

September 10, 2004

Councilmember Richard Conlin
Transportation Committee - Chair
Seattle City Council
Seattle City Hall
600 4th Avenue, 2nd Floor
Seattle WA, 98104

RE: Mercer Street Corridor Alternatives

Dear Councilmember Conlin:

South Lake Union Friends and Neighbors (SLUFAN), the designated community organization representing the South Lake Union Neighborhood, endorses the proposed “Two Way Mercer & Narrow Valley (Alternative B)” proposal for the Mercer Corridor. Further, we urge the Seattle City Council, Mayor and Seattle Department of Transportation to identify this alternative as the city’s preferred option. We encourage Seattle City Council to approve and release funds as necessary for ongoing design development and implementation of Alternative B – “Two-Way Mercer and Narrow Valley.”

This action has been taken by a unanimous vote of the nine Board members present at our meeting on September 7, 2004. This was the culmination of over a year of involvement by our members and other community representatives through public meetings and presentations. Our support of the “Two-Way Mercer and Narrow Valley” alternative is based upon:

- The results of the South Lake Union Transportation Study that included an intensive public involvement process with local SLU, Queen Anne, Eastlake, and freight mobility stakeholders and resulted in their agreement on the benefits of this alternative.
- The benefits to the proposed regional maritime-themed South Lake Union Park resulting from the reduction of the Valley Street right-of-way and related decrease of traffic on Valley. In addition, the proposed Valley configuration provides a logical and appropriate connection to Eastlake and Westlake to form a continuous “drive” around Lake Union and access to the park
- Two-way Mercer/Narrow Valley best enhances pedestrian, transit, and bicycle mobility within the corridor and directly supports the South Lake Union Master Plan’s - “key priority strategy” (as adopted in the South Lake Union Neighborhood Plan) to enhances the pedestrian connectivity between the park and the remainder of the SLU neighborhood as well as with the Queen Anne, Capitol Hill, Eastlake, and other nearby neighborhoods.

- The proposal is consistent with the Seattle City Council Resolution #30610 which affirms the City of Seattle's commitment to:
 - making South Lake Union area the region's most competitive location for biotech research and economic development;
 - encouraging Mercer/Valley improvements that support the development of South Lake Union Park
 - exploring transportation improvements that link SLU and Lower Queen Anne.
- Two-way Mercer/Narrow Valley was supported and approved unanimously by the Seattle Design Commission as the preferred alternative after considering its impact on the neighborhood's urban design, development costs, and the elimination of the confusion associated with the current "Mercer Mess" street configuration.

SLUFAN looks forward to continuing to work with the City to provide the neighborhood stakeholders' perspective as design work progresses on dealing with the various Mercer Corridor issues.

Yours truly,

Ed Geiger, Chair
South Lake Union Friends and Neighbors - SLUFAN

Cc: All Seattle City Councilmembers
Mayor Greg Nickels
Grace Crunican, Seattle Department of Transportation