

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
Telephone: (716) 286-4310
June 26, 2018

The Niagara Falls City Council
Niagara Falls, New York

RE: Removal of the Niagara Scenic Parkway—from Main Street to Findlay Drive

Council Members:

An agreement has been reached between the Power Authority of the State of New York ("NYPA"), the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation ("State Parks"), the New York State Department of Transportation ("NYSDOT"), the USA Niagara Development Corporation ("USAN"), and the City of Niagara Falls (the "City"), which is the next step in the ROBERT MOSES PARKWAY NORTH SEGMENT REMOVAL PROJECT (Project). This construction project is estimated to cost \$38,500,000. It is largely funded through NYPA (\$36,500,000), with the balance being paid for by New York State Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation (\$2,000,000). No municipal capital funds are required for this Agreement to take effect.

Since constructed in 1962, the former Robert Moses Parkway has not just been the subject of severe criticism but a malignancy that has decimated our community by having cut off both residents and visitors from the Niagara River, Niagara River Gorge, and the public lands connected thereto. The Parkway, rather than being the transportation link in service of economic development and city-building, instead only served to create an effective by-pass around the City and its Main Street, Pine Avenue, and other traditional business corridors.

This Project, more than any before marks the largest removal, reconfiguration and regeneration of urban land since a portion of the Parkway passing through Niagara Falls State Park and Prospect Park was removed in the late 1970s. Similar to the preceding 'South Segment Removal Project,' also known as Riverway, this Project will achieve unprecedented public access to the northerly portion of the rim of the Niagara Gorge, through the construction of new 'tourism infrastructure,' which includes but is not limited to the following:

1. Full-depth reconstruction of Whirlpool Street from Cedar Avenue to Findlay Drive, removal of Whirlpool Street from Walnut Avenue to Cedar Avenue and undertaking a mill and overlay of Whirlpool Street between Walnut Avenue and Main Street along with the installation of new curbs/sidewalks and restoring the name of this segment to its original name of "Second Street";
2. Full-depth reconstruction of Third Street from Main Street to Cedar Avenue in a manner consistent with that of Whirlpool Street between

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Cedar Avenue and Findlay Drive;

3. Construction/reconstruction of selected segments of streets adjoining or connecting to Whirlpool and Third Streets to facilitate a complete network, including but not limited to: extending Walnut Street to the Niagara Gorge Discovery Center; reuse/reconstruction of a former entrance to the Parkway as an entry drive for the Niagara Gorge Discovery Center to be known as "Discovery Way;" and repaving of an unimproved segment of Spring Street adjoining Whirlpool Street and Findlay Drive, and;
4. Selected improvements to existing City owned parking areas along Whirlpool Street at: Ashland Avenue, and near the City owned train station at Ontario Avenue.

These improvements are to be undertaken during Phase 1 of the project. Various other improvements will be made during Phases 2 and 3 of the project. Phase 1 is projected to begin in the Fall of 2018 and be completed by the Fall of next year (2019). Likewise, Phase 2 and Phase 3 starting in 2019 and be completed in September 2020 and June 2021 respectively.

Additionally, the Parkway's removal, reconfiguration of Whirlpool Street and the expansion of Niagara's waterfront parks enables full implementation of various development strategies that will support the long-term growth and development of Niagara Falls tourism, especially in the adjacent Core City neighborhoods and business districts.

Attached hereto is a copy of the proposed agreement between all parties. Will the Council so approve and authorize the Mayor to execute this agreement on behalf of the City of Niagara Falls?

Respectfully submitted,

PAUL A. DYSTER
Mayor