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August 29, 2005

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Re: Conversion of Cesar Chavez to 2-way traffic

Dear Mayor and members of the City Council:

On August 22, the Design Commission received a presentation from Public Works regarding the conversion of five blocks of Cesar Chavez to two-way traffic. The Design Commission supports the conversion of Cesar Chavez to two-way traffic, however we have not had proper time or information required to endorse one of the three options presented. We do, however, have the following comments based on the presentation:

1. Pedestrian movement should be considered as carefully as vehicle movement in the design of this project. The options presented (without medians) would force the pedestrian to cross seven lanes of traffic with no safe harbor.
2. If a median is implemented, the Design commission supports the inclusion of at least a 10' wide median, which would allow for the planting of street trees.
3. The importance of the Grackle Triangle and the relationship of the street pattern across from City Hall should be given full consideration during the design process.

The Design Commission commends Public Works' dedication to traffic impacts and urban design issues in presenting option of for the conversion of Cesar Chavez. It is our understanding that this exercise is a preliminary feasibility study, during the design process there will be the opportunity to further examine the allocation and focus of urban enhancements. We would appreciate the opportunity to be included in the design process and are excited about the potential of Cesar Chavez to become a premier downtown boulevard.

Richard Weiss, AIA
Chair, Design Commission

Cc: City Manager Toby Futrell