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Cut in Infrastructure Money for Communities Hurt by Highways Disappoints Advocates.

The Reconnecting Communities Initiative aimed to help cities rectify damage caused by highways built through minority neighborhoods. The bipartisan infrastructure bill cut it by 95 percent.

Shawn Dunwoody and Suzanne Mayer can remember when Democratic Sens. Kristen Gillibrand and Chuck Schumer of New York went to Rochester's Inner Loop at the end of June and emphasized the need to fund projects that reconnected neighborhoods bisected by highways.

The senators' advocacy meant the world, said Dunwoody and Mayer, who created a group called Hinge Neighbors. Their goal was to fill in the Inner Loop, a part of Interstate 490 that the federal government built after it plowed through minority neighborhoods in the 1950s, destroying hundreds of homes and businesses.

They said the words of support feel confusing now that they have seen the details of the bipartisan infrastructure bill. The Reconnecting Communities Initiative — which began as a bill written by Gillibrand and Schumer, whose offices did not respond to requests for comment — was cut from a proposed \$20 billion in the American Jobs Plan to \$1 billion in the recently proposed legislation.

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