



March 12, 2012

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

Dear Secretary LaHood:

I am writing this letter in my role as President of Seattle Children's Research Institute (SCRI) to support funding for the Two-Way Mercer West extension project in Seattle, Washington.

Mercer West is the second phase of the Mercer Corridor Project, serving many key organizations including ours. This corridor is the gateway to the Gates Foundation, the University of Washington, PATH, Amazon, RealNetworks and other notable enterprises as well as the maritime and manufacturing industries of InterBay and Ballard. Mercer West is critical to the success of the other major transportation projects. It links the Seattle Center, the Port of Seattle, and neighborhoods in northwest Seattle with the south-bound portal of the SR99 Bored Tunnel that is replacing the Alaskan Way Viaduct. Planning around the tunnel replacement project assumes that Mercer West will move forward, allowing full advantage to be taken of the investments that have already been made.

In addition to creating approximately 585 direct jobs that will provide an economic boost to our region, improvement of Mercer West will increase the flow of up to 55,000 vehicles daily and extend street, bicycle and sidewalk improvements from Ninth Avenue North to Queen Anne Avenue North. It will also improve freight mobility and access to the passenger cruise ship industry, which has an economic impact of \$393 million. Both public and private partners will be able to take full advantage of the cultural amenities in and around the Seattle Center, including the iconic Space Needle.

The project is an important part of the Seattle Comprehensive Plan which calls for increased density in 38 urban centers, including South Lake Union, and continues the area's phenomenal success. Completing the Mercer West extension has been a priority for the city of Seattle, the state of Washington and the Puget Sound region. In my volunteer role as President of the Downtown Seattle Association we understand the importance of allowing greater access to the South Lake Union neighborhoods where SCRI and other thriving bio-tech and global health companies are located, and also an area of continued regional growth.

We at Seattle Children's Research Institute fully support the completion of the Mercer Way extension and respectfully request approval of the Mercer West Tiger IV Application granting federal funding. We look forward to improved mobility for existing residents, commuters, travelers and those who will make Seattle their home or workplace in the future.

Sincerely,



James B. Hendricks, Ph.D.  
President

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

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