

The Honorable Raymond H. LaHood  
Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Re: City of Seattle MERCER WEST TIGER IV application

Monday, March 12, 2012

Dear Secretary LaHood:

Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center supports the City of Seattle's application for the US Department of Transportation TIGER grant. Funding from this grant will be dedicated to the Two-Way Mercer West project.

The Hutchinson Center has been in the South Lake Union neighborhood since 1988, and is committed smart, sustainable growth and development. Transit and transportation projects are important to us because we have more than 3700 employees and affiliates on our campus (which includes the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance), as well as patients, care-givers and visitors. Many of our constituents are using the Mercer Corridor, and 61% of those trips are NOT made in a single occupant vehicle.

The Mercer Corridor is a critical transportation connection that carries more than 70,000 people a day. It has been a major traffic bottleneck in the Seattle area, limiting access to the growing South Lake Union area and to our campus. This project, including the Mercer West extension is vital.

Mercer West is critical. Without it, we cannot take advantage of other transportation investments. The Hutchinson Center has been part of the Mercer Stakeholder Committee, a partnership of 42 individuals, since 2006, and we understand none of the planning around the Deep Bore Tunnel/Alaskan Way Viaduct project can come to fruition without the connections provided in Mercer West.

Mercer West provides badly needed pedestrian and bicycle connections between South Lake Union and Lower Queen Anne. Currently, the Mercer underpass of Hwy 99 includes narrow, elevated sidewalks with no buffer from traffic. With the Mercer West extension, underpass improvement will include three vehicle lanes in each direction, wide buffered sidewalks and a 10-foot bike path. Our researchers, staff and visitors who come from Lower Queen Anne will be more likely to use an alternate mode with these facilities in place. Mercer West will also provide robust access to the Seattle Waterfront, Seattle Center and major federal and state highways, supporting the regional economy on many levels.

The Hutchinson Center urges you to award funding for this project.

Sincerely,



Scott Rusch

Vice President, Facilities

Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center

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