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**New York State Canal Corporation and Village of Fairport Announce Phase I
Completion of Fairport's Bicentennial Canal Gateway Project**

***New Heritage Trail & Waterfront Enhancements Celebrate History &
Bicentennial of Historic Erie Canal***

Construction of Phase II Will Begin in November

The New York State Canal Corporation and the Village of Fairport today announced the completion of the first phase of construction of Fairport's Bicentennial Canal Gateway Project, including a heritage trail celebrating the bicentennial of the Erie Canal.

This investment in Fairport's waterfront will ultimately create a revitalized waterfront destination for visitors and residents, with connections to local trailways and significant accessibility upgrades from existing facilities, including an accessible kayak launch, regraded boat ramp and updates to wayfinding signage.

"The Bicentennial Gateway celebrates the incredible role that New York's canals played in the creation of the state we live in today, and will help show visitors the very best our state has to offer," **said Brian U. Stratton, director of the New York State Canal Corporation.** "The Canal Corporation is always thrilled to support projects that integrate the canals' history with creative and imaginative new approaches to encouraging both outdoor recreation and tourism, and this project is no exception."

The project's first phase at Kennelley Park, along the southwest bank of the Erie Canal, included the placement of an observation deck and non-motorized boat deck, new sidewalks, road base, lighting, landscaping, and historical interpretive signage. Prior to the start of the project, the area needed to be cleared of all debris and brush and all utilities were installed underground.

The New York State Canal Corporation awarded the \$850,000 phase one project \$150,000 in 2018 to support accessibility upgrades and compliance throughout the

waterfront, with funding received through the Regional Economic Development Councils' Consolidated Funding Application program.

The \$1.1 million phase two of the project is expected to begin in November 2020 along the Erie Canal's northwest bank. This phase received \$300,000 in funding from the New York State Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation and includes all new docks and dock utilities, lighting, a new non-motorized small craft boat launch, and ADA accessible features throughout (e.g. kayak launch, observation deck). There will be multi-mode access and signage on the Lift Bridge, and docks will extend to the canal path to encourage access to the water. This area will also be utilized for events and staging and is expected to be completed by Fall 2021.

"State Parks is pleased to be able to support this important economic development and tourism project that brings New Yorkers better access to the historic Erie Canal," **said State Parks Commissioner Erik Kulleseid**. "During this pandemic, it has been made very clear that connecting people of all abilities to the outdoors and their natural heritage is an important part of their health and well-being."

"I am absolutely ecstatic about the investment that has been made in the Village of Fairport," **said Senator Rich Funke**. "This project celebrates the connection between Fairport and the Erie Canal by making the waterfront more accessible and enjoyable for those in the community."

"Even though I'm a lifelong Webster resident, I remember as a child that one of my big thrills was my parents bringing us down to Fairport to watch the bridge go up and down and the boats and barges go by," **said Assemblyman Mark Johns**. "This is still a great worldwide tourist attraction and this project will only continue to enhance the venue."

"This is an exciting time for the Village of Fairport," **said Mayor Julie Domaratz**. "We're ushering in a new and exciting era while preserving the rich history here in the village. The development of the north and southwest Erie Canal banks will not only enhance the boater, pedestrian, and cyclist experience, but welcome in new businesses and modern housing, further solidifying Fairport as a destination to live, work, and visit."

"This is another example of our belief that public improvements spur private investment," **said H. Kevin Clark, Chair of the Fairport Office of Community + Economic Development**. "By creating an inviting and walkable environment, this project will encourage engagement with the canal, provide amenities that enhance our recreational opportunities and connect residents and visitors to our unique mix of shopping, dining and entertainment here in the Village of Fairport."

For more information on Fairport's Bicentennial Canal Gateway project visit [here](#).

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About the New York State Canal Corporation

New York's Canal system includes four historic canals: the Erie, Champlain, Oswego, and Cayuga-Seneca. Spanning 524 miles, the waterway links the Hudson River with the Great Lakes, the Finger Lakes and Lake Champlain. The canals form the backbone of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor and connect hundreds of unique and historic communities.

The New York State Canal Corporation is a subsidiary of the New York Power Authority.

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