



COUNTY OF ERIE

MARK C. POLONCARZ

COUNTY EXECUTIVE

2025 JUL 2 25:11:43

July 2, 2025

Erie County Legislature
92 Franklin Street, 4th Floor
Buffalo, New York 14202

Re: Authorization to Accept NYSERDA Funding for the Clean Energy Communities Program – Botanical Gardens Heat Pump Installation

Dear Honorable Members:

Please find attached a resolution requesting legislative authorization to accept grant funding from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) into a Clean Energy Communities Program Capital Project and to transfer a portion of the funding to the Buffalo & Erie County Botanical Gardens to support the purchase and installation of an air-source heat pump.

If your Honorable Body requires any further information, please contact Commissioner William Geary at the Department of Public Works. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark C. Poloncarz".

Mark C. Poloncarz, Esq.
Erie County Executive

MCP/rb
Enclosure

cc: ~~Commissioner of Public Works William Geary~~

MEMORANDUM

To: Honorable Members of the Erie County Legislature
From: Erie County Department of Public Works
Re: Authorization to Accept NYSERDA Funding for the Clean Energy Communities Program – Botanical Gardens Heat Pump Installation
Date: July 2, 2025

SUMMARY

Legislative authorization is requested to accept \$937,500 in grant funding from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), to establish a Clean Energy Communities Program capital project to facilitate a heat pump project at the Erie County Botanical Gardens and solar panel project at the Buffalo & Erie County Central Library.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The grant funding for this action is derived entirely from 100% New York State Aid dollars. No County tax dollars are necessary to support this request.

The Botanical Gardens will be a subrecipient of \$532,000 of this funding, which the County will advance to the Botanical Gardens to purchase and install the air-sourced heat pump and, upon completion, the County will submit those expenses to NYSEDA for reimbursement.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION/BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In 2024, The Erie County Department of Public Works was awarded, by NYSEDA, a \$937,500 grant for its participation in the Clean Energy Communities Program. The Clean Energy Communities program rewards municipalities for taking steps to develop renewable energy, utilize clean heating and cooling, as well as other steps to reduce an organization's carbon footprint. Erie County was the first to reach the 5th and highest tier for the numerous initiatives and projects it has performed. This resulted in the award that can be used to fund further clean energy projects.

This award is being used to fund a solar array at the Buffalo & Erie County Library's downtown branch as well as the installation of an air-source heat pump at the Botanical Gardens. The solar array is being incorporated into the new green roof project currently under design. This is the perfect time to implement because all design factors can be accounted for and included into the design.

The air-source heat pump is getting integrated into the Botanical Gardens expansion plan. This was a design element that the Botanical Gardens wanted to include into the expansion plan but, due to the incremental cost difference, was in danger of getting eliminated. This funding will allow the Botanical Gardens to install the heat pump and realize the benefit of clean heating and cooling. The Botanical Gardens is managing the expansion project and therefore it is necessary to transfer funds over to the organization.

CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION

Erie County would lose the \$937,500 award and would not be able to move either project forward. The Library would continue to pay higher electric bills and the Botanical Gardens would emit more carbon dioxide and other pollutants.

STEPS FOLLOWING APPROVAL

The Department of Public Works will work with the Division of Budget and Management to establish the grant and facilitate the transfer of necessary funds to Botanical Gardens.

A RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY:
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Re: Authorization to Accept NYSERDA Funding for the Clean Energy Communities Program – Botanical Gardens Heat Pump Installation

WHEREAS, Erie County endeavors to promote clean energy and lower its' carbon footprint wherever possible; and

WHEREAS, Erie County achieved the highest ranking in NYSERDA's Clean Energy Communities competition; and

WHEREAS, because of this achievement, Erie County has been awarded a Clean Energy Communities grant in the amount of \$937,500; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Public Works requires legislative approval to accept the State funds and to establish a new Clean Energy Communities Program Capital Project; and

WHEREAS, these funds will be used to further promote clean energy by installing solar panels on the Buffalo & Erie County Central Library and installing a heat pump at the Buffalo & Erie County Botanical Gardens; and

WHEREAS, the Botanical Gardens will act as a subrecipient of this NYSERDA funding where sufficient funds will be advanced to the Botanical Gardens to complete the purchase and installation of an Air-Source Heat Pump; and

WHEREAS, upon completion of the Project the County will seek reimbursement from NYSERDA of the eligible expenses.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Erie County Legislature hereby authorize the County Executive or Deputy County Executive to enter into contract with NYSERDA to accept \$937,500 in funding into the Division of Buildings & Grounds (Fund 410, Funds Center 12220) Capital Project A.25XXX – Clean Energy Communities Program as follows:

Project A.25XXX
Clean Energy Communities Program
Fund 490, Funds Center 12220

REVENUES

409000 State Aid Revenues

BUDGET

\$937,500

\$937,500

APPROPRIATIONS

Capital Project Expense

\$937,500

TOTAL

\$937,500

and be it further

RESOLVED, that authorization is hereby given to enter into contract with the Buffalo & Erie County Botanical Gardens as a subrecipient of this NYSERDA funding and transfer \$532,500 for the completion of the purchase and installation of an air-sourced heat pump; and be it further

RESOLVED, that authorization is hereby given to accept any other federal, state or utility incentive, grant or refund into the Division of Buildings & Grounds (Fund 410, Funds Center 12220) Capital Project A.25XXX – Clean Energy Communities Program for future use; and be it further

RESOLVED, that authorization is given to the Director of Budget and Management to make any technical adjustments necessary in order to effectuate this resolution; and be it further

RESOLVED, that certified copies of this resolution be furnished to the County Executive's Office, Comptroller's Office, Department of Public Works and Division of Budget and Management.