

From The New York Times...

Can Removing Highways Fix America's Cities?

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ROCHESTER, N.Y. — Built in the 1950s to speed suburban commuters to and from downtown, Rochester's Inner Loop destroyed hundreds of homes and businesses, replacing them with a broad, concrete trench that separated downtown from the rest of the city. Now, the city is looking to repair the damage. It started by filling in a nearly-mile-long section of the sunken road, slowly stitching a neighborhood back together. Today, visitors of the Inner Loop's eastern segment would hardly know a highway once ran beneath their feet.

As midcentury highways reach the end of their life spans, cities across the country are having to choose whether to rebuild or reconsider them. And a growing number, like Rochester, are choosing to take them down.

In order to accommodate cars and commuters, many cities "basically destroyed themselves," said Norman Garrick, a professor at the University of Connecticut who studies how transportation projects have reshaped American cities.

"Rochester has shown what can be done in terms of reconnecting the city and restoring a sense of place," he said. "That's really the underlying goal of highway removal."

Read more at: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/05/27/climate/us-cities-highway-removal.html?action=click&module=Well&pgtype=Homepage§ion=Climate%20and%20Environment>

These aerial photos show American cities before the highway boom of the 1950s and '60s.

Highways radically reshaped cities, destroying dense downtown neighborhoods, dividing many Black communities and increasing car dependence.

Now, **some cities** are looking to take them out.

But reconnecting neighborhoods is more complicated than breaking them apart.

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