

WOVEN TOGETHER: Reconnecting Communities through Small-Scale Interventions

Reclaiming Fragmented Spaces

"Woven Together" proposes a series of thoughtful, small-scale interventions to address decades of social, cultural, and environmental disruption in Seattle's Chinatown-International District (C-ID) and Yesler Terrace. These communities were historically vibrant and self-sustaining, but systemic decisions—such as the construction of the I-5 highway and recent redevelopment pressures—have fragmented their fabric, displacing families and severing physical and social connections. Rather than relying on large-scale redevelopment, which often leads to further gentrification, our project focuses on localized design strategies that empower residents and reinforce existing community assets.

A Patchwork of Cultural Resilience

Drawing inspiration from traditional quilts in African American, Chinese, and Japanese cultures, the design adopts the metaphor of patchwork as both a healing process and a celebration of diversity. These cultural quilting traditions—rooted in resilience, storytelling, and collective memory—inform the spatial organization and material language of the interventions. Each small gesture, like each patch in a quilt, is intentional and layered with meaning, contributing to a larger narrative of community strength and interconnectivity.

Site-Specific Interventions

Our design vision is implemented through three primary nodes: the I-5 Underpass Park, the Community Terrace Garden, and the Stormwater Path to Yes Farm.

- *The Underpass Park* reclaims underutilized space beneath the highway, transforming a shadowed corridor into an active spine that reconnects Chinatown and Little Saigon. Removal of a concrete wall opens the area for a multifunctional plaza, hosting a farmers market, community garden plots, seating, and sports courts—redefining this void as a vibrant public realm.
- *The Community P-Patch Terrace Garden* addresses the steep grade separating the C-ID from Kobe Terrace Park and the Danny Woo Garden. By layering ADA-accessible paths, all-inclusive planting beds, and a shared harvest table, this terrace strengthens intergenerational connections and makes gardening and communal gathering more accessible to elders and people with disabilities.
- *The Stormwater Path* serves both ecological and connective purposes. It safely guides pedestrians between fragmented green spaces while capturing runoff from the upper terraces to irrigate drought-tolerant native plants. This integration of infrastructure and ecology supports environmental resilience and engages the community in sustainable stewardship.

Designing for Belonging and Identity

Throughout the project, bold color, pattern, and signage serve as supergraphic interventions to express the cultural identity of the neighborhood and encourage exploration. These visual cues help restore pride of place, transforming forgotten spaces into welcoming environments that reflect the stories and values of their residents. Public art and culturally relevant design details

ensure that every corner of the site feels rooted in community memory rather than imposed from above.

A Living Quilt of Community Empowerment

Together, these interventions do not attempt to “solve” the deep systemic challenges facing the neighborhood, but rather offer strategic, participatory tools for community healing and empowerment. Like a quilt stitched by many hands, the project embraces imperfection, local voice, and collective authorship. "Woven Together" becomes more than a design—it is a framework for reconnecting disrupted urban spaces through care, cultural continuity, and incremental acts of transformation.