



**For Immediate Release:** Monday, March 23, 2015

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## **Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation Meets and Approves Items to Move Forward on Buffalo Waterfront Operations, Maintenance and Improvements**

The Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation (ECHDC) Board of Directors met today and approved several items, including its operating and capital budgets, 2015-2016 budget with Global Spectrum, a utility easement at Buffalo Harbor State Park and selection of a designer for public access at the Outer Harbor.

Thanks in part to Global Spectrum's efforts, the 2014 summer season at Canalside exceeded all expectations, with approximately one million visitors making their way down to the waterfront destination for a diverse offering of festivals, activities for children, concerts, arts and culture, fitness and more. In 2014, ECHDC was pleased to provide 30 percent more events and activities than what was offered in past summer seasons. Canalside also opened the Ice at Canalside, New York's largest outdoor ice rink. Despite heavy snow and bitter cold, Canalside had the most eventful and memorable winter in the history of Buffalo's waterfront. At today's ECHDC Board meeting, the directors approved the fiscal year 2015-2016 budget for management of Canalside in an amount not to exceed \$2,449,121. Global's continued role at Canalside will include operations and maintenance, programming and events management and Canal/Ice Rink operations and maintenance. The funding source for the proposed contracts is proceeds payable to ECHDC pursuant to the New York Power Authority (NYPA) Relicensing Agreement and common area maintenance charges generated from the project.

The ECHDC Board also authorized a utility easement to the Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation to provide necessary electric service, which is required in order for the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to construct and operate improvements to the green space adjoining Gallagher Beach that is part of Buffalo Harbor State Park. These improvements include a playground, picnic pavilions, promenade and stage.

The board approved ECHDC's fiscal year 2015/2016 operating budget and capital expense authorization. The operating budget, which includes personnel and non-personnel services, is \$1,279,086. Separate from the corporation's operating budget is

the corporation's capital expense authorization, which will be individually approved by the corporation's board of directors under separate actions throughout the year. The corporation's fiscal year 2015/2016 capital expense authorization is \$34,908,844. Funding for ECHDC's capital budget will consist of both existing and anticipated funds from the NYPA, New York State and the Federal Highway Administration.

Finally, ECHDC was authorized to enter into a consultant agreement for architectural and engineering services for water-bike ferry improvements on the Outer Harbor. The contract was awarded to DiDonato Associates, Engineering & Architectural, P.C. for a contract amount of \$140,000 from the NYPA relicensing agreement.

### **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).

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