



CAPU
COLORADO ASIAN PACIFIC UNITED

ANCHORING DENVER'S LITTLE SAIGON

2026 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION STUDY



Photo illustration by Sean Parsons
Courtesy of 5280 Magazine



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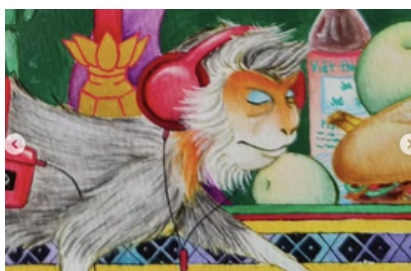
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We could not have done this without the help of our community partners in the City of Denver, the Asian Chamber of Commerce, the Center for Community Wealth, History Colorado; and our tireless community navigators and oral historians: Tommyhil Doan, Ivy Ha, Joie Ha, Kim Le, Jane Ly, Jadyng Nguyen, An Trinh, and Joseph Truong.

A very special thanks to CAPU's volunteers, Karen Chen and Emily Burrowes, who helped put this report together.



About Us



Images courtesy of Cindy Ambs, Lionheart Motion Works, Little Well Studio, and Joie Ha

Colorado Asian Pacific United (CAPU) strives to unearth, preserve, and celebrate local Asian and Pacific Islander diaspora histories. Our work includes multi-modal ways of remembering and storytelling including: exhibitions, oral histories, visual art, film, research & education, and more.

To give our stories a home, CAPU is working to open the first Asian and Pacific Islander diaspora culture & history museum in the Rocky Mountain Region, and reactivate the alleyway that used to be Denver's Chinatown.

It was through our storytelling initiatives in Little Saigon, including oral histories, film, and an exhibition at History Colorado Center, that we uncovered the growing displacement pressures in the district; **and it is through storytelling that we hope to grow advocacy efforts to preserve the legacy of Little Saigon for future generations.**



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References and Resources

[Little Saigon Memory Project](#)

[There's a Lane for Us Here Documentary](#)

[Big Dreams in Denver's Little Saigon Exhibit](#)



Summary Sheet

About the Study

Over three years, CAPU embarked on intensive community engagement in Denver's Little Saigon through oral histories and one-on-one conversations to identify the most pressing concerns as displacement pressures increase. This study identifies key findings, as well as recommendations on the next steps.

Findings

CAPU identified the following key themes regarding the concerns and desires for Little Saigon:

- Crumbling Infrastructure
- Lack of Affordability
- Concerns around public safety
- Lack of institutional support and access to resources
- Desire to preserve cultural identity

Recommendations

Informed by the findings and research in anti-displacement strategy, CAPU recommends the following:

- Add protections against redevelopment impacts
- Launch a community advisory and management group
- Build community wealth and provide financial support
- Invest in cultural placemaking & gathering
- Address public safety
- Increase and improve access to public resources

This study requires *your* support to make sure the recommendations are implemented. Little Saigon needs tangible action now to preserve its legacy for future generations.

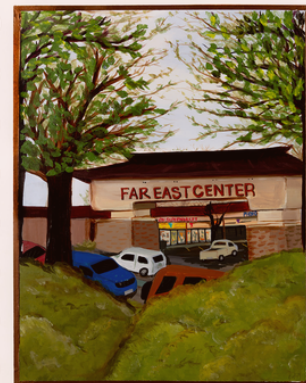
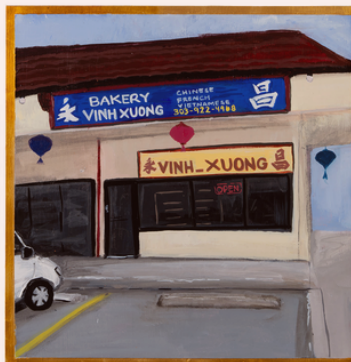




Photo courtesy of Mimi Luong

About Little Saigon

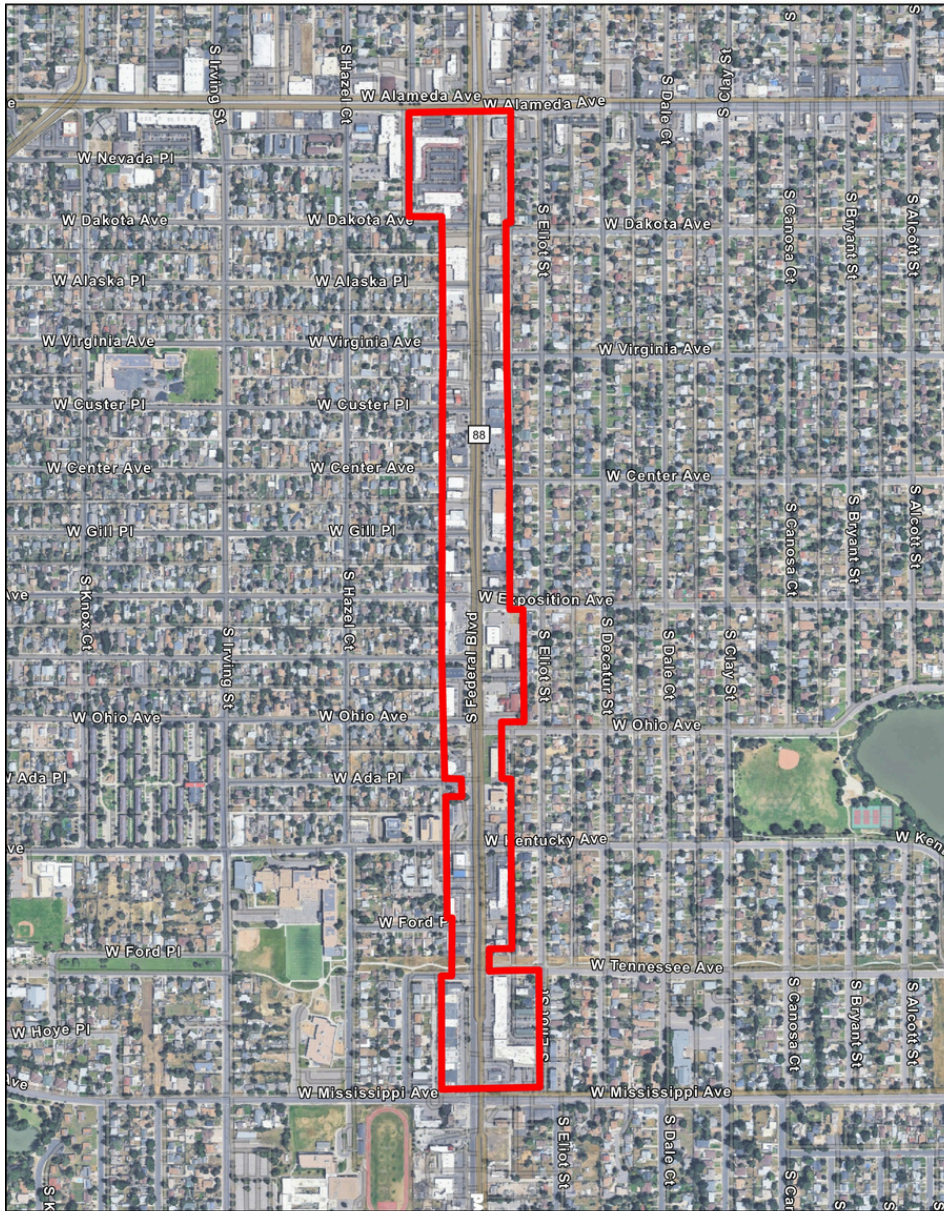
From the late 1970s -1990s, Colorado experienced a significant influx of refugees from Southeast Asia. Though from the same region, these newcomers had roots in many cultures - Vietnamese, Chinese, Cambodian, Thai, Hmong, Lao, and more. After fleeing persecution and famine caused by the Vietnam War, Khmer Rouge, and Secret War, these families established businesses and homes along Federal Boulevard and created Denver's Little Saigon. **This became a home away from home, where newcomers could earn income and find much-needed resources. From paralegals to apothecaries, restaurants to grocery stores, it created a sense of cultural belonging for a people that had been forcibly displaced.**

Today, Little Saigon remains an active commercial corridor with numerous Southeast and East Asian-owned businesses that share the neighborhood with their Latine neighbors. Despite acknowledgements like the designation as an official business district in 2014 and inclusion in the city's recent Southwest Area Plan, Little Saigon requires deeper, culturally-grounded research and support. **The area is under increasing pressure: crumbling infrastructure, affordability, public safety concerns, and lack of institutional support and access.**


These challenges are compounded as the first-generation ages and retires with no clear succession plans, increasing risk for business closure or buyout. With redevelopment interest growing and upcoming infrastructure projects like the Federal Boulevard Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), displacement becomes an urgent threat. **Without long-term protections, these businesses and families are at risk of being pushed out despite their deep roots and investment in the neighborhood.**



About Little Saigon



Little Saigon Map

 Little Saigon boundary

0 0.05 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 Miles



Map and Geographic Information

Little Saigon is located in Southwest Denver, sharing space with neighborhoods like Westwood, Athmar Park, Barnum, and Ruby Hill. The area officially includes Federal Boulevard from Mississippi to Alameda, and unofficially from Alameda to S. Tejon Street. It mainly serves as a commercial corridor with a mix of residential housing.



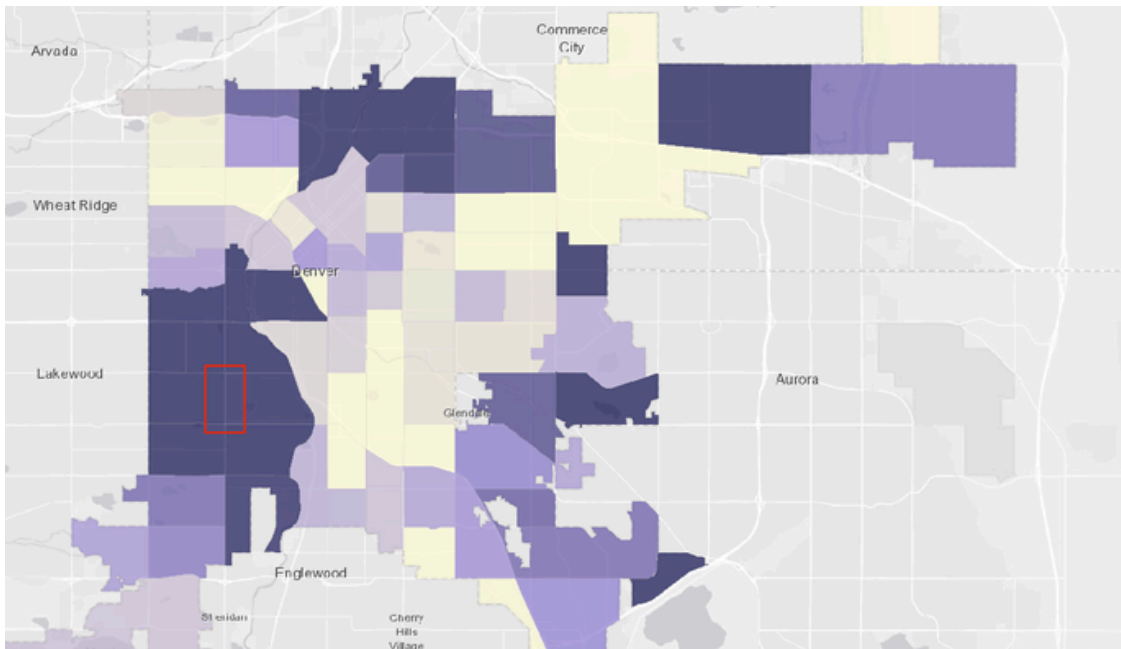
About Little Saigon

In many of Denver's historic, rapidly changing neighborhoods, residents are faced with a rising cost of living while small businesses struggle with increased costs of rent, labor, and materials. The Denver Economic Development & Opportunity (DEDO) office created Neighborhood Equity and Stabilization (NEST) indicators to identify areas specifically vulnerable to displacement and lower quality of life.

NEST neighborhoods are identified by 10 indicators:

- Adults age 25 and older with less than a high school diploma
- Speak a Language Other Than English in the Home
- Foreign Born Population
- Households without Internet Access
- People in Poverty
- Unemployment
- Household with Income under \$75,000 in the past 12 months
- Cost Burdened Housing
- Business With Annual Gross Sales under \$500,000
- Decrease in Number Of Businesses From 2017 to 2021

Little Saigon (identified in red below) is in a deep purple area, indicating **higher cumulative vulnerability to social and economic pressures.**



Little Saigon also resides in one of Colorado's 16 enterprise zones. These designated enterprise zones have **high unemployment rates, low per capita income, or slow population growth.**



About the Study

In 2023, Colorado Asian Pacific United (CAPU) partnered with History Colorado's Museum of Memory to create an oral history archive that documented the stories of those who helped shape Denver's Little Saigon. During the collection, we noted recurring concerns regarding the future of the district.

In 2025, with support from the City of Denver and Asian Chamber of Commerce, we completed several one-on-one conversations with property and business owners in the Little Saigon district focused on their concerns, desires, and future plans. The results were not surprising: **people want to stay, they just can't afford to.**

This Community Preservation Study includes findings that document and delve into the issues facing Little Saigon, and recommendations that can serve as a framework to implement community-driven solutions.

Our study explores potential paths forward, but is not an implementing mechanism. It is vital that stakeholders, government agencies, community organizations, and funders, see this as a guide that requires further champions and resources to carry forward. This is just the beginning of what we hope to be an engaged and sustained process that will preserve and revitalize Little Saigon for future generations.

The issues facing Little Saigon are shared by many communities in Denver, and recommendations identified in this study could also benefit other ethnic enclaves and neighborhoods with a history of public disinvestment.

Community members were clear- **now is the time to address these issues.** We can no longer afford to be reactionary, and must make moves towards solutions now. If we do not act, any initiative in the future will be too little, too late.



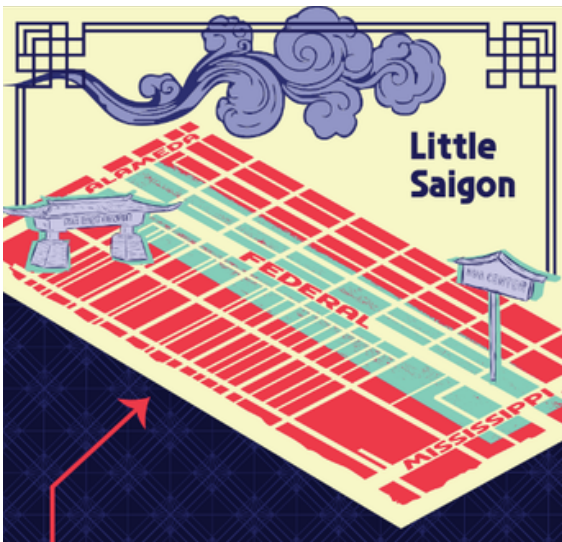


Methodology

The data for this study were collected through in-person **oral histories and one-on-one conversations** with property and business owners in the Little Saigon district.

We employed community liaisons to help gather data, knowing that their established personal connections to the district would allow for deeper authentic conversations. Because the community has historically been skeptical of governmental processes and business owners are often from older generations, we avoided collection methods like online surveys which would have been impersonal and less accessible. Instead, we met the community where they were at, used their preferred language, and prioritized their time.

A detailed methodology including methods, data analysis, and thematic codes can be found in Appendices A and B.



Study Area

The study area for this Community Needs Assessment is focused on the Little Saigon District, along Federal Boulevard between Alameda and Mississippi Avenues in Denver. Where relevant, the study also considers adjacent areas that impact or interact with Little Saigon’s social and economic dynamics.

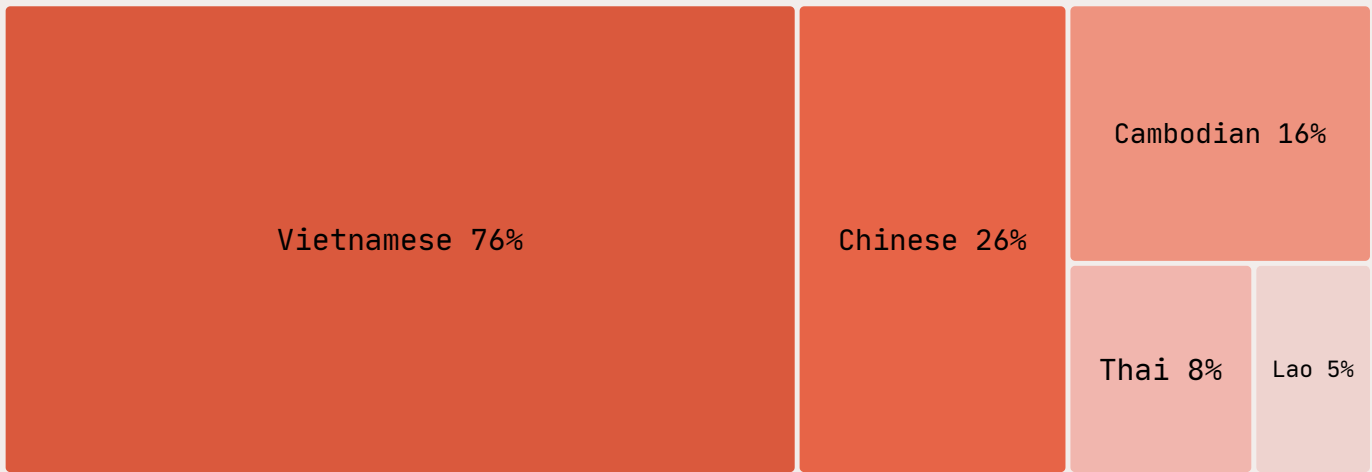
Study Timeline	2023	2024	2025	2026
Oral History Collection	[Bar]			
One-on-One Convos		[Bar]		
Data Analysis			[Bar]	
Study Release				[Bar]



Demographics

The oral histories included 38 participants, consisting of community members, business owners, and property owners in Little Saigon. The one-on-one conversations included 38 participants representing primarily business and property owners in Little Saigon. The charts below summarize key demographic details.

Oral Histories Ethnic Background



*All participants in oral histories identified as Asian.

**These percentages account for ethnicities alone or in combination, accounting for multiracial individuals

One-on-One Conversations Ethnic Background



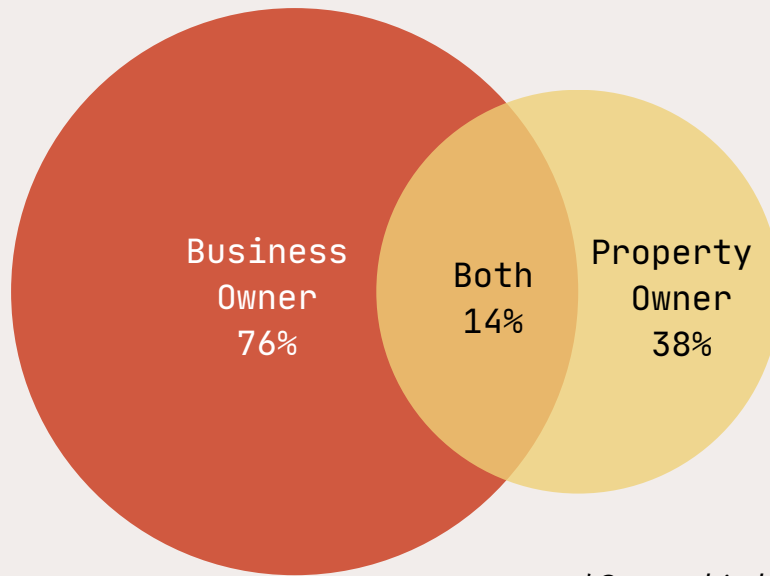
*These percentages account for ethnicities alone or in combination, accounting for multiracial individuals



Demographics

One-on-One Conversations

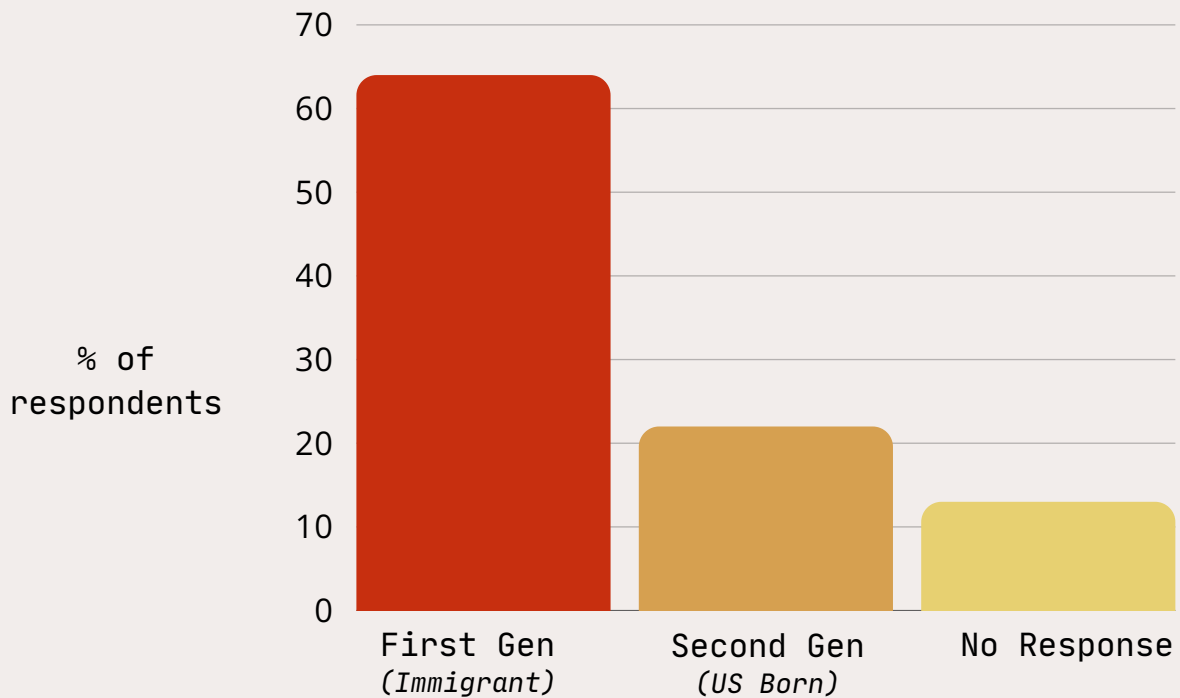
Ownership Status



Ownership length spans 1-40 years

One-on-One Conversations

Immigration Generation





Public Safety

Safety, security, and crime

Infrastructure

Built environment including roads, sidewalks, and drainage

Community

Culture, people, and sense of place

Thematic Categories

The findings from our conversations are split into five broad categories

Institutional Support

Public resources and local government

Money

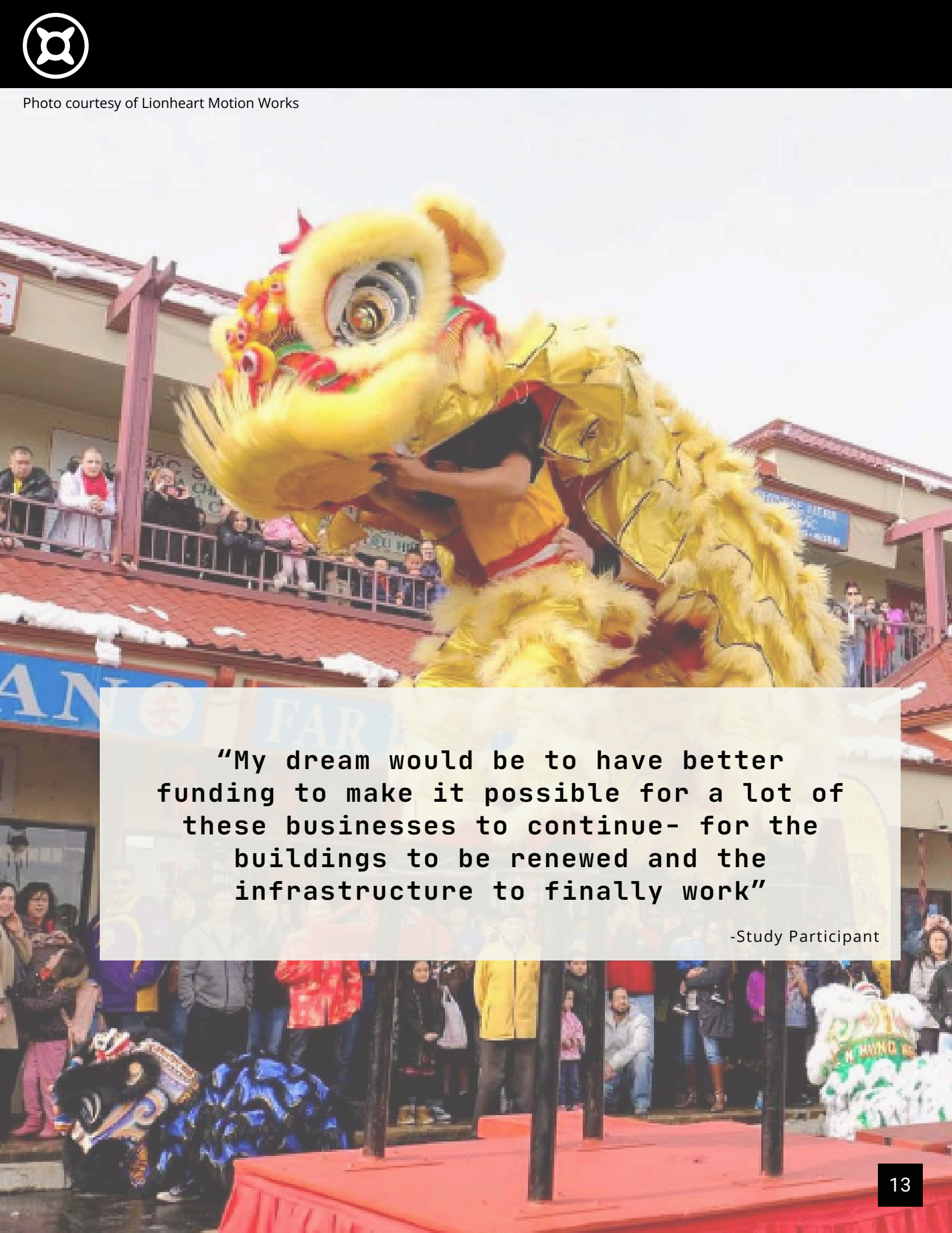
Finances, fees, taxes, and funding

Each of these categories was determined using inductive thematic analysis to identify recurring themes and patterns in conversations. The 5 categories were then further divided into 35 total sub-categories. Sub-categories were created if specific themes were mentioned more than twice.

All categories, sub-categories, and their totals can be referenced in Appendix B.



Photo courtesy of Lionheart Motion Works



"My dream would be to have better funding to make it possible for a lot of these businesses to continue- for the buildings to be renewed and the infrastructure to finally work"

-Study Participant



Findings: Overview

Little Saigon business and property owners face pressing challenges across infrastructure, affordability, public safety, and access to support, yet remain committed to preserving the district's cultural identity. While frustration with local institutions is high, stakeholders are eager for practical, community-driven solutions.

Infrastructure

Deteriorating roads, sidewalks, drainage, and streetscape conditions are urgent concerns, with many questioning why Little Saigon receives less investment than other Denver neighborhoods.

Finance & Money

Rising rents, insurance, taxes, and fees are major pressures; owners struggle to stay profitable and lack awareness of available financial support programs.

Public Safety

Crime, vandalism, and homelessness are top concerns, creating both economic and safety challenges.

Community

There is a shared value for cultural legacy, and desires for beautification, gathering spaces, and programming that increase foot traffic and reflect the district's heritage.

Institutional Support

Language, cultural, and technological barriers limit access to resources; despite dissatisfaction with government and institutional support, business owners actively seek guidance and partnerships.



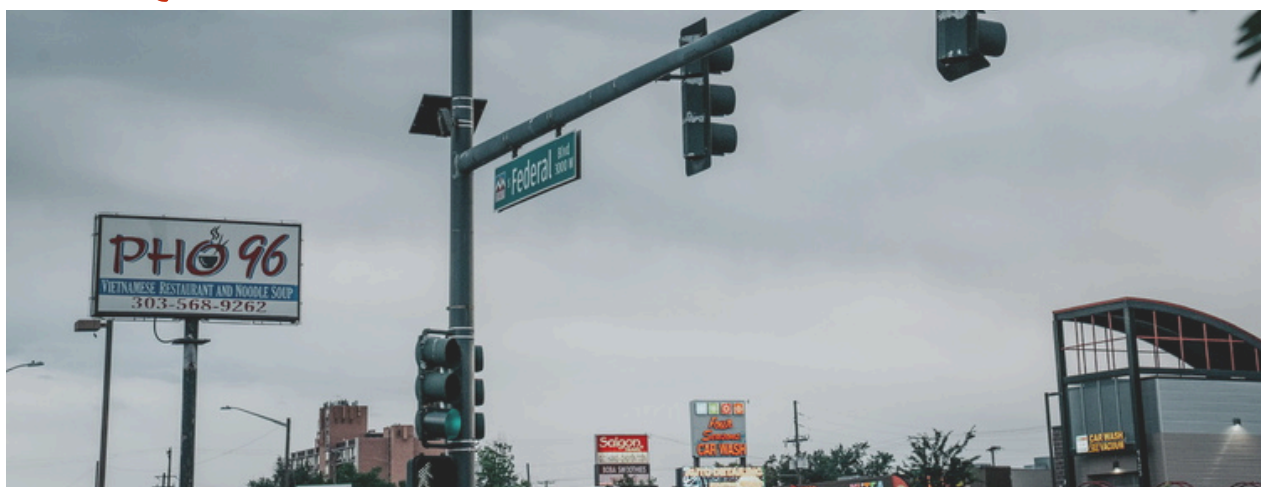
Findings

Infrastructure

Over 86% of business and property owners named infrastructure as a key concern and desired area of change.

"Make the neighborhood more pretty, keep the community local and culturally rich"

"In the infrastructure you can tell the area is getting older"



- The majority of business and property owners urgently requested support to **fix the crumbling infrastructure**, and beautification efforts to create a clean and culturally welcoming space through the built environment.
- Significant requests included **improving the poor condition of the roads and sidewalks, overall cleanliness, and poor drainage.**
- The newly installed median on Federal Blvd was specifically mentioned with mostly negative or questioning comments on its usefulness in reducing traffic and poor driving in the district.
- Compared to other Denver neighborhoods, especially mixed-use residential and business districts like Cherry Creek, community members feel that the city is not interested in improving the infrastructure of Little Saigon. Several asked **"where are my tax dollars going?"** when speaking about the condition of the district.



Findings

Money & Finance

82% of business and property owners raised financial concerns around affordability. Rising costs are the main displacement pressure.

"I would like to see [Little Saigon] improved because for years we've been paying hundreds of thousands of dollars in property taxes and not getting any help"



- Businesses are struggling with their current profit margins, and affordability is a pressing concern.
- Community members feel that **taxes are increasing, but no improvements are actually made in Little Saigon**. There is significant disappointment in how their taxes are being used (or not used).
- Business and property owners express equal dissatisfaction with **rising costs of rent and insurance**; and with **government imposed fees in taxes, fees, and compliance costs**.
- Business and property owners have expressed wanting **more financial support from institutions**; the majority of which did not know what was available, and one respondent mentioned never hearing back after applying for a government grant.



Findings

Public Safety

80% of business and property owners identified crime, theft, and inadequate police response as the top issues in the area.

"[We have] been robbed 7 times this year"

"People are afraid of safety in our district and don't come"

- Business and property owners are constantly managing the negative repercussions of **vandalism and burglary**. The costs of which are significant, with little avenues of financial support. Additionally, the lack of public safety serves as a **deterrent for customers, and makes it more difficult to retain employees**.
- Multiple businesses reported repeated break-ins with **little to no police follow-up**.
- **Homelessness was mentioned as a cause of concern for over 68% of business and property owners**. The majority of which did not identify any specific request of action; with 10% identifying solutions for support (shelters, heating, and more resources), and 10% requesting more policing.
- **Encampments, loitering, and property damage** were frequently cited. Business owners are not equipped with the skills to address **mental illness or addiction** that individuals experiencing homelessness may need.





Findings

Community

63% of business and property owners mentioned the importance of cultural legacy, places to gather for the community, and the need to increase foot traffic.

"A hub for people to eat, play, drink – the hangout spot"

"Make the neighborhood more pretty, keep the community local and culturally rich. We don't want big investors to destroy our social fabric"

- 66% of property and business owners mentioned **beautification as a way to create a more welcoming cultural space**. They specifically noted a desire for an improved streetscape with architecture, art, and signage that **mirrors the cultural identity of the area**.
- 40% of property and business owners **expressed concerns with declining foot traffic** and urged stakeholders to support solutions to bring more customers.
- There is a desire for more **gathering spaces for visitors to be in community**, where families and friends can spend several fruitful hours in the district.
- Community members are deeply proud of their heritage and see Little Saigon as a way to continue cultural legacy. They share a desire to expand cultural programming and build bridges with the neighboring Latine community.



References and Resources

Lion Dance Celebration in Far East Center in the late 80s, photo courtesy of Mimi Luong (left)
Lion Dance Celebration in Far East Center in 2024, photo courtesy of Dougal Brownlie (right)

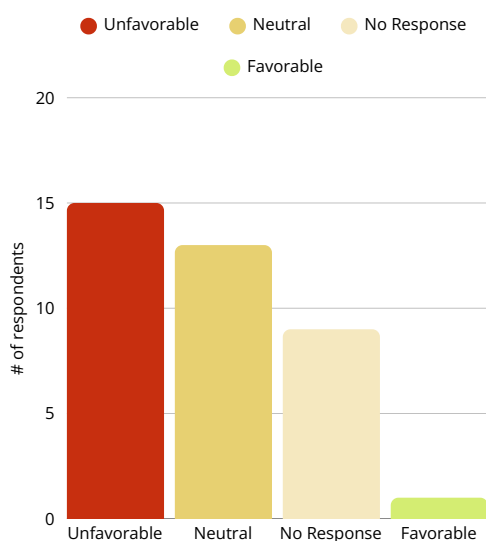


Findings

Institutional Support

76% of business owners made specific requests for more support, with several mentioning barriers to access, lack of resources, and lack of interest from local government and institutions as reasons why they have been unable to receive help.

“Change for the better, but make it accessible to people of Little Saigon.”



Perception of Local Gov't

- Many business and property owners expressed that there were **no resources available**, or if there were, they did not know of them.
- **Language, cultural, and technological** barriers make it near impossible to access any information about resources or the processes needed to request them.
- 40% of business and property owners expressed **unfavorability with local government**. Despite clear disenchantment, respondents still affirmatively requested support.
- The most frequently requested resource was **support for building renovations**; with other responses mentioning **planning for the future, business management support, and legal support**.





“Currently we see that the Vietnamese neighborhoods here are still run down... Maybe we can change that. Maybe we will build bigger and add to it a more artistic character so that when we walk in there, we can say “wow, this Vietnamese neighborhood is so beautiful.”

-Study Participant

Recommendations: Overview

This study was developed for multiple stakeholders: government and policymakers, funders, community organizations, and Little Saigon business owners. The recommendations are designed to be actionable and shared across sectors. Specific actions are broken into **advocate, fund, provide, and support**, recognizing that meaningful change requires coordinated effort. Together, these recommendations aim to stabilize small businesses, strengthen community leadership, address urgent challenges, and invest in Little Saigon's long-term cultural and economic vitality.

Add Protections Against Redevelopment Impacts

Establish immediate protections and anti-displacement strategies to stabilize businesses.

Launch a Community Advisory and Management Group

Support the creation of a community-led body that can unify stakeholders and represent local needs.

Build Community Wealth and Provide Financial Support

Provide urgent financial relief for businesses alongside long-term strategies that build community and generational wealth.

Invest in Cultural Placemaking & Gathering

Repair infrastructure and invest in building welcoming, vibrant spaces that honor Little Saigon's heritage and create opportunities to connect.

Address Public Safety

Advance solutions to public safety that focus on root causes and rebuild relationships between the community and public institutions.

Increase and Improve Access to Public Resources

Increase support and close access gaps in public programs by expanding culturally competent outreach, hiring community navigators, and equitably distributing resources.



Recommendations

Add Protections Against Redevelopment Impacts

Legacy businesses provide cultural and economic value. Yet, rising costs, public safety concerns, and deteriorating infrastructure make it difficult for local business owners to compete with large corporations that can more easily absorb increasing fees and instability. Even improvements like infrastructure upgrades can pose displacement risks without proper protections. Small businesses in Little Saigon need immediate and intentional protections to survive rapid changes in the district.

- **Add protections and regulations for new developments in Little Saigon**
 - Implement zoning, design overlays, form-based codes, and other land use controls that regulate the look, size, and use of buildings
 - Advocate for and pursue Good Neighbor Agreements/Community Benefits Agreements if major developments are proposed in the future
 - Ensure Development Agreements between the City of Denver and developer have robust community-engagement strategies with minimum engagement metrics set and enforced including: who is engaged, how many community members, length of process, type of engagement, etc.
- **Support business owners during government construction projects**
 - Require a Business Impact and Mitigation Plan created with community input to be released in an easily accessible manner prior to construction approval
 - Ensure availability of and provide financial assistance to affected business owners prior to construction approval
 - Provide education and technical assistance for the Denver Business Impact Opportunity Fund and similar programs
 - Hire business liaisons fluent in community languages during major construction projects to conduct in-person engagement

Support

How to Help

- **Advocate** for legislative priorities focused on anti-displacement policies and small business protection
- **Advocate** for revisions in existing city processes to support Little Saigon and other similar neighborhoods
- **Fund** businesses impacted by future construction projects directly
- **Support** and amplify community engagement opportunities prior to and during major developments
- **Provide** technical assistance and marketing support to small businesses impacted by future construction



Recommendations

Launch a Community Advisory and Management Group

Currently, Little Saigon does not have a **unified organizing body that can serve to communicate and meet the needs of its residents and business owners**. A community advisory and management group like a Merchants Association or other place-based organization can identify urgent needs, officially represent the district, and tackle issues directly without solely relying on institutions or government.

A successful entity in Little Saigon today needs to be **spearheaded from leaders within the community**. This will allow the community to take charge of their own needs, and serve as a direct contact for the city and other stakeholders.

- **Recruit and support business and property owners for a community advisory and management group**
 - Connect the group with organizations and government agencies that should meet with them
 - Include the group in all official conversations in matters surrounding the district
- **Provide technical assistance to help the group establish governance, shared priorities, and a sustainable organizational structure; and file for incorporation**
- **Provide resources and training for the group to become familiar with anti-displacement advocacy**

Support

How to Help

- **Advocate** for the group to be recognized as a representative body for Little Saigon, and included in official conversations surrounding the district
- **Fund** seed and operational funding for the group
- **Support** recruitment for CAPU's initiative to facilitate a cohort of community leaders to form the group
- **Provide** trainings and resources on business management, advocacy, and navigating city processes
- **Provide** free venue space for meetings
- **Provide** organizational and government contacts that can serve as representatives to the community-led place management entity

For several years, a Business Improvement District (BID) has been discussed unsuccessfully. BIDs are typically funded through a property tax mill levy and require a level of trust with the city. While BIDs can provide many benefits to Little Saigon, property and business owners feel mistrustful and disempowered, making BID formation unlikely in the immediate future.



Case Study

BuCu West

Community-Led Place Management

BuCu West (BuCu stands for business and culture) started in 1987 as the Morrison Road Business Association which was formed to support local business amidst blight and economic hardship along a struggling area of Southwest Denver. Today, it has grown into a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that serves as a community development corporation. BuCu West strengthens communities through real estate advocacy, cultural preservation, and community ownership.

Community Ownership

BuCu West acquires commercial property as a way to establish itself as a permanent anchor in the Westwood neighborhood.

Currently they have a portfolio of five properties and 28 commercial units.

Small Businesses Support

BuCu West's Business Support Program provides resources, guidance, tailored support, and connections.

In 2024, the organization supported 251 businesses and secured over \$200,000 in grant funds.

Creative District

BuCu West helped establish the Westwood Creative District in 2017. The Façade Improvement Program helps the neighborhood's visual identity and cultural expression.





Build Community Wealth and Provide Financial Support

Small businesses are being displaced due to affordability and generational shifts. There is an immediate need for financial relief programs now. For long-term solutions, it is important to build community and generational wealth through community ownership.

- **Explore revenue streams that can be used to fund community improvements in Little Saigon**
 - Lodging tax revenue (that currently funds VisitDenver and the National Western Complex) should also be used to support Little Saigon and other cultural districts that serve as tourist destinations. Revenue can be used for efforts like promotion and marketing, cultural programming, events and festivals, and partnerships with arts and cultural organizations.
 - Explore ways sales and property tax in Little Saigon can directly be funneled back into the community
- **Provide immediate financial relief**
 - Find ways to connect small businesses with tax credits (such as Enterprise Zone tax credits), grant opportunities, and other financial resources
 - Ensure funding opportunities have a low-barrier to access with robust technical assistance and thorough small business education
- **Support efforts in community ownership**
 - Formalize support for community ownership models as a tool against gentrification

How to Help

- **Advocate** for increased public funding to the Little Saigon district
- **Advocate** for a re-evaluation of how sales, property, and tourist tax dollars can be allocated to Little Saigon and similar neighborhoods
- **Advocate** for avenues of tax relief for small businesses
- **Fund** businesses experiencing hardship directly
- **Support** efforts to increase foot traffic and visitors to Little Saigon
- **Provide** trainings on community ownership and wealth building
- **Provide** technical assistance and education on how to apply for financial relief opportunities



Recommendations

Invest in Cultural Placemaking & Gathering

There is deep pride in Little Saigon and a desire to see the rich cultural heritage reflected in the physical landscape. Fixing crumbling infrastructure and investing in cultural placemaking and gathering will create a welcoming home for the community to celebrate its diverse heritage, as well as generate economic benefits for both Little Saigon and the city at large.

- **Fix glaring infrastructure issues**
 - Ensure robust community engagement and education for infrastructure projects
 - Focus specifically on sidewalk and road repair
- **Improve the streetscape to reflect the art and culture of the community**
 - Create and implement a community-informed design overlay that creates and protects the cultural look and feel of the neighborhood
 - Install community-led ideas related to art, architecture, greenscaping, and lighting improvements
- **Create programs to support business and property owners looking to improve their commercial spaces and building facades**
 - Provide robust technical assistance and outreach for programs
- **Create a cultural center and museum in Little Saigon** that would provide a third space for the community, cultural programming and celebration, and can serve as a hub for resources from service providers
 - Re-purpose available unused spaces in the district for community use
- **Elevate and invest in existing cultural programming (for example: Lunar New Year, Mid-Autumn Festival)**

Support

How to Help

- **Advocate** for infrastructure improvements, public realm improvements, and a museum & cultural center in Little Saigon
- **Fund** local artists, and art and culture organizations for beautification initiatives
- **Fund** efforts to create a museum & cultural center in Little Saigon
- **Fund** existing cultural programming and festivals
- **Fund** small businesses pursuing renovations
- **Support** efforts to increase foot traffic and visitors to Little Saigon
- **Provide** expertise on developing a community-informed design overlay



Case Study

San Francisco Cultural Districts *Cultural Placemaking & Gathering*

In 2022, after years of community advocacy, the San Francisco Pacific Islander Cultural District (PICD) was officially established to protect and celebrate the community's heritage. The program provides tenant protections, land use regulations, and preservation of culturally significant buildings, while promoting arts, culture, and community engagement.

The effort is coordinated by city agencies including the Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD), Planning Department, Arts Commission, and the Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development (MOHCD).

Tax Funding

A portion of the City's Hotel Tax (approx. \$230,000/year) directly supports district programs and initiatives.

Programs

Tenant protections, land use regulations, and preservation efforts safeguard businesses and culturally significant buildings.

Economic Opportunity

PCID supports small businesses, cultural tourism, and workforce development, creating sustainable economic pathways for residents and local entrepreneurs.





Recommendations

Address Public Safety

One of the top community concerns was public safety and homelessness. Community members have difficult relationships with law enforcement, and are increasingly under strain due to the escalation in immigration raids. Little Saigon needs long-term solutions that focus on solving the root of crime and homelessness.

- **Increase public resources in addressing homelessness in Little Saigon**
 - Deploy licensed professionals to conduct specialized outreach to connect with individuals experiencing homelessness in Little Saigon to provide direct assistance and resources
 - Expand and promote City of Denver’s STAR program to Little Saigon
 - Reduce police response times and conduct outreach to build better relationships with the community and regain trust
- **Explore how to reduce congestion and improve road safety**
 - Commission study to review traffic flows and find solutions for areas with the most congestion and incidents
 - Explore traffic calming methods (see appendix C) that may reduce safety risks (note: several respondents mentioned that the new median on Federal Blvd causes more confusion and dangerous driving)
- **Create opportunities for community-led crime mitigation methods**
 - Explore and implement street clean-up initiatives found in similar neighborhoods
 - Improve lighting and install CCTV cameras
- **Create and provide robust resources for businesses impacted by burglary and vandalism**
 - Disseminate clear information on how to complete insurance claims, file police reports, and apply for any public resources and funding available

Support

How to Help

- **Advocate** for long-term solutions to public safety that focus on the root of homelessness
- **Fund** community-led crime mitigation methods
- **Provide** education and resources on how to compassionately address homelessness
- **Support** businesses impacted by burglary and vandalism



Recommendations

Increase and Improve Access to Public Resources

Little Saigon faces a significant access gap to city, state, federal, and organizational resources. Existing community engagement and outreach are not reaching those most impacted in Little Saigon. People do not know what is available, who to talk to, and how to get more information. Material that is simply translated is not enough if it is not presented in a culturally competent way, or if it never reaches its intended audience.

- **Hire long-term community liaisons for Little Saigon to serve as bridge between local government and institutions**
 - Liaisons could help share information on resources, funding, new projects, potential tax credits, rebates, legacy business programs, accessing the STAR program and other public safety supports
 - Liaisons could also gather concerns from the community and share with direct service providers
- **Disseminate key resources in linguistically and culturally competent ways**
 - Focus on boots-on-the-ground engagement and canvassing
- **Ensure community engagement opportunities are robust and accessible**
 - Ensure physical locations are easily accessible in community
 - Provide incentives for attendance
 - Provide interpretation and translation
 - Identify underrepresented groups and focus on intentional recruitment
 - Focus on long-term relationships, and not one-time touchpoints
- **Offer trainings and resources in the following topics:**
 - Legal support, tenant's rights, business management, legacy business, marketing (traditional and online), digital literacy, workforce development, grants and applying to funding

Support

How to Help

- **Advocate** for local government and direct service providers to hire permanent community liaisons dedicated towards sharing resources and collecting feedback
- **Fund** community navigators and other culturally/linguistically competent methods of outreach
- **Provide** trainings and resources directly to businesses
- **Support** and disseminate community engagement opportunities



What's Next

Across the United States, Little Saigons and similar neighborhoods are at risk of disappearing. Hailing from far-away countries and fleeing conflict, Southeast Asian refugees have found their place in the USA. They have contributed to our cuisine, economy, and the growing conversation on what it means to be Asian American. **Revitalizing and preserving Little Saigon safeguards the right of communities to remain rooted in the places they've helped shape.**

Without meaningful and tangible measures, the future of Little Saigon is uncertain. This study serves as a preliminary guide of clear and actionable items that stakeholders can advocate for, fund, provide, and support. **Led by members from the community and informed by business owners and residents, these recommendations are embedded in lived-experiences.**

Though this study is one of the first reports focused specifically on addressing the complex challenges and opportunities in Denver's evolving Little Saigon District, it is limited in scope. **CAPU recommends investing in more comprehensive city planning studies** - similar to California's Cambodia Town project - that would reach a broader segment of the community and support more detailed approaches.

CAPU is currently in the process of developing a community advisory and management group in Little Saigon. This will include recruiting a cohort of business and property owners in Little Saigon that will receive relevant training, direct connections with institutions and local government, and a modest bucket of funding that participants can use to address issues in the district immediately. CAPU is also producing a documentary, *There's a Lane for Us Here*, by filmmaker, Hannah Tran, to explore the legacy of the Little Saigon district. Our exhibition, *Big Dreams in Denver's Little Saigon*, honoring the neighborhood will be on display at History Colorado until October 2026. All of these efforts are in service to the preservation of our stories and built environment, ensuring Little Saigon remains a cultural home for future generations.

References and Resources

[Cambodia Town Community Vision Plan](#)

[Little Saigon Memory Project](#)

[There's a Lane for Us Here Documentary](#)

[Big Dreams in Little Saigon Exhibit](#)

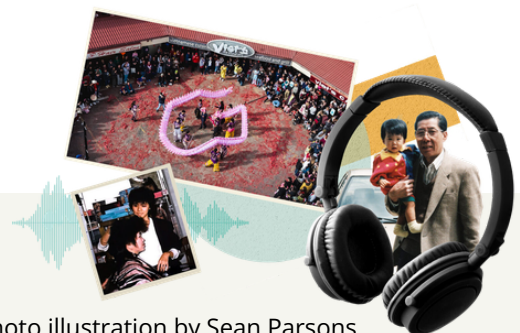


Photo illustration by Sean Parsons
Courtesy of 5280 Magazine



APPENDICES

A Appendix A: Methodology Details

B Appendix B: Findings Details

C Appendix C: Traffic Mitigation



Oral Histories

Interviews for oral histories lasted anywhere from 25-80 minutes, and were conducted by eight oral historians with ties to the Little Saigon neighborhood. Community oral historians helped identify and connect with narrators who are integral to the foundation and continued success of Little Saigon, and/or have deep personal connections to the area. Additional narrators were found through social media outreach and word of mouth. The initial research questions were focused on individuals' life histories and relationships with Little Saigon. Specifically, questions about preservation and legacy provided the data which we believed warranted further research.

We used inductive thematic analysis to identify recurring themes and patterns across the oral histories after their collection. The bottom-up approach allowed us flexibility on identifying emerging themes without setting predetermined guidelines on the interviews. Specifically, this process led us to identify the code of *'Hopes & Dreams for Little Saigon'* which led to the emergent themes on public safety, infrastructure improvement, community care, and legacy preservation. These guided the topic areas for the one-on-one conversations.

One-on-One Conversations

The one-on-one conversations were facilitated by 4 community liaisons who were hired due to their specific relationship to Little Saigon (leaders, real estate agents, and previous business owners). Liaisons were provided details about the property owners through publicly-accessible city data which they supplemented with their own networks and knowledge. Liaisons also canvassed the Little Saigon area to reach business/property owners that were not responsive through phone or email. The conversations were focused on: current challenges, desired improvements, and future business plans. These conversations were semi-structured with a question guide that drove the discussion.

For the one-on-one conversations, we conducted inductive thematic analysis to identify recurring themes. Additionally, we compared responses to themes from the oral histories to further add detail to identified topic areas.



One-on-One Conversations

All Codes

- Money:** Costs, Rent, Mortgage -
- Money:** Taxes, Fees, Utilities -
- Money:** Financial Support +
- Infrastructure:** Road condition -
- Infrastructure:** Sidewalk condition -
- Infrastructure:** Sewage/drainage -
- Infrastructure:** Cleanliness -
- Infrastructure:** Median -
- Infrastructure:** Traffic and Poor Driving -
- Infrastructure:** Walkability +
- Infrastructure:** Public Transport +
- Infrastructure:** Signage +
- Infrastructure:** Beautification +
- Infrastructure:** Affordable Housing +
- Infrastructure:** Better Parking +
- Public Safety:** Burglary -
- Public Safety:** Vandalism -
- Public Safety:** Loitering -
- Public Safety:** Drugs -
- Public Safety:** Lighting +
- Public Safety:** Homeless (Supportive Measures) +
- Public Safety:** Homeless (Policing) +
- Public Safety:** Homeless (Neutral)
- Public Safety:** General Security/Safety +
- Community:** Gathering Space +
- Community:** Cultural Legacy +
- Community:** Increase Foot Traffic +
- Institutional Support:** Lack of Support -
- Institutional Support:** Barrier to Access -
- Institutional Support:** Lack of Resources -
- Institutional Support:** Request for Support +
- Institutional Support:** Business Management +
- Institutional Support:** Future Planning +
- Institutional Support:** Renovations & Upkeep +
- Institutional Support:** Legal Support +

Directional Symbol Key

- a (+)** indicated an additive request
- a (-)** indicated a complaint
- neutral** indicated that a topic was mentioned but no specific action was requested



Code Group Totals

Code Group	Total	Percentage by N
Community	24	63.16%
Public Safety	30	78.95%
Money	31	81.58%
Infrastructure	33	86.84%
Institutional Support	29	76.32%

This table shows the thematic code groups, the amount of times a statement fell into a particular code, and a percentage of total mentions by total respondents.

Respondents could give multiple answers that would fall into a code group more than one time. For example, a comment about sidewalk condition and a comment about the road condition would be counted as two separate instances.

Note: codes and subcodes are referenced as categories and sub-categories in the report for understandability



Appendix B: Findings

SubCode Totals

SubCode	Count	% Percentage by N
Community: Cultural Legacy +	15	39.47%
Community: Gathering Space +	11	28.95%
Community: Increase Foot Traffic +	15	39.47%
Infrastructure: Affordable Housing +	3	7.89%
Infrastructure: Beautification +	25	65.79%
Infrastructure: Better Parking +	6	15.79%
Infrastructure: Cleanliness -	12	31.58%
Infrastructure: Median -	8	21.05%
Infrastructure: Public Transport +	5	13.16%
Infrastructure: Road condition -	20	52.63%
Infrastructure: Sewage/drainage -	3	7.89%
Infrastructure: Sidewalk condition -	14	36.84%
Infrastructure: Signage +	2	5.26%
Infrastructure: Traffic and Driving -	8	21.05%
Infrastructure: Walkability +	2	5.26%
Institutional Support: Barrier to Access -	7	18.42%
Institutional Support: Business Management +	7	18.42%
Institutional Support: Future Planning +	8	21.05%
Institutional Support: Lack of Resources -	3	7.89%
Institutional Support: Lack of Support -	12	31.58%
Institutional Support: Legal Support +	4	10.53%
Institutional Support: Renovations & Upkeep +	19	50.00%
Institutional Support: Request for Support (Gener:	11	28.95%
Money: Costs, Rent, Mortgage -	25	65.79%
Money: Financial Support +	14	36.84%
Money: Taxes, Fees, Utilities -	25	65.79%
Public Safety: Burglary -	9	23.68%
Public Safety: Drugs -	2	5.26%
Public Safety: General Security/Safety +	25	65.79%
Public Safety: Homeless (Neutral)	18	47.37%
Public Safety: Homeless (Policing) +	4	10.53%
Public Safety: Homeless (Support) +	3	7.89%
Public Safety: Lighting +	16	42.11%
Public Safety: Loitering -	11	28.95%
Public Safety: Vandalism -	8	21.05%

This table shows all the thematic subcodes, the amount of times a comment fell into a particular subcode, and a percentage of total subcode mentions by total respondents.

A subcode can only be counted once per respondent.

Note: codes and subcodes are referenced as categories and sub-categories in the report for understandability



Traffic Calming Methods



Source: NACTO, City of Mountlake Terrace



Source: NACTO, City of Mountlake Terrace



Traffic Calming Methods



Source: Denver Streets Partnership



Source: Confluence