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**ECHDC BOARD MEETS TO APPROVE MEASURES THAT WILL IMPROVE BUFFALO'S
WATERFRONT**

Board recommends that ESD modify its Canalside plan to include the Webster Block and enters into agreement with DOT to undertake engineering design services for Ohio Street corridor

The Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation (ECHDC) Board of Directors met today to approve two items. The board recommended that its parent agency, the New York State Urban Development Corporation d/b/a Empire State Development (ESD), adopt a modified general project plan (MGPP) for Canalside to include development of the Webster Block. It also authorized ECHDC to enter into a federal aid local project agreement with the New York State Department of Transportation (DOT) for the Ohio Street and Inner Harbor infrastructure improvements project.

“These two projects go hand in hand with our mission to support and promote the creation of infrastructure on Buffalo’s waterfront that will create critical mass, private investment and enhance the enjoyment of the waterfront for residents and tourists in Western New York,” said ECHDC Chairman Robert Gioia. “By recommending that ESD adopt the modified general project plan, we can help the City of Buffalo more quickly advance the Webster Block project and by entering into an agreement with the DOT, we are moving forward with our plan to transform Ohio Street into a major waterfront link.”

The recommendation to ESD to adopt the MGPP, whose purpose is to detail proposed development plans for the Canalside Project and to provide notice to the public regarding the development at Canalside, will, when approved by ESD, permit development of the Webster Block to move forward and promote a cohesive atmosphere that is inspired by the architecture of Buffalo’s historic canal district. To reflect the proposed changes in the project, the corporation will hold a public hearing on the MGPP at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, December 5 at the Minnie Gillette Auditorium on Erie County Community College’s city campus.

The board also authorized ECHDC to enter into a federal aid local project agreement with the New York State Department of Transportation to undertake detailed engineering design

services for the Ohio Street project. This project is the reconstruction of Ohio Street as a “landscaped riverfront arterial” between NY Route 5 and Michigan Avenue that will attract private investment and mixed-use development to a formerly blighted area. ECHDC will be responsible for serving as a pass-through for all federal funds, ensuring that Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) guidelines are followed, as well as all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations. The consultant, Audubon Architecture, Engineering, Surveying & Landscape Architecture, PC (Wendel), will be paid a base amount not to exceed \$1,230,190 for its contract term of 10 months. It is funded using \$1,088,000 federal and \$272,000 non-federal (NYPA relicensing agreement) funds.

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 non-voting, 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.

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