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Congressman Higgins, Olmsted Parks Conservancy Announce Support for Peace Bridge Construction Plan that Restores Front Park

Support & Momentum Build with Plan that Preserves Olmsted's "Gateway" Vision



Congressman Brian Higgins (NY-27) and leaders from the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy announced support for a Peace Bridge plaza using an existing construction option that would preserve Frederick Law Olmsted's "Gateway" vision for [Front Park](#).

"In the process of establishing a new Peace Bridge connection over the water we should not pass up the opportunity to right a historical wrong and also connect our community with the water's edge," said Congressman Higgins. "Over a century ago Olmsted had the foresight to recognize the value of Buffalo's place along the lake. Restoration of Front Park should be integrated into our vision for this community moving forward as we proceed with Peace Bridge expansion and comprehensive waterfront development."

Front Park's view of the water was initially obstructed with the construction of "Ramp B" from the Peace Bridge Plaza to the Southbound I-190 during the 1950s. Consultants to the New York State Department of Transportation have indicated that during the [Peace Bridge expansion](#) it is possible to realign "Ramp B" to allow for the functional restoration of Front Park. Congressman Higgins and Conservancy leaders are working with the Peace Bridge Authority (PBA) and the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) toward the goal of moving forward with the plaza design option that enhances the region's sweeping lake views.

"We are extremely pleased to stand here today with Congressman Higgins, someone who has provided strong leadership in achieving this historic preservation goal of the Conservancy," said Thomas Herrera-Mishler, president and CEO of the Olmsted Parks Conservancy. "Together we celebrate the potential for this historic park and international gateway not only for our neighbors but to the entire region because rebuilding and restoring Front Park is a step forward for this neighborhood

and the entire city and will be an important link to the Niagara River Greenway.”

“Today’s announcement continues to move the expansion project forward,” said Peace Bridge Authority Chairman Ken Schoetz. “It is a project that will move the WNY economy and its people forward in the years to come. Congressman Higgins has been a stalwart supporter of our efforts from day one. Today, we are both pleased and proud to receive the support of the Olmsted Park Conservancy. Restoring Front Park to the best it can be has been, and remains, a top priority of the Peace Bridge Authority.”

“A new Peace Bridge gives us a great opportunity to create good-paying jobs in Western New York and advance the overall economic development of the region,” said Congressman Lee. “The partnership between Olmsted Parks, Peace Bride Authority and New York State Department of Transportation is important step in improving the long-term vitality of this region as we move forward with the peace bridge expansion. I appreciate Congressman Higgins’ continued leadership on this issue and will continue to work with him to improve the economic development of Western New York.”

Frederick Law Olmsted, America's first and greatest landscape architect, designed the 37-acre Front Park. Located on a bluff overlooking the Niagara River and Lake Erie, Olmsted envisioned Front Park as Buffalo's “public face” to our northern neighbors. When first opened in the 1870's Front Park quickly became Buffalo's most popular park with more than 5,000 visitors on the weekends. Olmsted declared this site as Buffalo's reason for being because it sits on a site overlooking the convergence of the Lake and River.

Over \$2 million in rehabilitation projects have been completed at Front Park including a substantial pathway restoration project and full reconstruction of the terrace overlook plaza.