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THE CANAL SIDE PROJECT & THE SEQRA PROCESS

With the release of the comprehensive Canal Side master plan and model, Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation (ECHDC) will be progressing early next year with the project environmental review, as required under the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA).

Empire State Development (ESD), on behalf of its subsidiary ECHDC, secured SEQRA lead agency status for the purpose of administering a Generic environmental impact statement (GEIS) process to assess the social, economic and environmental effects of the project. The City of Buffalo, along with other funding and regulatory agencies, will be serving as “involved agencies” in the GEIS review.

The next step of this process will involve public scoping, where various agencies, interest groups and the general public are solicited to provide input into key issues that will be analyzed in the GEIS. It is anticipated that public scoping will begin in early 2009.

Following completion of the scoping phase of the GEIS, ESD will prepare and publish the Draft GEIS. Public hearings on the Draft GEIS will then take place, most likely in late spring or early summer of 2009.

The process will conclude with the issuance of a Final GEIS and written findings. For more information please visit www.eriecanalharbor.com