

Commentary/Op-Ed - April 2021

Building big without breaking the bank: How New York City should fix a broken capital construction

In this New York Daily News op-ed, CUF Executive Director Jonathan Bowles and New Yorkers for Parks Executive Director Adam Ganser argue that reforming the city's broken capital construction process is a huge opportunity to help the city realize significant cost savings during a period of protracted fiscal uncertainty.

by Jonathan Bowles and Adam Ganser

With the city facing long-term fiscal uncertainties, one of the best opportunities New York has to save money even as it spends is by reforming the city's deeply flawed process for designing and building capital projects. Today, building a new branch library can easily take more than seven years to complete and cost more than $1,500 per square foot to construct. A new report from the Center for an Urban Future shows that reforming this process could save the city $800 million over five years, which is nearly enough money to clear the entire backlog of state-of-good-repair needs across the city's three library systems, pay for 150 full-time parks maintenance workers for the next decade, or fund more than 1,300 miles of protected bike lanes.

In this op-ed for the *New York Daily News*, CUF Executive Director Jonathan Bowles and New Yorkers for Parks Executive Director Adam Ganser urge the next mayor to commit to capital reforms that will fix the inefficiencies in the capital process, ensure the greatest possible investment in vital social infrastructure, and help the city stretch dollars further during a period of fiscal uncertainty.

You can read the op-ed here.

This op-ed builds on the Center's ongoing research on the city's aging infrastructure and capital construction process, including the recent report *Stretching New York City's Capital Dollars*, reports *Caution Ahead: Five Years Later*, *A New Leaf: Revitalizing New York City's Aging Parks Infrastructure*, *Slow Build*, and event "Reforming NYC's Capital Construction Process for Libraries, Parks, Museums, and Other Public Buildings."

RELATED PRESS

The New York Building Congress Went From Major Player to Social Club and Back Again

Commercial Observer, by Nicholas Rizzi, November 16, 2021

Mayor Adams Announces Comprehensive Effort To Overhaul Capital Process, Reducing Red Tape

Office of NYC Mayor Eric Adams, October 12, 2022

Mayor Adams, Comptroller Lander Bring Transparency and Accountability Into Capital Process

Office of NYC Mayor Eric Adams, November 01, 2023

CENTER FOR AN URBAN FUTURE
120 Wall Street, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10005

cuf@nycfuture.org © All Rights Reserved.