

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. When is the harbor open?

A. Erie Canal Harbor is open to the public 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. On occasion, certain segments of the site are cordoned-off for standard site maintenance work and upkeep.

Q. Is there an admissions fee to visit the harbor?

A. There is no cost or admissions fee associated with Erie Canal Harbor. Visitors are encouraged to participate in various free-to-the-public summer programming activities and events, being sponsored by Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation, in conjunction with the City of Buffalo and Buffalo Place Inc.

Q. Are there public restrooms?

A. Public restrooms are currently being provided in the Naval & Serviceman's Museum building. The restrooms are open during the Naval Museum's regular hours of operation - April through October - 7 days a week from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. There are also public restrooms located at The Hatch at Erie Basin Marina - open May through October - 7 days a week from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Q. Where do I park?

A. There is ample parking located in surface lots and ramps in and around HSBC Arena. There is also on-street and metered parking available on Franklin, Pearl, Seneca and Washington Streets.

Q. How do I arrange to dock at Erie Canal Harbor?

A. The docks are managed by Brand-On Services, Inc. Please call (716) 851-6503 to secure a berth. Docking fees vary by date/event.

Q. Where is the nearest restaurant?

A. "The Hatch" restaurant is located at Erie Basin Marina, and is in close proximity to the harbor - (716) 851-6501. For a listing of additional restaurants in the canal district please visit the Buffalo Place Inc. website at www.buffaloplace.com/play/restaurants.html

Visiting Buffalo's Inner Harbor District

Erie Canal Harbor is located in the City of Buffalo's (NY) downtown corridor, at the intersection of Pearl Street and Marine Drive. The harbor can be accessed through temporary entrances at the foot of Main Street and on Scott Street, or by way of the Buffalo & Erie County Naval and Military Park, located on the northwestern edge of the harbor site.



Boaters can also visit Erie Canal Harbor via the Buffalo River. The harbor currently boasts over 1,000 feet of berthing space, with the ability to accommodate over 50 vessels daily, and nearly 100 vessels for special events. Transient dockage fees are required, and an hourly rate applies for both water and electric service.

About ECHDC

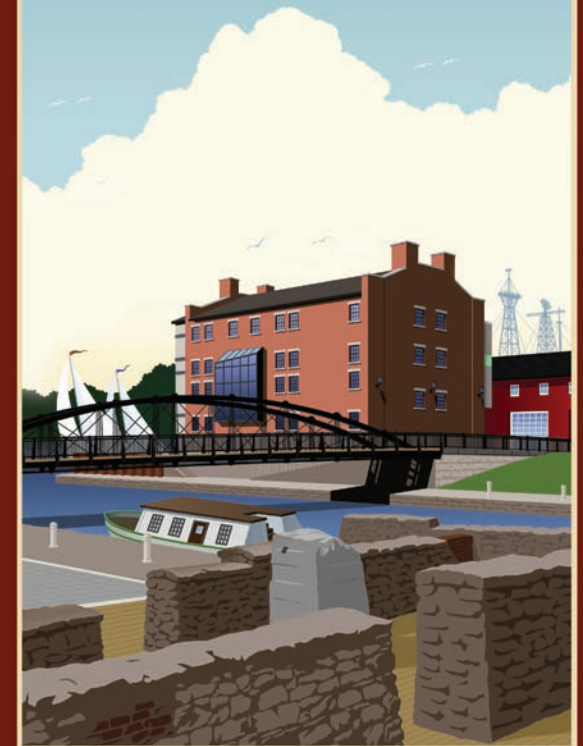
Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation (ECHDC) is a subsidiary agency of Empire State Development (ESD). Its vision is to revitalize Western New York's waterfront and restore economic growth to Buffalo, based on the region's legacy of pride, urban significance and natural beauty. ESD is New York State's chief economic development agency and also oversees the marketing of "I Love NY," the state's iconic tourism brand. For more information, visit www.nylovesbiz.com.



State of New York – David A. Paterson, Governor

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History of Erie Canal Harbor

Erie Canal Harbor was originally built in 1825 as the western terminus of the Erie Canal. In its heyday, America's "gateway to the west" was one of the world's greatest business centers, teeming with canal and rail traffic passing from the Atlantic seaboard across the Great Lakes. For much of the 19th century it was truly an industrious port that bustled with people and goods from all over the world.

As a result of this prodigious commercial activity, by 1850 Buffalo was transformed from a small waterfront village into a thriving metropolis, eventually becoming the largest inland port in the nation as well as the unofficial grain capital of North America.



While Erie Canal Harbor and its "Central Wharf" represented the epicenter of commerce and trade in Buffalo, the surrounding canal district neighborhood enjoyed a much more ambiguous reputation. Home to a diverse cross-section of canal era inhabitants and transient visitors, the district's saloons, hotels and other establishments buzzed with activity, and the crime rate reflected it.

The arrival of trains and automobiles in the early 20th century led to the ultimate demise of Erie Canal Harbor as a functional hub of commerce. In time, the site was covered over with stone and dirt to make way for modern streets and vehicle parking.

The harbor rested in this state until 1999, when the Erie Canal Harbor Redevelopment Project officially took hold, and the area was reclaimed for restoration as one of America's brightest historical treasures.

Restoring an American Landmark

First initiated in 1999, the Erie Canal Harbor Redevelopment Project is a \$53 million waterfront infrastructure effort focused on transforming roughly 12.5 acres of idle inner harbor land into a contemporary recreational and tourism destination that celebrates the site's great historical significance, while also establishing a new maritime and entertainment center in downtown Buffalo.

The first phase of this historic restoration effort was opened in July 2003, following completion of the Veteran's Waterfront Park. The park features a naval armada of WWII ships, as well as various monuments and military artifacts for visitors to tour and view.



The second phase of the project focused on the Erie Canal Harbor segment of the redevelopment effort.



Open to the public since May 2008, it features several fully restored facets of the original Erie Canal Harbor, including: the "Commercial Slip," which served as the historic juncture between the Erie Canal and the Great Lakes; the wooden plank "Central Wharf;" the replica Coit-McCutcheon canal era building; and the award-winning "Whipple Truss" foot bridge, which accurately resembles other traditional canal spans and connects the "Central Wharf" to cobblestone "Commercial Street."

Informational signage and various interpretive exhibits are located throughout the site to help educate and inform visitors about this important American landmark.

Future Steps in Waterfront Redevelopment

The current phase of waterfront revitalization is focused on the "Canal Side" project, a dynamic \$315 million, 23-acre endeavor that will forever change the face of downtown Buffalo and the inner harbor area.



The proposed "Canal Side" effort involves the redevelopment of Buffalo's inner harbor lands for public, commercial, residential and cultural usages. ECHDC has already completed several substantial "Canal Side" construction projects – including reclamation, asbestos remediation and demolition of the Memorial Auditorium, as well as reclamation and asbestos remediation of the Donovan State Office Building – in order to prepare for upcoming development opportunities.

In addition, as part of the "Canal Side" effort the City of Buffalo is scheduled to excavate and re-cobble several historic Canal District streets including Lloyd, Hanover, Perry and Prime Streets. This work is expected to be completed by September 2010.

ECHDC has not only made progress in redeveloping Buffalo's inner harbor area, the agency has been successful in reclaiming several of the city's most prominent outer harbor land parcels as well. In May 2008, ECHDC took title to a 7+ acre parcel previously owned by Cargill, Inc. The corporation also plans to secure another parcel located adjacent to the Cargill site, which currently houses the New York Power Authority ice boom, and negotiations are underway with the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority regarding transfer of 100+ acres of outer harbor lands. The harbor corporation is also advancing a study of possible bridge alternatives between the inner and outer harbor areas.

