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October 2, 2024

Mr. James Stack, Executive Director
Genesee Transportation Council
50 West Main Street, Suite 5131
Rochester, NY 14614

Re: Genesee Valley Park Olmsted Arched Bridges Restoration Plan

Dear Mr. Stack:

The Olmsted Network wholeheartedly supports the Unified Planning Work Program application submitted by Monroe County for the Genesee Valley Park Olmsted Arched Bridges Restoration Plan. Based in Washington, DC, we are the national organization dedicated to promoting and preserving the work and values of Frederick Law Olmsted and the Olmsted firm through advocacy, education and stewardship. We are honored to partner with the Rochester Olmsted Parks Alliance and the Highland Park Conservancy to protect Rochester's irreplaceable Olmsted landscapes.

We join with ROPA in believing this unified plan is the necessary first step toward preserving unique Olmsted assets in Rochester, essential to healthy lifestyles and a livable city.

The historic bridges are key parts of three major trail systems: the Erie Canalway Trail, the Genesee Greenway Trail and the Genesee Riverway Trail. They are integral to well-used transportation networks which provide healthy recreation opportunities for the environmental justice communities adjoining them, as well as substantial numbers of users from around the city and state.

Genesee Valley Park (GVP) and its three pedestrian bow bridges over the Erie Canal are part of Rochester's rich heritage of Olmsted masterworks. When the Erie Canal was rerouted through GVP in the early 20th century, the city commissioned the Olmsted Brothers firm to design the three bridges to span the canal and reconnect park paths. After 100 years of use, it's no wonder that they are in need of stewardship.

With funding, the proposed plan will present a long-term approach to the maintenance of these historic bridges. It will foster an inclusive planning process that brings all affected parties to the table. It will help identify more efficient and

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effective ownership and maintenance structures and help contribute to a clear understanding of the role and processes of the government agencies involved including NYSDOT, the NYS Canal Corp., and the NYS Historic Preservation Office.

The proposed plan is ambitious, important and timely – and we ask that you support its full funding.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne Neal Petri". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "A".

Anne Neal Petri
President and CEO

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