



# Common Council

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April 25, 2011

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Honorable Members  
The Erie County Legislature  
92 Franklin Street - 4th Floor  
Buffalo, NY 14202

Dear Honorable Members:

At the Common Council Meeting held on Tuesday, April 19, 2011, the following item was **ADOPTED** by the full Council:

(157, Tuesday, April 19, 2011) "Build Community College's Health Sciences Center for Excellence at ECC's City Campus in downtown Buffalo".

Please review the enclosed item. If you would like to file a response, you can do so at the City Clerk's office, located at 1308 City Hall, Buffalo, NY 14202. If you have any questions or need further information, please contact me at 851-5105.

Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Brian C. Bray  
Sr. Legislative Assistant

## RESOLUTION

By: Mr. Golombek and Mr. Pridgen

**RE: Build Community College's Health Sciences Center for Excellence at ECC's City Campus in downtown Buffalo**

**Whereas:** County Executive Chris Collins has proposed building a \$30 million Health Sciences Center for Excellence at Erie Community College's North Campus in Amherst; and

**Whereas:** An upgrade to Erie Community College's campus facilities could benefit all Erie County students and can be a vital improvement that helps rebrand the college and attract and retain top-notch talent; and

**Whereas:** ECC's often neglected City Campus, despite being the most accessible and conveniently-located campus in Western New York, is still the smallest of ECC's three-campus system; and

**Whereas:** ECC's City Campus is at the doorstep of the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, one of New York State's leading economic development and health sciences research hubs; and

**Whereas:** The proposed ECC Health Sciences Center for Excellence is an unprecedented opportunity to link health sciences students in Erie County to the job, internship, and networking opportunities of the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus; and

**Whereas:** ECC's own mission statement says the college "strives toward a future where education is accessible and convenient to all," yet its North Campus is conveniently accessible to only people who have automobiles; and

**Whereas:** Over 30% of Buffalo households have no access to an automobile and depend on public transportation to access job and educational opportunities, making it critical to place a major regional investment like an ECC Health Sciences Center for Excellence where transportation is a viable and convenient alternative; and

**Whereas:** There is plenty of room to grow at ECC's City Campus, including two 1.3 acre sites that Erie County already owns at 45 Oak St. and 100 N. Division St.; and

**Whereas:** The County-owned parcel at 45 Oak St., currently the site of an unsightly, one-story "bunker" now occupied by ECC for temporary classroom space, is an especially inspiring redevelopment opportunity and visually prominent site that is ideal for a Health Sciences Center for Excellence; and

**Whereas:** Not since Gov. Nelson Rockefeller announced a "North Campus" for the University at Buffalo in 1968 has such a substantial regional investment been proposed at an isolated, automobile-dependent location at the expense of the central city; and

**Whereas:** Times have changed, and it is now widely accepted that to grow smartly, civic buildings of regional importance must be directed to transit hubs, not isolated suburban campuses; and

**Whereas:** County executive Collins proposal may simply be called the "more traffic in Amherst" plan, which would make even worse the nightmarish congestion on a suburban Main St. that already carries more than 23,400 cars per day, according to the GBNRTC; and

**Whereas:** Downtown Buffalo is already equipped to handle the greater density this project would represent, particularly at the ECC City Campus where there is currently a parking surplus, according to the 2008 parking study performed by Desman Associates; and

**Whereas:** Of the three ECC campuses, only the City Campus is within close distance of 32,730 parking spots, the Metro Rail, 35 bus routes, an intercity bus station, and three major highways, making it more accessible and convenient to more people in Erie County than anywhere else; and

**Whereas:** Growth and modernization of campus facilities is desperately needed at Erie Community College, where full and part-time enrollment has jumped 34.9% (13,143 to 17,730) from 2008 to 2011; and

**Whereas:** The growth in enrollment at Erie Community College has far outpaced that of Niagara County Community College, which grew by only 17.7% (6,212 to 7,314) from 2008 to 2011, challenging claims made recently by County Executive Chris Collins that NCCC is "stealing students" away from ECC; and

**Whereas:** Despite the low relative growth of NCCC, that college's leadership is setting the stage for true competition with ECC by investing in a hip, new culinary campus in downtown Niagara Falls, where an enhanced, mixed-use urban setting is expected to generate significantly more drawing power for young, talented students; and

**Whereas:** The Buffalo region continues to suffer population decline and losses of jobs and wealth, and can no longer afford to miss opportunities to make progressive and forward-thinking decisions about the future of regional assets like Erie Community College; and

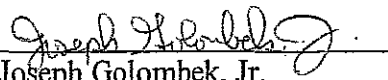
**Whereas:** A delay in New York State funding sought by County Executive Chris Collins for ECC's proposed Health Sciences Center for Excellence has introduced an opportunity to plan for this investment more thoughtfully, strategically, and collaboratively;

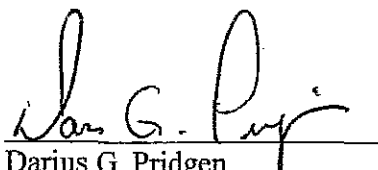
**Therefore, Be It Resolved:** That the Common Council calls for the construction of the ECC Health Sciences Center for Excellence at the ECC City Campus; and

**Be It Further Resolved:** That the Common Council urges the ECC Board of Trustees to give strongest consideration to its underutilized 1.3-acre parcel at 45 Oak St. to develop a world-class Health Sciences Center for Excellence; and

**Be It Further Resolved:** That the Common Council offers to support the ECC Board of Trustees in helping build up ECC's neglected City Campus, thereby forging stronger connections between its students and the thousands of jobs being created at the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus; and

**Be It Further Resolved:** That the Common Council requests this resolution be forwarded to Governor Andrew Cuomo, every member of the New York State Senate and Assembly, Erie County Executive Chris Collins, every member of the Erie County Legislature, ECC President Jack Quinn, and the members of the ECC Board of Trustees for their comments.

  
Joseph Golombek, Jr.

  
Darius G. Pridgen