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January 25, 2017

Mr. Matthew Driscoll
Commissioner of Transportation
New York State Department of Transportation
50 Wolf Road
Albany, NY 12205

Re: A road diet for the Scajaquada plan

Dear Commissioner Driscoll:

I write today to convey my support for the concerns which have been raised by stakeholders such as the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, GO Bike Buffalo, Assemblyman Sean Ryan and other members and allies of the Scajaquada Corridor Coalition regarding the deficiencies of the proposed design for the Scajaquada Corridor (Rt. 198) project in the City of Buffalo, NY.

Their request for bike lanes, for smaller medians, for smaller intersections, for a reconfiguration of the intersection of 198 and Delaware Ave. which will allow for Olmsted's historic bridge to achieve its original function, and their call for the restoration of Agassiz Circle are reasonable, appropriate, and should be implemented.

I reject the notion that FHWA regulations would somehow prohibit the "road diet" for which these stakeholders advocate. Over the last decade, the FHWA has moderated the rigidity of their standards to allow for and even encourage a push toward "context sensitive solutions" which respect the "scenic, aesthetic, historic, community, and environmental resources" of the communities served by U.S. surface transportation infrastructure.¹ Intersections more appropriate to Sheridan Drive or Union Road are not sensitive to the context of historic parkland designed by the father of American landscape architecture. The FHWA notes that "there is a great deal of

¹ FHWA & AASHTO, *Joint Summary Report, Context Sensitive Solutions*, March, 2007.

latitude in the design of a roadway relative to its functional classification”² I encourage the department to use this latitude to develop solutions which work in this particular context.

Thank you very much for your leadership and your consideration.

Sincerely,



Brian Higgins
Member of Congress

Cc: Hon. Sean Ryan, Assemblyman
Mr. Peter Osborne, Division Administrator, FHWA
Ms. Stephanie L. Crockatt, Executive Director, Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy
Mr. Justin Booth, Executive Director, GO Bike Buffalo

² FHWA, *Highway Functional Classification: Concepts, Criteria and Procedures*, 2013, p. 41.