

Appendix B: Proposed Canal Side Design Guidelines



# Proposed Canal Side Design Guidelines

Issued by:

## **Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation**

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# Table of Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Use</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3. Massing</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>4. Circulation</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>5. Architectural Features</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>6. Materials</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>7. Signage</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>8. Lighting</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>9. Erie Canal Harbor Parcels</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>10. Sustainability</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>11. Design Review Process</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>35</b>
Sections 3.3 & 3.5 of the 2005 Erie Canal Harbor Amendment to the Urban Renewal Plan for the Waterfront Redevelopment Project	

## 1. Introduction

Canal Side (the “Project”) is a new mixed-use neighborhood that will reconnect Downtown Buffalo to the Lake Erie waterfront through a network of streets, canals, and public spaces, evoking the City’s history, while creating a timeless neighborhood that will help define its future. With approximately 1.1 million square feet of development, including retail, restaurant, hotel, office, cultural, and residential uses, Canal Side is made up of 23 development parcels within approximately 20 acres on the Buffalo Riverfront (“Project Area”). Anchored by a destination retailer, the Project offers urban amenities and year-round offerings and experiences, including restaurants, entertainment venues, retail outlets, cultural attractions, public spaces, and increased access to the Buffalo River.

The proposed Canal Side Site Plan (“Site Plan”, see Exhibit 1) identifies the conceptual design for the mixed-use project. These Canal Side Design Guidelines (“Guidelines”) apply to all development parcels within Canal Side. Unless otherwise noted, the Guidelines apply to all blocks within the Canal Side project area (see Exhibit 2 for the boundaries of those blocks). These Guidelines take as their foundation, both in terms of intent and detail, the guidelines approved as part of the 2005 Erie Canal Harbor Amendment to the Urban Renewal Plan for the Waterfront Redevelopment Project. The guidelines established in that document are preserved to the maximum extent possible, especially where concerning the Erie Canal Harbor Parcels (see Section 9). As the scope, program, and type of the proposed project has evolved and expanded since the 2004 Erie Canal Harbor Project Master Plan, some elements of that project’s associated guidelines have been revised.

The emphasis of the Guidelines is on the public spaces. The goals of the Guidelines are to provide high quality, attractive and active spaces that employ contemporary techniques but connect to the unique history of the site and Buffalo as a whole. To this end, the Guidelines are focused on the impact of buildings on the public environment. These Guidelines seek to create spaces, not projects. The goal is to create an ever-changing, lively atmosphere and visual appeal throughout (this is not a traditional business or residential district). The focus is on the pedestrian - to provide a human scale, good wayfinding, and a comfortable walking environment. The automobile is considered and sought to be convenient, but not dominate the view.

The Guidelines are also intended to create visual interest from near and far. Up close, ground level design standards produce comfortable, inviting, and stimulating environments. From afar a variable skyline of roof edges, vertical shafts, and signage create interest.

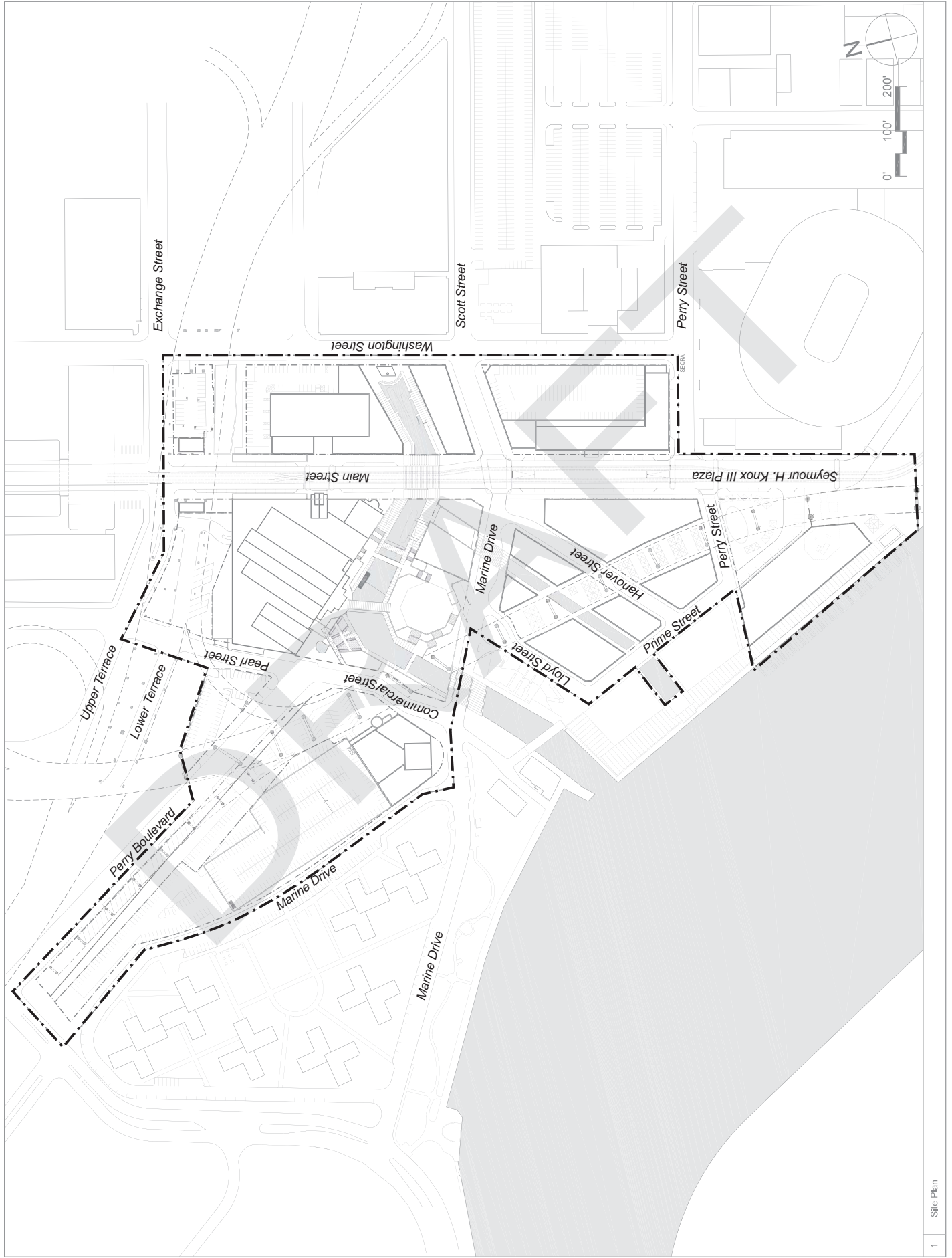
These objectives are achieved through a general consistency of design intent, communicated through standards concerning such features as fenestration, materials, color, scale, lighting, and signage. The guidelines also encourage visual interest throughout the Project Area, achieved through a variety of forms and materials. At full build-out, the project will have the appearance of a variety of buildings and spaces that have been built over time, by different owners and designers.

The Guidelines are mostly concerned with visual content relating to any and all parts of buildings (seen up close as well as from afar). These are guidelines and not rules. The purpose of the Guidelines is to give direction and help provide a very quick review and response to proposed development actions.



*The Guidelines take as their inspiration a mix of the contemporary with the materials, profiles, and scale of the historic Erie Canal Waterfront.*

# Exhibit 1: Site Plan



## 2. Use

The parcels in the Site Plan have been subdivided into blocks as per the designations below (see Exhibit 2 for the boundaries of the blocks). Each is subject to the Guidelines, which identify physical design constraints such as height restrictions, service access, and set-back lines; as well as use regulations such as ground-level use guidelines.

- AUD Block;
- Commercial Slip Block;
- Thruway Block;
- Donovan Block;
- Webster Block; and
- Erie Canal Harbor Parcels.

The Project as a whole is envisioned as mixed use. In order to create a vibrant, 24-hour pedestrian friendly environment, all areas allow a mix of uses, including Residential, Office, Commercial (retail, restaurant, and service), Hotel, and Cultural. Detailed descriptions of the program and design character of the blocks can be found in Chapter 3 of the State Environmental Quality Review: Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement for the Canal Side Project.

### 2.1 Active Ground Floor Uses

Active uses that engage pedestrians shall be located along street frontages as indicated in Exhibit 3. Ground level land uses shall be established and designed to animate public sidewalks and canal paths, and to provide visual appeal. In required active ground floor areas, the following uses are acceptable:

- Commercial uses, such as retail stores, retail service establishments, food and beverage establishments; and/or entertainment facilities, and
- Institutional uses, such as museums and similar facilities of an educational or heritage nature.



*Active ground floor uses and pedestrian-oriented fixtures create a lively and commodious pedestrian environment*