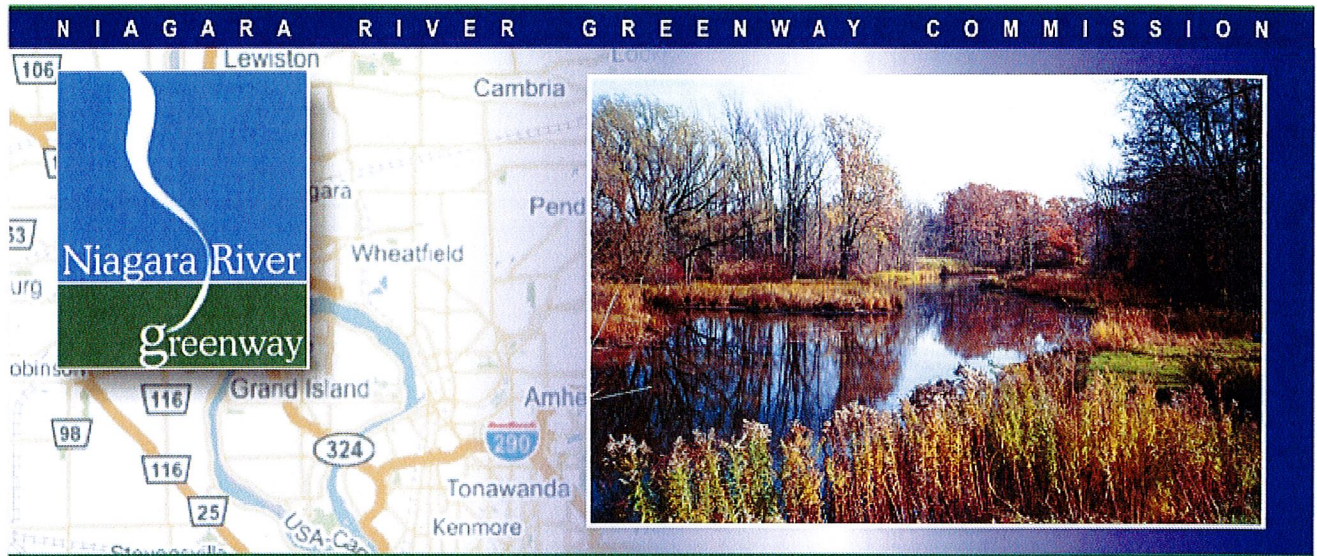


# City of North Tonawanda Charles Fleischmann Park Improvements

Prepared for



Submitted by:  
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January 14, 2020



**AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL**

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# Project Narrative

## 1. Project Overview

Charles Fleischmann Park is a small but significant property in downtown North Tonawanda. This triangular public park is located at the intersections of Goundry, Webster, and Main Streets and functions as a traditional ‘public square’ space. Charles Fleischmann Park is seen by the majority of vehicular and pedestrian traffic traveling through downtown and is a landmark point between the historic Webster Street and Erie Canal area and the transitioning northern redevelopment section of downtown North Tonawanda.

Due to its location, Charles Fleischmann Park is also utilized by the majority of downtown events including vendor fairs, parades, the annual Canal Fest and holiday events. However the Park is small, only 0.1 acres, and the area surrounding the park is set up to primarily accommodate vehicular traffic and parking. This setup limits the functionality of the Park for events but more importantly detracts from the overall walkability and aesthetic of the area of pedestrian use year round. The travel lanes and parking areas surrounding the Park are wide and create difficult, potentially dangerous crossings for pedestrians and limit the ability of visitors to safely and comfortably walk through the downtown historic district. The vehicular traffic circulation, due to the unusual triangular street alignment, creates dangerous conditions for drivers as well.

The City of North Tonawanda, utilizing funding from the Smart Growth Community Fund, initiated the design of a ‘Downtown Placemaking’ project in 2018. The goal of this project was to come up with substantive changes in downtown that will make the area more walkable, pedestrian friendly, and ultimately more economic vibrant and productive. This project includes a number of improvements throughout the downtown district but has a major focus on the reconfiguration and redevelopment of Charles Fleischmann Park.

The planned redevelopment will more than double the size of the Park from 0.1 acres to 0.25 acres. This will be accomplished by extending the Park to the north and widening it to the east, as well as installing curb bump-outs at the crosswalks. These features will dramatically shorten the distance pedestrians have to cross the street and provide additional protection for pedestrians.

The redeveloped Park will also be reconfigured to better function as a true public square. The new Park will have improved landscaping, pedestrian furniture, signage, and a signature clock tower element to further establish this significant site as a landmark location in downtown.

The complete Downtown Placemaking project was let for public bid in November 2019. The total construction budget for the project was \$1,432,260 and the low bid with all components received was \$1,673,900, leaving a \$241,640 shortfall. To bring the project under budget and award a contract a number of the elements in Charles Fleischmann Park, including the signature clock tower, were removed to bring the cost down to \$1,392,900. At this time the City of North Tonawanda would like to request \$200,000 through the Niagara River Greenway

Commission to close the budget gap and allow for the complete redevelopment of Charles Fleischmann Park.

## 2. Advancing the Niagara River Greenway Vision

The Charles Fleischmann Park Improvement project strives to meet and advance the vision, goals and objectives outlined in the Niagara River Greenway Plan. Specifically, the project is consistent with the following:

- Excellence – Downtown North Tonawanda continues to become a destination site drawing thousands of people for dining, entertainment, special events, and tourism. This project will further support the growing popularity of the area by providing improving the visitor experience and overall quality of the historic aesthetic in the area.
- Accessibility – By expanding public spaces and installing pedestrian safety features such as ADA compliant crosswalks and curb bump-outs, this project will help to make downtown North Tonawanda more accessible for visitors regardless of age or mobility status.
- Public Well-Being – Fleischmann Park is primarily a passive recreation area and will offer the opportunity for local residents and visitors to stop, relax, and safely experience the historic downtown area. The expanded size of the Park will also offer opportunities for more utilization of the space during special events.
- Restoration- This project will continue the on-going revitalization of downtown North Tonawanda. This urban center has been designated a ‘Smart Growth Community’ and offers residents and visitors a chance to live, work, and recreate in a historic, walkable, authentic downtown.
- Community Based – The vision of the NT Momentum plan was developed by a collaboration of city leaders, dedicated residents, and the general public through the combination of multiple steering committees and public input events. The Downtown Placemaking project has also been driven by a local steering committee made up of business owners in the area immediately adjacent to the project.

### **Goals**

- Improve Access – This project will help to make all of downtown North Tonawanda, situated on both the Erie Canal and Niagara River, more accessible for the public.
- Spark Revitalization and Renewal – Investing the public accessibility and walkability of the downtown area will improve the economic viability of the area. Combined with other concurrent investments in the infrastructure in the area, downtown North Tonawanda will be prepared to attract and support new business and real estate development projects that are consistent with the area’s historic character and walkable urban scale.

## Criteria

- Consistency with Principles – The City of North Tonawanda strives to make public improvements within the Greenway boundaries which are consistent with the vision, goals, and principles of the Greenway Master Plan. Continued development of public parks and open spaces which encourage accessibility and walkability within the Greenway are consistent with the principles of the Greenway Master Plan.
- Focus Area – This project is located within close proximity to both the Erie Canal and Niagara River and is central to the Greenway system.
- Environmental Soundness- This project has no adverse impact on the environment and provides a small increase in the total open green space within an urban area characterized by excessive pavement and hardscape.
- Implementable – The City has the capacity to implement this project without significantly adding new operations or maintenance burden. Existing City departments have the expertise and capacity to assist in implementation of this project.
- Economic Viability – The project adds no additional cost to the City. In addition, improvements to the walkability and character of the downtown area is expected to increase surrounding property values and local retail business activity.
- Local Sponsor or Partner – This project’s long term sponsor is the City of North Tonawanda and has been planned in coordination with the North Tonawanda Downtown Merchants Association and other local residents.
- Matching Funds/Leveraging – Through the larger Downtown Placemaking project, funded through Empire State Development’s Smart Growth Community Fund, an additional \$457,000 is being invested into the redevelopment and improvement of Charles Fleischmann Park.
- Consideration of Other Planning Efforts – This project is consistent with all of North Tonawanda’s planning documents, specifically the NT Momentum Brownfield Opportunity Area plan.
- Clear Benefits – This project will clearly benefit the public of North Tonawanda and the Niagara region who are looking to safely visit downtown North Tonawanda.

### 3. Budget and Schedule

The City of North Tonawanda expects the total cost of the Charles Fleischmann Park improvements to be \$657,000. The City currently has \$417,640 committed to this project, leaving a budget gap of \$239,360.

#### Charles Fleischmann Park Improvements

|                                |           |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| Planning                       | \$0       |
| Construction                   | \$657,000 |
| Acquisition                    | \$0       |
| Administration                 | \$5,000   |
| Operation & Maintenance / Year | \$5,000   |
| Total                          | \$667,000 |

The City of North Tonawanda is requesting \$200,000 from the Niagara River Greenway Ad Hoc Committee on Recreation and Tourism.

Construction of Charles Fleischmann Park and all the associated elements will be bid to qualified contractors. Operation and maintenance of the facility will be handled exclusively by the City of North Tonawanda Parks & Recreation Department. Parks & Recreation staff is currently responsible for maintaining all City parks, playgrounds, and recreational areas and fields.

The budget above is based on figures provided by contractors during a public bid and as such present an accurate total cost for the project.

#### 4. Community and Government Support

The development and implementation of the Downtown Placemaking project, including the redesign of Charles Fleischman Park, has been led by a robust steering committee and is overseen by a multi-layered structure of municipal committees, departments, and staff. Overall direction and oversight is provided by the Mayor and City Common Council. Project management, grant management, implementation, and operations are handled by a working partnership between the City Engineering, Parks & Recreation, and Community Development offices.

- Project Steering Committee
- North Tonawanda Mayor and Common Council
- City Engineer
- Community Development Director
- Superintendent of the Department of Public Works
- Director of Youth, Parks, and Recreation

The project also advances North Tonawanda's downtown revitalization plan, the NT Momentum Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA). The NT Momentum BOA was completed in 2015 and adopted in 2018. NT Momentum envisions downtown North Tonawanda as a walkable, historic, vibrant small economy and calls for improvements to public infrastructure and facilities that enhance the pedestrian sense of place. NT Momentum stresses the need for public plazas and pocket parks throughout downtown as well as pedestrian improvements such as landscaping and curb bump-outs.



## 5. Existing Conditions and Project Implementation

The Charles Fleischmann Park site is municipally owned and located at 36 Goundry Street. The existing Park is 0.1 acres but will be expanded to 0.25 acres upon completion.

Existing site conditions and the proposed redevelopment plan are included as attachments.

Project implementation and construction oversight will be handled by the City Engineer and Department of Public Works Supervisor. Grant management of the requested Greenway funds will be handled by the Community Development office.

### **Project Timeline**

|   |                         |
|---|-------------------------|
| Project Design                          | May 2019 – October 2019 |
| Construction Bid                        | November 2019           |
| Construction Bid award                  | January 7, 2020         |
| Construction start                      | April 2020              |
| Bid of additional components            | May 2020                |
| Award of addition components bid        | June 2020               |
| Construction completion, all components | October 2020            |

Aerial Site Map  
Charles Fleischmann Park





## Existing Conditions Photos







# **Charles Fleischmann Park Redevelopment Plan**

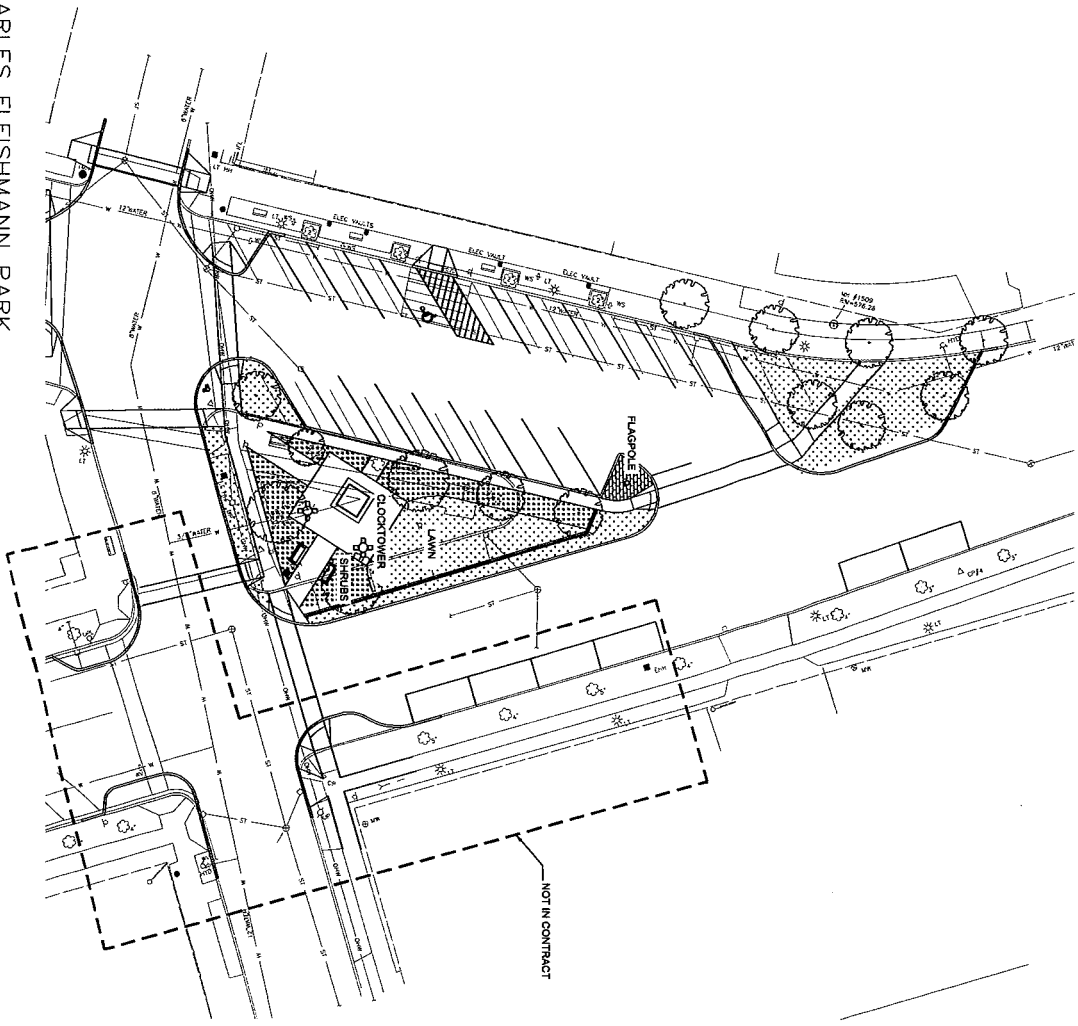


# Charles Fleishmann Park

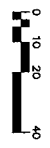




① CHARLES FLEISHMANN PARK  
SCALE: 1" = 20'-0"



- NOTES:**
1. SEE CIVIL PLANS FOR LAYOUT OF CURBS, STORM DRAINS AND UTILITIES
  2. SEE ARCHITECTURAL PLANS FOR CLOCKTOWER DESIGN



**Downtown Placemaking Project**  
North Tonawanda, NY  
Streetscape Contract



|                              |                |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| NO. BY                       | REVISIONS DATE |
| XXX                          | XXX            |
| DWG. TITLE                   |                |
| CHARLES FLEISHMANN PARK PLAN |                |
| DATE                         | XXX            |
| SCALE                        | XXX            |
| PROJECT NO.                  | XXX            |
| DWG. NO.                     | L-01           |

