

Klinge Closing Is Unfair

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The mayor recently announced that Klinge Road NW will be torn out and converted into a narrow, twisted park next to the vast Rock Creek Park and the zoo. Parks are good, but this will hurt people east and west of the park under the cover of a sliver of green space.

Klinge is one of only four roads through the park. Porter Street, which starts at Rock Creek, is another. With Klinge closed, Porter Street must handle more than 18,000 cars a day. This is more cars per available lane than Connecticut Avenue carries. While neither Klinge or Porter is wide, together they divided the burden.

Klinge was closed 10 years ago when the city had no money to repair it. Now that federal money is available for such repairs, we find that the people who live near Klinge are much richer and more powerful than those who live near Porter. Instead of reopening Klinge, the District has tried to solve the problem by rebuilding Porter like a mini-speedway, with grooving in the concrete perpendicular to the curbs.

Because Klinge Road is closed, my street looks like a speedway but will never equal two roads. Because Klinge Road is closed, local streets are filled with frustrated detoured drivers. There are more barriers between east and west, and a few people have a calm place to walk their dogs while hundreds of my neighbors have the roar of traffic racing over innumerable concrete groves. It is simply unfair that Klinge Road remains unopened.

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