

NYBC

NEW YORK BUILDING CONGRESS

2017 Agenda For New York



Legislative and Policy Priorities

2017 POLICY AGENDA

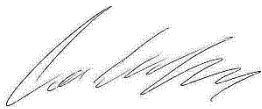
THE NEW YORK BUILDING CONGRESS AGENDA FOR NEW YORK

The New York Building Congress, a broad-based membership association dedicated to promoting the growth and success of the construction industry in New York, is pleased to present its policy priorities for 2017.

Now in its 96th year, the Building Congress works to advance an industry-wide agenda focusing on economic and infrastructure investment, job creation, and professional exchange in close coordination with its more than 425 member organizations comprising more than 250,000 skilled tradespeople and professionals working in all industry sectors. The Building Congress advocates sound public policy, promotes productive capital spending, encourages public/private partnerships, and evaluates the implementation of major government projects.

The 2017 Agenda for New York reflects an increased focus on all five boroughs of New York City and the broader metropolitan region. As we execute our priorities, the Building Congress will work to gather input from industry, business, and civic organizations as well as community leaders to encourage broad consensus on infrastructure investment, public policy initiatives, and related issues affecting the building industry.

Please look out for updates on the Policy Agenda throughout the year at www.buildingcongress.com.



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2017 NEW YORK CITY FIVE-BOROUGH AGENDA

PROMOTE A FIVE-BOROUGH INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT STRATEGY

The Building Congress will promote ambitious projects that improve mobility, economic opportunity, and growth throughout the City. The Building Congress will work with local stakeholders and industry experts to define neighborhoods, industries and infrastructure needs that have been overlooked and provide true opportunities for investment.

The Building Congress will also research and report on these opportunities for critical investments to drive interest.

ENSURE ROBUST CAPITAL SPENDING BY THE CITY OF NEW YORK

The City spends more on public infrastructure in the five boroughs than any other government entity. Recent years have seen the City make unprecedented levels of investment to protect, maintain and expand its network of schools, libraries, hospitals, parks, roads and bridges, water and sewer systems, and other core components that make the City livable. It is critical the City continue to make similar levels of investment in 2017 and demonstrate a longer-term commitment in its Ten-Year Strategy, as the population continues grow and the economy expands.

The Building Congress will monitor the City's Fiscal Year 2018 Preliminary and Executive Capital Budgets to ensure that spending continues to flow to critical infrastructure. The Building Congress will offer detailed analyses and testimony on Budget details and work with the Administration and City Council, as needed, if concerns arise.

MAKE THE NEW YORK CITY CAPITAL PROGRAM MORE EFFICIENT

The City of New York consistently spends between \$8-10 billion every year on vital capital projects throughout the City. However, the City budget planning process is opaque, and capital project procurement, management and delivery are inefficient.

The Building Congress will continue to work closely with City officials to make meaningful improvements to procurement practices to speed projects into construction, and improve management during construction and closeout to avoid delays, scope changes and speed payment.

The Building Congress will also encourage the City to prepare and present a more transparent capital budget. An improved budget will allow elected officials to better track capital program progress, detect cost overruns, and allow City officials to engage in more rational long-term planning.

CHAMPION MAJOR NEW INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

A number of major infrastructure projects are being planned and have been made public – like the Gateway Program, Phase II of the Second Avenue Subway, and the JFK Master Plan – that will need the support of the City and the industry as they move into development.

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However, the City must look beyond the current slate of projects and plan for the next generation of critical infrastructure projects that will allow the City to accommodate the growth it is struggling to accommodate. The Building Congress will define these projects and then promote them to ensure they are given serious consideration by the public and decision makers.

EXPAND PROJECT-BASED STEAM EDUCATION

The Building Industry is facing a shortage of design and construction professionals, and diversity within its ranks. A variety of excellent Project-Based STEAM learning programs supported by the New York Building Foundation, the charitable arm of the Building Congress, are educating and training the next generation of design and construction professionals inside New York's public schools and beyond.

The Building Congress and Building Foundation will undertake to expand access to these programs, encourage systematizing them as a single "pipeline" from early childhood into entry in the workforce, and seek more consistent funding for project-based education in New York City schools.

COMPLETE THE EAST MIDTOWN REZONING

The City must complete its East Midtown rezoning plan, which will permit responsible renewal of New York City's premier office district, facilitate infrastructure investment, job growth and expansion of the City's tax base. The Building Congress will actively support the City's efforts to complete the public review and approvals process in 2017.

A key benefit of the rezoning plan is the creation of a meaningful infrastructure fund that could generate hundreds of millions of dollars for mass transit and pedestrian improvements. If the plan is approved, it could provide a model for future rezonings.

IMPROVE THE CITY'S MWBE PROGRAM

The City plans to increase its goals for participation of minority- and women-owned firms in the City's capital construction program in the coming year. The Building Congress supports the full engagement of emerging businesses in the City's capital program. However, the City must improve MWBE capacity-building programs and provide additional resources to ensure meaningful inclusion and development of MWBE firms can take place.

The Building Congress will work with the City to look closely at its programs and practices, suggest areas for improvement, and seek their implementation.

PROMOTE A CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE AGENDA

New York's cultural institutions are hugely important to the New York City economy and essential to its quality of life. Museums, libraries, theaters and other cultural destinations are also investing in growth and expansion at an unprecedented rate in order to meet demand for services from residents and visitors. In the midst of sustained population growth, an explosion in tourism, the quality and diversity of our cultural institutions must be encouraged to grow.

The Building Congress will dedicate resources to promote the importance and scale of the cultural sector, and quantify the value of its infrastructure investments. The Building Congress

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will also work to ensure that the City and State provide adequate financial support to allow this sector to grow and serve all residents and visitors.

WORK TO ADVANCE SMART CONSTRUCTION SAFETY LEGISLATION

The City Council will be offering a suite of legislation in 2017 addressing construction safety, which has been an increasingly visible issue in the midst of the City's historic building boom. It is critical that the City make worker safety a priority. The Building Congress will analyze legislation when it is introduced and work to reach consensus among involved parties to ensure that worker safety is prioritized and construction is not constrained by unnecessarily burdensome regulations.

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2017 NEW YORK STATE AGENDA

ENSURE PROGRESS ON THE STATE'S INFRASTRUCTURE AGENDA

Governor Andrew Cuomo has made major infrastructure investment a central focus of his administration, focusing on several key agencies and projects. The Building Congress will closely monitor progress on these projects throughout the year and urge full, protected funding during budget season and implementation, construction and completion of critical elements.

Efforts will include:

- Promoting and facilitating the Amtrak Gateway Project, including partial funding of the project;
- Protecting funding and advancing implementation of the MTA's \$29 billion 2015-2019 Capital Plan;
- Monitoring the State budgeting process to ensure stable funding for New York State DOT's \$22 billion, five-year capital plan;
- Keeping attention on reconstruction of the Penn Station/Moynihan Station Complex;
- Advancing implementation of master plans for LaGuardia and JFK Airports; and
- Supporting construction of a new third track along a portion of the Long Island Rail Road Main Line.

AUTHORIZE DESIGN-BUILD CONSTRUCTION FOR NEW YORK CITY AND STATE

The design-build approach to building major infrastructure projects has been successful on a number of essential State transportation projects, however legislation permitting the State to use the design-build sunsets this year. New York City has also sought authorization to use design-build for vital, time-sensitive projects, but has been unsuccessful.

This year, with both the City and State seeking authorization for design-build, presents an important opportunity to expand its use, speeding delivery of major infrastructure projects, while reducing costs. The Building Congress will make passage of design-build legislation for both the City and State a top priority during the 2017 legislative session.

PASS THE EMERGENCY RESPONDER ACT

State legislation protecting members of the building industry from liability when they respond to a declared emergency is a matter of public safety. Without such protection, firms may be rendered unable to provide timely and adequate emergency support services. A strong liability protection law will allow the industry to respond decisively during catastrophic events like Superstorm Sandy or 9/11.

The Building Congress will lead efforts to finally pass essential legislation that will permit the building industry to play an essential role on behalf of government during times of crisis.

CHAMPION MAJOR NEW INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

The State, as well as the City, must be a major force for investment in and advancement of the major new expansion projects that will enable New York City to thrive in the next century. As noted in the Building Congress Agenda for New York City, there are several major infrastructure projects essential to the future of New York.

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The Building Congress will publicly urge advancement of these projects, and facilitate progress as an advocate, planner and financial supporter, where necessary, to ensure these projects move forward.

ADVOCATE LONG-TERM, SUSTAINABLE FUNDING FOR INFRASTRUCTURE

New, dedicated revenues would provide essential funding necessary to meet the State's \$100 billion infrastructure agenda. Dedicated revenues are also a sustainable source that will allow the maintenance and upkeep of proposed and existing infrastructure over the long term. The Building Congress encourages consideration of the following revenue options, all of which require legislative approval:

- Adding a uniform toll on vehicles entering the Manhattan central business district.
- Increasing the Petroleum Business Tax.
- Removing the artificial cap on the gasoline sales tax which leaves hundreds of millions of dollars gasoline untaxed whenever the price of gas exceeds \$2.
- Increasing the MTA region sales tax surcharge by one-quarter of one percent (or 1 penny for every \$400).

PASS LEGISLATION TO ENCOURAGE AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

The 421a tax benefit incentivized the creation of thousands of affordable housing units before its expiration in 2016. Efforts to craft an acceptable replacement stalled in the legislature last year, and the pipeline of affordable units slated for development slowed as a result.

The Governor has included language in his 2017-2018 budget that provides tax incentives and other guidelines similar to 421a that should reinvigorate the affordable housing pipeline. The Building Congress will work with stakeholders to reach agreement on passage of this or another acceptable replacement of 421a this year.

ENSURE AFFORDABLE POWER FOR NEW YORK

The State made headlines with its plans to close the Indian Point Energy Center, which provides over 2,000 megawatts of clean energy for New York, as early as 2021. At the same time, the Building Congress' most recent *Energy Outlook* report anticipated a growing demand for energy, driven by the tremendous development underway in Hudson Yards, the World Trade Center and other areas of the City. Unless new, affordable sources of energy are put on line, the closure of Indian Point poses significant risks to New York's energy consumers.

The Building Congress will closely monitor progress on the closure and ensure that an affordable plan to replace the loss of Indian Point is met. The Building Congress will convene its Energy Committee regularly with parties involved in the closure to ensure plans for an orderly transition to new sources proceed in a systematic fashion.

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2017 TRANSPORTATION AGENDA

The Building Congress will focus particular attention on the challenges facing New York's transportation network. Virtually all modes of transportation have exceeded existing capacity and constrain the City's ability to manage the effects of economic expansion and population growth. New mass transit alternatives are needed. Improved roads and bridges are also vital. The City's airports simply cannot accommodate growth forecasted for the coming decades.

The Building Congress will actively promote opportunities for expansion of the transportation network, focusing on projects that are currently under active development by government, and projects that have been proposed or considered by advocates and elected officials that deserve closer examination.

Active projects that are not yet underway and need strong advocacy efforts until they are implemented include:

- The Gateway Program, preserving and enhancing cross-Hudson access for tens of thousands of daily commuters, and which is considered the most urgent infrastructure need in the United States;
- Phase II of the 2nd Avenue Subway;
- The second span of the Kosciuszko Bridge replacement;
- The Third Track through central Long Island;
- The BQX light rail program linking the Brooklyn and Queens emergent waterfront neighborhoods; and
- A rail connection to LaGuardia Airport.

Examples of proposed projects that are not in development and will receive closer examination from the Building Congress in order to address the region's transportation deficit include:

- Enhanced landing and takeoff capacity for the region's airports;
- Burying the Gowanus Expressway;
- The Regional Plan Association's proposal to create The Triboro rail connection, linking Brooklyn, Queens, and the Bronx on a single, existing north-to-south route;
- Expanding commuter rail access on existing, underused rights of way in Queens, Brooklyn and the Bronx, including the abandoned Whitepot line to the Rockaways;
- Projects to integrate the New York City ferry system into the existing mass transit network;
- A river-to-river light rail line on 42nd Street; and
- A proposal for an aerial cable car system connecting Manhattan, Brooklyn and Queens.