



**Erie Canal Harbor  
Development  
Corporation**



**Parks, Recreation,  
and Historic Preservation**

**For Immediate Release:** Monday, February 9, 2015

**Contact:**

Pamm Lent (Governor's Office) | [pamm.lent@esd.ny.gov](mailto:pamm.lent@esd.ny.gov) | (716) 846-8309

Randy Simons (Parks) | [Randy.Simons@parks.ny.gov](mailto:Randy.Simons@parks.ny.gov) | (518) 486-1868

## **New York State's Largest Marina Set to Receive Transformation**

*New Marina Operator Selected at Buffalo Harbor State Park*

*Expected to Invest \$10 Million in Marina Improvements and Construct New Full Service Restaurant*

Plans to upgrade slips, electrical and water service, lighting, dining facilities and other amenities at the marina at Buffalo Harbor State Park are one step closer as a new operator has been selected, Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation (ECHDC) and New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (State Parks) announced today. ECHDC and State Parks selected Safe Harbor Development as the new operator that will focus on transforming the marina into a modern destination at Buffalo Harbor. The announcement of Safe Harbor Development as the operator came at a board of directors meeting of the Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation, who will ultimately sign the lease and maintain ownership of the property. State Parks will operate and maintain the new 200-acre state park.

"ECHDC recognizes the importance that this marina plays in Governor Cuomo's vision for establishing the new, first-class Buffalo Harbor State Park and continuing to improve our Outer Harbor," said Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation Chairman Robert Gioia. "The proposal submitted by Safe Harbor demonstrated a wide range of experience in operating marinas and provided the best blend of competence and financial ability to create a quality destination for both boaters and visitors."

"Upgrading the marina at Buffalo Harbor State Park is just one step in transforming the Buffalo waterfront into a dynamic and re-energized destination for visitors to enjoy," said State Parks Commissioner Rose Harvey. "The improvements coming to the marina combined with restoration of our beautiful greenspace including a new playground, picnic pavilions, stage area and a fish cleaning station is providing visitors a quality-of-life staple in Buffalo."

"Safe Harbor Development is committed to improving the marina at Buffalo Harbor State Park and, in the process, Buffalo's revitalized waterfront," said Safe Harbor Development LLC Owner Darby Campbell. "We have a winning track record that builds on successful public-private partnerships to create a quality destination that combines

marinas with restaurants and other activities. Thanks to the many successful initiatives launched by Governor Cuomo, I personally am thrilled to build on Buffalo's resurgence to make Buffalo Harbor State Park the place to be."

Under terms of the proposed lease, Safe Harbor will oversee the 1,037-slip marina, 8,000-square-foot restaurant and administration building, 214 parking spaces, bait shop, and storage facilities at the park. It is anticipated that Safe Harbor Development will assume operations at the marina in April 2015. State Parks will oversee slip rentals and operations until a final lease is approved with the company.

Existing slip holders will receive their agreements within the next ten days and those interested in a slip for the 2015 boating season can call (716) 828-0027 to be placed on a waiting list. As marina improvements are made over the next several years, modest increased slip fees, including a 7-percent rise in 2015, will transform the marina into a first-rate destination for boaters and visitors alike.

Safe Harbor Development Corporation currently operates marinas, restaurants, RV parks, entertainment facilities and housing developments throughout Tennessee. Along with operations of the marina, Safe Harbor will also oversee the parking lots related to the marina and several buildings on the property.

Safe Harbor's proposed capital plan includes, among other features, dock replacement, slip layout redesign and the expected construction of a new full-service restaurant on site. In total, Safe Harbor's capital plan includes an approximately \$10 million commitment in the first five years of operation.

Buffalo Harbor State Park, the first state park in the City of Buffalo, was designated as a state park by Governor Andrew Cuomo in September 2013. In addition to the upgrades at the marina, work is currently underway to create a nautically themed destination playground, picnic pavilions, new walking and bike paths, upgraded utilities and landscaping that will provide better site topography and screening of the parking areas.

#### **About New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation**

The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation oversee 180 state parks and 35 historic sites, which are visited by 62 million people annually. A recent study found that New York State Parks generates \$1.9 billion in economic activity annually and supports 20,000 jobs. For more information on any of these recreation areas, call 518-474-0456 or visit [www.nysparks.com](http://www.nysparks.com), connect on [Facebook](#), or follow on [Twitter](#).

#### **About Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation**

The Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation (ECHDC) is governed by a nine-member board consisting of seven voting directors and two non-voting, ex-officio directors. The seven voting directors are recommended by the New York State Governor and are appointed by the New York State Urban Development Corporation d/b/a Empire State Development as sole shareholder of ECHDC. The two nonvoting,

ex-officio director positions are held by the Erie County Executive and the City of Buffalo Mayor.

As a subsidiary of Empire State Development, the state's chief economic development agency, the Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation supports and promotes the creation of infrastructure and public activities at Canalside, the Ohio Street corridor and the Outer Harbor that is attracting critical mass, private investment and enhance the enjoyment of the waterfront for residents and tourists in Western New York. Its vision is to revitalize Western New York's waterfront and restore economic growth to Buffalo based on the region's legacy of pride, urban significance and natural beauty. For more information on ECHDC, visit [www.eriecanalharbor.com](http://www.eriecanalharbor.com).

###