



# Memorandum

**TO:** RULES AND OPEN  
GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

**FROM:** Councilmember Kansen Chu  
Councilmember Pete Constant

**SUBJECT:** VIETNAMESE RETAIL AREA

**DATE:** February 12, 2008

**APPROVED:**

**DATE:**

02/12/08

Within the past couple of days two memos have been distributed about the Little Saigon issue. One memo distributed by Mayor Chuck Reed and Councilmember Madison Nguyen is asking that this issue go to a vote of the entire residents of San Jose costing the city at least \$214,500 and, the most recent memo from Vice Mayor David Cortese, is asking for a three step process which includes a request to rescind the vote previous taken regarding the issue of the Vietnamese Business District. Combined, these events have raised more questions than they attempt to answer. What precedent are we setting by re-voting? What happens if the majority say "no" to the "Little Saigon" name in the November election? Then what? These questions will undoubtedly continue to divide our community.

For this reason, we propose the following actions:

1. Rescind Resolution 74127 taken on November 20, 2007 and;
2. Direct staff to draft a Council policy that outlines a process to officially name areas and districts of the city that is modeled on the Council policy for changing street names and provides proposals that name business district must come from organization representing the businesses in the district and;
3. Staff is directed to review the results of the survey conducted by the City and Agency, which was sent to the stakeholders within the 1,000-foot radius of the proposed retail destination, and identify if one name was clearly the preference of the stakeholder group. Staff should then prepare an application for naming the retail destination in accordance with the aforementioned new City Policy for officially naming areas and districts
4. Direct staff to continue to work with the community on the design and placement of proposed banners.

The Vietnamese retail area issue is not a citywide issue. Asking the entire city to bear the \$214,500 cost of a ballot initiative for a single agenda item sets a dangerous precedent and more importantly, expends money we cannot afford during this time of fiscal uncertainty. Further, both sides of the issue will spend countless time and money campaigning on this issue. Instead, these resources would be better spent on raising the funds necessary to design and purchase banners for a successful retail area.