



SGU VETERANS AND FAMILIES OF USA, INC.

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Tong Vang, President

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Amy Brendmoen, City Council President

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Re: RES 22-973 (Seeking a robust community process and representative engagement for Phase II of Phalen Regional Park China Garden)

Dear Council President Amy and Honorable City Council Members,

On behalf of the SGU Veterans and Families of USA, I am writing to sincerely thank you and the entire City Council Members for leading the initiative and introducing **RES 22-973** to seek a robust community process and representative engagement process for the Phase II of Phalen Regional Park China Garden. We support the resolution **RES 22-973** (Seeking a robust community process and representative engagement for Phase II of Phalen Regional Park China Garden).

As you and many other elected-officials, community leaders and citizens have witnessed in the last several months - the lack of diverse community engagement process during the Phase I of Phalen Regional Park China Garden has spawned an out of control conflict that has now divided our Hmong community. We hope that the City's resolution will restore trust and confidence back to the Hmong community.

Moving forward, SGU requests that the City Council consider the following:

1. Planning for Phase II should NOT resume until “a robust community process and representative engagement” committee has been established and approved by the diverse Hmong community leaders and citizens.
2. Planning for Phase II should NOT resume until the name and spelling of “Hmong” has been reviewed and approved by the diverse Hmong community leaders and citizens.
3. Conceptual design and proposals for Phase II of Phalen Regional China Garden should not resume until designs, art works, and language has been reviewed and approved by the diverse Hmong community leaders and citizens.

Why is the name “Hmong” and the spelling of “H-M-O-N-G” so important to the Hmong people? Because the name Hmong and the spelling “H-M-O-N-G” is the inclusive and neutral name that has bind our people for generations. While there are many subgroups of Hmong people (i.e., Black Hmong, Striped Hmong, White Hmong, Green Hmong, etc.) and many spoken dialects, we are collectively known to the world as “Hmong”. Hmong is also the globally accepted name and spelling by scholars and researchers, educators, historians, writers, and the United Nations.

Why are we fighting for the name “Hmong”? Because during the Secret War of Vietnam War, regardless of White Hmong or Green Hmong, tens of thousands of Hmong soldiers (over 35,000 uniformed soldiers) sacrificed their lives and died fighting for and defending the name “Hmong”. Furthermore, it has been estimated that over 100,000 Hmong individuals (including women and children) have died during the Secret War or escaping the war, because they were simply “Hmong”.

Today, we are encouraged by the efforts of the City Council and its commitment to diversity and inclusion on its board and committee composition. We are confident that together, we all can build a better and safer community through expanding and improving the community engagement process. Please don’t hesitate to contact us for assistance or guidance.

Kindly Regards,

Tong Vang, President of SGU



Ganghis Khang, Vice President of SGU



Xai Paul Vang, Advisor of SGU

