



HIGHWAYS TO BOULEVARDS INITIATIVE

CONGRESS FOR THE NEW URBANISM
CENTER FOR NEIGHBORHOOD TECHNOLOGY



TWO VERY DIFFERENT CHOICES

BUFFALO IS A WATERFRONT CITY WITH A DEEP HISTORY ALONG THE SHORES OF LAKE ERIE. WITH MORE THAN HALF OF THE CITY'S WATERFRONT LEFT VACANT, THE POTENTIAL FOR REVITALIZATION IS IMMENSE.

WHOLE NEIGHBORHOODS AND COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS COULD BE BUILT WITH STRONG CONNECTIONS TO DOWNTOWN AND THE CITY'S EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS.

TO ACHIEVE THIS VISION, BUFFALO NEEDS TO LAY DOWN THE PROPER FOUNDATION. GOOD DEVELOPMENT IS TIED TO GOOD INFRASTRUCTURE. THE FORM OF THE STREETS CAN SEAL THE FATE OF VAST AMOUNTS OF LAND.

THE NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (NYSDOT) EVALUATED THREE INFRASTRUCTURE ALTERNATIVES FOR THE OUTER HARBOR. IT SELECTED THE PLAN THAT WILL, IN ALL LIKELIHOOD, KEEP THE WATERFRONT VACANT FOR ANOTHER 50 TO 100 YEARS. THIS PLAN MAINTAINS THE ELEVATED SKYWAY AND THE EMBANKED ROUTE 5 AND EXPANDS A MAJOR FRONTAGE ROAD, WHILE CONSUMING UNNECESSARY AMOUNTS OF LAND THAT COULD OTHERWISE BUILD THE CITY'S TAX BASE.

BUT BY SIMPLY CHOOSING THE BOULEVARD ALTERNATIVE ALREADY DEVELOPED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, BUFFALO COULD BUILD A SINGLE URBAN THOROUGHFARE THAT WOULD ACCOMMODATE TRAFFIC DEMANDS AND BECOME A VALUABLE DESTINATION IN IT'S OWN RIGHT. THE NEW BOULEVARD WOULD SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVE WATERFRONT ACCESS AND SUPPORT THE REVITALIZATION THAT BUFFALONIANS HAVE BEEN FIGHTING FOR.

BUFFALO HAS TWO VERY DIFFERENT CHOICES ON THE TABLE. BY CHOOSING THE BOULEVARD ALTERNATIVE, THE CITY WILL OPEN THE DOOR TO WORLD-CLASS DEVELOPMENT.

THE FOLLOWING SERIES OF IMAGES DEMONSTRATES WHAT COULD HAPPEN ALONG THE WATERFRONT WITH THE RIGHT INFRASTRUCTURE IN PLACE. IT CONTRASTS THAT FUTURE WITH WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF THE NYSDOT IS ALLOWED TO CONTINUE WITH ITS CURRENT PLANS.



STREETS AND BLOCKS: A CATALYST FOR REVITALIZATION



**A NETWORK OF STREETS AND
BLOCKS EXPANDS ACCESS AND
CONNECTIVITY TO THE OUTER
HARBOR.**

**A MIXTURE OF COMMERCIAL, OFFICE,
AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT,
ALONG WITH PARK SPACE, WOULD
MAKE THE WATERFRONT A REAL
DESTINATION EXPLORED BY
RESIDENTS AND VISITORS ALIKE.**

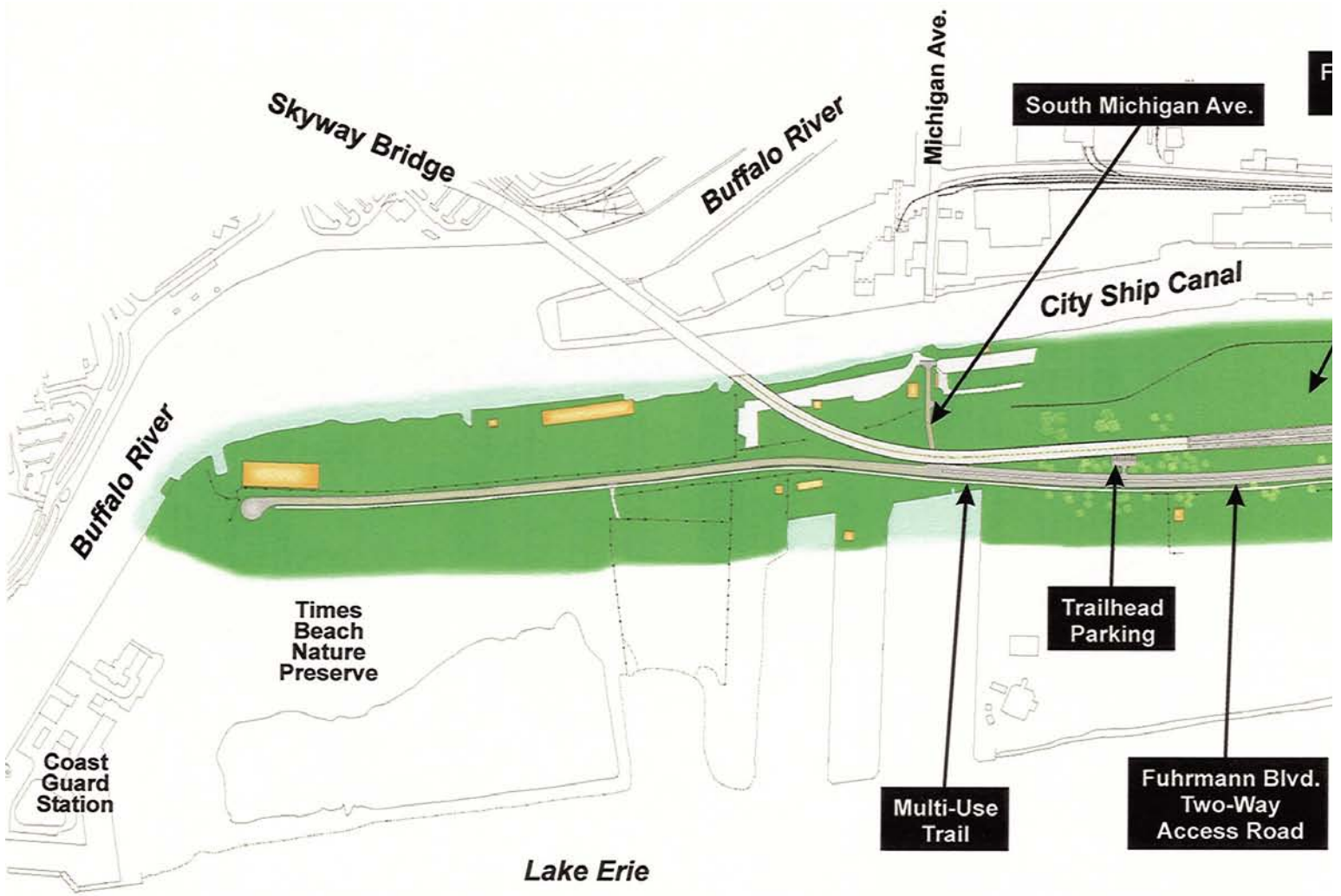
**WITH A BOULEVARD
INSTEAD OF AN EMBANKED
HIGHWAY, THE THOROUGHFARE
CAN BE CONNECTED TO A
SERIES OF SMALLER BLOCKS
AND NARROW STREETS THAT
INCREASE WALKABILITY.**



SUBURBAN-STYLE PARKWAY: MORE OF THE SAME

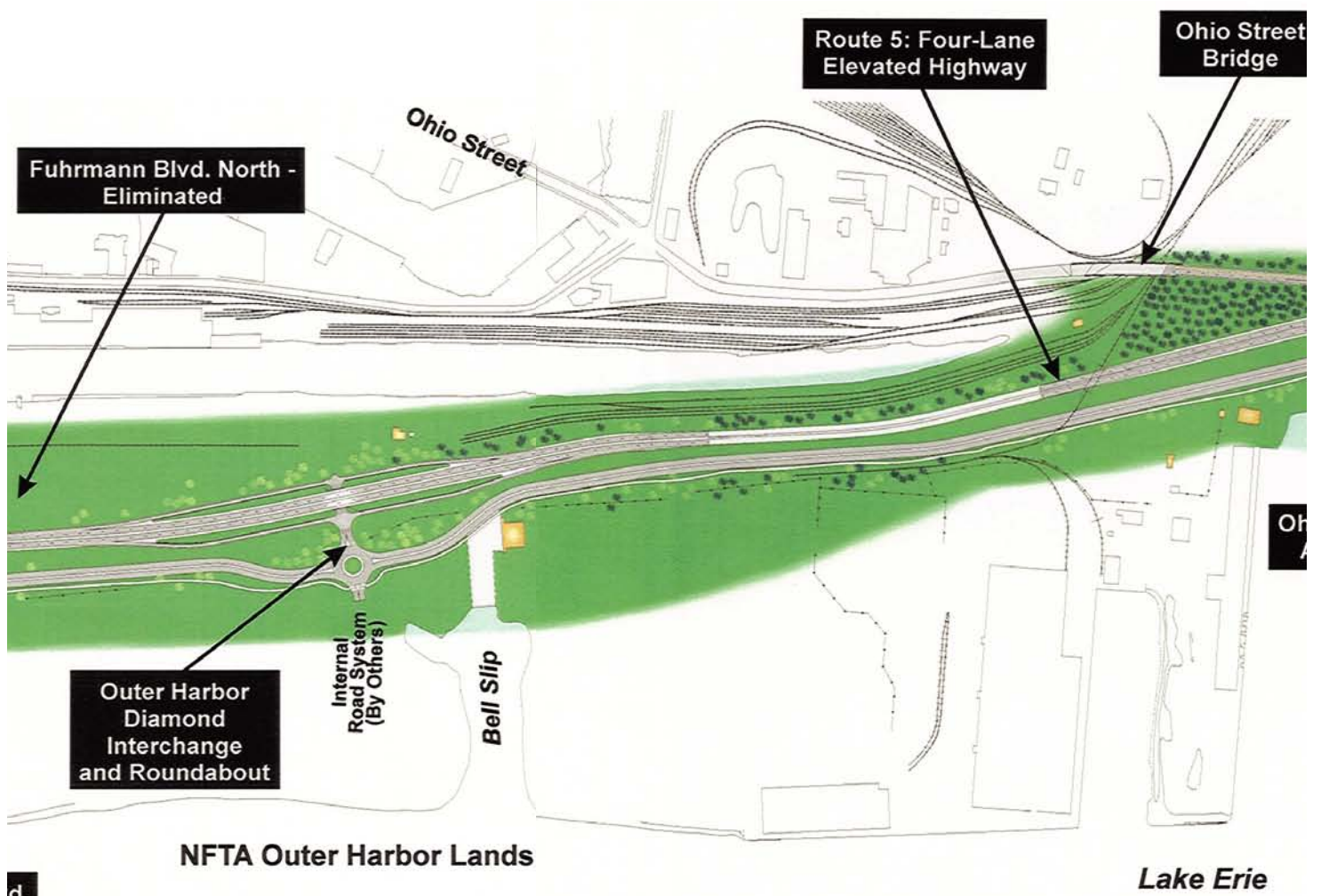
THE CURRENT PLANS ARE TO EXPAND FUHRMANN BOULEVARD INTO A FOUR-LANE PARKWAY ON THE LAKE SIDE OF THE EMBANKED ROUTE 5. ADDITIONAL MONEY WILL BE SPENT RECONSTRUCTING TWO INTERCHANGES BETWEEN FUHRMANN BOULEVARD AND THE HIGHWAY.

BECAUSE THESE PLANS RETAIN THE EMBANKED HIGHWAY, ALONG WITH THE ELEVATED SKYWAY BRIDGE, THE FULL POTENTIAL OF THE WATERFRONT WILL BE NOT BE REALIZED.

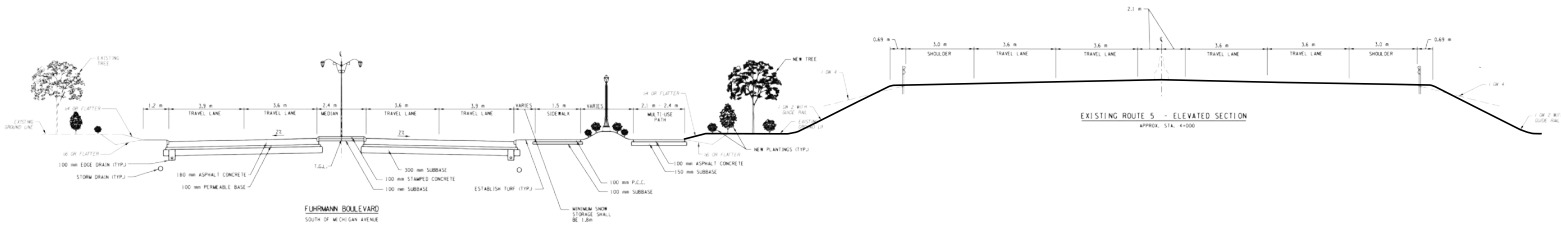


WITH AN EMBANKED ROAD ON ONE SIDE, DEVELOPMENT ALONG FUHRMANN WILL CONTINUE TO BE LOW-VALUE AND AUTO-ORIENTED, YIELDING MINIMAL SHORT-TERM GAINS INSTEAD OF A LONG LASTING WATERFRONT NEIGHBORHOOD.

AND DESPITE THE MILLIONS INVESTED, LACK OF CONNECTIVITY WITH THE REST OF BUFFALO ESSENTIALLY REMAINS THE SAME.



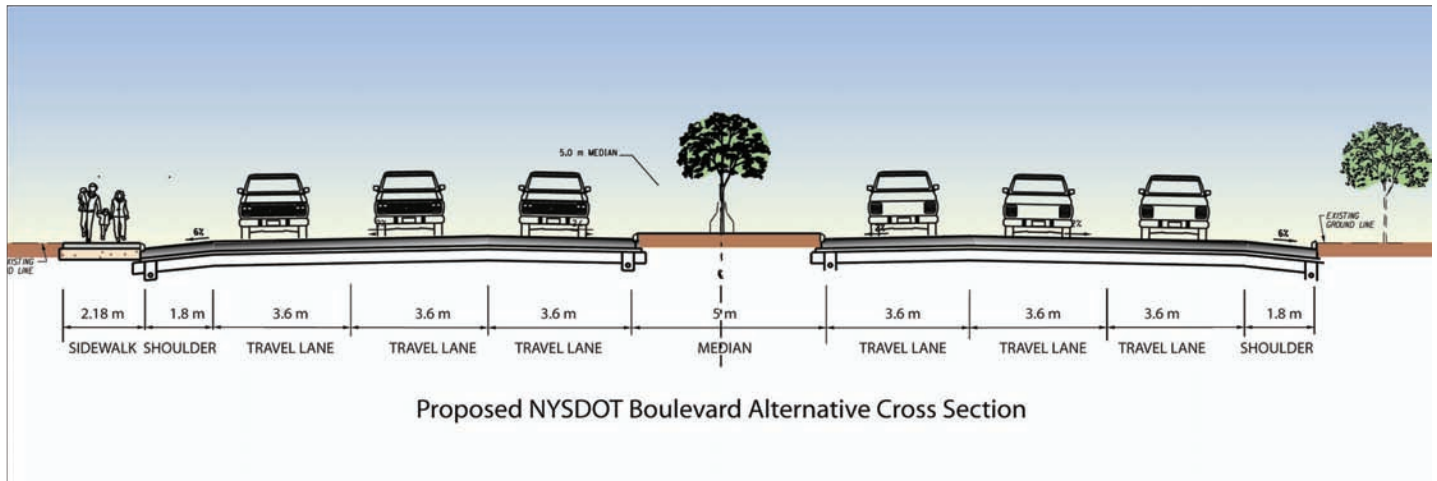
WASTING SPACE



THE CURRENT PLANS CREATE TWO PARALLEL ROADS VERY CLOSE TOGETHER--OCCUPYING AN UNNECESSARILY LARGE SWATH OF VALUABLE WATERFRONT REAL ESTATE.

THE LAYOUT MAKES DEVELOPMENT ALONG THE STREET EDGE HIGHLY UNLIKELY. ONE SIDE IS COMPLETELY OCCUPIED BY THE EMBANKED HIGHWAY, THE OTHER SIDE IS ONLY LIKELY TO SUPPORT ISOLATED SUBURBAN-STYLE DEVELOPMENT.

THE BOULEVARD OPTION: DOT HAD IT RIGHT THE FIRST TIME

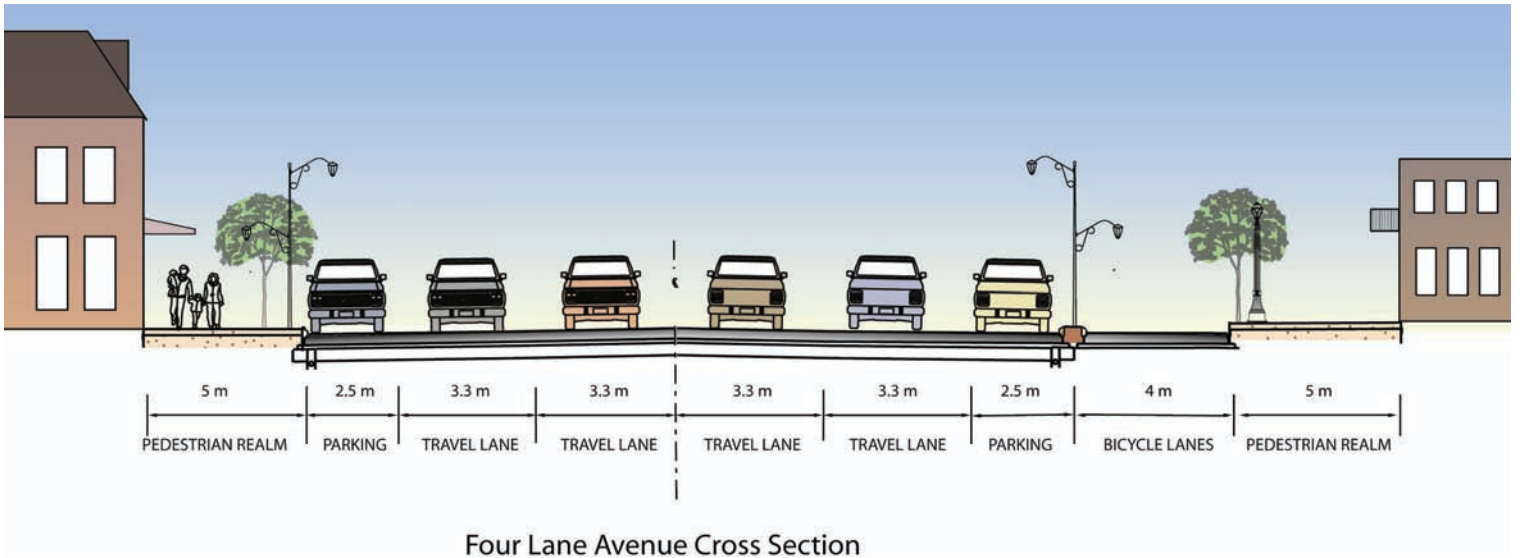


THE BOULEVARD ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPED BY NYS DOT SHOULD BE USED INSTEAD OF THE COMBINATION OF ACCESS ROAD AND EMBANKED HIGHWAY. IT BRINGS ROUTE 5 DOWN TO SURFACE LEVEL AND ALLOWS FOR THE SKYWAY BRIDGE TO BE REPLACED WITH AT-GRADE BRIDGES.

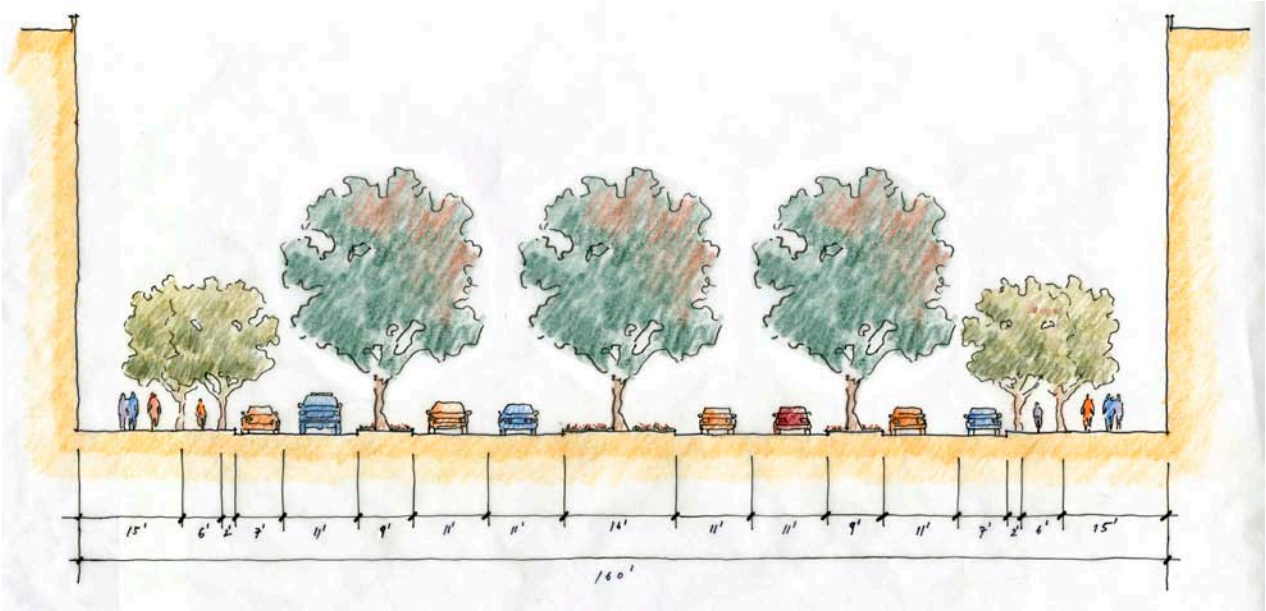
WITH SLIGHT DESIGN CHANGES, THIS BOULEVARD COULD BE TRANSFORMED FROM ONE THAT SERVES ONLY THROUGH TRAFFIC TO ONE THAT SUPPORTS ENDURING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ROOTED IN A STRONG SENSE OF PLACE.

STREET DESIGN OPTIONS

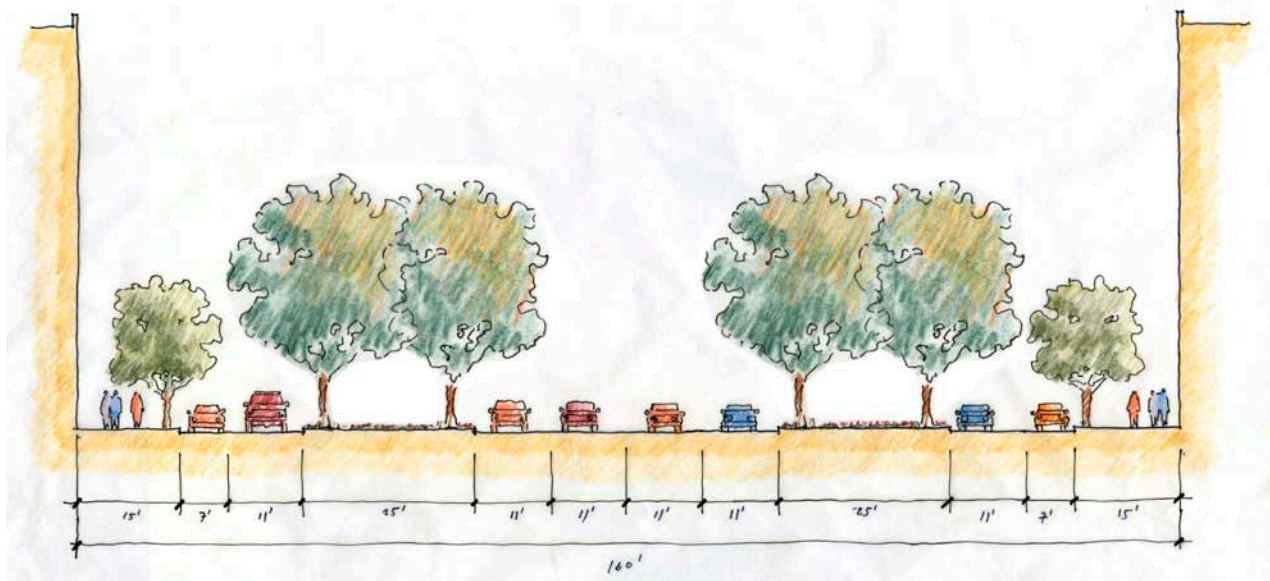
FUHRMANN AND ROUTE 5 SHOULD BE REPLACED WITH ONE THOROUGHFARE THAT HAS DEVELOPMENT LINING THE STREET. THE THOROUGHFARE COULD THEN BE CONNECTED WITH SEVERAL CROSS STREETS ALL ALONG THE WATERFRONT.



GIVEN CURRENT TRAFFIC VOLUMES, AN AVENUE WITH FOUR MOVING LANES AND TWO PARKING LANES COULD EASILY PROVIDE ADEQUATE TRAFFIC CAPACITY. WITH A BICYCLE LANE, LARGE SIDEWALKS, AND BUILDINGS ALONG THE STREET EDGE, THIS STREET COULD ATTRACT A VARIETY OF USERS.



A MULTI-WAY BOULEVARD COULD ALSO BE CONSIDERED. IT ALLOWS THROUGH TRAFFIC TO KEEP MOVING IN THE CENTER LANES AND LOCAL TRAFFIC--THE KIND NECESSARY FOR COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT--TO CONTINUE AT ITS OWN PACE.



RETURNING TO THE WATERFRONT



HARKENING BACK TO THE GREAT DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS FOUND IN BUFFALO'S DOWNTOWN AND NEIGHBORHOODS, THE WATERFRONT COULD BE BUILT UP WITH BUILDINGS THAT MATCH THE LOCAL VERNICULAR.

THE BOULEVARD OPTION WITH A STREET NETWORK WOULD OPEN UP AN ADDITIONAL 235 ACRES FOR DEVELOPMENT. CURRENTLY, THESE UNDERUTILIZED ACRES ARE ONLY ASSESSED AT \$17.6 MILLION--WELL BELOW THE CITY AVERAGE. CREATING A VALUABLE PLACE CONNECTED TO THE CITY WOULD RAISE PROPERTY VALUES UP TO THE CITY AVERAGE, YIELDING \$82 MILLION IN ASSESSED VALUES.

AND THERE'S NO REASON TO THINK THAT THE VALUES WOULD STOP THERE. FOLLOWING MILWAUKEE'S FREEWAY CONVERSION EXAMPLE, THE SAME DEVELOPMENT RATES COULD RAISE THE ASSESSED VALUES TO \$168 MILLION.



THE LONG TERM HORIZON LOOKS EVEN BETTER. PORTLAND REMOVED THEIR WATERFRONT FREEWAY IN THE 1970S. IF BUFFALO FOLLOWS PORTLAND'S EXAMPLE, THE VALUE OF THE RESTORED WATERFRONT ACREAGE COULD REACH \$1.3 BILLION.

