

PORT OF SEATTLE
MEMORANDUM

COMMISSION AGENDA

Item No. 7a

Date of Meeting May 10, 2011

DATE: May 5, 2011

TO: Tay Yoshitani, Chief Executive Officer

FROM: Patricia Akiyama, Director, External Affairs
Mike Merritt, Local Government Affairs Manager
Geri Poor, Regional Transportation Manager
Dan Burke, Regional Transportation Lead Planner

SUBJECT: City of Seattle West Mercer Place Study Update

BRIEFING OUTLINE:

At the May 10, 2011, Commission meeting, the City of Seattle will present the findings of the West Mercer Place Study. The Study looks at potential infrastructure improvements for West Mercer Place, and their impacts on vehicle travel time in this corridor. The team will also respond to Port Commission questions raised at the November 2, 2010, Commission meeting (see Previous Commission Review below).

BACKGROUND:

The Mercer Corridor is a critical link in the overall Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Program. The Corridor's two segments, Mercer East and Mercer West, are designed by the City as a two-way street that will provide east/west access between I-5, the Viaduct North Portal, and Elliott Avenue West, serving Terminal 91 and the Ballard-Interbay Manufacturing and Industrial Center.

Mercer East is in the first year of a three-year construction program that will widen Mercer Street to six lanes from Dexter Avenue North eastwardly to the I-5 ramps at Fairview Avenue. Mercer West, currently under design, runs from Dexter Avenue North westwardly to Elliott Avenue West. As part of Mercer West, Mercer Street will be widened to six lanes from Dexter Avenue North to Fifth Avenue North under SR 99, which the Port desires for freight mobility. From Fifth Avenue North to Fifth Avenue West, Mercer West is expected to be completed by reconfiguring and restriping the existing roadway. Potential improvements to West Mercer Place are being determined through the West Mercer Place Study.

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SDOT began the West Mercer Place Study in the Fall of 2010 and included Port staff input into the study review. SDOT staff presented preliminary findings of the study to Port staff in January 2011. Following the review, SDOT staff completed additional analysis and began presenting updated findings to project stakeholders in March, 2011. The City expects to choose a preferred alternative in mid-to-late May.

OTHER DOCUMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS REQUEST:

SDOT PowerPoint

PREVIOUS COMMISSION REVIEW:

On November 2, 2010, the Alaskan Way Viaduct Team updated the Port Commission on the Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Program. At the meeting, Commissioners asked questions about the City of Seattle's West Mercer Place project. Ron Paananen of WSDOT and Bob Powers of the City of Seattle said the West Mercer Place Study is underway and the team would be available toward the end of April 2011 to update the Commission.

Specifically, the Commission asked that the following be addressed in the West Mercer Place Study:

- Traffic model runs would include a sensitivity analysis of the potential for higher density development and related traffic impacts for the Terminal 91 Uplands;
- A dual-lane uphill option would receive equal analysis and consideration as the single-lane option on West Mercer Place;
- Traffic model runs would include analysis in the Elliott/15th Avenue corridor all the way to Fisherman's Terminal; and
- Impacts of slow-moving freight on Mercer Place must be considered.