

Ho Chi Minh City began the Saigon South development project, Phú Mỹ Hưng, in 1993. It is the first project to promote the condominium concept. Phú Mỹ Hưng functions primarily as a residential area. It is located in District 7 and is full of waterfront retail stores, private residences and private buildings.

The Phú Mỹ Hưng Corporation is an urban infrastructure developer responsible for building the urban area. Its' primary goal is to re-establish Ho Chi Minh City and Vietnam's position in the global economy while focusing on sustainable development. It envisions Phú Mỹ Hưng as a modern city that also functions the "most desirable international business location in Southeast Asia."¹ The development of the area indicated the first step towards the expansion of Ho Chi Minh City.

The Phú Mỹ Hưng Corporation was licensed on May 19, 1993. They hosted an international urban design competition in 1993 for the Saigon South Urban Development Project.² The winners were a team of architectural firms: Skidmore, Owings and Merrill of San Francisco, Koetter Kim & Associates of Boston and Kenzo Tenge Associates of Tokyo. The Master Plan was approved by Prime Minister Võ Văn Kiệt in December 1994, and infrastructure work began in July 1996.³

The Phú Mỹ Hưng urban area won the Progressive Architecture Citation in 1995 and the American Institute of Architecture Honor Award in 1997 for best urban design. It is the first Asian city to win the AIA award.⁴ The Corporation completed the Nguyễn Văn Linh Parkway in 2007. The Saigon Exhibition and Convention Center, a brand new trade center, opened in November 2008.⁵

Phú Mỹ Hưng is Saigon's largest self-contained edge city. It is exclusively middle-class and introduces a new type of lifestyle in Phú Mỹ Hưng.⁶ The residential properties house over 25,000 people, of which 48% are foreigners. The residents can choose to pay in phases instead of leasing or paying monthly rentals. Phú Mỹ Hưng has the highest security level in Ho Chi Minh City. There is a guard service that works 24/7 at community gates, ground floors and the Phú Mỹ Hưng service center. There are also guards traveling by motorcycle around the area.⁷

Phú Mỹ Hưng covers 33 km² of land. It was originally intended to eventually house one million people. The area is composed of five sectors: A. new city center B. university village C. high tech center D and E. commodity circulation center. "The Central Trading & Development

¹ "Phu My Hung Development Corporation," *Phu My Hung Corporation*, <http://www.phumyhung.com.vn/en/introduction/phu-my-hung-new-urban-development.html> (accessed 21 Aug. 2013).

² "Introduction," *Phu My Hung Corporation*, http://www.saigonsouth.com/contents.aspx?lang=en&siteid=25&system_id=119 (accessed 13 Aug. 2013).

³ Nguyen, Thuy, "New milestones for Phu My Hung Corporation," *Vietnam Investment Review*, 20 May 2013, <http://vir.com.vn/news/en/property/new-milestones-for-phu-my-hung-corporation.html> (accessed 21 Aug. 2013).

⁴ "Phu My Hung Development Corporation," *Phu My Hung Corporation*, <http://www.phumyhung.com.vn/en/introduction/phu-my-hung-new-urban-development.html> (accessed 21 Aug. 2013).

⁵ Nguyen, Thuy, "New milestones for Phu My Hung Corporation," *Vietnam Investment Review*, 20 May 2013, <http://vir.com.vn/news/en/property/new-milestones-for-phu-my-hung-corporation.html> (accessed 21 Aug. 2013).

⁶ Douglass, Mike (2008), "Globalization On Edge: Fleeing the Public Sphere in the (Peri-)Urban Transition in Southeast Asia," in *Trends of Urbanization and Suburbanization in Southeast Asia*, 101.

⁷ Douglass, Mike and Liling Huang (November 2007), *Globalizing The City In Southeast Asia: Utopia On The Urban Edge – The Case of Phu My Hung, Saigon*, 23,24.

Group based in Taiwan owns 70% of the capital, and the remaining 30% is from the Tan Thuan Industrial Development Company, a representative of the Ho Chi Minh City Municipality.”⁸ The cheapest apartment is more than VDN 1 billion (USD\$62,000). Most middle and lower-class workers cannot afford to live in the area. Phú Mỹ Hưng is exclusively for rich Vietnamese and foreigners who are attracted to the landscape, high level of security, foreign social services like international schools and hospitals.⁹ Phú Mỹ Hưng serves as an example of privatization of public space in new mega-cities. There may be pools, parks and other “public spaces” in Phú Mỹ Hưng, but the amenities are for exclusively for residents who have to pay fees for their privileged access.

⁸ Douglass, Mike and Liling Huang (November 2007), *Globalizing The City In Southeast Asia: Utopia On The Urban Edge – The Case of Phu My Hung, Saigon*, 24.

⁹ Mike Douglass and Liling Huang (November 2007), *Globalizing The City In Southeast Asia: Utopia On The Urban Edge – The Case of Phu My Hung, Saigon*, 24.