

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Open Letter to Mayor Murray and City Council

The CIDBIA is very disappointed with the City of Seattle's lack of communication regarding the Navigation Center. As a leading organization representing the best interest of the Chinatown-International District neighborhood, the CIDBIA should have been informed by the City prior to the decision to place the Navigation Center in the Little Saigon neighborhood, especially since the City has been considering this concept for an extended period.

This project's location was not disclosed in a timely manner, and there was a significant lack of communication by the City. It is deeply concerning that this represents yet another missed opportunity for the City to engage the Chinatown-International District residents, businesses, and stakeholders.

As the Navigation Center is a new model that the City is trying out, it is crucial that community organizations, businesses, and residents of C-ID are not only notified, but brought to the decision-making table when changes to our neighborhood take place, prior to a final result.

This neighborhood is home to a large population of immigrant and minority community members and small family owned businesses, who have contributed decades of hard work to improve the district and give Seattle the unique culture it enjoys. The neighborhood has not always had the support it deserves and in maintaining a thriving, safe, and vibrant area. It is crucial that representatives of this community are engaged in decisions like these as we continually work, in conjunction with the City, at maintaining public safety and improving the livability of the neighborhood.

It is not so much the fact that the Navigation Center will be in our neighborhood that is infuriating, rather it is the lack of communication regarding this decision and the lack of coordination and outreach to our residents, schools, community organizations, and businesses.

This neighborhood is a compassionate and hardworking immigrant community that cares deeply

about the homelessness crisis in our city, about our neighbors who deserve resources and access to housing options. Other neighborhoods in our city do not bare the same heavy burden that the Chinatown-International District neighborhood has faced for decades, and we would like the City to consider the impacts of decisions about our neighborhood fabric when the community is not engaged.

Our community has questions regarding what other neighborhoods in Seattle were considered for the site and how Little Saigon was chosen out of other options, what criteria were used, and how the conclusion was reached. Also, was the Racial Equity Toolkit used in determining this site location and how was it applied?

We request the City make an immediate effort to actively engage in a dialogue and provide answers to these and additional questions from our community.

We look forward to a more productive discussion.

Jessa Timmer
Executive Director,
Chinatown-International District Business Improvement Area

The Chinatown-International District Business Improvement Area (CIDBIA), founded in 1994, works to improve and promote Seattle's Chinatown-International District. In addition to providing sanitation services, the CIDBIA coordinates several of the neighborhood's major events including Dragon Fest, Lunar New Year Celebration, and Night Market. The CIDBIA also advocates on behalf of its constituents with respect to a host of public policy, planning, and quality-of-life issues. For more information about the CIDBIA, log onto www.cidbia.org.

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