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# COUNTY OF ERIE

**MARK C. POLONCARZ**

COUNTY EXECUTIVE

February 10, 2023

Erie County Legislature  
92 Franklin Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Buffalo, New York 14202

**RE: Erie Heat Emergency Planning Project**

Dear Honorable Members:

Enclosed please find a memorandum and proposed resolution from the Department of Environment and Planning to authorize the execution of an agreement to accept \$100,000 in New York State Department of Environmental Conservation funding, establish a budget, and enter into a contract with the named sub-awardee, State University of New York at Buffalo, to conduct a heat emergency planning project.

Should your Honorable Body require further information, I encourage you to contact Deputy Commissioner Bonnie Lawrence. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely yours,

Mark C. Poloncarz, Esq.  
Erie County Executive

MCP/nb  
Enclosure

cc: Daniel R. Castle, Commissioner  
Bonnie Lawrence, Deputy Commissioner

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Honorable Members of the Erie County Legislature  
**From:** Erie County Department of Environment and Planning  
**Re:** RE: Erie Heat Emergency Planning Project  
**Date:** February 10, 2023

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### **SUMMARY**

It is recommended that the Legislature approve the attached resolution prepared by the Department of Environment and Planning (DEP) to authorize the County Executive or the Deputy County Executive to execute the necessary agreements to accept \$100,000 in grant funding from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), establish a program budget, and execute a contract with the sub-awardee, State University of New York at Buffalo (SUNY Buffalo). The project will develop a heat emergency plan for the County.

### **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

There will be no additional impact on County resources. No staff positions are created and all grant funding will be contracted to the sub-awardee, SUNY Buffalo.

### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

The proposed project will better prepare the County for extreme temperature events, which will allow for the protection of life and property.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Erie County is finalizing a Climate Vulnerability Assessment (CVA), which identified extreme heat as one threat posing significant and increasing risk to the County. The County Legislature resolved to plan for adaptation to unavoidable climate change as part of the County's Climate Smart Community Pledge (Comm. 12E-5 (2014)). In 2016 and thereafter, the Erie County Environmental Management Council's Annual Recommendations Reports have recommended the County identify resources to proactively plan for the impacts of climate change.

Extreme heat poses the greatest risk to seniors, individuals with health vulnerabilities, and low- and moderate-income residents, who tend to live in housing without air conditioning, and live in neighborhoods with fewer cooling attributes like trees. The Heat Emergency Plan will identify preparations needed ahead of extreme heat events, thresholds for triggering an emergency response, and procedures to be undertaken during an event. This will require an interdepartmental effort, and DEP will be conducting the effort in collaboration with departments including Health, Emergency Services, and Senior Services.

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, through its Climate Smart Communities program, is leading an initiative to support local governments as they plan and adapt to climate change. By COMM. 14E-25 (2021) the County Legislature resolved to

authorize DEP to apply for NYSDEC funding for the project. Subsequently, DEP was awarded a grant for \$100,000 by NYSDEC to conduct the project.

### **CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION**

The DEP will forfeit NYSDEC funding and will be unable to advance heat emergency planning in Erie County.

### **STEPS FOLLOWING APPROVAL**

The necessary contracts with NYSDEC and SUNY Buffalo will be executed, and a budget will be established.

A RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY:  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING

RE: Erie Heat Emergency Planning Project

WHEREAS, Erie County has identified events resulting from climate change, including the increasing risk of extreme heat, as posing an increasing risk to life and property within the County; and

WHEREAS, the Erie County Legislature resolved to become a Climate Smart Community and plan for adaption to unavoidable climate change (Comm. 12E-5 (2014)); and

WHEREAS, Erie County has individual projects and initiatives to address severe weather events, but has not conducted a comprehensive heat emergency plan; and

WHEREAS, the Erie County Legislature authorized the Department of Environment and Planning (DEP) to apply for New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) grant funding to conduct a climate change adaptation planning project (COMM. 14E-25 (2021)); and

WHEREAS, NYSDEC has awarded DEP a \$100,000 grant to conduct the heat emergency planning project; and

WHEREAS, NYSDEC has designated State University of New York at Buffalo (SUNY Buffalo) as the project sub-awardee; and

WHEREAS, to proceed with the project it is necessary for Erie County to execute an agreement with the NYSDEC, adopt a project budget; and execute an agreement with SUNY Buffalo.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Erie County Legislature hereby authorizes the County Executive to accept \$100,000 from NYSDEC and be made available as a multi-year grant to the Department of Environment & Planning in Fund 281, Cost Center 1620020 as follows:

Department of Environment & Planning  
Erie County Heat Emergency Planning Project  
162HEPP2327  
April 1, 2023 to March 14, 2027

<u>ACCOUNT</u>	<u>REVENUES</u>	<u>BUDGET</u>
409000	State Aid Revenue	<u>\$100,000</u>
	TOTAL	<u>\$100,000</u>

<u>ACCOUNT</u>	<u>APPROPRIATIONS</u>	<u>BUDGET</u>
516020	Professional Contract Services	<u>\$100,000</u>
	TOTAL	<u>\$100,000</u>

and be it further

RESOLVED, that the County Executive is hereby authorized to execute the necessary agreements to contract with SUNY Buffalo in an amount not to exceed \$100,000, waiving the procedures in Section 26.08 of the Erie County Administrative Code; and be it further

ESOLVED, that authorization is hereby given for the Division of Budget and Management to make any technical adjustments necessary to effectuate this resolution; and be it further

RESOLVED, that certified copies of this resolution shall be forwarded to the County Executive; the Director of the Division of Budget and Management; the County Attorney; the County Comptroller; Commissioner of Environment and Planning; and Deputy Commissioner of Environment and Planning.