



**City of North Tonawanda
Department of Engineering**

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January 2022

Dear Sweeney Street Neighbor:

Happy New Year!

The City of North Tonawanda is pleased to provide you with this update on its plan to extend the Erie Canal Bike Path connecting Mayor's Park, 987 Sweeney St., with the North Tonawanda Botanical Gardens, 1825 Sweeney St.

On our North Tonawanda Erie Canal Bike Path Extension Bike Ride and Conversation held September 16, 2021, many of you shared insights and suggestions and also assisted the project team by airing concerns with potential alternative trail alignments and safety on Sweeney Street. We are very appreciative of all of this feedback, and it has all been taken into consideration.

Following analysis of the alternative alignments for the proposed extension, we have made the following preliminary determinations:

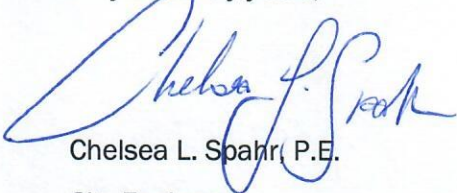
- The new trail extension will stay on the south/east side of Sweeney Street all the way from Mayor's Park to the Botanical Gardens, going in front of Donald F. Miller Park and through the Robinson Street intersection:
- The existing roadway width between Mayor's Park and Donald F. Miller Park is wider than required for two-way traffic. Here we are exploring shifting the centerline of Sweeney Street two feet north, and reducing the street width by approximately six feet, to 24 feet. Our engineers will be taking pavement core samples to confirm that the existing pavement can accommodate the shift. If it proves to be feasible, this will accommodate the new path and reduce impacts on trees and utility poles. The path will be separated from the road with a planned 5' buffer between Sweeney St and the bike path where allowable.
- The street width will be similarly narrowed throughout the project area by re-striping the travel lanes. Narrowing of roadways has documented results of calming traffic. This reduction in speed will greatly benefit the overall safety of Sweeney Street for drivers, cyclists and pedestrians, alleviating concerns raised by residents.
- At Donald F. Miller Park, the new path will follow Sweeney Street in front of the park, parallel to Sweeney Street in the flat area between the utility poles and trees. This alignment is supported by representatives of Donald F. Miller Park.
- Trees that need to be removed will be replaced with the owners' consent at no cost to them. The City and project engineers will also coordinate with National Grid on utility pole relocation.
- The City has requested a meeting with the North Tonawanda postmaster to determine if it will be possible for mailboxes belonging to residents on the north side of Sweeney Street to be relocated to the north side, so these neighbors will no longer have to cross the street to get their mail.

- The exact alignment of the path through the Robinson Street intersection and how that will impact the present configuration of the intersection is still being studied, as is the best way for the path to enter the Botanical Gardens. This will also provide a path connection point to the East Robinson bridge which will help serve as a connector to the Erie Canalway Trail. The trail extension will formally terminate at the southern entrance of Deerwood Golf Course, connecting to the existing marked crosswalk there, but will include a coordinated path to the Botanical Gardens parking lot.
- The City will plow the path in winter.
- The City and project engineers will reach out to individual property owners to discuss trees, any possible right-of-way issues, and other impacts over the coming months.
- The project team is analyzing possible driveway impacts and how to address or minimize them.
- A revised project schedule calls for the project to go to bid this fall with construction starting in spring of 2023.
- During the September bike event many of you made suggestions for trail amenities such as a rest area, a trailhead and parking at Parkview Drive along with a crosswalk and crossing beacon, bike repair station and others. These are all under consideration and if the budget can accommodate them, they will be included in the final design.

The objective of this project is to continue to implement the City's Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) by connecting two waterfront parks as well as extending safe recreational bicycle access into your previously unserved residential neighborhood. The project is funded by grants from NYS Department of State and Canal Corp.

When the preliminary design is complete for the north end of the trail and impacts to individual properties are identified, a public meeting will be held to discuss the final trail alignment. In the meantime, please don't hesitate to reach out to Daniel Borcz, C&S Engineers Project Manager, by phone at [\(716\) 955-3028](tel:7169553028) or email at dborcz@cscos.com

Very sincerely yours,



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