



August 20, 2009

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

Re: Mercer Corridor Project TIGER grant application

Dear Secretary LaHood:

I am writing to express the Space Needle's support for the City of Seattle's applications for funding for the Mercer Corridor Project. The Mercer Corridor is a critical transportation corridor that carries more than 80,000 people a day. It's known as the Mercer Mess because it is a major traffic bottleneck in the Seattle area, impeding access to Interstate 5 and the 520 Freeway, the growing lower Queen Anne and South Lake Union areas, the Seattle waterfront and freight terminals, and the Seattle Center. The Mercer Corridor project is critical to keeping people, goods and services moving in Seattle and throughout the region. With Federal Recovery Act funding, we have the opportunity to create a livable, walkable community and to improve mobility and access not only to the Space Needle, but to other rapidly developing areas of Seattle's Center City.

The funding is especially critical to the economic competitiveness of the region. The Mercer Corridor Project supports growth in key sectors of Washington's economy: Information Technology, Biotechnology, Travel and Tourism, and International Trade. The Space Needle is among major employers served by the project including the Seattle Center, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, University of Washington School of Medicine, Amgen and numerous other traditional and high-tech media companies. New headquarters complexes for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Amazon.com are currently under construction and are contributing to the cost of the project.

I urge you to support the Federal Recovery Act funding of the Mercer Corridor Project.

Sincerely,

Ron Severt
President and CEO
Space Needle LLC

cc: Senator Patty Murray
Senator Maria Cantwell
Representative Jim McDermott
Governor Christine Gregoire
Mayor Greg Nickels
Council President Richard Conlin

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