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Reasons to Upgrade the Scajaquada Expressway

In respect to the purpose of this project, the speed reduction to 30 mph should be thought of as an *upgrade* for the community, instead of a downgrade for commuters. As we move forward, let's take a look at the benefits that a Scajaquada Parkway can bring to the city of Buffalo.

1) Restore the Original Elements of Delaware Park

- a. Historically, there was a bridle path that extended from Agassiz Circle up to the Elmwood Avenue stone bridge.
- b. Olmsted Parks Conservancy making progress with various historical elements
 - i. Spire Fountain (originally built in 1895; restored in 2013)
 - ii. Boathouse at Hoyt Lake
 - iii. Reforesting designations
 - iv. Annual cleansing efforts at Scajaquada Creek

2) Make Travelling Around Delaware Park Easier for Pedestrians

- a. Current crosswalk proposal will reunite Meadow Park with Lake Park
- b. Easier to travel between the History Museum, the Japanese Garden, and the Albright-Knox Art Gallery

3) ...and for Motorists!

- a. Driving around Parkside is needlessly complicated
- b. Too many detours within short travelling distances
 - i. Getting to Medaille College from Main Street
 - ii. Meadow Road from Agassiz Circle
- c. Reviving Agassiz Circle would solve logistical issues.
 - i. Will make Parkside intersection *much* safer!

4) Reunite Meadowview Place and Delaware Park Garage with Surroundings

- a. * An elephant in the room: Small pocket of homes near Medaille are completely separated from the rest of the Parkside neighborhood
- b. Delaware Park Garage almost completely inaccessible without Scajaquada
- c. ...and even then, can only be accessed going southbound

5) Promote Safety for Parkside Residents

- a. Spinoff traffic from Scajaquada has caused many annual accidents in and around the Parkside neighborhood.
 - i. Motorists constantly ignoring the speed limit

- b. Residents want to go to the Zoo/Playgrounds/Golf Course without competing with traffic problems.

6) Protect and Promote Historical Legacy of Buffalo's "Central" Park

- a. As the largest in the city, Delaware is not simply a neighborhood park; it is Buffalo's *community* park!
- b. Think of Central Park in Manhattan.
- c. Expressways should *never* travel through parks.
- d. There are other east-west routes between Main and Delaware.

7) (Re-)Establish Connections to Other Olmsted Parks

- a. Humboldt Parkway
 - i. Hamlin Park neighborhood was fractured by the Kensington Expressway, another freeway built against the residents' wishes.
 - ii. Reconnect formal green path between Delaware and Martin Luther King Parks
 - iii. Fix parts of city street grid ruined by Kensington
- b. Riverside Park
 - i. Original Scajaquada Parkway extended parallel to the creek up to Grant Street.
 - ii. The parkway was probably the basis for an intended connection to Riverside Park.
 - iii. Aside from the obscured Jesse Kregal Bicycle Path (amid safety issues), there was never an official link between Delaware and Riverside Parks.
 - iv. Proposal from Conservancy's 2008 Master Plan sought to remedy this.
 - v. Would officially unite Riverside with the rest of the Olmsted Parks System.

8) Other Cities Have Successfully Reduced or Eliminated Freeways from Neighborhoods

- a. Embarcadero Parkway in San Francisco, CA
 - i. The Embarcadero Freeway was demolished in 1991, when reconstruction was considered too expensive, following a 1989 earthquake that damaged much of the structure.
 - ii. Parkway designed and built through the 1990s.
 - iii. Today, it is one of San Fran's major transportation corridors (for the city's BART System), which provides immediate access to their commercial harbor.
- b. Tom McCall Park in Portland, OR
 - i. Former expressway separated city from waterfront
 - ii. Removal championed by then-Governor Tom McCall in the 1970s.
 - iii. Freeway removed later that decade; land rededicated as a park during the 1980s.
 - iv. Today, Portland is reunited with the Willamette River as one of the city's premier tourist destinations!

- c. Freeway Reduction happening here in New York State!
 - i. Inner Loop in Rochester
 - ii. Robert Moses Parkway in Niagara Falls
 - iii. Discussions for I-81 removal in Syracuse

9) Continue Holding City and State Officials Accountable

- a. Systematic disinvestment in the city of Buffalo.
 - i. New York State Department of Transportation particularly has been ignoring residents' requests for improvements for *decades!*
 - ii. Delayed and diluted plans for changing Scajaquada date back to at least a decade.
 - iii. Same obstructionist tactics with Humboldt and Skyway
 - iv. It took for a mother to lose a young child before the bureau did what they had been asked to do.
 - v. In one *day* what was requested for *decades*.
- b. City officials failing to take initiatives on demanding change.
 - i. Assemblyman Sean Ryan has become a voice for residents who have been ignored, while left to see years of neglect.
- c. Calling attention to our aging infrastructure.
- d. Doing what works best for people, rather than automobiles
 - i. Getting commuters to gain a sense of perspective
 - ii. Residents of Amherst, Cheektowaga, or Hamburg would not appreciate a park running through their neighborhoods.
 - iii. City finally has a chance to reshape its own future based upon its unique heritage.

10) Give the City Back to the People!

- a. Cars are not the be-all, end-all of urban planning
 - i. Other cities have found success upon realizing this.
 - ii. Buffalo's heritage is not determined by autocentric planning.
 - iii. Upcoming Green Code will reinforce desire for walkable neighborhoods.
- b. Redesign dangerous intersections
 - i. Roads out in Cheektowaga, Amherst, and Williamsville (Harlem & Walden; Niagara Falls & Maple; Transit & Wherle) that are almost completely inaccessible to pedestrians; does not belong in the city landscape!
 - ii. Restore Agassiz Circle!
 - iii. * Complete Streets Initiative (passed by NYS in 2011)
- c. Freeways have historically *separated* communities.
 - i. Under the misguided pretense of "progress".
- d. Parkways have historically *united* communities.
 - i. The founding principle of Frederick Law Olmsted's proposed park system.
 - ii. As people realize the socio-economic liabilities of Robert Moses' legacy, Olmsted's principles are being rediscovered.
- e. As we return to people-centric planning, Buffalo will prosper from there.