

SUSPENSION

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chairwoman Betty Jean Grant

FROM: Legislator Lynn M. Marinelli 

DATE: June 20, 2013

RE: Correspondence regarding the Long-delayed Kenmore Avenue Reconstruction Project

Attached please find copies of letters that I sent to various public and private sector leaders in which I advocate on behalf of the Kenmore Avenue Reconstruction Project.

This project has been the #1 priority of the Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC) for years. Over the course of time, infrastructure improvement plans for this region have limited the scope and quality of this project – from a projected \$17.7 million investment in 2004 to an estimated \$5 million today.

Despite the fact that Kenmore Avenue will receive some surface attention this year (\$400,000), the vast majority of reconstruction funds have yet to be released.

Kenmore Avenue is jointly owned by the City of Buffalo and the County of Erie. It is located in one of the most densely populated communities in our region. The daily vehicle traffic count is 16,000.

For these reasons, I strongly support the appropriation of capital funds from the federal and state government, together with the advocacy of our business community, for this important infrastructure project to receive the needed investment that has been vetted among and agreed to by all stakeholders.

I would appreciate your directing this packet to the Economic Development Committee for its review.

ERIE COUNTY LEGISLATURE

LYNN M. MARINELLI
LEGISLATOR - 3RD DISTRICT



- 1701 Hertel Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14216
716/832-0493
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June 18, 2013

Howard A. Zemsky, Co-Chair
Satish K. Tripathi, PhD, Co-Chair
WNY Regional Economic Development Council
95 Perry Street - Suite 500
Buffalo, NY 14203

RE: The Buffalo Billion

Dear Mr. Zemsky and Dr. Tripathi:

It is my understanding that the WNY Regional Economic Development Council (WNYREDC) is reviewing projects for Phase II consideration for "The Buffalo Billion." I respectfully ask that the Council would consider investing in capital projects that have already been vetted, prioritized and agreed to by all stakeholders as top priorities for economic development.

One such project, the reconstruction of Kenmore Avenue from Main Street to Military Road, has languished at the top of the list of our region's roadways in urgent need of rehabilitation. In fact, the Kenmore Avenue project is the number one priority of the Greater Buffalo Niagara Transportation Council (GBNRTC). It has gone through one iteration after another in scope and quality as capital funding has steadily evaporated due to on-going federal, state and county fiscal budget constraints.

Once slated to be reconstructed from Main Street to Military Road at a projected cost of \$17.7 million in 2004, the scope of the Kenmore Avenue project has now been downsized to include only the section between Main Street and Starin Avenue at a cost of \$5 million. This road, which handles 16,000 vehicles daily, cannot continue being pushed off into the distant future.

Kenmore Avenue is jointly owned by the City of Buffalo and County of Erie. It traverses one of the most densely populated communities in our region. Kenmore Avenue is home to dozens of small businesses that have been hurt by ongoing delays in this project and by the unfortunate, yet understandable, avoidance of Kenmore Avenue by motorists due to its decrepit condition and the corresponding damage to vehicles.

Continued

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WNY Regional Economic Development Council

page two

Yet, Kenmore Avenue provides an ideal linkage between the University at Buffalo's Main Street Campus and the community adjacent to the Buffalo Waterfront just north of downtown. This thoroughfare is an asset to the region, and, once rehabilitated, would reap substantial return on investment in the form of added commerce, job growth and tax revenues.

It is an ironic twist of circumstance that the Village of Kenmore was named "One of the Top 10 Neighborhoods in the United States" by the American Planning Association in 2009. However, its southern gateway - the expanse of Kenmore Avenue - is our region's most vivid example of benign neglect, the incontrovertible outcome of words with no action.

We have seen success stories following the reconstruction of local roads such as Main Street in East Aurora and South Park Avenue in Hamburg. Robust development and economic activity follow infrastructure improvements. These roads become a magnet for businesses and their customers.

Please take advantage of the Governor's pledge of the Buffalo Billion as an opportunity to eliminate the Buffalo backlog, most notably, the inertia that surrounds the long-stalled Kenmore Avenue Reconstruction Project, the #1 priority of the GBNRTC. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,



Lynn M. Marinelli
3rd District Legislator
Member, Economic Development Committee

c: County Executive Mark Poloncarz
Mayor Byron Brown
Supervisor Anthony Caruana
Mayor Patrick Mang
Highway Superintendent William Swanson
Buffalo Common Councilmember Bonnie Russell
Buffalo Common Councilmember Michael Locurto
Buffalo Common Councilmember Joseph Golombek, Jr.
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June 18, 2013

Congressman Brian Higgins
Larkin at Exchange
726 Exchange Street
Buffalo, NY 14210

RE: Kenmore Avenue Project

Dear Congressman Higgins:

As our representative in the House, you have always recognized the relationship between sound, strategic infrastructure improvements by government as the key that unlocks private sector investment and robust economic activity.

One such infrastructure improvement project, the reconstruction of Kenmore Avenue from Main Street to Military Road, has languished at the top of the list of our region's roadways in urgent need of rehabilitation. In fact, the Kenmore Avenue project is the number one priority of the Greater Buffalo Niagara Transportation Council (GBNRTC). It has gone through one iteration after another, both in scope and quality as capital funding has steadily evaporated due to on-going federal, state and county budget constraints.

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Congressman Brian Higgins

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We have seen success stories following the reconstruction of local roads such as Main Street in East Aurora and South Park Avenue in Hamburg. Robust private sector development and economic activity follow government funded infrastructure improvements. These roads become a magnet for businesses and their customers.

The inertia that surrounds the long-stalled Kenmore Avenue Reconstruction Project, the #1 priority of the GBNRTC, is an embarrassment to our region. No single person, organization or government is to blame.

You may recall that you, as former Chief of Staff of the County Legislature's Majority, and I worked together with then County Executive Gorski and Mayor Masiello to accomplish the repaving of a portion of Kenmore Avenue. This repaving project was hailed by constituents, business owners and the community alike.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,



Lynn M. Marinelli

3rd District Legislator

Member, Economic Development Committee

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Buffalo Common Councilmember Bonnie Russell
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June 18, 2013

Honorable Mark Grisanti
New York State Senator
65 Court Street - #213
Buffalo, NY 14202

RE: Kenmore Avenue Project

Dear Senator Grisanti:

As our representative in the State Senate, you recognize the relationship between sound, strategic infrastructure improvements by government as the key that unlocks private sector investment and robust economic activity.

One such infrastructure improvement project, the reconstruction of Kenmore Avenue from Main Street to Military Road, has languished at the top of the list of our region's roadways in urgent need of rehabilitation. In fact, the Kenmore Avenue project is the number one priority of the Greater Buffalo Niagara Transportation Council (GBNRTC). It has gone through one iteration after another, both in scope and quality, as capital funding has steadily evaporated due to on-going federal, state and county budget constraints.

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Kenmore Avenue is jointly owned by the City of Buffalo and County of Erie. It traverses one of the most densely populated communities in our region. Kenmore Avenue is home to dozens of small businesses that have been hurt by ongoing delays in this project and by the unfortunate, yet understandable, avoidance of Kenmore Avenue by motorists due to its decrepit condition and the corresponding damage to vehicles.

Yet, Kenmore Avenue provides an ideal linkage between the University at Buffalo's Main Street Campus and the community adjacent to the Buffalo Waterfront just north of downtown. This thoroughfare is an asset to the region, and, once rehabilitated, would reap substantial return on investment in the form of added commerce, job growth and tax revenues.

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Honorable Mark Grisanti
New York State Senator

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We have seen success stories following the reconstruction of local roads such as Main Street in East Aurora and South Park Avenue in Hamburg. Robust private sector development and economic activity follow government funded infrastructure improvements. These roads become a magnet for businesses and their customers.

The inertia that surrounds the long-stalled Kenmore Avenue Reconstruction Project, the #1 priority of the GBNRTC, is an embarrassment to our region. No single person, organization or government is to blame. This project begs for leadership at every level of government. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,



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June 18, 2013

Honorable Robin Schimminger
New York State Assembly
3514 Delaware Avenue
Kenmore, NY 14217

RE: Kenmore Avenue Project

Dear Assemblyman Schimminger:

As our representative in the State Assembly, you recognize the relationship between sound, strategic infrastructure improvements by government as the key that unlocks private sector investment and robust economic activity.

One such infrastructure improvement project, the reconstruction of Kenmore Avenue from Main Street to Military Road, has languished at the top of the list of our region's roadways in urgent need of rehabilitation. In fact, the Kenmore Avenue project is the number one priority of the Greater Buffalo Niagara Transportation Council (GBNRTC). It has gone through one iteration after another, both in scope and quality, as capital funding has steadily evaporated due to on-going federal, state and county budget constraints.

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Honorable Robin Schimminger

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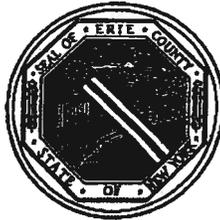


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June 18, 2013

Dottie Gallagher-Cohen, President & CEO
Buffalo Niagara Partnership
665 Main Street - Suite 200
Buffalo, NY 14203

RE: Kenmore Avenue Project

Dear Ms. Gallagher-Cohen:

Most businesses recognize the relationship between sound, strategic infrastructure improvements by the public sector as the key to unlocking private sector investment and robust economic activity. Please consider adding the long-stalled Kenmore Avenue project to the Buffalo Niagara Partnership's state and federal legislative agenda.

The reconstruction of Kenmore Avenue from Main Street to Military Road has languished at the top of the list of our region's roadways in urgent need of rehabilitation. In fact, the Kenmore Avenue project is the number one priority of the Greater Buffalo Niagara Transportation Council (GBNRTC). It has gone through one iteration after another, in both scope and quality, as capital funding has steadily evaporated due to ongoing federal, state and county budget constraints.

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Dottie Gallagher-Cohen, President & CEO
Buffalo Niagara Partnership

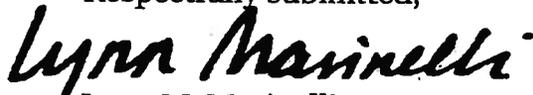
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Respectfully submitted,



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