



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

Thursday, March 08, 2012

Dear Secretary LaHood:

I am pleased to write in support of 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. Sellen Construction has been in operation as a general contractor for more than 65 years and has been located in the South Lake Union neighborhood of Seattle since 1944. We have built many of the Northwest's most prominent structures and are proud to have played a major role in the growth of this region.

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, the Seattle waterfront, the Seattle Center, and major federal and state highways. This project is vital because it supports four key sectors of the regional economy including: information technology, biotechnology, travel and tourism, international trade and of course, construction.

Economic competitiveness

- *This project will create over 500 direct jobs, providing an economic boost to our region.*
- *Mercer West continues the phenomenal success of South Lake Union. It is the second phase of the Mercer Corridor Project, serving the Gates Foundation, the University of Washington, PATH, Amazon, RealNetworks, Classmates.com, F5 Networks, the North Pacific Fishing Fleet and the maritime and manufacturing industries of InterBay and Ballard.*
- *Mercer West will provide badly needed pedestrian and bicycle connections between the Queen Anne and South Lake Union neighborhoods.*
- *The project encourages development of a 90-acre parcel north of terminals 90 and 91.*

Partnership

- *An independent Mercer Corridor Stakeholder Committee comprised of 42 individuals met 15 times and reached consensus supporting the Mercer West project. In addition, over 50 events, or briefings between 2004 and 2009 have been held to present information and receive feedback.*
- *As part of its work for future development, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is excavating for the widening of Mercer Street and providing the undergrounding of transmission lines that serve the entire South Lake Union neighborhood.*
- *Mercer West is an important part of the Seattle Comprehensive Plan which calls for increased density in 38 urban centers, including South Lake Union and Uptown.*

Pedestrians and Bicycles

- *Improvements included in Mercer West project are recommended in both the Seattle Bicycle Master Plan and the Seattle Pedestrian Master Plan.*
- *The Mercer Underpass will go from four-foot sidewalks squeezed between a retaining wall and traffic with no buffer, to eight-foot sidewalks and a six-foot planting strip buffer in addition to a ten-foot bike path.*
- *Creates a continuous east-west bikeway from the east side of South Lake Union to Lower Queen Anne.*
- *Connects bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure from South Lake Union and Cheshiahud Lake Union Loop to the Olympic Sculpture Park on Elliott Bay and Kinnear Park in Lower Queen Anne.*

Sustainability

- *Reduce 5,000 vehicle miles traveled in the downtown and South Lake Union neighborhood*
- *Storm water improvements at a historic flooding spot where Mercer crosses under Aurora Avenue will eliminate high water that has occasionally closed the roadway.*

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Redman", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Scott Redman
President
Sellen Construction Company
scott.redman@sellen.com

cc:

Senator Patty Murray
Senator Maria Cantwell
Governor Christine Gregoire
Congressman Jim McDermott
Mayor Mike McGinn, Seattle