

THE TOWN OF

MIKE MADIGAN  
COUNCILMAN



GRAND ISLAND

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Mark Thomas  
NYS Office of Parks  
Prospect Street & Old Falls Street  
Niagara Falls, NY 14303

19-July-2017

Dear Mark Thomas:

Please confirm that the Parkway Closure plan has been canceled. The lack of any response by you or the State to address the Town of Grand Island and its residents' serious safety concerns, after committing to do so at the November 2016 meeting (no traffic calming plans or plan of any form has been provided as committed) supports the conclusion that this project has been canceled.

The Grand Island Town Board rejected the Parkway closure plan on 01-August 2016 due to serious safety concerns impacting the hundreds of residents located along Whitehaven, Staley, Bedell, Love, Fix and Bush Roads as well as the West River service road. A viable plan, that did not degrade area resident safety, was approved by the Town that did not involve closing the Parkway.

The roads that would be most impacted by the Parkway closure have no sidewalks or shoulders and most are very narrow. All of these roads are used daily by pedestrians to walk their dogs, bike, and jog. Obsolete in their design, most of these roads would not be built today because they lack the present-day features which reduce the risk of traumatic injuries to pedestrians. Intentionally increasing traffic along these roads when viable safer alternatives exist would be negligent and morally irresponsible.

In this region a number of high profile pedestrian-motor vehicle accidents have recently occurred along similarly deficiently designed roads. These cases involved loss of life and traumatic life changing injuries. It is incumbent on all our public transportation officials to make every effort to prevent these tragedies.

Closing the Parkway will add greater than 1500 cars, and therefore chances, of a similar traumatic injury accident occurring daily in Grand Island on these deficiently designed roads.

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Closing the non-residential Parkway by New York State would be a conscious choice to jeopardize resident safety. It is not justifiable to increase the risks of car-car and car -pedestrian casualties when safer options are available and feasible. Also subject to greater danger would be the bicyclists who legally opt to use the busier service road so as not to conflict with the variety of new users of the multi-use trail.

The following facts contribute to the conclusion that the Parkway Closure plan has been cancelled:

- November 9<sup>th</sup> you (Mark Thomas) committed to working with the town to develop a traffic calming plan to address the serious resident and town board safety concerns related to shifting over 1500 cars onto these deficiently designed unsafe roads. Thomas's refusal to meet with members of the Town Board and lack of any action in developing the plan to address these serious safety concerns strongly supports that the project is cancelled.
- The State signed a legal contract with the Town committing the State to meet a minimum of once per quarter with the Town Board during the duration of the project, and to work with the Town Board as partners in the project planning, design and construction. Requests to meet have been submitted by e-mail and rejected numerous times over the past nine (9) months. This refusal to meet supports the conclusion that the project is cancelled. Otherwise this refusal is a serious breach in the legal contract and a breach of trust against the Town and its residents.
- The Town rejected the Parkway closure plan. This official rejection by the governing body that requested this project, and contractually is the sponsor of the project, combined with the complete lack of any contact by the State regarding this project over the past 9 months, supports the conclusion that the Parkway Closure plan has been cancelled.

Your official verification of the apparent project cancellation would be appreciated so we can formally close the contract and the project, and inform the residents of this cancellation.

Best regards;

Mike Madigan

Grand Island Town Councilman