

August 28, 2009

The Honorable Raymond H. LaHood
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
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Washington, D.C. 20590

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RE: *Mercer Corridor Project – TIGER Grant Application*

Dear Secretary LaHood:

I would like to voice my strong support for the City of Seattle's TIGER Grant Application for funding the **Mercer Corridor Project**. With the requested federal Recovery Act funding, Seattle has the opportunity to create a livable, walkable community and to improve mobility and access in this rapidly developing area of Seattle's Center City.

As background, I am a land use/environmental planning consultant with over 35 years of experience involving development projects throughout the Pacific Northwest. Over the past 10 years, I have had the opportunity to be involved with 14 redevelopment projects in Seattle's South Lake Union Neighborhood – the neighborhood in which the Mercer Corridor now divides. These projects represent approximately 5.8 million square feet of new bioengineering, housing, office, retail and museum space.

The renaissance that is underway in this neighborhood is aimed at creating a vibrant, mixed-use community. Much development has already occurred, much is currently in construction, and much is well into the City's permitting process. When these changes are completed, it is anticipated that many job opportunities -- as well as housing -- will be available, which will not only benefit the neighborhood but the City as a whole. These changes would not have been possible without a concerted effort by the community, its property owners and the City.

A key element of this redevelopment effort involves the **Mercer Corridor Project**. I am a fourth generation Seattleite and have followed planned revisions associated with the "Mercer Mess" since the late 1960's. Whereas an incredible number of "studies" have been done to resolve the inherent problems, the problems – high-accident rates, poor freight mobility, fractured neighborhood -- remain today.

The **Mercer Corridor Project** – in my estimation – will be a significant transportation improvement for the area and the City as a whole – in terms of vehicular, non-motorized and pedestrian movements. The project is aimed at removing existing barriers and, thereby, will improve mobility, provide vastly improved access to and through the area, as well as improved pedestrian and vehicular safety. In addition to improvements to Mercer St. itself, the changes will provide better connections to other streets in the neighborhood and pedestrian access to the City's improved Lake Union Park and the new home of the City's Museum of History & Industry. The planned improvements associated with the **Mercer Corridor Project** are aimed at not only moving vehicles, but creating a far better pedestrian environment.

I strongly urge you to support Seattle's application for federal Recovery Act – TIGER funding for the **Mercer Corridor Project**.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Terry McCann
Principal

cc: Senator Patty Murray
Representative Jim McDermott
Mayor Greg Nichols

Senator Maria Cantwell
Governor Christine Gregoire
City Council President Richard Conlin