

Looks for easily navigable environments and quick purchasing processes.

### Customization & Hospitality

Aspires to a higher level of service that is genuine and helpful, and spends time to get a personalized service and experience.

### Tech Connectivity & Community

Seeks integrated experiences that leverage technology to stay updated on deals, promotions and local insights/offerings.

### Sustainability

Considers long-term impact of lifestyle and consumption patterns on the local economy and environment.

### Look & Feel

Pays attention to user interface and design of spaces.

### Local Culture & Sense of Place

Enjoys experiencing places that emulate local neighborhoods, trends, and culture through music, events, and art.

**Customer Profile**

**Locals**



1st Gen/2nd Gen  
Vietnamese-American



3rd/4th Gen  
Vietnamese-American



Orange County  
Resident

**Visitors**



International Tourist



US Visitor

**Frequency/Purpose of Visits**

Routine weekly/monthly visits, typically for groceries, take-out, and convenience goods and services. On special occasions, dining out.

**Dwell Time**

Average range: 45-60 mins

**Core Values**

Places greatest value in Convenience and Efficiency, and Local Culture & Sense of Place

Annual or less frequent visits (typically for specialized reasons, e.g. visiting Disneyland, Knotts Berry Farm and beaches), with some plan made ahead of time. Typically for destination dining and retail.

Average range: 60 mins>

Places greatest value in Local Culture & Sense of Place, Look & Feel, Customization & Hospitality

The following customer profiles are created based on qualitative information provided through stakeholder interviews conducted by Streetsense

City of Westminster Race / Ethnicity	2010	2020	
White	36.12%	29.85%	↓
Asian	46.79%	51.35%	↓
Black / African American	0.98%	1.10%	↑
Some Other Race	11.62%	12.99%	↑
Two or More Races	3.62%	3.83%	↑
American Indian / Alaska Native	0.47%	0.46%	
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Island	0.41%	0.42%	
Hispanic or Latino	24.12%	25.13%	↑

Source: 2010 Decennial Census; 2020 Claritas

City of Westminster Asian Population by Ancestry	2010	2020	
Vietnamese	86.27%	84.74%	↓
Chinese	4.44%	4.05%	↓
Filipino	2.70%	3.02%	↑
Japanese	2.04%	2.06%	
Korean	1.47%	0.95%	↓
Cambodian	0.56%	0.88%	↑
Asian Indian	0.79%	0.91%	↑
Laotian	0.25%	0.72%	↑

Source: 2010 Decennial Census; 2020 Claritas



## 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Gen Vietnamese American

**Age Group:**  
45+

**Dwell Time:**  
30-60 minutes

**Dwell Area:**  
Magnolia-Moran



**Favorite Businesses:**  
ABC Supermarket  
Song Long Restaurant  
Lee's Sandwiches

### Core Values:

- Convenience & Efficiency
- Customization & Hospitality
- Tech Connectivity & Community
- Sustainability
- Look & Feel
- Local Culture & Sense of Place

### Little Saigon Story:

"I was born in Vietnam and fled the country with my family in the late 1970s. We moved to Westminster and worked hard to build a business and grow our family here. When our children were little, we brought the family to Little Saigon every week to buy groceries, eat out, and attend weddings or village reunions. The children went to college in Irvine and returned often for my home cooked meals and to stock up on Vietnamese snacks. They have since come back to help my husband with the business. We still visit Little Saigon weekly and drop the grandchildren off for Vietnamese language lessons while we enjoy a cup of coffee and pork buns at Van's Bakery. There is still so much on offer in Little Saigon, I don't know where else you would go for the best traditional bánh mì or bún bò Huế."



## 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Gen Vietnamese American

**Age Group:**  
16-39

**Dwell Time:**  
30-60 minutes

**Dwell Area:**  
Bushard



**Favorite Businesses:**  
It's Boba Time  
Chien Mi Go #byjoy Restaurant  
BAMBŪ Desserts & Drinks  
The Loop: Handcrafted Churros

### Core Values:

- Convenience & Efficiency
- Customization & Hospitality
- Tech Connectivity & Community
- Sustainability
- Look & Feel
- Local Culture & Sense of Place

### Little Saigon Story:

"I grew up in Westminster and just graduated from Cal-State Fullerton with a business degree. Growing up, my parents and grandparents would bring me to Little Saigon occasionally for weddings and family events. I remember dreading waiting in the car to find parking on weekends so now I prefer to drive a little farther to Garden Grove to buy groceries at H Mart, or get my hair cut at Bella Terra. In our free time, my friends and I enjoy tracking LA Eater and food Instagram accounts to find new food and drink places around Orange County. We love to walk down Surf Nights Street Fair in Huntington Beach and are looking to rent an apartment there as we develop a new restaurant concept together."

## Staying Attractive to Orange County Residents

To enhance Little Saigon as a retail, dining and cultural destination in Orange County, it is important for businesses to continue attracting spending and visitation from other customers across the region.

Although their preferences may differ from that of local Westminster residents based on age breakdown, incomes, educational attainment, race/ethnicity, and language capabilities, it is still critically important that these customers are able to easily and comfortably experience and appreciate the authentic Vietnamese history and culture of Little Saigon.



Current Condition

# 45%

**Local youth never visit Little Saigon or visit only a few times a year**

Source: 2021 Little Saigon Youth Survey (City of Westminster)

Orange County residents are younger, more ethnically diverse, primarily English-speaking, and have higher spending power and educational attainments. To appeal to these customers, Little Saigon will need to elevate its appearance and update sales and marketing tactics, while diversifying offerings to include a mix of traditional and newer, trendier retail and dining concepts.



	2020 Education Attainment	OC	Westminster
→	Less than High School	15.2%	22.4%
	High School Graduate/GED	17.3%	22.7%
	Some College/Associates	27.6%	30.0%
	Bachelor's Degree	25.9%	18.3%
→	Master's Degree and Higher	14.1%	6.6%

	2020 Household Income	OC	Westminster
→	<\$35,000	17.9%	28.7%
	\$35,000-\$49,999	8.7%	10.9%
	\$50,000-\$99,999	26.4%	27.8%
	\$100,000-\$149,999	19.2%	16.1%
	\$150,000-\$199,999	10.6%	7.6%
	\$200,000-\$249,999	5.8%	3.9%
→	\$250,000>	11.4%	5.0%
→	Median Income	\$94,007	\$66,573

	2020 Languages Spoken	OC	Westminster
→	English Only	53.2%	35.5%
→	Asian/Pacific Island Language	14.4%	42.4%
	IndoEuropean Language	4.8%	2.6%
→	Spanish	26.8%	18.6%
	Other Language	0.8%	0.9%

	2020 Ethnicity	OC	Westminster
→	White	56.0%	29.9%
→	Asian	21.3%	51.4%
	Black / African American	1.9%	1.1%
	Some Other Race	15.1%	13.0%
	Two or More Races	4.8%	3.8%
	American Indian/Alaska Native	0.6%	0.5%
	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Island	0.3%	0.4%
→	Hispanic or Latino	35.0%	25.1%

	2020 Age	OC	Westminster
	<18	21.7%	20.9%
	18-24	9.1%	8.3%
	25-44	27.3%	26.2%
	45-54	13.8%	14.6%
	55-64	12.9%	13.0%
	65-84	13.3%	15.0%
	85>	1.9%	2.2%
→	Median Age	37.5	40.6



## Organizational Capacity

# Organizational Capacity

## Why is it important?

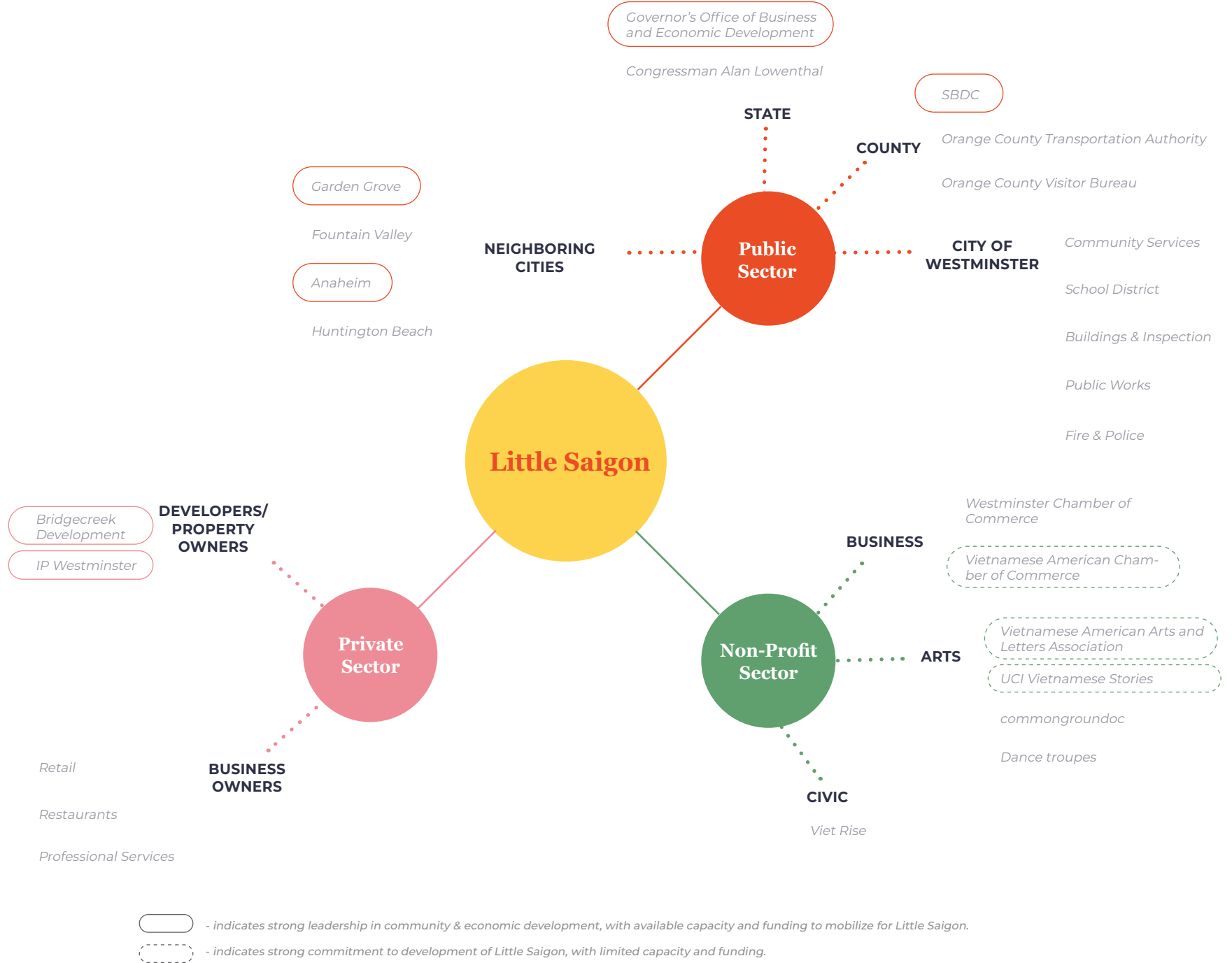
Local organizational capacity plays a crucial role in achieving long-term community-driven commercial revitalization. Organizational capacity refers to a combination of leadership (across public, private, and non-profit sectors), resources (both human and financial), and regulatory and policy frameworks that enable catalytic investments and improvements to take root.

## Organizational Landscape of Little Saigon

Despite being run almost entirely with volunteer support and donations, the non-profit organizations in Westminster have shown continued, strong commitment to the revitalization of the district through popular events and programming. The need to uplift these groups will be critical to the preservation of Little Saigon as an economic and cultural hub for the Vietnamese community and others across Orange County.

However, the district will need to leverage and work with leadership, funding, and technical support from the State, County and neighboring cities that have established resources and capacity to guide local stakeholders in Little Saigon.

At this time, the City is under-resourced and -staffed to execute a robust suite of economic development initiatives that can drive growth of the district.





Recommendations/Strategies

## Developing Strategies

The following strategies combine a mix of policy, programs, and capital improvement projects that the City of Westminster and its existing partners/stakeholders can take the lead on implementing and that address previously identified challenges and opportunities.

Toward developing each of the following recommendations/strategies, Streetsense first assessed past and existing City programs and policies to understand the successes/failures of each tool to-date. This was critical to understanding the level of public buy-in that any newly proposed recommendation will be met with, as well as level of resource commitment that may need to be dedicated to new programs and tools.

Streetsense then leveraged its national experience and in-house expertise in Placemaking + Branding/Marketing to develop each strategy/recommendation that may be applied district-wide or prioritized in specific nodes along Bolsa Avenue.

Each of these strategies is guided by a set of **four core principles** (or beliefs and values) that emerged through the research conducted and that were developed in consensus with the Advisory Committee.

They are also supported by relevant case studies that helped shape a robust understanding of estimated time and cost for implementation, potential models to adapt/replicate, likely partners needed for implementation (including city agencies, private property owners and businesses, non-Profit organizations, etc.), as well as potential sources of funding (including Federal, State, Local and Philanthropic).

The following plan should serve as an advocacy tool to guide the City's investments, solicit new expertise and funding, as well as strengthen applications to national and state grants.

*The sample project rubric shown here was used to develop each priority action in detail.*



<b>Project Rubric</b>	
<b>Project Title</b>	An action-oriented statement, e.g. Install lighting in public plaza
<b>Category</b>	Organizational Capacity*, Branding + Marketing, Redevelopment (Public Realm + Private Realm), Access + Circulation
<b>Guiding Principles</b> (or beliefs and values) developed in consensus with the Advisory Committee	<p>Preserve + grow cultural and historic landmarks and institutions in Little Saigon</p> <p>Unify stakeholders in Little Saigon</p> <p>Support the creation of a cohesive, vibrant, and connected place</p> <p>Elevate Little Saigon as a preferred place to do business</p>
<b>Priority Location</b>	District-wide; Magnolia-Moran; Bushard; Brookhurst
<b>Estimated Time &amp; Cost</b>	<p>Low: &lt;\$50,000, Medium: \$50,000-\$200,000, High: \$200,000&gt;</p> <p>Short: &lt;1 year, Medium: 1-5 years, Long: 5 years&gt;</p>
<b>Diagnostic</b>	Challenge or opportunity identified in the diagnostic assessment that necessitates the implementation of the strategy
<b>Action Items &amp; Process</b>	Concise description of project and key actions that will be taken (may include a list of chronological steps to fully implement the project, e.g. training, property/land purchase)
<b>Partners and Resources</b>	Include a list of public/non-profit/private entities and individuals whose support and cooperation is critical to successful implementation of projects, and specify any roles
<b>Risks</b>	Identify potential risks to the project including political will, regulatory restrictions, community interests, site ownership, environmental constraints, or financing limitations
<b>Case Study/ Best Practice Model</b>	Descriptions of projects similar to the one being proposed. Examples may be local/regional/ national

\* Organizational capacity refers to a combination of leadership (across public, private, and non-profit sectors), resources (both human and financial), and regulatory and policy frameworks that enable catalytic investments and improvements to take root.

## Little Saigon Guiding Principles

**Little Saigon is an unrivaled economic engine and cultural hub for the Vietnamese-American community of Orange County. Located on Bolsa Avenue, the district is home to a mix of over 700 consumer-facing retail, restaurant, and service businesses, and key cultural organizations and industrial businesses that heavily influence import/export activity for the region.**

**Since the 1980s, the district has grown its offerings beyond Asian Garden Mall across the mile-long corridor and branched out into neighboring cities, Garden Grove and Fountain Valley. Even as it enters a new era and welcomes new generations of Orange County residents, its identity remains firmly rooted in the history, language, and culture of the Vietnamese-American community.**

### Guiding Principles

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#### Unify stakeholders in Little Saigon

### Why?

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Little Saigon is comprised of a complex landscape of stakeholders who are highly committed to the revitalization of the district. However, to date, stakeholders have not had formalized frameworks for collaboration and as such have been unable to rally significant levels of resources and funding to catalyze investment and improvement in the district. To implement the strategies in the plan, Little Saigon will need to foster new relationships and build trust in order to drive a common vision for the district.

#### Elevate Little Saigon as a preferred place to do business

Little Saigon is home to more than 700+ consumer-facing businesses that drive more than \$938 million in sales annually. Maintaining this economic engine will be critical to the City's overall success and will require continued business support and innovative, business-friendly programs and policies.

#### Preserve + grow cultural and historic landmarks and institutions in Little Saigon

Consumers today place high value in experiencing authentic places that emulate local trends and culture through music, events, and art. Little Saigon's rich history as a hub for the Vietnamese-American community of Orange County is an asset that is already preserved through tenant mix and annual events/activities, and may be further enhanced to help bridge relationships between young and old, and across ethnic groups.

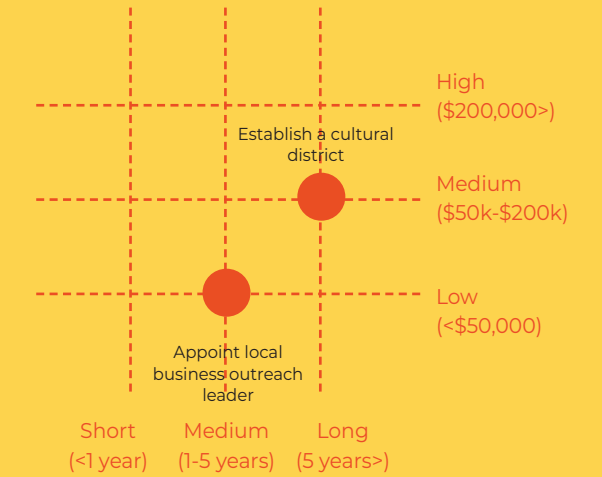
#### Support the creation of a cohesive, vibrant, and connected place

Customers in the region have a wide range of destinations to select from when choosing where to shop, dine, and entertain. Although the district's diverse set of retail, restaurants, and services continue to serve customers that are familiar with the district, many others are faced with challenges in the physical environment including the lack of walkability, outdoor spaces for gathering, as well as convenient parking.

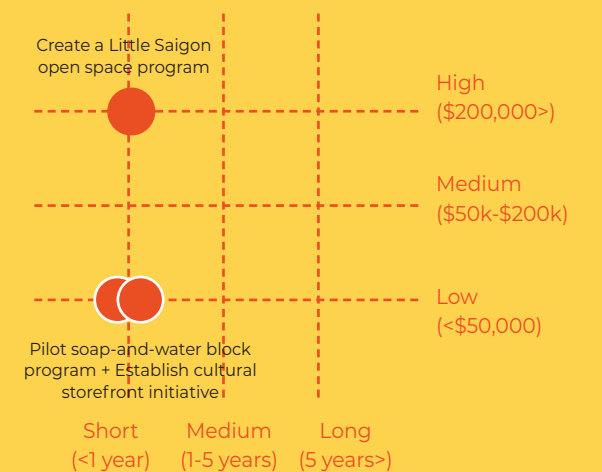
# Little Saigon Blueprint for Investment

Category	Action/ Strategy	Guiding Principles
<b>Organizational Capacity</b>	Appoint Little Saigon community outreach leader	Preserve + grow cultural and historic landmarks and institutions in Little Saigon
		Unify stakeholders in Little Saigon
		Elevate Little Saigon as a preferred place to do business
	Establish management entities for Little Saigon	Preserve + grow cultural and historic landmarks and institutions in Little Saigon
<b>Branding + Marketing</b>		Support the creation of a cohesive, vibrant, and connected place
		Preserve + grow cultural and historic landmarks and institutions in Little Saigon
	Develop a Little Saigon district brand and logo	Unify stakeholders in Little Saigon
		Elevate Little Saigon as a preferred place to do business
	Design and implement a comprehensive marketing strategy	Support the creation of a cohesive, vibrant, and connected place
	Elevate Little Saigon as a preferred place to do business	
	Establish a civic art program	Preserve + grow cultural and historic landmarks and institutions in Little Saigon
		Support the creation of a cohesive, vibrant, and connected place

## Organizational Capacity

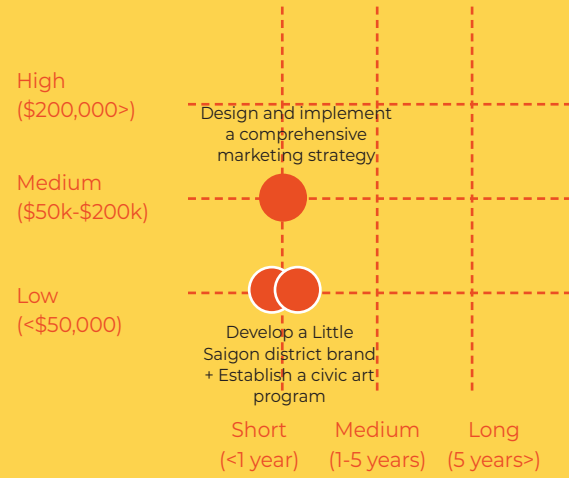


## Redevelopment

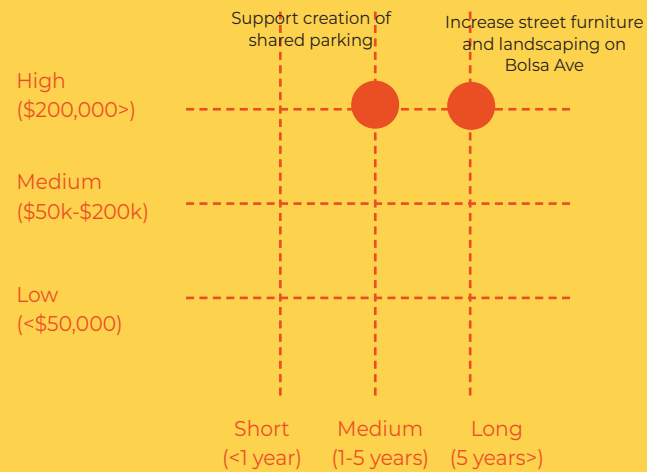


# Little Saigon Blueprint for Investment

## Branding + Marketing



## Access + Circulation



Category	Action/ Strategy	Guiding Principles
Redevelopment	Create a Little Saigon pop-up activation program	Preserve + grow cultural and historic landmarks and institutions in Little Saigon  Unify stakeholders in Little Saigon  Elevate Little Saigon as a preferred place to do business Support the creation of a cohesive, vibrant, and connected place  Support the creation of a cohesive, vibrant, and connected place
	Pilot soap-and-water/storefront improvement block program	Support the creation of a cohesive, vibrant, and connected place  Elevate Little Saigon as a preferred place to do business
	Support the creation of shared parking	Support the creation of a cohesive, vibrant, and connected place
Access + Circulation	Increase street furniture and landscaping on Bolsa Avenue	Support the creation of a cohesive, vibrant, and connected place



# Appoint Little Saigon community outreach leader

## Project Category

- Organizational Capacity
- Business Retention + Attraction
- Branding + Marketing
- Public Realm
- Access/Circulation
- Private Property

## Guiding Principles

- Preserve and grow culture and history
- Unify stakeholders in Little Saigon
- Elevate Little Saigon as a preferred place to do business
- Support the creation of a cohesive, vibrant & connected place

## Priority Nodes



## Estimated Time + Cost



### Why is this critical?

The planning effort revealed an important gap in working relationships between the City and local businesses and property owners on Bolsa Avenue. At this time, the City's Department of Community Development overseeing all planning, housing, community preservation and building efforts in town has limited full-time staff, and therefore limited capacity to conduct ongoing outreach with local stakeholders.

However, to successfully implement the strategies in this plan, the City will need to make a concerted effort toward conducting robust outreach and engagement with the help of partners or volunteers to begin building much-needed relationships with local stakeholders before eventually seeking community buy-in and garnering additional resources.

### How do we appoint a community outreach leader?

The community outreach leader role may initially be an unofficial role appointed to a part-time volunteer or contractor given the limited capacity of City staff and funding resources. Vietnamese-American students at local business colleges, for example, may be ideal candidates for the role and often require a nominal compensation commensurate with experience.

To continue strengthening the network building that was done as a part of this project, the Little Saigon Advisory Committee that was established should be called upon to help shape scope of work and qualification requirements to be used in an open RFP process.

### What is the role of a community outreach leader?

A community outreach leader typically serves as an ombudsman or local liaison between the City and local stakeholders. They should be the person that local businesses, property owners, and other community organizations feel most comfortable sharing concerns with and seek business and permitting support from. As such, the community outreach leader must be well-versed in the City's existing programs, policies, and services in order to be able to address the needs of various stakeholders.

Given the high rates of older Vietnamese-American business owners in Little Saigon, it is critical that the appointed community outreach leader is able to converse fluently in Vietnamese and has some previous experience in business administration and/or engagement with diverse communities.

The responsibilities of the community outreach leader in the first and second year of appointment should include the following:

- Develop a comprehensive communications, outreach, and engagement plan
- Conduct cold calls/in-person initial outreach to tenants, property owners, property managers, brokers, etc.
- Participate at VACOC and ABAOC meetings and be a member of regional business associations/boards to familiarize with existing business resources and to network with local business owners

- Establish a schedule of regular Little Saigon district roundtables with core group of stakeholders - business owners, cultural organizations, religious institutions, property owners, brokers (e.g. monthly luncheons)
- Utilize new networks to deploy City/County business and cultural resources and technical assistance
- Establish and regularly update Little Saigon database, including contact information of tenants, business sales data, property ownership data, commercial vacancy and lease rates, etc

### Who can help support this project?

Although their membership extends beyond the City of Westminster, the Vietnamese American Chamber of Commerce (VACOC) and Asian Business Association of Orange County (ABAOC) has an existing schedule of regular meetings for its members and may be an important partner in helping establish initial contact with key business owners in Little Saigon.

These organizations also already offer business support and training to its members on grant/loan applications and digital marketing with the expertise of volunteers, and may benefit from cross-marketing of their services through the Little Saigon community outreach leader's efforts.



Source: Streetsense

### Garden Grove, CA

**Staff/Resources:** The City of Garden Grove established the Community and Economic Development division in 2016 to accelerate the City of Garden Grove's growth as a choice location for doing business. From a full-time staff of 1, the team has since grown to a full-time staff of 5 overseeing redevelopment efforts, business support, and real estate transactions.

**Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement:** In the initial years of its formation, the Director of Community and Economic Development committed time to conducting outreach to the local business community in order to build relationships and learn the stories of legacy businesses. The outreach began with in-person meetings with five key stakeholders with the strongest relationships in the local community before expanding to small group lunches that became conversations that led to trust-building and "breaking bread" with stakeholders who have, in the past, been afraid to approach City Hall for assistance.

**Partnerships:** Outreach efforts were complemented by analyses of sales tax data and other real estate indicators to better design financial/technical assistance programs for local businesses. Cal-State Fullerton School of Business and University of California (Irvine) student groups helped facilitate some of these analyses and outreach. Other key partners that have provided resources to the division include SBDC, SBA, and VACOC.

*Based on Streetsense interview with Lisa Kim, City of Garden Grove Assistant City Manager/Community and Economic Development Director. Conducted January 13, 2021.*



Source: Flickr

### 4th St, Santa Ana, CA

**Staff/Resources:** The City of Santa Ana initially hired a downtown liaison whose responsibilities, over 3-4 years, expanded to include economic development projects across the municipality. Today, the position is titled Economic Development Specialist and filled by a candidate who speaks fluent Spanish - a critical skill to engage legacy Mexican business owners in the City.

**Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement:** Within the first year of appointment, the downtown liaison prioritized outreach to business owners, tenants, and property owners. The relationships built that first year resulted in the downtown liaison being recognized by local stakeholders as the point person for any technical support on code enforcement or business permitting/licensing issues, and becoming a familiar and trusted resource. Other early responsibilities of the downtown liaison included setting up a database to track downtown development, tenant changes, and any other public realm/business issues.

**Partnerships:** Key partners that supported the work of the downtown liaison included existing business and cultural organizations such as the Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce and Grand Central Arts Center.

*Based on Streetsense interview with Julie Castro-Cardenas, City of Santa Ana Economic Development Specialist. Conducted March 03, 2021.*

# Establish Management Entities for Little Saigon

## Project Category

- Organizational Capacity
- Business Retention + Attraction
- Branding + Marketing
- Public Realm
- Access/Circulation
- Private Property

## Guiding Principles

- Preserve and grow culture and history
- Unify stakeholders in Little Saigon
- Elevate Little Saigon as a preferred place to do business
- Support the creation of a cohesive, vibrant & connected place

## Priority Nodes



## Estimated Time + Cost



### What is a district management entity? Why is it critical?

A district management entity is an economic development tool that allows a set of stakeholders to enhance a defined area by building revenue through a) fees or taxes levied on property owners, or b) grant funding. There are various forms of district management entities that may be considered for Little Saigon including the following:

- Cultural District
- Business Improvement District
- Parking Management District

The formation of any one of the above entities does not preclude another from being created. In fact, a combination of entities, **if designed and structured in close collaboration rather than in competition with one another**, may generate greater funding and resources for Little Saigon.

The City’s budget shortfall, as previously mentioned, indicates its limited capacity to implement the Blueprint without cross-sector partnership and additional support and resources. The formation of management entities for Little Saigon, therefore, will ensure the creation of new sources of revenue that will help fund dedicated staff time, programs, and resources to support economic recovery and community revitalization efforts of the district.

### What is a Cultural District?

In 2016, the state of California signed a bill that authorized the California Arts Council to solicit and receive funding from public or private sources to establish a state-designated cultural district program. The program established criteria and guidelines for state-designated “cultural districts” and a competitive application system for certification in order that **technical and promotional support may be provided to these certified state-designated cultural districts.**

As outlined by the program, a state-designated **“cultural district” refers to a certified geographical area with a “concentration of cultural facilities, creative enterprises, or arts venues** that... 1) attracts artists, creative entrepreneurs and cultural enterprises, 2) encourages economic development and supports entrepreneurship, 3) encourages the preservation and reuse of historic buildings and other artistic and culturally-significant structures, 4) fosters local cultural development, 5) provides a focal point for celebrating and strengthening the unique cultural identity of the community, and 6) promotes opportunity without generating displacement or expanding inequality”. **Cultural Districts may be eligible for a new set of tax credits and grants (Federal or State) that are dedicated to historic preservation, creative placemaking, and cultural development (including from the California Arts Council).**

Each eligible district must be submitted to the State by a partnership that includes, at a minimum a cultural non-profit or artist collective, a local business or business association, and local government.

### Why is a Cultural District the right tool?

Although Bolsa Avenue is widely recognized as a commercial corridor and economic engine for the City of Westminster, the street has also become a key cultural hub for Vietnamese Americans in the County and all across the State of California. The corridor hosts significant cultural events/ activities such as the Tet Parade and Little Saigon Night Market, religious institutions (primarily temples and churches), and legacy businesses that continue to preserve the complex culture and identities of the Vietnamese American community.

As mentioned in earlier sections of the plan, despite the absence of an official district brand, the Vietnamese culture and identity also continues to be expressed in other subtle ways along Bolsa through statues of war figures, and the architecture of malls that feature pagoda designs and Corinthian columns. In addition, Moran Street or “Media Lane” has become a cultural landmark in itself as the home of major Vietnamese news and media outlets that remain important to older generations.

At this time, however, the preservation and protection of cultural assets in the district is a piecemeal effort by a few individuals and organizations - each with limited resources and run voluntarily. There is no coalition/partnership formed between existing organizations to oversee this important task through which grants, gifts, and donations may be authorized to further expand cultural efforts in Little Saigon.

**Who can help support this project?**

Local leaders who are already engaged in the work of preserving Vietnamese arts and culture in Westminster, and specifically in Little Saigon, should be champions of this strategy. The Little Saigon Blueprint for Investment has specifically identified the following organizations, based on recommendations of the Advisory Committee:

- UCI Viet Stories/ Vietnamese American Oral History Project
- Vietnamese American Arts and Letters Association
- commmongroundoc
- SaigonTV
- Viet-Nam California Radio
- Vietnam War Memorial
- local dance, music and performancetroupes
- religious institutions

Local religious institutions that have played a significant role in supporting the movement of Vietnamese refugees in the early 1980s will also be critical partners in this effort.

**How do we establish a Cultural District?**

Once a coalition of partners with aligned missions around preserving and protecting the culture, identity, and arts of the Vietnamese-American community in Little Saigon has been established, a critical first step would be to convene the coalition and establish regular meeting intervals to determine roles and responsibilities, as well as strategic goals and mission of the colalition.

With the support of the appointed local business outreach leader (refer to earlier strategy on page 6), the coalition should begin creating a cultural asset inventory and map (sample provided below from the Cultural Arts Council). The inventory will be required by the Cultural Arts Council in certifying Little Saigon as a State-designated cultural districts and may be an effective way to engage more members of the community in this process through surveys on street interviews.

These preceding actions will support the writing of an application and letter of intent to the Cultural Arts Council to designate Little Saigon as a State-designated cultural district.

Category	Asset	Location	Notes/ Additional Information
People	e.g., Lam Nguyen, Retired architect		
	e.g., Dr. Linda Vo, UCI Viet Stories		
Places	Asian Garden Mall	Address	
		Longitude/Latitude Coordinates	
Organizations	UCI Viet Stories/ Vietnamese American Oral History Project		
	Vietnamese American Arts and Letters Association		
	commmongroundoc		
	local dance, music and performancetroupes		
	SaigonTV		
	Viet-Nam California Radio		
Events (Historic and Current)	Little Saigon Night Market		Frequency
	Tet Parade		Name of Organizer
			Cost of production
Additional Categories			

*Little Saigon Cultural Asset Inventory Template (adapted from Cultural Arts Council)*

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### What is a **Business Improvement District (BID)**?

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A BID is an assessment district, or “a program of a city under which the **city levies an assessment against businesses or property owners** to fund services or improvements that benefit the assessed businesses or property”<sup>2</sup>. With the formation of a BID, a non-profit organization will be formed under contract to the City and is responsible for providing the services or improvements outlined in the establishment process of the BID.

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### What are potential challenges with establishing a **Business Improvement District (BID)**?

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While levying additional assessments on properties/businesses is often unpopular, particularly in the immediate phases of a nationwide economic depression, establishing a BID could offer a viable solution to improve Little Saigon in a ground-up manner, as BID members would choose the type of improvements they wanted to fund. Establishing a BID will require significant cooperation and coordination between property owners and business owners - stakeholders from whom the City of Westminster, at this time, cannot gauge the level of support or interest.

**A city council can only establish a BID after a majority of owners of the businesses or properties located within a proposed district have indicated their support for the BID.**

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### What is a **Parking Management District (PMD)**?

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A PMD is an area designated by a city to regulate parking supply and rates in order to better match parking demand to supply. Specific regulations that govern parking requirements will apply to all properties located within a PMD and typically include supply management strategies such as dedicating shared parking facilities and parking pricing policies that allow for changes to parking fees based on demand.

Parking revenues collected from any centralized or shared parking facilities may then be used to operate and maintain parking areas as well as toward public realm enhancements that facilitate the use of shared parking facilities in the district. As such, this type of management entity is critical to the implementation of a shared parking structure (*refer to page 26*) as well as toward funding streetscape improvements (*refer to page 27*) that complement parking supply management.

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### What are potential challenges with establishing a **Parking Management District (PMD)**?

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Currently, most parking spaces available to customers across various properties in Little Saigon are available at no cost. Introducing parking fees to raise revenues for the PMD may initially be unpopular to business owners who rely on customers arriving by car. In fact, there are few case studies today of other municipalities in Southern California adopting a similar management entity, particularly in a non-mixed use district.

The City will therefore need to undertake extensive outreach and education to demonstrate the importance of PMD's and potential benefits to access and circulation.

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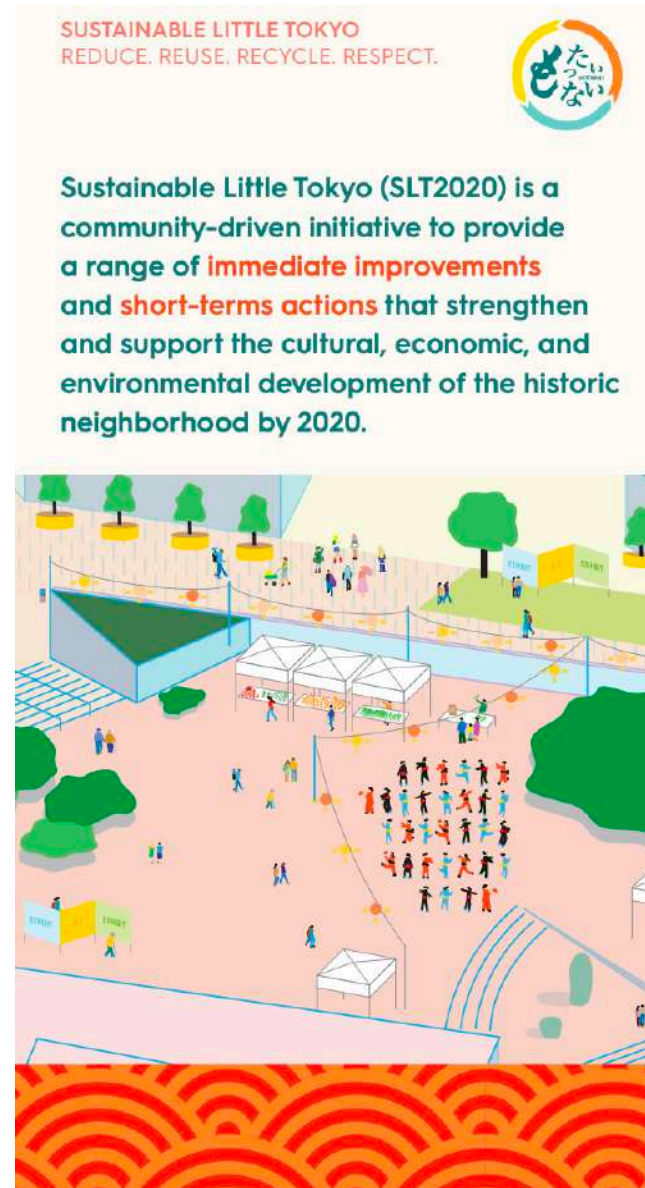
<sup>2</sup> “Business Improvement Districts: Potential for Public/Private Conflicts”. Mandell, Mark. 2017.

## Little Tokyo, LA - California Cultural District

Little Tokyo is a compact 100-year old neighborhood in downtown Los Angeles measuring about 0.17 sq miles. It is one of three remaining “Japantowns” in the nation, and was designated as a California Arts Council Cultural District in 2016. Although the district is now a well-supported and well-funded initiative led by a partnership of three major cultural organizations (Japanese American Cultural & Community Center, Little Tokyo Community Council, Little Tokyo Business Association, and Little Tokyo Service Center), it was only possible through a strong grassroots visioning process - similar to the ongoing Little Saigon Blueprint for Investment effort - that involved the participation of over 200 community members in 2013. This process also included the establishment of a cultural asset inventory of traditional and contemporary cultural and spiritual groups, organizations, and institutions that range from informal gardening groups to century old Buddhist temples.

Many would consider the community vision document as having succeeded in guiding positive development efforts in the following decade and continues to be refined as new challenges arise for the community. Among key issues that were identified in the 2013 visioning process were the lack of affordable housing and the threats of displacement for long-time, family-run and multigenerational small businesses that were struggling with rising rents and a diminishing customer base. These issues have been addressed through myriad strategies implemented with the support of LA Metro, City agencies, and private funders.

The success of the coalition to date has built the case for additional funding from a combination of philanthropic organizations including The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, ArtPlace America and Surdna Foundation, as well as Community Development Financial Institutions such as Enterprise Community Partners.



Source: Sustainable Little Tokyo 2021

## SLT's Long-Term Vision

In 2013, in response to plans for the Metro Regional Connector station as the second busiest transit hub in LA County, Sustainable Little Tokyo embarked on a community-based vision process to design a scheme for First Street North (the block between Temple St, 1st St, Judge Aiso St, and Central Ave), the Mangrove block (First St and Alameda St), and suggestions for the Metro station site (First St and Central Ave). Over 200 community members created the Sustainable Little Tokyo 2013 vision for equitable and sustainable development of these three pieces of public, city-owned land.

The community vision includes:



The proposed development is a phased 5-10 year plan, ensuring the long-term sustainable development of the neighborhood. Building upon this vision, SLT 2020 aims at short-term actions that continue community efforts for self-determination and sustainability in order to build towards this long-term vision. The long-term SLT 2013 vision can be found at: [www.sustainablelittletokyo.org](http://www.sustainablelittletokyo.org)

# Develop Little Saigon district brand & logo

## Project Category

- Organizational Capacity
- Business Retention + Attraction
- Branding + Marketing
- Public Realm
- Access/Circulation
- Private Property

## Guiding Principles

- Preserve and grow culture and history
- Unify stakeholders in Little Saigon
- Elevate Little Saigon as a preferred place to do business
- Support the creation of a cohesive, vibrant & connected place

## Priority Nodes



## Estimated Time + Cost



## Why is this critical and who is the audience?

A district brand (including a brand positioning statement and pillars) will provide clarity, cohesion and recognition for the Little Saigon district in its entirety along Bolsa Avenue. The brand, which may include a name, tagline, logo and visual assets, will also simply formalize the subtle expressions of Vietnamese-American culture and brands that already exist in the design and architecture of malls, bus stops, and neighboring residential developments.

The research conducted through this planning process revealed the nuances between different audiences, primarily between 1st/2nd Generation and 3rd/4th Generation Vietnamese American customers (refer to customer profile section of this plan) and between Vietnamese OC customers and non-Vietnamese OC residents. The Little Saigon brand will therefore need to inspire these diverse audiences through a forward-looking identity that both honors and respects the district's history and character but also enables younger generations and non-Vietnamese customers to easily access the retail, dining, and cultural assets of the district.

## How can a district brand be deployed?

Depending on available budget and resources, a district brand can be deployed in a number of ways including on street furniture (e.g. light pole banners, wraparound decals for trash cans, benches, planters), storefront window decals, murals, digital marketing (e.g. website, advertisement banners), and in print materials such as flyers, brochures, annual district reports, etc. Please refer to the following page for examples of potential district brand deployment.

## How is a district brand developed?

To begin developing a Little Saigon district brand, an exercise in audience identification and persona development (complementary to the earlier customer profiles developed in this plan) must be held to ensure the brand resonates with the right audiences (including a range of Vietnamese American age groups) and to better understand their needs and priorities to guide brand messaging.

Toward this, a brand consultant may choose to:

- Conduct an audit of existing brand landscape.
- Conduct in-depth research on the region's brand potential, including conducting consumer outreach, brand testing and focus groups.
- Review current brand efforts and existing creative elements.
- Conduct an analysis of competitor district marketing strategies.
- Create a strategic plan that includes implementation, management and ongoing promotion of the new brand.
- Design a logo and guidelines for reproducing the brand identity for Little Saigon
- Develop a conceptual brand collateral package based upon the established brand identity and design direction. This package should include art direction/

selection of photography and images, and a full expression of the project identity including custom graphic treatments.

## What project risks will need to be mitigated?

Although earlier efforts to brand the district were rooted in community engagement - an open call was held to submit logo designs and a public voting process was created, there was limited strategy put in place to deploy the selected brand. In addition, the open call process meant that few guidelines were in place to inform the direction of the logo design resulting in many disparate logo ideas - each responding to nuances from disparate audience groups.

As such, it is critical that moving forward, the Little Saigon brand and logo is developed through a contextual approach that is rooted in an understanding of the district's goals (as outlined in this plan) as well as the competitive landscape and audience dynamics (including the cultural nuances within the Vietnamese American community) before "picking up pencils."

## Who can help support this project?

To develop the Little Saigon district brand and logo, the City will need to hire a consultant experienced in developing community brands in diverse communities.

Local Vietnamese artists and arts organizations should also be engaged through the brand development process to ensure the graphic identity not only resonates with the targeted audiences but is also accepted by community members and business owners.

Inspiration for future brand development (based on designs from previous adhoc community-led Little Saigon marketing efforts)



Please Join Us for the Dedication of the

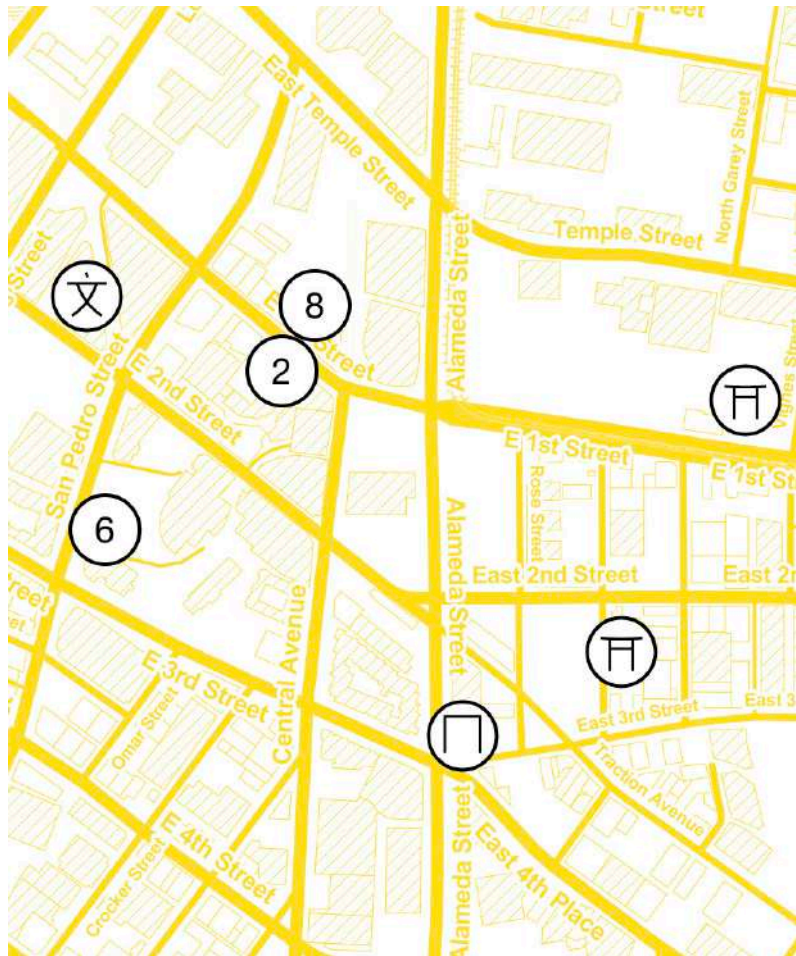
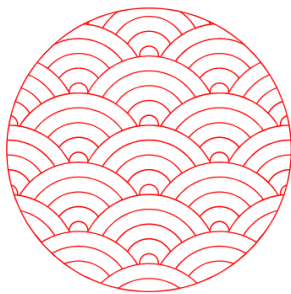
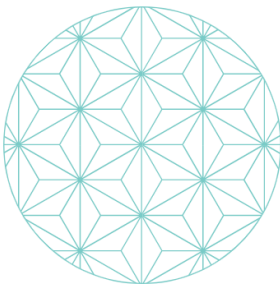
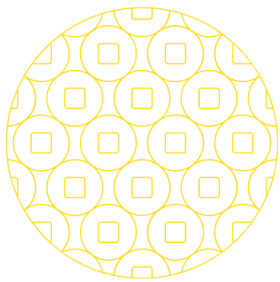
# LITTLE SAIGON Shuttle

**Saturday, Oct. 29, 2016**  
**11 a.m. - noon**  
 Asian Garden Mall  
 9200 Bolsa Ave | Westminster

Refreshments will be served.

**SERVICE BEGINS OCT. 31** [Ocbus.com/LittleSaigon](http://Ocbus.com/LittleSaigon)  
 For service information: (714) 636-RIDE (7433)





Source: Sustainable Little Tokyo

### Little Tokyo, Los Angeles

The logo of Sustainable Little Tokyo is inspired by “Mottainai”, a familiar Japanese phrase, roughly translated as “Don’t be wasteful” or representing the three “R’s”: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. This aligns closely with the district’s mission to support green development practices and to turn Little Tokyo into an eco-district.



Source: Streetsense

### Hollywood Partnership, CA

The Hollywood area is one of the fastest growing areas in Los Angeles. After two Hollywood BIDs merged, the new BID needed a name and identity that unified the two organizations, and celebrated the history of the neighborhood in a way that felt fresh and reflective of the many micro-communities it serves. The Hollywood Partnership commissioned brand consultants, Streetsense, to explore a new brand name, develop a logo and guidelines, and a conceptual brand package.

# Design and implement a comprehensive marketing strategy

## Project Category

- Organizational Capacity
- Business Retention + Attraction
- Branding + Marketing
- Public Realm
- Access/Circulation
- Private Property

## Guiding Principles

- Preserve and grow culture and history
- Unify stakeholders in Little Saigon
- Elevate Little Saigon as a preferred place to do business
- Support the creation of a cohesive, vibrant & connected place

## Priority Nodes



## Estimated Time + Cost



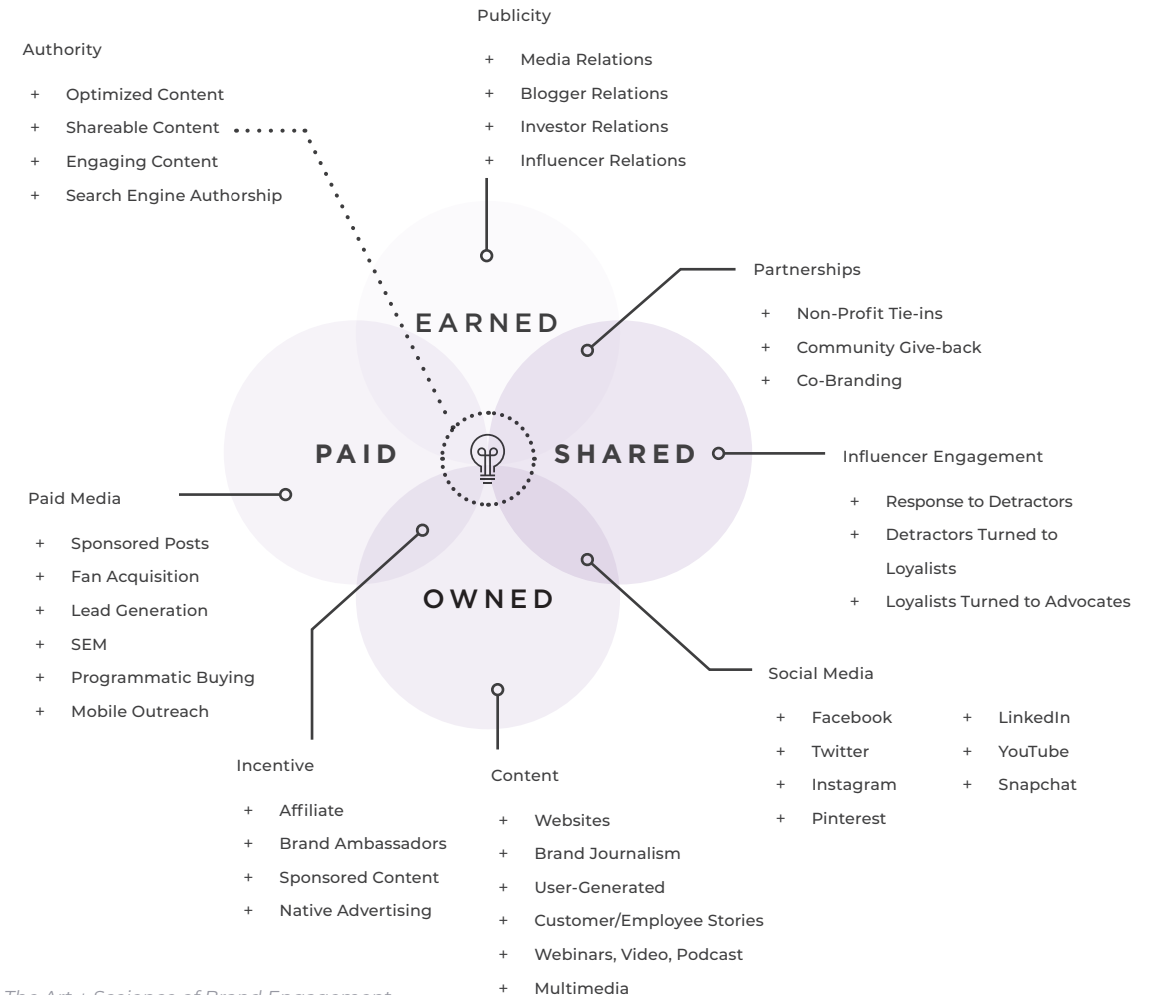
## What is a marketing strategy?

A comprehensive marketing strategy provides a roadmap for a brand rollout in digital, social and editorial spaces. Creating a strong brand and visual identity is only the first step to raising awareness of Little Saigon and its offerings to the right audiences. The brand needs to be leveraged in district marketing. As such, it is critical that this strategy is implemented in tandem with or following the completion of the Little Saigon brand development.

The marketing strategy for Little Saigon should include:

- Setting marketing goals, objectives, and key performance indicators
- Defining key messaging per target audience (as determined through the brand development strategy)
- Developing an owned media strategy (Website, Email, Direct), paid media strategy (Social, Display, PPC), shared media strategy (social platforms), earned media
- Best Practices in social media - including posting cadence, community management strategies, and post boosting.
- Design and development of a custom website that is responsive across desktop, mobile, and tablet (including information architecture/sitemap, copywriting, wireframe design, content management and search engine optimization)

The Little Saigon Website should not only be designed as directory that serve consumers seeking authentic Vietnamese cuisine, grocery products, and services. The over 700 businesses



*The Art + Science of Brand Engagement.*  
Source: Streetsense

in the district, as well as religious, art, and cultural organizations, should also be able to use the website as a resource. At this time, the City does not have a landing web page for a comprehensive set of business and arts/cultural resources.

In addition, given that older generation Vietnamese customers still rely heavily on print media, it is critical to develop a robust earned media strategy and build relationships with local media companies located on Moran Street.

### Why is this critical?

---

As previously mentioned, in order to engage with the growing share of younger consumers who are technologically-savvy, businesses across the country, including in Little Saigon, will need to adapt and leverage digital marketing tools so that they remain visible to customers. However, the large share of legacy businesses owned by older, 1st generation Vietnamese in Little Saigon have been slow to adapt. Many are less comfortable with technology apps and at this time only 25+ businesses are active on GrubHub, Postmates and other online delivery platforms, and these are the same businesses that are leveraging digital marketing strategies on IG/ FB/ GoogleMyBusiness.

As such, it is important that the City (or the newly established cultural district coalition and business outreach leader) supports the marketing of retail, dining, and cultural offerings in Little Saigon on behalf of some of these businesses, as well as in coordination of the newer businesses who themselves have established their own digital presence.

### Who can help support this project?

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In addition to hiring a marketing consultant experienced to help develop the marketing strategy and developing the website for Little Saigon and various other related media content, it is important to build a trusting relationship with local reporters at Vietnamese newspaper/radio/ TV media companies located in Little Saigon and across Orange County to begin raising awareness of the new Little Saigon brand and inspiring positive media coverage of businesses in the district.

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### How should Little Saigon leverage digital marketing?

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Setting up a website/app for Little Saigon must be accompanied by widespread buy-in and adoption by local businesses. As such, it is important that local businesses themselves are able to navigate the platforms and take full advantage of these new marketing tools. In addition to developing the website/app, the marketing consultant will need to be able to offer free 1-on-1 trainings to businesses on how to use the website/app, input/update information, and leverage other similar digital marketing tools that feed content to the app.

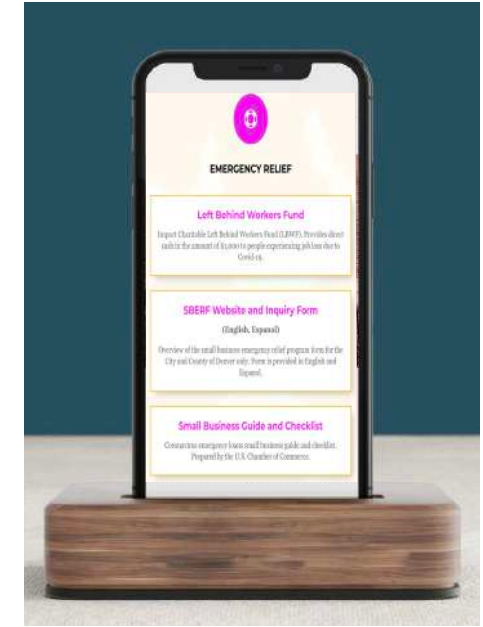
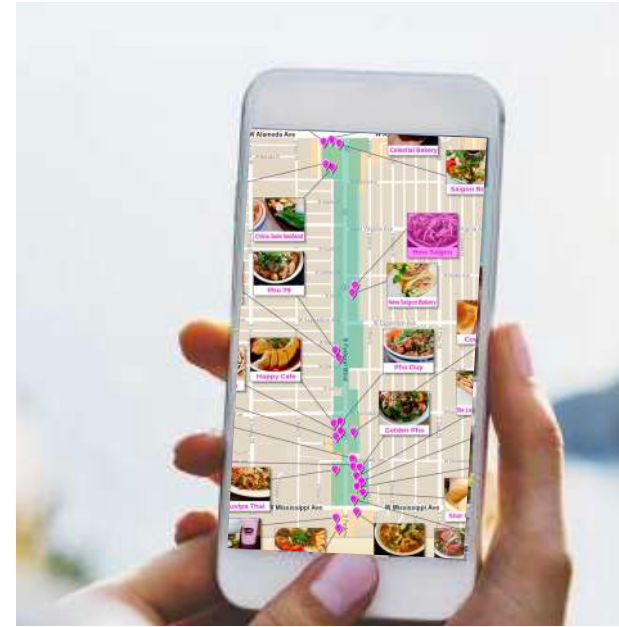
### What project risks will need to be mitigated?

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A bilingual marketing strategy must remain central to this effort to ensure engagement of older and younger generations of Vietnamese-American business owners and customers, as well as non-Vietnamese speaking customers across Orange County.

In addition, the implementation of the marketing strategy will require dedicated staff time and resources. This may be a role assigned to the Little Saigon business outreach leader or to a member of the proposed cultural district coalition (refer to earlier strategies). Execution of the strategy is resource-intensive and, alternatively, may even require an on-call support consultant to continuously manage content, maintain website, etc.

In the long-term, once a robust audience has been built, funding for marketing efforts may be built through paid ads that businesses or religious/cultural organizations may choose to pay to feature any special content on Little Saigon's marketing platforms.



Source: Little Saigon Denver

# Establish a civic art program

## Project Category

- Organizational Capacity
- Business Retention + Attraction
- Branding + Marketing
- Public Realm
- Access/Circulation
- Private Property

## Guiding Principles

- Preserve and grow culture and history
- Unify stakeholders in Little Saigon
- Elevate Little Saigon as a preferred place to do business
- Support the creation of a cohesive, vibrant & connected place

## Priority Nodes



## Estimated Time + Cost



## Why is this critical?

The Vietnamese arts and cultural landscape is rich and colorful, and the district has an opportunity to better reflect that diversity. The visual experience of Little Saigon is repetitive and largely unvaried along Bolsa Avenue with uniform colors of mall facades and weary conditions of older properties that have not been well-maintained closer to Magnolia.

Public art has long been recognized as a community asset. It is not only a popular and creative way to spruce up older properties and to enhance the experience of visitors/customers but it also creates opportunities for families and seniors to create new memories and 'shareable/Instagrammable moments' - especially if the art reflects the history and culture of the Vietnamese-American community.

## How do we establish a civic art program?

The City, with support from the cultural district coalition, should manage the program. By partnering with the coalition, the program may easily be supported through federal/state/philanthropic arts-focused or creative placemaking funds such as the [California Arts Council's Impact Projects](#).

Micro grants administered through the program should primarily cover artist's time and materials, and should vary depending on size of art work, installation time, materials purchased and location of artwork (with priority given to artwork

in the Magnolia/Moran node and along public right-of-ways).

The program should also prioritize grant applications from partnerships including local property owners, tenants, and local artists and community groups.

## What is a civic art program?

Building on the city's mural art program, the civic art program should provide micro-grants and technical assistance to interested artists, commercial tenants, and property owners interested in implementing professionally-crafted designs and art installations across Little Saigon.

Art installations funded through the program should:

- a) reflect the history of the diverse cultures and histories of communities in Westminster
- b) align with the brand of Little Saigon
- c) activate, light, and beautify under-utilized public spaces and streets so as to enhance overall walkability of Bolsa Avenue. Therefore, art work funded through the program should include more than murals. Stakeholders have suggested other opportunities including the painting of street furniture (light poles/bus shelters/benches), utility boxes, crosswalks, and parking lot asphalt.
- d) be visible and accessible to the public
- e) be created by local community
- f) be temporary in nature (incl. movable art) to allow for rapid installation and removal (as needed), and rotational/seasonal activations.

## What project risks will need to be mitigated?

Property owners along Bolsa Avenue have historically been difficult to contact and engage. To ensure participation in the civic arts programs, the City will need to conduct direct outreach prior to launch of the program to educate property owners on the details of the program (guideline on funded artwork, terms of financial support, etc.), and the benefits of civic art on the corridor and on the value of their real estate.

In addition, to ensure program applicants are respectful of cultural nuances within the community, **program guidelines** should clearly outline any design and language expectations that set a decorum for participants of the program, and a **Little Saigon civic art commission** should also be formed (consisting of arts/culture representatives who identify as both 1st/2nd Gen and 3rd/4th Gen Vietnamese American) to vet program applicants.

## Who can help support this project?

The City and the cultural district coalition should engage with various other local arts and cultural organizations with existing networks in the Vietnamese artist community early on in the process to build interest in the program and to begin connecting any artists directly with interested property owners.



Source: Little Saigon Stories 2019



Source: Greeting Tours (The organization worked in partnership with El Cajon BIA to create the gateway mural to Little Saigon San Diego)

### Little Saigon, San Diego, CA

Little Saigon Stories project features artwork along El Cajon Boulevard in the neighborhood of City Heights. The collection of art, combining a mix of asphalt art, wall murals, and window art installations, aims to help visitors better understand the history of the neighborhood and its residents, and to foster dialogue and sense of pride in the local Vietnamese-American community.

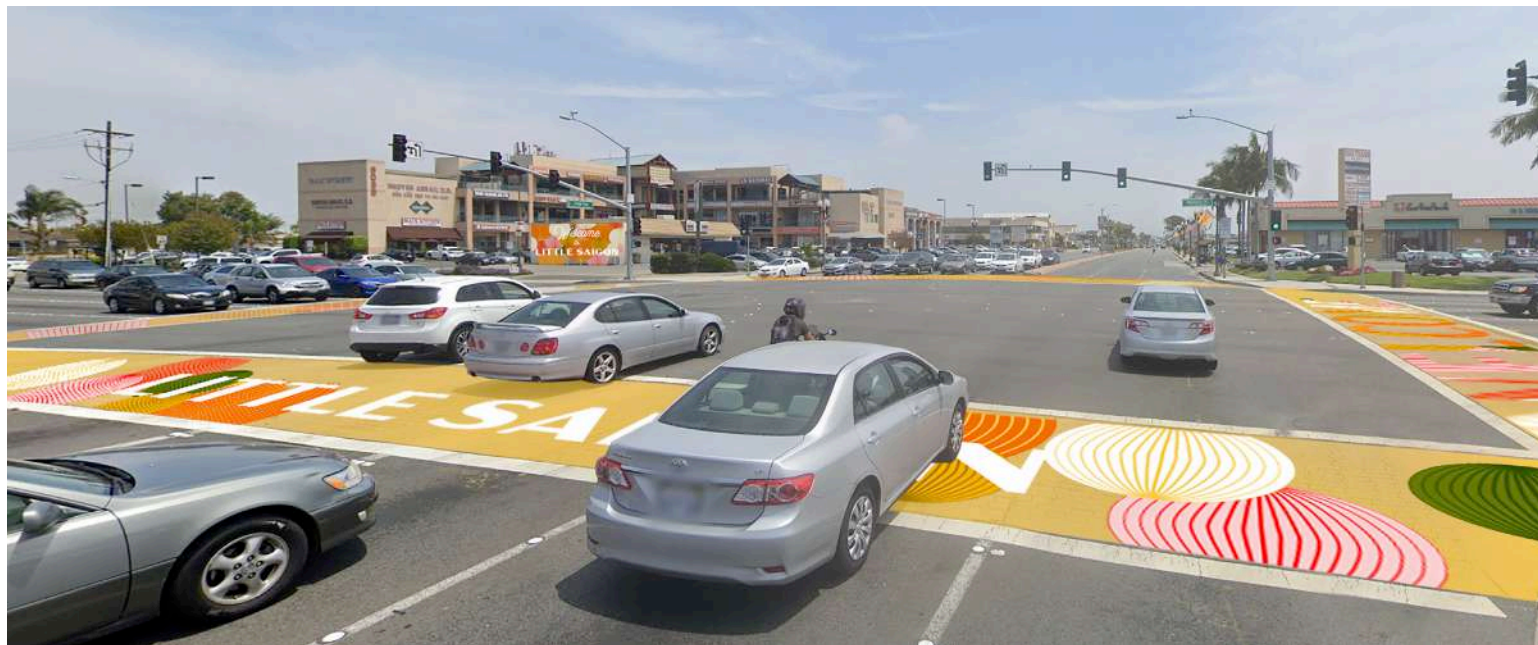
The art program is organized by a partnership of the Little Saigon San Diego Foundation, El Cajon Boulevard Business Improvement Association, and local arts organizations - Media Arts Center San Diego and The AjA Project. Funding was provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, LISC San Diego, and the SF Commission for Arts & Culture.



Civic art mock-up in Little Saigon



Entering the Magnolia-Moran node from the East. Source: Streetsense



Gateway entry to Little Saigon from Magnolia St. Source: Streetsense



Mall facade near A Dong Supermarket. Source: Streetsense

# Create a Little Saigon pop-up activation program

## Project Category

- Organizational Capacity
- Business Retention + Attraction
- Branding + Marketing
- Public Realm
- Access/Circulation
- Private Property

## Guiding Principles

- Preserve and grow culture and history
- Unify stakeholders in Little Saigon
- Elevate Little Saigon as a preferred place to do business
- Support the creation of a cohesive, vibrant & connected place

## Priority Nodes



## Estimated Time + Cost



### Why is this critical?

To mitigate against the threats of e-commerce, shopping centers and commercial corridors/ business districts across the country are offering customers **unique entertainment and experiential offerings that help build an ambiance that otherwise cannot be created online**. Ambient entertainment makes a customer's visit to a district exciting and turns districts into places to visit - not just for shopping. It also has shown the potential to increase dwell time of visitors, encouraging them to browse more stores and products, and potentially spend more dollars in the district.

At this time, Little Saigon lacks intentional open spaces or cultural storefronts that facilitate

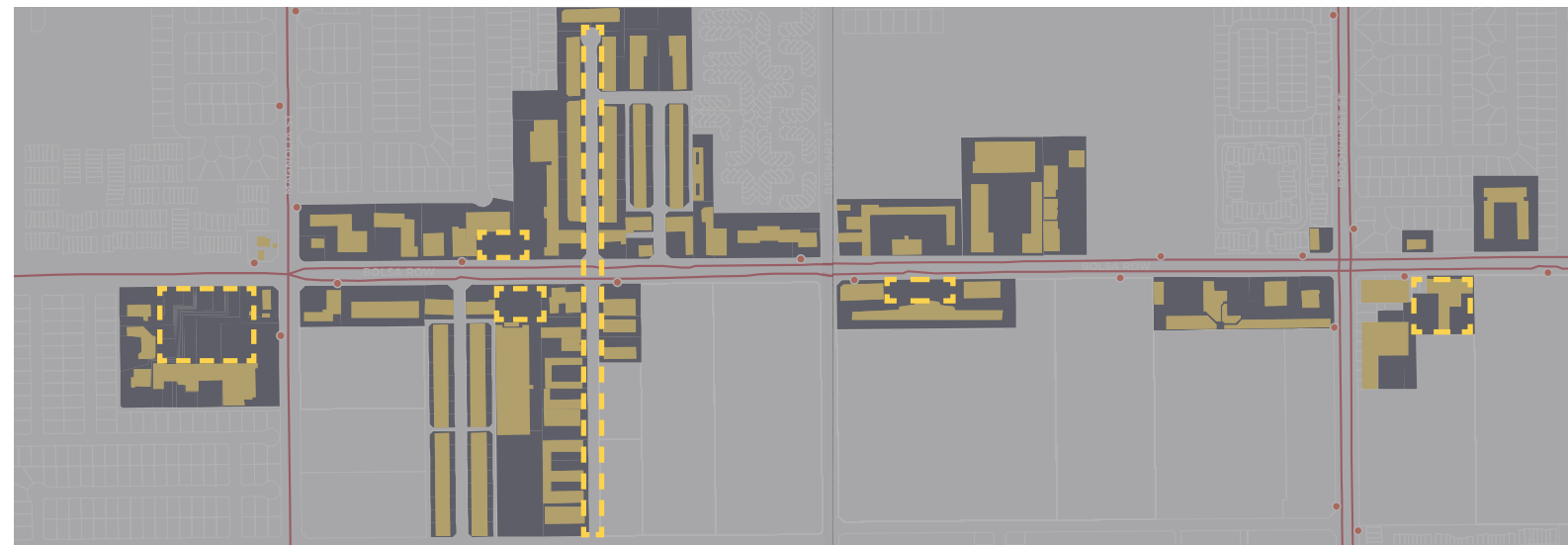
large social gatherings and community events. The district will need to **leverage spaces that are available - primarily surface parking lots, buffer green areas** (between the roadway and strip malls), **and vacant storefronts<sup>3</sup>** - to support creative programming, as successfully demonstrated during the pandemic and at annual night markets.

Cultural and arts organizations in Westminster (including non-profits and religious institutions) have expressed interest in finding viable spaces in Little Saigon in order to expand their services and better reach local communities. However, long-term rents in Little Saigon currently pose an impediment to these organizations and may be addressed through shorter term, pop-up spaces for lease.

### What is pop-up activation program?

A pop-up activation program provides **resources and technical assistance to local artists, property owners, community organizations, and businesses that wish to contribute to the district ambiance** and/or promote Vietnamese arts and culture and provide critical community services - whether in an outdoor/open space or a vacant storefront.

The program should therefore support a range of creative activation projects that are made available for free or at a low-cost to the public including performance series, public art installations, health/wellness activities, and parades/festivals/cultural events. Potential applicants may also open pop-up community service offices, chamber/business support offices,



■ Surface parking area    ■ Little Saigon commercial properties    □ Priority Open Space for Activation

<sup>3</sup> Although there are currently limited vacant commercial spaces in Little Saigon (based on a visual survey conducted in early 2021), this trend is anticipated to change with the expiration of the state-wide eviction moratorium in Q2 2021.

temple/church outposts or volunteer/cultural service centers in participating vacant storefronts.

The program should provide:

- a) template agreement that may be used between property owner and event/program organizers
- b) rent-free/below-market rate spaces (whether subsidized by the cultural district coalition or the property owner) in increments of one month or longer
- c) rental equipment from the City (e.g. speaker/sound systems, movable tables/chairs, etc.)
- d) a nominal sponsorship assistance\* valuing up to \$5,000 to local businesses and nonprofit organizations that are interested in holding activities in designated priority public activation spaces (see below).

*\*The grant should mainly cover code/permit applications, artist commissions, event logistics, etc. Technical support such as marketing, licensing (by code department), and equipment rental should also be built into the package of benefits offered to successful applicants of the program.*

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### **How do we establish a pop-up activation program?**

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The City, with support from the cultural district coalition, should manage the program. By partnering with the coalition, the program may easily be funded by federal/state/philanthropic arts-focused or creative placemaking funds such as the [National Endowment for the Arts' Our Town fund](#), [California Arts Council's Impact Projects](#) and [National Association of Realtor's Placemaking grant](#).

The Cultural District coalition should then serve as primary lease holder for any vacant storefronts acquired for the program with participating applicants as sub-leasers.

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### **What project risks will need to be mitigated?**

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This program will require significant staff time and resources and should only be considered once a cultural district coalition has been established as well as an business outreach leader appointed to Little Saigon.

In addition, the success of the program will rely on participation and support of property owners on the corridor to help subsidize rents on spaces acquired for the program. As such, the new business outreach leader will need to conduct direct outreach prior to launch of the program to begin building strong relationships with property owners and to educate them on the details of the program (guideline on funded public space

activations, terms of financial support, etc.), and the potential benefits of open spaces, civic uses, and local art/culture on the corridor and on the value of their real estate.

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### **What project risks will need to be mitigated?**

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### **Who may be early adopters of the program?**

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In the past, many local Vietnamese arts and cultural organizations (incl. VAALA and Phu Loc To) have come together on the corridor to promote local artists and to gather communities for cultural events. Their support and participation will be critical to the successful implementation of this strategy.

The following arts and cultural organizations in Westminster/Orange County have expressed interest in finding appropriate spaces for the operation/expansion of existing services, including:

- Vietnamese-American Chamber of Commerce
- UC Irvine Vietnamese Stories
- VAALA
- Viet rise
- Religious institutions

In addition, VACOC and ABAOC 's support will also be critical in providing trainings to program applicants, for example in event marketing and promotion.



### Pop-Up on Main, Memphis, TN

DMC's Open on Main Pop-Up program currently allows retailers and entrepreneurs to test market potential in vacant ground floor spaces along the Main Street mall. The pop-up activation efforts provides below-market rate spaces (on average \$750/month) to creative retail concepts in increments of one month or longer, depending on success of concepts. Applicants apply to an open call for proposals.

Since its launch in 2017, the program has successfully activated four empty storefronts on the mall, and in turn improved pedestrian experience and provided entrepreneurs a low-risk way of testing their business concepts downtown. At least two program applicants have since graduated into permanent locations in the downtown.

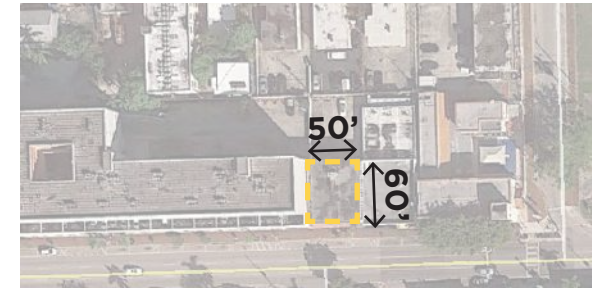
Successful applicants to the program have included everything from experiential retail (soap/candle makers) to non-retail uses such as art galleries, theater/ entertainment spaces, and co-working spaces.



### Calle Ocho (Little Havana, FL)

Little Havana is the colorful center of Hispanic culture in Miami. Centered on 8th Street - the corridor provides the backdrop for the famous Calle Ocho festival and Carnaval on the Mile. While the street itself is the community's center of a celebration, smaller spaces - restaurants, parking lots, medians - along its length providing daily, weekend and occasional opportunities to reflect the spirit of the community.

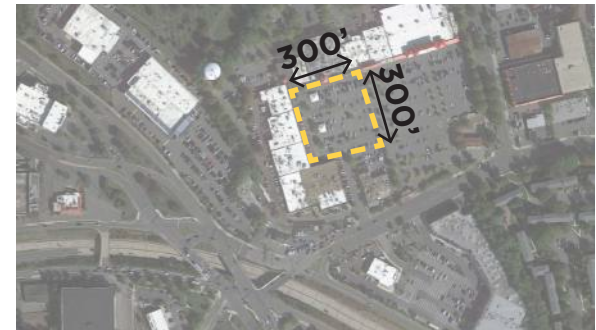
**Example:** Ball and Chain Nightclub  
**Space:** Parking Lot measuring 50'x65'  
**Events:** Music on the Street (annually), Salsero Sundays (weekly)  
**Typical Equipment:** None - connection to sidewalk and open courtyard creates unique place



### Seven Corners (Falls Church, VA)

Seven Corners is a commercial center located at a critical motorist intersection in Fairfax County, Virginia. Similar to Bolsa Avenue, the area is not currently designed to facilitate safe circulation of pedestrians in the area but has remained a popular destination in the DC/VA/MD/PA area for its unique cluster of Vietnamese American-owned businesses at Eden Center. Over the years, the strip mall owner has held various outdoor events including weekly/ seasonal markets, cultural performances, and community events in co-opted parking spaces located in the north western corner of the property - closest to anchor restaurants. Over the pandemic, restaurants also extended dining service to parking spaces adjacent to their storefronts.

**Example:** Eden Center  
**Space:** Parking Lot measuring 300'x300'  
**Events:** Outdoor markets (monthly), outdoor dining areas (daily)  
**Typical Equipment:** None - picnic tables and benches, market stands



# Launch a soap-and-water storefront improvement block program

## Project Category

- Organizational Capacity
- Business Retention + Attraction
- Branding + Marketing
- Public Realm
- Access/Circulation
- Private Property

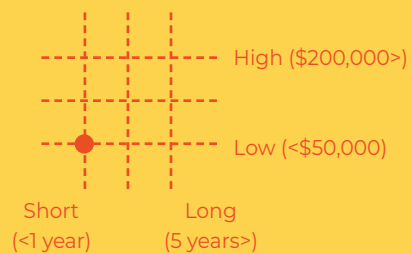
## Guiding Principles

- Preserve and grow culture and history
- Unify stakeholders in Little Saigon
- Elevate Little Saigon as a preferred place to do business
- Support the creation of a cohesive, vibrant & connected place

## Priority Nodes



## Estimated Time + Cost



## Why is this critical?

Appearance matters. Building facades that are clean and well-maintained as well as storefronts with attractive window displays can dramatically impact the appearance of the commercial district to potential customers.

When surveyed earlier this year, youth in the community continued to cite the appearance of older properties and storefronts as one of the major factors impacting their experience of Little Saigon. It is therefore critical to launch a soap-and-water storefront improvement program given the deteriorating conditions of mall properties on Bolsa Avenue - particularly in the Magnolia-Moran node.

**Soap-and-water must be made a priority action as part of the program.** This refers to the basic upkeep and maintenance of storefronts and building facades through power washing to help improve the customer experience and perception of safety that will set the stage for new economic activity in Little Saigon.

## Who is eligible for the program?

Property owners and tenants in a target zone (Magnolia-Moran) should be eligible for power-washing and other auxiliary storefront improvements. Focusing on a small geography of Little Saigon will ensure a highly visible impact to customers and hopefully serve as a model for expansion to the rest of Bolsa Avenue.

## What eligible improvements should be funded through the program?

All improvements funded through the program must be visible from the public right-of-way. To ensure quality of improvements in the relaunched program, the City should first create a storefront design guideline that clearly outlines

best practices and eligible improvements for interested applicants. This should be followed by direct outreach to business owners and property owners in the target zone. In addition, facade power washing should be a required baseline improvement for program applicants.



Lighting

Awning

Planters/Landscaping



Signage

Outdoor Display



Facade

Windows/Doors

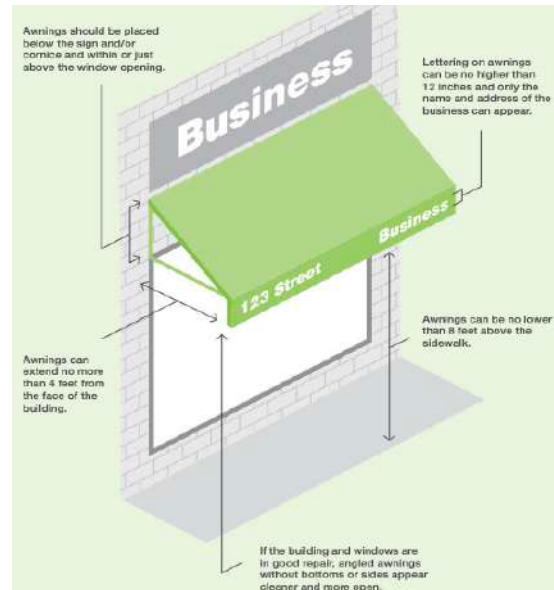


BEFORE POWER WASH



AFTER POWER WASH

NYC Storefront Improvement Guide



The NYC Department of Small Business Services created a citywide guide for storefront improvements in neighborhood commercial districts. The guide is a publicly-available resource that helps City agency partners, Business Improvement District staff, and business owners to clearly understand the various parts of a traditional storefront—the sign, awning, lighting, display window, and security devices—and the potential costs and regulations related to improving these elements.

A copy of the guide may be retrieved online at: [http://www.nyc.gov/html/sbs/downloads/pdf/neighborhood\\_development/storefront-guide.pdf](http://www.nyc.gov/html/sbs/downloads/pdf/neighborhood_development/storefront-guide.pdf)

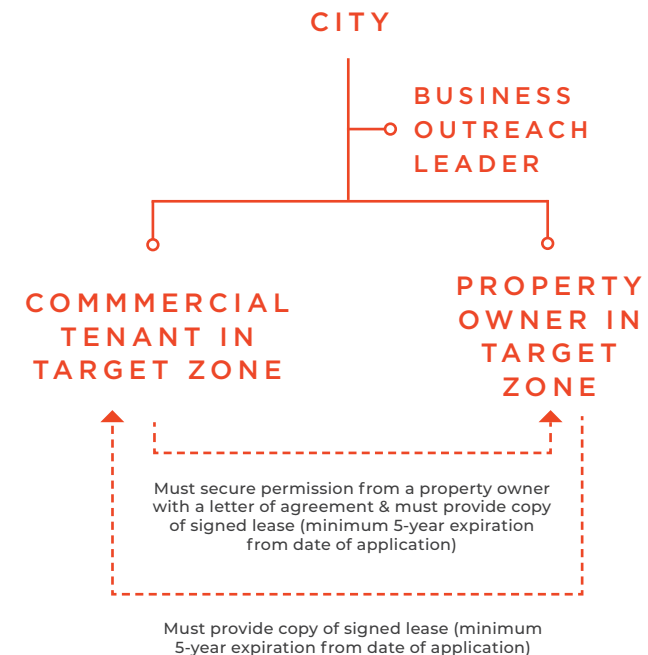


BEFORE POWER WASH



AFTER POWER WASH

Storefront Improvement Program framework



## Support the creation of shared parking

### Project Category

- Organizational Capacity
- Business Retention + Attraction
- Branding + Marketing
- Public Realm
- Access/Circulation
- Private Property

### Guiding Principles

- Preserve and grow culture and history
- Unify stakeholders in Little Saigon
- Elevate Little Saigon as a preferred place to do business
- Support the creation of a cohesive, vibrant & connected place

### Priority Nodes



### Estimated Time + Cost



### Why is this critical?

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Despite the existing supply of nearly 5,000 parking spaces across the various commercial properties fronting Bolsa Avenue, visitors and customers frequently face issues of finding convenient parking. This is likely due to the additional demand for parking from employees at the shopping centers (of which there is approximately 4,300+).

Building more parking for single land use, however, limits cross-visitation within the district and may be short-sighted as the district expands and develops with a mix of other land uses, as outlined in planned development overlays (including Bolsa Row and Moran Street Specific plans).

To really support car-less customer journeys within Little Saigon, parking should be shared throughout the district so that customers may park once and walk between destinations on Bolsa Avenue. This strategy must be complemented by other improvements to public sidewalks to ensure comfortable customer journeys on foot within Little Saigon- refer to next strategy.

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### How do we support the creation of shared parking?

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Shared parking in Little Saigon may be supported in two ways, through **contractual agreements** between adjacent properties (and their existing parking lots) or through **establishment of a previously-mentioned parking management district**, which collects fees from all property owners in the district to develop and maintain designated parking for the district, including a shared parking structure. In either case, property owner participation and cooperation in Little Saigon is required and will likely pose a challenge for successful implementation given limited City engagement with property owners.

Before making a decision on either strategy towards shared parking, however, the City and local property owners in Little Saigon should embark on a full analysis of parking demand and supply with a transportation consultant, as well as carry out a feasibility analysis for a parking structure. This will help build a robust understanding of peak parking demand across different malls and determine real costs for construction of new shared parking facilities in Little Saigon.

It is important to note, however, that parking structures are incredibly expensive, often costing upwards of \$30,000 per parking space, and must be carefully considered alongside other potential parking management strategies.

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### Where should a shared parking structure be located?

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As previously outlined in the [Moran Street Specific Plan](#), most businesses and properties in the Magnolia-Moran node are located within a 1,500 foot radius of the parcel behind the Asian Garden mall. This supports the site as a logical location for a new parking structure that may also be used by other non-residential uses in close proximity.

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# Increase street furniture and landscaping on Bolsa Avenue

## Project Category

- Organizational Capacity
- Business Retention + Attraction
- Branding + Marketing
- Public Realm
- Access/Circulation
- Private Property

## Guiding Principles

- Preserve and grow culture and history
- Unify stakeholders in Little Saigon
- Elevate Little Saigon as a preferred place to do business
- Support the creation of a cohesive, vibrant & connected place

## Priority Nodes



## Estimated Time + Cost



## Why is this critical?

Although sidewalks have been well-maintained, basic amenities for pedestrians such as street trees and benches are currently lacking along public sidewalks on Bolsa Ave.

These amenities, if designed creatively, can create an engaging experience for pedestrians and also support a safe and comfortable walking environment in the district, especially for young families and seniors. Street tree canopies, for example, can help provide shade in hot summer months, and contribute significantly to the sidewalk's aesthetic and sound attributes - especially on a high-trafficked roadway like Bolsa Avenue.

## Who is responsible?

The City's Parks/Trees Maintenance Division currently oversees the planting and maintenance of landscaped medians and all street trees, and should be responsible for the implementation of new street trees along Bolsa Avenue. The installation, repair, and maintenance of public benches, however, is not clearly defined by the City and will require further exploration through a streetscape masterplan.

A streetscape masterplan for Little Saigon should include the development of conceptual designs and standards, as well as proposed locations, for street furniture and other pedestrian and landscaping amenities, with detailed phasing and cost estimates. Concept designs should also align closely with the Little Saigon district brand (refer to earlier strategy).

## Downtown La Mesa, San Diego CA

The City of La Mesa commissioned design and engineering consultant services to develop the Downtown Village Streetscape Improvement Plan to revitalize public infrastructure in the downtown area. The consultant developed both a concept plan and construction plan, and the entire process from planning to construction lasted 7 years.



Sample pages from Downtown Village Streetscape Improvement Concept Plans for La Mesa (Created by RBF Consulting)

## What's Next?

The City and its partners will first need to build organizational capacity by **assigning a district leader** and **designating a local management entity** (whether a cultural district, business improvement district, or parking management district) to conduct stakeholder outreach and to lead the implementation of strategies laid out in this plan.

The assignment of a community outreach leader will ensure **dedicated time and resources are spent to establish relationships and build trust with stakeholders** (businesses, tenants, property owners) in Little Saigon. Although stakeholder outreach and engagement may be challenging and time-intensive, it must be made a priority strategy. The success of strategies in the plan will highly depend on the robust participation of stakeholders who are unified by a shared vision for Little Saigon.

**Short term and low cost strategies (e.g. Branding + Marketing) should be prioritized** as they may be useful in helping engage with other stakeholders, and to demonstrate early wins/successes that will help make the case for additional resources and funding for the implementation of higher cost and longer term actions such as shared parking and street furniture/landscaping.

*Proposed phased implementation*

Organizational Capacity	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6+
Appoint Little Saigon community outreach leader	[Timeline bar from Year 1 to Year 2]					
Establish and support management entities for Little Saigon	[Timeline bar from Year 1 to Year 6+]					
<b>Branding + Marketing</b>						
Develop a Little Saigon district brand and logo	[Timeline bar from Year 1 to Year 2]					
Design and implement a comprehensive marketing strategy	[Timeline bar from Year 2 to Year 3]					
Establish a civic art program	[Timeline bar from Year 2 to Year 3]					
<b>Redevelopment</b>						
Create a Little Saigon pop-up activation program	[Timeline bar from Year 2 to Year 3]					
Pilot soap-and-water/storefront improvement block program	[Timeline bar from Year 2 to Year 3]					
<b>Access + Circulation</b>						
Support the creation of shared parking	[Timeline bar from Year 3 to Year 6+]					
Increase street furniture and landscaping on Bolsa Avenue	[Timeline bar from Year 4 to Year 6+]					

## Launch of the Little Saigon Blueprint for Investment

Supported by a new iteration of the Little Saigon Advisory Committee (which was first formed as part of this planning effort), and following the publication of the Blueprint for Investment, the City will begin outreach to potential funders and partners to pool resources and build partnerships toward the implementation of strategies.

Many early members of the Little Saigon Advisory Committee have in fact expressed interest in continuing discussions around how to implement each strategy, as well as in connecting the City directly with potential artists, partners, and collaborators they may have previously worked with.

Bimonthly meetings may be held to allow members to dig deeper into each strategy by category (Organizational Capacity, Branding and Marketing, Redevelopment, Access and Circulation) and should also include “guest expert” speakers who may be able to offer advice in each of those categories.

## Strategy Summary Matrix

\$\$\$ – Low cost (<\$50k)

\$\$ – Medium Term (\$50-200k)

\$ – Long Term (\$200k+)

S – Short Term (<1 year)

M – Medium Term (1-5 years)

L – Long Term (5 years+)

Category	Action/Strategy	Est. Cost	Est. Timeline	Priority Node
<b>Organizational Capacity</b>	Appoint Little Saigon community outreach leader	\$\$\$	SML	District-wide
	Establish management entities for Little Saigon	\$\$	SML	District-wide
<b>Branding + Marketing</b>	Develop a Little Saigon district brand and logo	\$\$\$	SML	District-wide
	Design and implement a comprehensive marketing strategy	\$\$\$	SML	District-wide
	Establish a civic art program	\$\$\$	SML	Magnolia-Moran
<b>Redevelopment</b>	Create a Little Saigon pop-up activation program	\$\$\$	SML	Magnolia-Bushard
	Pilot soap-and-water improvement block program	\$\$\$	SML	Magnolia-Moran
<b>Access + Circulation</b>	Support the creation of share parking	\$\$\$	SML	Magnolia-Moran
	Increase street furniture and landscaping on Bolsa Ave	\$\$\$	SML	Magnolia-Bushard



## Appendix



What would you like to see improved in Little Saigon?



Source: 2021 Little Saigon Youth Survey (City of Westminster)

## Review Guiding Questions

### Internal Working Group + Advisory Committee

1. What are your **favorite sections** of the report? Why?

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2. Are there **inaccurate/false claims** in the report? If so, can you provide supporting evidence/data/anecdotes for a counter claim?

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3. Are there any **potentially controversial claims** in the report that may not be well-received by the community? How can we better address them?

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4. Are there any **major challenges/issues that were not highlighted** in the report? If so, can you provide a resource that describes this.

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5. Are there **any other priority strategies** that should be considered in the final plan? Share your ideas.

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6. Do you know of **any existing initiatives/programs that can support priority strategies** listed above?

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7. Who should we be sharing this report with to begin relationship-building/advocacy?

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