



May 12, 2008

Ann Arbor City Council  
City Hall, 3rd Floor  
100 N. Fifth Avenue  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Dear City Council Members:

The Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum is proud to be a major attraction in Ann Arbor. The Museum has welcomed 3.3 million people to Ann Arbor over the last twenty-five years. Throughout the years, we have worked diligently to ensure the safety of our guests, the majority of them being children.

**It is for this reason we strongly oppose the reconfiguration of 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue between Ann and Catherine and the proposed relocation of our long-standing bus staging area.**

Each year, 50,000 children arrive on school buses from all over Southeastern Michigan. As you can imagine, it is a daunting challenge to coordinate thousands of children and their parents. Our location, combined with the difficulties of navigating in downtown, adds to the complexities of each field trip. After dozens of trips, schools have become accustomed to our long-standing bus drop-off location. More importantly, we believe the current configuration is the safest option available for the children that arrive via bus. Any change may result in schools eliminating the Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum as a field trip destination. As a recent economic impact study indicated, the Museum contributes \$3.9 million annually to our community. A reduction in field trips may adversely impact the Museum - and the entire community.

The one proposed location would require thousands of children to cross 5th Avenue. We believe this will place children, teachers and their chaperones at risk. The thought of crossing a major street, including traffic turning into the path of carefree children may set the stage for tragedy.

The Museum has previously requested a feasibility study by an independent, professional researcher to analyze the bus situation. We would be eager to participate in the study to determine recommendations that could resolve the situation in the best interests of everyone.

Please help us ensure the safety of our guests. **We believe the reconfiguration of 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue between Ann and Catherine will result in a safety issue for thousands of children and be detrimental to our long-term sustainability.** Without careful planning, the safety of thousands of children will be in question as may the very existence of the Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mel J. Drumm".

Mel J. Drumm  
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read "Lawrence A. Grace".

Lawrence A. Grace  
Chair, Board of Trustees

cc: Roger Fraser