

# REVUE DE PRESSE N°3

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Centre de Prospective  
et d'Études Urbaines



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## ARCHITECTURE

### ***Architects protest demolition of French villas, VN houses — VNS, October, 26 2015***

<http://vietnamnews.vn/society/277589/architects-protest-demolition-of-french-villas-vn-houses.html>

HCM CITY (VNS) — About 3,000 valuable old houses and villas could be demolished in HCM City, but architects and historians have said that many of these historic structures should be restored.

Of the total number, about 168 valuable houses and villas, mostly built during the French colonial period, are under management of the State and receive funds from the city's state budget for repair and preservation costs.

Only eight Vietnamese traditional houses of the 3,000 remain in good condition, according to the city's Urban Research and Development Centre.

[...]

The owners of 13 villas have submitted requests to the city to tear down their buildings.

Architect Luong Thu Anh from the city's Master Planning and Architecture Department said that preservation of the city's old architecture had been ineffective.

## ENVIRONNEMENT

### ***Saigon May Chop Down 150-Year-Old Trees in Tao Dan Park for Metro Line 2 — Saigonner 19 October 2015***

<http://saigoneer.com/saigon-development/5486-saigon-may-chop-down-150-year-old-trees-in-tao-dan-park-for-metro-line-2>

Tao Dan Park, the green lung of downtown District 1, is about to get a little smaller, as the city's People's Committee may soon approve a plan to repurpose 2,100 square meters of the space for metro construction.

According to VnExpress, city officials are in talks to section off a part of Tao Dan for the sake of Saigon Metro's Line 2, the Ben Thanh-Tham Luong route that will connect the downtown District 1 market with Tan Phu District to the west.

If the proposal goes through, Tao Dan will say goodbye to 33 of its large, leafy residents, some of which were planted as far back as the 1860s, Thanh Nien reports. Some officials have asked the city to reconsider, citing Tao Dan's strategic importance as one of the few remaining green spaces in the city center, however further information regarding the city's plans for the park has yet to be released.

This is not the first time old trees have been sacrificed for the city's metro system. Last year, a set of century-old trees in front of the Opera House were felled to facilitate the construction of a four-storey underground station while 57 others that stand in front of Ben Thanh Market face a similar fate.

The 11.3-kilometer Line 2, which began construction at the start of 2015, has fallen behind in the last year or so, in part due to growing costs. The project was originally priced at US\$1.35 billion but has since bloated to over US\$2 billion, a 60% increase from its initial estimate.

## INONDATIONS

### ***HCM City to need huge funding for flood control in 2016-2020 – VietnamNet Bridge 31/10/2015***

<http://english.vietnamnet.vn/fms/society/145096/hcm-city-to-need-huge-funding-for-flood-control-in-2016-2020.html>

HCMC is in dire need of nearly VND68 trillion (over US\$3 billion) to carry out a slew of urgent flood control projects in the 2016-2020 period to minimize the impact of flooding on the city's development.

HCMC vice chairman Nguyen Huu Tin told the municipal People's Council at a meeting on October 27 that the city is the driving force of the national economy, so flooding will cause damage for the city and the country as a whole. Flood control analyses should focus on natural conditions, the impact of climate change and State management, he said.

HCMC is just one meter higher than sea level on average and surrounded by the Dong Nai, Saigon and Vam Co rivers plus a number of small canals that crisscross the city. This makes it hard for the city to effectively control floods caused by heavy rains and flood tides. If tides are 1.5 meters high, two-thirds of the city would be submerged under water.

There have been more heavy rains in recent years while HCMC's drainage capacity is limited. The drainage system in the city was designed to serve around 2.5 million people but the city's current population is 10 million, Tin said, adding that the number does not include non-residents.

[...]

### ***Saigonese live with tides: In pictures– VietNamNet Bridge 29/10/2015***

<http://english.vietnamnet.vn/fms/society/145164/saigonese-live-with-tides--in-pictures.html>

As of the evening of 27th October, flood tide began rising in HCM City, making many low-lying areas flooded. The people of Binh Thanh, Binh Tan, and Thu Duc district now live in the "floating season".

Ho Chi Minh City has set up a Flood Prevention Program for the 2016-2020 period to address the ill-effects of rising flood tides.

It has set three main targets for the next four years. The first is to create a mechanism to cope with climate change, while the other two will focus on controlling the city's 500 sq km flood zone and ensuring social security for approximately 6.6 million people who live in 13 central districts.

### ***Most Saigonese refuse to build home reservoirs for flood prevention: survey – Tuoi Tre News, October 26, 2015***

<http://tuoitrenews.vn/society/31200/most-saigonese-refuse-to-build-home-reservoirs-for-flood-prevention-survey>

Most people refuse the construction of reservoirs in their private homes for urban floodwater prevention, according to a brief survey by *Tuoi Tre* (Youth) newspaper on 70 city dwellers.

Of the 30 people living in urban areas, 30 in newly-constructed residential areas, and 10 housing investors, 93 percent said no to the idea.

However, the rate shrank to 66 percent if they were granted allowances from the government.

Now, the Management Center for Urban Flood Prevention in Ho Chi Minh City are mulling a plan to construct a network of small reservoirs of 1-2 cubic meters each at private homes to prevent floodwater.

The content of water kept in those reservoirs would be used for watering trees and washing motorbikes, according to the center.

[...]

### ***Home water tanks suggested as anti-flooding measure for Ho Chi Minh City - Tuoi Tre News***

**10/21/2015**

<http://tuoitrenews.vn/society/31112/home-water-tanks-suggested-as-an-antiflooding-measure-for-ho-chi-minh-city>

*Building reservoirs at households or in public and other areas has been put forward as a solution to chronic flooding caused by heavy rains in Ho Chi Minh City, the Anti-flooding Program Operation Center reported.*

The center said it is considering a project to set up small water tanks in urban areas, industrial parks, hospitals, schools, offices, and households to contain rainwater and prevent it from submerging the city.

The center added that it will refer the anti-flooding project to the municipal Department of Planning and Architecture for consideration.

This project is suitable for the city, where large reservoirs, covering hundreds of hectares, for the same purpose cannot be built due to lack of land, said the Center for Water Management and Climate Change (CWMCC) under the Vietnam National University-Ho Chi Minh City, which has set it up.

This anti-flooding model has been applied in other countries, including Germany, where a reservoir at home is mandatory.

Such tanks are necessary as systems in the city have failed to drain water from heavy rains, causing inundation to many areas, the CWMCC said.

Small tanks can be built on the rooftop of residential homes, while large ones, covering up to thousands of square meters, can be erected in other places, including industrial parks and urban areas, according to the CWMCC.

[...]

## **POLLUTIONS**

### ***Up to 14 tons of trash dumped daily into Ho Chi Minh City iconic canal: Env. Dept – Tuoi Tre News,***

**10/31/2015**

<http://tuoitrenews.vn/society/31305/up-to-14-tons-of-trash-dumped-daily-into-ho-chi-minh-city-iconic-canal-env-dept>

The Ho Chi Minh City administration might have successfully revitalized the Nhieu Loc – Thi Nghe from a dead canal to one of its new icons, but it is a much more difficult task to change people's mindset to not dump trash into the waters.

The 8.7-km canal, running through five districts and which received a facelift in 2012, now suffers from five to 14 tons of garbage dumped on a daily basis, according to the municipal Department of Natural Resources and Environment.

Nhieu Loc – Thi Nghe has become one of the canals that contain the most trash in the city, despite a huge investment of hundreds of millions of U.S. dollars spent to revitalize what used to be a dead, heavily polluted canal.

The Department of Natural Resources and Environment has thus called on the city's administration to allow an urban environmental firm to increase the frequency of the trash cleaning service on the canal from once every two days to once every day.

[...]

***Unclean air: Study finds pollution at dangerous level in HCMC's new urban areas - Thanh Nien News, October 27, 2015***

<http://www.thanhniennews.com/society/unclean-air-study-finds-pollution-at-dangerous-level-in-hcmcs-new-urban-areas-52930.html>

A new study from Ho Chi Minh City's environment department has found an increase in dust and toxic gas in many urban areas, warning that motorbike riders can be exposed to major health risks.

According to local media, the environment observation and analysis center measured the dust and carbon monoxide (CO) concentration and noise across the city. Although the situation looks brighter in the downtown, it has worsened in new urban areas in Districts 7 and Go Vap.

[...]

The permissible CO limit is 30 micrograms per cubic meter, with high levels from 55 micrograms able to cause nausea, heart failure, unconsciousness and even death.

Vietnam sets the dust safety limit at 300 micrograms per cubic meter and the noise limit is 70 decibels.

[...]

## **TRANSPORT**

***Ho Chi Minh City says fifth metro line will cost \$4.47 billion – Thanh Nien News, October 29, 2015***

<http://www.thanhniennews.com/society/ho-chi-minh-city-says-fifth-metro-line-will-cost-447-billion-53007.html>

Ho Chi Minh City is seeking approval from the country's legislators for its plan to build the fifth metro line which it says will cost US\$4.47 billion.

Under the plan recently sent to the government, the city said foreign creditors have agreed to bankroll the line, which will run around 24 kilometers between the Can Giuoc Bus Terminal in Binh Chanh District and the Saigon Bridge.

The government will present the plan to the National Assembly for approval.

Under Vietnam's law on public investment, any project which costs the state budget more than VND10 trillion (\$457.87 million) must get approval from the assembly, the country's legislative body.

The city has managed to secure funding for the first stage of the construction, estimated at \$1.86 billion. It said nearly 30 percent of that will come from the state budget.

The South Korean government is considering providing technical support for a feasibility study for the second stage.

The study will also look into the city's suggestion to build an extra two-kilometer line linking the metro line with Tan Son Nhat, currently the biggest airport in Vietnam.

The line is one of the eight planned for the country's first subway network.

Work on the first line connecting Ben Thanh in District 1 and Suoi Tien in District 9 began in 2012 and is expected to finish by 2018.

***Pedestrians risk lives crossing Ho Chi Minh City streets – Thanh Nien News October 28, 2015***

<http://www.thanhniennews.com/society/pedestrians-risk-lives-crossing-ho-chi-minh-city-streets-52966.html>

[...]

Many people in HCMC break road dividers and cross illegally due to a lack of pedestrian crossings or simply because they are too lazy to walk up to a zebra crossing or footbridge.

Sixty five people have been killed crossing the streets so far this year, according to the city transport department.

[...]

HCMC-based architect Ngo Viet Nam Son said footbridges should be built near roadside shopping malls and towers.

“The Thao Dien metro station will need a footbridge across the Hanoi Highway because people cannot take a 2-3 km detour. More people will use the bridge if it is going to be built near malls there.”

Son also called for more overbridges and tunnels for pedestrians, motorbikes and bicycles.

“People will surely use them once they are built on the Hanoi, Pham Van Dong and Vo Van Kiet highways.

### ***Electric buses planned for ‘backpacker area’ in Ho Chi Minh City – Tuoi Tre News October 19, 2015***

<http://tuoitrenews.vn/society/31066/electric-buses-planned-for-backpacker-area-in-ho-chi-minh-city>

Ho Chi Minh City, the Department of Transport said in a plan submitted to local authorities for consideration. One of the two routes of electric buses will run through an area dubbed the “backpacker area” in a plan submitted to local authorities for consideration.

The area is located in Pham Ngu Lao Ward, often called the “backpacker area” because of the community of foreigners who stay there when they visit the city as tourists.

In its plan, the department said every passenger would pay VND6,000-12,000 (US\$0.27-0.54) per ticket for their trip on electric buses.

Of the two routes, the first one would take in the “backpacker area,” Thai Binh Market, Cao Thang School, Cu Market, the Nguyen Hue pedestrian street, the University of Social Sciences and Humanities, the Saigon Zoo and Botanical Garden, some trade centers and administrative agencies located on the main thoroughfares in the downtown area.

Meanwhile, Route 2 would operate along the west corridor of the downtown area, running past 23/9 Park and other main streets including Pham Ngu Lao, Cong Quynh, Nguyen Thi Minh Khai, Le Duan, Nguyen Binh Khiem, Truong Dinh, Tran Quoc Thao, and others.

It would also include a stop at the Saigon Zoo and Botanical Garden, according to the department.

If the plan is approved, 11 electric buses with 12 seats each will operate on a pilot basis from 5:00 am to 6:30 pm every day, the department said.

## **PLANNIFICATION**

### ***To improve Ho Chi Minh City: Become a less stifling metropolis – Tuoi Tre News 11/01/2015***

<http://tuoitrenews.vn/city-diary/31328/to-improve-ho-chi-minh-city-become-a-less-stifling-metropolis>

Editor’s note: A reader shares her suggestions in a forum launched by Tuoi Tre (Youth) newspaper to welcome contributions on how to improve quality of life in Ho Chi Minh City.

Le Ngoc Hanh, a native of Binh Duong Province, approximately 30 kilometers from the city, hopes to make it less stuffy and thus improve quality of life.

Over the past several years, during the morning rush hour, I have seen shuttle buses carrying staffers and workers between Ho Chi Minh City and industrial parks in Binh Duong.

A number of young people now choose to work in the southern economic hub while commuting to work in Binh Duong and Dong Nai Province.

Ho Chi Minh City is choking on the increasingly swelling influx of commuters.

During peak and off-peak hours all year round, city streets are jammed with people and traffic thick with pollutants. Hospitals are brimming with patients while many schools have been grappling to cope as a massive migration boom has pushed the number of students enrolled to a record in recent years.

I'm not a Ho Chi Minh City resident, but I'm under the impression that the city has already been overwhelmed.

[...]

### ***Ho Chi Minh City may make sidewalks narrower in bid to reduce traffic jams — Thanh Nien News Sunday, October 25, 2015***

<http://www.thanhniennews.com/society/ho-chi-minh-city-may-make-sidewalks-narrower-in-bid-to-reduce-traffic-jams-52778.html>

Ho Chi Minh City transport department is seeking the municipal government's permission to expand some streets by narrowing the sidewalks, in an attempt to reduce traffic congestion.

[...]

According to the department, there are currently 24 spots in the city that are prone to congestion during rush hours.

The main reason is that the road area increases by only around 2 percent annually while the number of vehicles can go up by 10 percent, it said.

Each day the city has an additional 1,000 motorbikes and 100 cars. More than seven million motorbikes and cars have been licensed.

### ***HCMC allows massive tourism project near biosphere reserve to expand: report — Thanh Nien News, Friday, October 23, 2015***

<http://www.thanhniennews.com/travel/hcmc-allows-massive-tourism-project-near-biosphere-reserve-to-expand-report-52691.html>

The complex of hotels, resorts and a shopping mall has received permission to eat into the sea despite environmental concerns.

A tourism project near a treasured biosphere reserve on the outskirts of Ho Chi Minh City has been allowed to encroach on 1,080 hectares of sea area, news website Saigon Times Online reported on Tuesday.

Can Gio Tourist City Corporation will conduct a feasibility study for the tourism complex, known as Saigon Sunbay, and submit its revised design to the city's government next month, it said.

Originally the project only planned to take over 600 hectares of the sea.

[...]

Dubbed "the green lung" of Ho Chi Minh City, Can Gio boasts more than 70,000 hectares of mangrove forests, and rivers and canals, and around 200 different species of wildlife and 150 species of flora. Half of its area was recognized as a world biosphere reserve by UNESCO in 2000.

Experts have warned that tourist projects near the reserve could disturb it and cause irreparable damage.

### ***Living with tumble threat in Ho Chi Minh City apartments — Tuoitrenews 10/21/2015***

<http://tuoitrenews.vn/society/31114/living-with-the-threat-of-collapsing-apartments-in-ho-chi-minh-city>

*As many as 100,000 people are residing in 533 old apartment buildings in Ho Chi Minh City despite the fact that they may collapse at any time.*

The buildings contain over 50,640 apartments, all built before 1975, and have seriously deteriorated.

Many of the places are marked to be demolished but have remained barely standing for years due to a lack of investment from the government.

So residents have been exposed to great danger since the apartments may collapse any time, according to the assessment of local authorities.

[...]

*Response from authorities: planning*

According to the Ministry of Construction, it is planning to make a comprehensive check on dilapidated apartments all over the country.

It will submit a plan for the check to the central government this month and will carry it out next year.

Ho Chi Minh City planned to disassemble 445,000 square meters of outdated apartments during 2011-15 and have completed 60 percent of the plan to date.

The slow progress has been blamed on the lack of investment and the current slowdown in the real estate market.