

CITY OF ALBANY



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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PRESS RELEASE

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CITY RECEIVES \$318,750 GRANT TO REVITALIZE NORTH SWAN STREET PARK

Park Revitalization Will Build on \$63 million Invested in Arbor Hill Over Last 8 Years

Albany, NY (March 30) - The City of Albany is one step closer to seeing the revitalization of North Swan Street Park in the Arbor Hill neighborhood. Today the City announced it had received a \$318,750 grant from New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Environmental Protection Fund.

The City of Albany, in collaboration with the Arbor Hill Neighborhood Association and the United Way of the Greater Capital Region, has identified the North Swan Street Park as a priority for improvements. As an action item identified in the 2003 Arbor Hill Neighborhood Plan, the North Swan Street Park involves extensive renovation of a one-acre plot that currently includes a basketball court and asphalt area in a state of disrepair.

"This grant is a significant catalyst to the North Swan Street Park project," said Mayor Jennings. "The changes that have occurred since the Arbor Hill Neighborhood Plan was finalized are remarkable. This park will be another example of the positive things that can be accomplished when governmental agencies and non-profits work together."

Last June, Mayor Jennings, and City Officials joined with other stakeholders including the Albany Housing Authority, the Arbor Hill Neighborhood Association, and United Way of the Greater Capital Region and others to announce plans for the park. The initial phase of work started over the summer to clean up the site and prepare it for redevelopment. The one-acre plot will be a multi-generational park and plans for it include a playground, outdoor stage, climbing wall, picnic area, water fountains and a half basketball court.

"United Way's philosophy is that together, we can achieve much more than any one individual or organization can accomplish alone. That's what we like to call living united," said Katherine Pelham, CEO of United Way of the Greater Capital Region. "The revitalization of North Swan

Street Park is an example of what happens when people across the community find common ground and align their efforts to create meaningful change."

"The North Swan Street Park project is continuing the efforts of the neighborhood plan, and strengthening the neighborhood as a whole," said Katie Bronson, Senior Planner for the City of Albany. The park project is a major step forward in the continued transformation of the Arbor Hill neighborhood. The refurbished park will enhance the \$63 million already invested in the neighborhood since the plan was completed in 2003.

Across the street from the North Swan Street Park is the proposed Academy Lofts project which is an adaptive reuse project for the St. Joseph's Academy building. When completed the Academy Lofts will feature 40,000+ square foot of space rehabilitated into 25 low cost loft-style live-work residences and ground level commercial art facilities. That project has already received over \$4 million in funding is expected to begin construction later this summer.

The park revitalization is part of an ongoing commitment to Arbor Hill by many stakeholders including the City of Albany and its Planning Department, the Albany Housing Authority, Albany County, the Arbor Hill Neighborhood Association, United Way of the Greater Capital Region, Hershberg and Hershberg, and 3t architects who donated their services to the project.

In addition to the grant from NYS Parks, this project has also received support in the form of a \$30,000 grant from the Albany County Department of Health Strategic Alliance Campaign.

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