

BRIAN HIGGINS  
26TH DISTRICT, NEW YORK

2459 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-3306  
(202) 226-0347 (FAX)

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

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Congress of the United States  
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Washington, DC 20515-3226

726 EXCHANGE STREET  
SUITE 601  
BUFFALO, NY 14210  
(716) 852-3501  
(716) 852-3929 (FAX)

640 PARK PLACE  
NIAGARA FALLS, NY 14301  
(716) 282-1274  
(716) 282-2479 (FAX)  
higgins.house.gov

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August 3, 2016

Hon. Rose Harvey  
Commissioner  
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation  
625 Broadway  
Albany NY 12207

**Re: West River Connector Trail, Support for Preferred Alternative**

Dear Commissioner Harvey:

In the context of the public comment period for the West River Connector Trail, I write today to convey my strong support for Alternative #3, the agency's preferred alternative, which would provide the highest quality public access to this important stretch of waterfront and would eliminate redundant and unnecessary asphalt from this waterfront environment.

In the City of Buffalo, the City of Niagara Falls, and through the Tonawandas, great strides have been made and efforts are ongoing to create generous waterfront public access centered around pedestrian, bicycle and paddle craft access and other recreational uses. It is important that the same progress proceed on Grand Island. While these improvements accrue to the benefit of visitors and the region as a whole, the prime beneficiaries of these enhancements to walkability and livability are persons who live in the immediate vicinity of these improvements.

The decision regarding which alternative to pursue for this project will have generational significance. To persist with the extant Robert Moses-inspired, car-centric, wasteful and under-utilized infrastructure, as opposed to replacing it with this smarter, greener alternative would be a mistake not soon undone.

Having said all this, it is my understanding that the agency has received some comments from specific neighbors expressing concerns concerning regarding the locations and the extent of specific parking pads. These concerns are valid and the agency should, to the extent possible, address them substantively.

Thank you very much for your leadership in the responsible development of this important resource.

Sincerely,



Brian Higgins  
Member of Congress

Cc: Hon. Nathan McMurray, Supervisor, Town of Grand Island