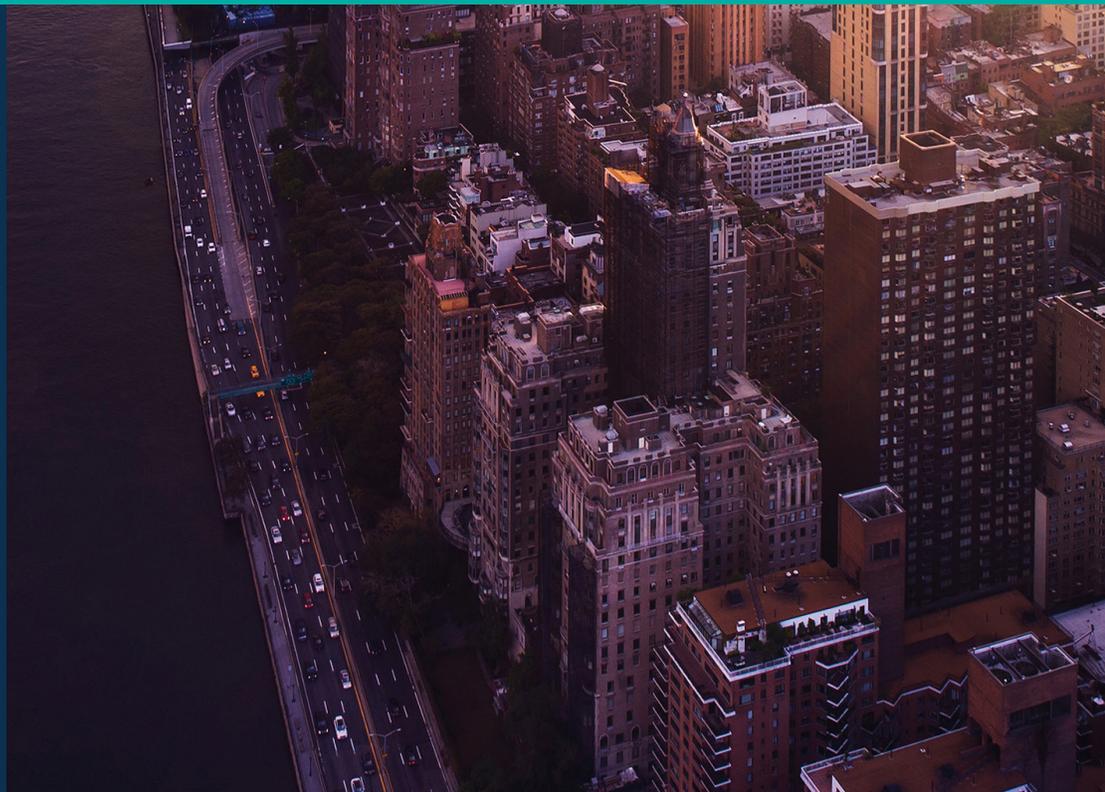




NEW YORK  
BUILDING  
CONGRESS



# THE NEXT 100 YEARS: --- A STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT



## January 2023

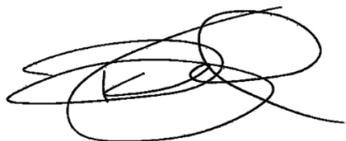
For more than a century, and through thick and thin, the New York Building Congress has been the voice of an entire industry. Our members are and have always been at the core of what we do and why we do it. Our advocacy, action, and programming flows from serving the needs of our 500+ member organizations from a broad range of building sectors.

But celebrating a centennial is also a good time for self-reflection and figuring out where even more success may lie. What can we be doing better? Where should we be focusing now? What haven't we explored enough? Who else can we partner with in this work?

This report presents the findings of that reflection. It takes into account the input of many, not only our entire staff, but also countless industry leaders, members, young professionals, and stakeholders from the many different sectors we represent. The results of polls, surveys and meetings were compiled by an outside firm to assure partiality to the information that was learned. We then processed that information into the goals, opportunities, rationales and expected impacts you'll find in the report. We have also updated our mission statement, crafted our first-ever vision statement, added our organizational values to the report, and we are excited to share those with you.

We recognize that as a member-driven organization, we will never stop listening and learning if we want to remain that voice of an industry. Our effectiveness in that role also relies on continuing to partner with our elected officials to implement the best practices that will allow continued equity, prosperity and resilience for our members, our city and beyond.

We look forward to continuing these discussions with you. The only way forward is together, as our industry will continue its proud history of meeting the challenges our region and nation will face head-on in our next 100 years.



**Ralph J. Esposito**  
New York Building Congress Chair  
President, Northeast & Mid-Atlantic Region  
Suffolk



**Carlo A. Scissura, Esq.**  
President & CEO  
New York Building Congress



**Frank J. Scieme**  
Centennial Commission Co-Chair  
Chairman & CEO, Scieme Construction LLC



**Dominick M. Servedio**  
Centennial Commission Co-Chair  
Chairman, STV Group Inc.

# INTRODUCTION

## The First 100 Years

In 2021, the New York Building Congress (Building Congress) celebrated its Centennial. Over the past 100 years, the organization has grown from 25 members to now representing over 500. In this time, the Building Congress has been the leading voice of the building industry, supporting impactful public policy, encouraging public private partnerships, and promoting an innovative future for New York.

## The Next 100 Years

Looking to the future, the Building Congress will continue to advocate for our members, our industry, and our city and state. Advocacy is at the core of what we do, and the progress that results from it is why we do it: for our members, our industry, and the residents of New York.

To that end, the Building Congress will continue to address the challenges that face New York now and anticipate those to come. To ensure that we are best representing our cross-sector community, we have developed this vision in close consultation with Building Congress stakeholders, conducting interviews and focus groups with executive-level leaders and young professionals, along with other membership-wide surveys.

# A New Vision, Mission, and Values

---

As we celebrated and reflected on our Centennial, members suggested that to continue to lead the industry, the Building Congress needed a road map — a vision, a mission, and values to guide the next 10, 50 and 100 years of advocacy, action, and programming.

As such, we have crafted the organization's first vision statement that illustrates what the Building Congress aspires to be. We reevaluated and updated our existing mission statement to reflect the evolving role of the organization, and what will guide strategic, operational, and policy priorities in the future. Lastly, we compiled a set of organizational values to codify what we do and will stand for over the next 100 years.

---



## Vision

The New York Building Congress will lead the building industry — and the people who work within it — toward a more equitable, prosperous, and resilient future in New York and beyond.



## Mission

The New York Building Congress provides a unique forum to advance an industry-wide agenda that strengthens New York's built environment. It does so by facilitating the collaboration of diverse stakeholders and communities, with a focus on economic and infrastructure development, job creation, and professional exchange.



## Organizational Values

- Advocacy
- Civic-Mindedness
- Collaboration and Cooperation
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Economic Opportunity and Prosperity
- Innovation and Forward-Thinking
- Member Support
- Sustainability and Resiliency

# STRATEGIC VISION

## What Will We Accomplish in the Next 100 Years?

The future of the building industry in New York is as promising today as at any point in the region's history. Investment in construction projects is projected to be greater between 2022 and 2024 than any previous three-year period in the city's history. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) will infuse unprecedented funding into the industry. Innovations and improvements in areas like sustainable building models, alternative project delivery methods, zoning regulations, and transportation networks offer broad opportunities for the building industry to shape the physical, social, and economic future of New York. These investments and transformations will benefit all New Yorkers, whether establishing more reliable commutes due to infrastructure improvements, having access to more robust and cutting-edge healthcare and educational facilities due to a commitment to civic infrastructure, or having a more affordable place to call home due to an expansion of housing stock and investment in affordable housing programs.

While this outlook is encouraging, much work remains. As of the end of 2022, funding from key sources like the IIJA was not yet in the hands of our members, who design and build the roads, rails, bridges, tunnels, and airports that the legislation was intended to create. Current housing development projections fall alarmingly short of need. Climate change poses a growing threat to the region, with significant sustainability and resiliency

investment needed to protect against its impacts. Many building codes, zoning ordinances, and other regulatory processes and policies are outdated and create unnecessary red tape, all hindering development.

The Building Congress is uniquely positioned to lead the building industry in the years to come. As the primary forum for cooperation and advocacy, we are committed

Our advocacy efforts at the city, state, and federal levels will focus on reducing regulatory barriers, creating strong policies that facilitate building, and getting funding into the hands of the people who can get the job done.

to providing much-needed leadership. Our advocacy efforts at the city, state, and federal levels will focus on reducing regulatory barriers, creating strong policies that facilitate building, and getting funding into the hands of the people who can get the job done. Our research will continue to document the importance of the building industry to New York's social and economic prosperity, as well as provide crucial information about the effects of emerging issues. Above all, the Building Congress will amplify our efforts and influence to create a thriving

future for all New Yorkers.

The following goals represent the Building Congress' future commitments, as determined by research and engagement with Building Congress staff and board, leadership, and member organizations. Every goal takes into account the driving force behind all we do: the policy advocacy we as an organization have always undertaken on behalf of our members and our industry.

# GOAL 1:

## ELEVATE THE BUILDING INDUSTRY AS A DRIVING FORCE FOR CIVIC AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW YORK AND THE NATION

### OPPORTUNITY

The building industry is a cornerstone of the New York's economy, and directly impacts every facet of the greater region as we know it today. As of 2022, it boasted over 250,000 jobs in New York City, representing a wide range of sectors, skill levels, education levels, and communities. The city is expected to see approximately \$270 billion in construction spending between 2022 and 2024, driven by funding from the IIJA. Building industry leadership will be critical to putting this funding into action, and making projects into a reality by uniting the public and private sectors.

At the same time, the extent of the industry's impacts, and the opportunities to participate in and benefit from it, are not always well understood by the public at large. The Building Congress must help facilitate information-sharing to a wider audience, and strategically augment advocacy efforts to ensure that New Yorkers and public officials see the value of supporting the industry and see their communities represented in it.

To enhance the contributions of the building industry going forward, the Building Congress commits to: Developing creative, public-facing programming to share industry information and opportunities; setting strategic, adaptive advocacy goals through quality research; and establishing a stronger presence in state and federal policy making.

The Building Congress will also establish the New York Building Congress Infrastructure Action Council (IAC), which will bring together industry leaders to drive advocacy efforts on both the federal and state levels. The IAC's mission is to help deliver infrastructure funding to the New York region and elevate the role of the organization in the public political arena.

### RATIONALE

Stakeholders in surveys and in focus groups said that the Building Congress can do more to represent the industry at the state (27%) and federal (67%) levels. Interviewees mentioned similar areas for improvement that included representation at local meetings (e.g., Community Boards), public marketing around significant

building projects, and educational efforts for young people and students. Meanwhile, many surveyed also indicated a preference to make membership more representative of the industry as a whole, by recruiting more financial, legal, and insurance firms. This was aimed, in part, at changing public perception of the industry, improving the impact of advocacy, and encouraging more development in the region.

### EXPECTED IMPACT

Priorities aimed at elevating the building industry as an economic and civic leader are expected to produce:

**More informed New Yorkers who can support the city's development.** Expanding the Building Congress' communications and programming to meet communities where they are will invite new stakeholders to become more engaged with the industry writ large, and with processes that impact their daily lives. The Building Congress can expand public communications and marketing efforts to promote members' work, including advocacy efforts, project developments, and more. Quality research and advocacy goals that resonate with a variety of audiences will also help achieve these goals. As an advocacy organization, the Building Congress balances the need to react to immediate policy discussions with the need to set a long-term agenda. Nearly 95% of survey respondents agree that the Building Congress' research should continue to define long-term policy and advocacy positions. The Building Congress can pursue strategic research around issues that are important to members and contribute to a building-friendly atmosphere, including quality of life issues, housing, workforce development, and sustainability and resiliency.

**Deeper relationships and influence with state and federal elected officials.** In the context of significant federal investment in infrastructure channeled through the state, policymakers outside of the City will be playing an enhanced role in shaping the built environment in New York. To take full advantage of this opportunity, the Building Congress will expand upon and solidify existing relationships, and forge new ones, with elected and public officials in New York City, Albany and Washington, D.C.

“The Building Congress creates a space for our industry to come together and prioritize the issues of highest importance to us, and then advocates on our behalf with the policymakers who can act on them. For me, the space they create allows connections with professionals and leaders from other disciplines within the broader industry, knowledge-sharing, and collaborating on big issues. That is the value it holds for smaller businesses like mine that are serving the private sector.”

-Maureen A. Henegan  
Henegan Construction

# GOAL 2:

## DEVELOP FUTURE GENERATIONS OF INDUSTRY LEADERS WHO WILL BUILD AN EQUITABLE, PROSPEROUS, AND RESILIENT NEW YORK

### OPPORTUNITY

Building leaders have emphasized the challenge of attracting enough top talent to the industry. Nationwide, the construction industry needs to attract 650,000 more employees annually to meet labor demand. With 32% of construction workers in New York already over 50 years old, this issue is likely to compound in the coming years. Workforce development – and attracting new talent – is also influenced by emerging trends across society and at work, including diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives, sustainability and resiliency, housing affordability, and innovation. Similarly, it is important for the industry to establish the infrastructure of professional development to chart clear paths for young workers into managerial and then leadership roles. The building industry has always been a pathway to the middle class for generations of workers, and we aim to keep it that way.

To ensure the industry cultivates strong and equitable career paths for workers, the Building Congress – in partnership with its charitable arm, the New York Building Foundation – will center educational opportunities and workforce development as key policy and advocacy issues, align members on effective DEI initiatives to encourage a more diverse workforce, and contribute to the professional development and learning of emerging leaders in the industry through programming and mentorship opportunities.

### RATIONALE

More than 70% of Building Congress survey respondents believe that the organization should increase focus on expanding workforce development across the building industry. In particular, our Young Professionals Committee cited concerns about the lack of young people with the training and expertise to assume leadership positions in the building industry in the coming years. Relatedly, while a number of interviewees noted that the organization has greatly enhanced its M/W/DBE inclusion efforts over the last five years, all stakeholders consulted agreed that the organization can expand DEI initiatives within Building Congress' membership and events, as well as in the building industry as a whole.

### EXPECTED IMPACT

Increased attention to workforce and professional development, including research and advocacy, training and education efforts, public outreach, and mentorship opportunities for young professionals and M/W/DBEs, is expected to produce:

**Clearer pathways for workforce development across the industry.** To encourage younger generations to choose the building industry, the Building Congress and the Building Foundation will support efforts to encourage participation at all levels. Both organizations will explore workforce development partnership opportunities with educational institutions, like high schools, community colleges, and universities, to encourage diverse access to good-paying jobs.

**Improved diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts within the building industry to promote employee retention.** To create a work environment and industry that yields higher retention, the Building Congress will support members with information and advice to advance DEI practices within their organizations. The Building Congress will also continue to facilitate professional exchange and development for young professionals to be able to make an impact on organizational priorities and goals.

**Future leaders equipped with the knowledge, expertise, and values to implement sustainable and resilient, civic-minded, and prosperity-promoting building projects.** In order to enhance the professional development of emerging leaders, the Building Congress will facilitate and promote mentorship opportunities for young professionals, especially for individuals from underrepresented communities, to learn from more senior leaders in the field. The Building Congress will also ensure that public programming and research reports supply members with actionable takeaways of best practices and new thought leadership.

“I think we are exceptionally good in representing the building industry. There is no organization like ours in the country. We're different. We're innovative. There should be a Building Congress in every major city.”

- Cheryl McKissack  
Daniel  
McKissack & McKissack  
Chair, New York Building  
Foundation

# GOAL 3:

## ENGAGE NEW SECTORS AND FIRM TYPES IN THE BUILDING INDUSTRY TO LEVERAGE THE OPPORTUNITIES OF THE NEXT CENTURY

### OPPORTUNITY

The building industry has maintained its leadership role in the growth and development of the New York economy by adapting to internal and external opportunities and challenges. Maintaining this dynamism to respond to new challenges will require openness and adaptation to include emerging sectors and underrepresented businesses.

With new challenges and opportunities on the horizon, it is imperative to attract a more expansive and inclusive suite of members. There are a host of different innovations firms that can bring new perspectives and depth to the Building Congress portfolio, such as those involved in renewable energy, life sciences, and sustainable materials.

To augment our role as a convener of the building industry, the Building Congress will foster the growth of, and encourage collaboration with, emerging sectors, as well as a more inclusive workforce, by expanding membership opportunities and promoting more targeted engagement and support for MWBE firms.

### RATIONALE

Our stakeholders affirmed the importance of the Building Congress remaining nimble to changing economic, political, and social trends. For example, the majority of those consulted indicated they would like to see the organization prioritize expansion into other sectors not traditionally associated with the building industry. Also, while nearly 80% of surveyed members agreed that the Building Congress should focus more heavily on diversity, equity, and inclusion, only 20% felt that the organization offers compelling and accessible opportunities for related M/W/DBE businesses today. Encouraging membership growth among smaller and M/W/DBE businesses will foster a broader and more equitable trajectory of the industry as a whole.

### EXPECTED IMPACT

A focus on bringing new sectors and more diverse members into the fold is expected to produce:

**Collaboration that leads to innovation.** Bringing myriad perspectives together is a proven way to develop new products and processes that will make building and development more efficient, inclusive, and resilient. The inclusion of new sectors into the Building Congress community will help encourage innovative exchange on how to incorporate new approaches into complex projects, like utilizing emerging technology.

**Expanded economic opportunity, especially for M/W/DBE businesses.** The Building Congress is committed to making sure M/W/DBE businesses can contribute to and benefit from a robust building industry by supporting and leading advocacy efforts that ease burdens and increase access for these firms. Accordingly, by encouraging more participation from diverse businesses at our events and on our committees, the Building Congress will foster a more holistic networking and professionalization ecosystem.

**A broader coalition to advance policy.** The Building Congress will augment its existing advocacy by creating an even more impactful alliance of industry leaders and civic organizations who can drive infrastructure, regulatory, and economic development policy change. To that end, the Building Congress will advance thoughtful research and make informed, ahead-of-the-curve decisions about policy advocacy in order to emphasize our role as New York's leader on the built environment.

“I always think of the Building Congress as the convener of our profession, and our profession is broad. It's not just what we do in professional services, it's those who build, it's the trades, it's owners, developers, lawyers... There are lots of folks under the tent, and the BC's role is really to be the conveners that advance an agenda that's good for our industry.”

- Gregory A. Kelly  
STV

### OPPORTUNITY

Because of its broad reach across the physical and social landscape of New York, the building industry must periodically navigate turbulence and unpredictability. The COVID-19 pandemic, Superstorm Sandy and Hurricane Ida, economic recession and inflation, political and regulatory changes — these are just a few of the many issues that have impacted the industry in the past decade alone.

In the face of uncertainty, the Building Congress finds opportunities to grow as a stabilizing force that provides a consistent foundation for the industry to bounce back stronger and faster from each new challenge. As a forum for connection between businesses, the Building Congress promotes networking and intra-industry collaboration that generate new opportunities, which are especially critical during hard times. As an advocate for good policy, the Building Congress seeks to reduce undue burdens on the industry and promote public sector investment to help businesses persevere. Finally, as a proponent of new ideas and best practices, the Building Congress facilitates the spread of emerging trends so the industry can stay ahead of the curve.

The Building Congress will focus on stabilizing the industry through advocacy that minimizes burdens on industry and facilitates efficient development and construction, workforce development that fills gaps in capacity and expertise, and sustainability and resiliency measures that keeps infrastructure safe. In doing so, we will remain adaptable and responsive to emerging issues and opportunities over the next 100 years.

### RATIONALE

Members emphasized the importance of the Building Congress during challenging economic times. Across interviews and focus groups, we heard the refrain: the Building Congress is most important during the bad times. Organizational leaders described the networking and business development opportunities afforded by Building Congress events as vital to their rebounding. Across the membership, 90% of survey respondents rated a 4 or 5 out of 5 that “the organization offers events and networking

opportunities important for doing business.” Moreover, 77% of survey respondents shared that the Building Congress ‘understands and supports the needs of organizations like mine.’ Members experience the benefit of the Building Congress’ stabilizing presence through this collaborative and supportive environment.

### EXPECTED IMPACT

Focusing on stabilization through member and government relationships, knowledge sharing, and dynamic advocacy is expected to produce:

**Effective dissemination of industry best practices amid changing contexts.** The Building Congress will continue to promote tried-and-true practices alongside leading-edge ideas to equip members with the information they need to make informed decisions. Through engaging public programing, rich discussion in our committees, and thoughtful research reports, the Building Congress will ensure that the building industry is prepared for difficulties associated with downturns.

**A forward-thinking advocacy apparatus to support the industry.** The Building Congress will work tirelessly to ensure that industry is represented and enhanced by the policies we advocate for during turbulent times. While staying committed to long-term goals and values, we will pride ourselves on the ability to get prescient policies passed that make doing business easier during downturns.

**New opportunities for cooperation, networking, and business development.** The Building Congress prides itself on providing a forum for members across the industry to come together, build relationships, and collaborate on building the New York of the future. We will continue these efforts as a cornerstone of the organization, and as insulation against changing economic tides.

“The New York Building Congress is the preeminent design and build advocacy organization, forging a comprehensive, inclusive and valuable resource to its members. It is the cornerstone of our industry’s growth, and a conduit to promote and support our sector and region.”

-Elizabeth Velez  
Velez Organization

# WHAT'S NEXT?

With this strategic vision, the Building Congress will solidify and amplify our efforts and influence to lead the building industry towards even brighter and better outcomes. To do so, we will continue to adapt and evolve to the needs of our members and our industry. This includes further advocacy not just in New York City, but concerted efforts toward expansion of influence in Albany and Washington, D.C.

**As a hallmark of this past, current, and future leadership, the Building Congress will also seek to establish a permanent home for the building industry in New York.** We envision an exhibition and gathering space – a physical manifestation of our role as a convener for all. We imagine this Building Congress headquarters as a place not just for our organization and its staff, but for members, the building industry, and the community to gather and discuss and share new ideas. A place for convening 30 to 300. A place where the public can learn about the transformative impact the building industry has on New York and the nation, with a permanent exhibition space, conference space, a café, and rentable common work areas.

**From this space and with this vision, we will build the prosperous and dynamic future that New York deserves in the century to come.**

“

What's most important for me about being associated with the Building Congress from a members perspective is the professional exchange that exists. You connect the dots across a number of components of our industry: real estate, design, and labor.

- Ralph J. Esposito  
Suffolk, Chair, New York Building Congress

”

## METHODOLOGY

The New York Building Congress retained the services of Karp Strategies, a WBE-certified urban planning and strategy consulting firm, to lead the visioning process in partnership with organization staff, leadership, and members. Over the course of four months, Karp Strategies conducted desktop research, five focus groups, eight interviews, and a member survey to assess the strengths and limitations of the Building Congress of today, and brainstorm opportunities for the Building Congress of tomorrow. Karp Strategies consolidated findings across research methods using a qualitative coding system to identify the key themes that emerge in this report.



As a hallmark of this past, current, and future leadership, the Building Congress will also seek to establish a permanent home for the building industry in New York. From this space and with this vision, we will build the prosperous and dynamic future that New York deserves in the century to come.



The New York Building Congress, a broad-based membership association celebrating its 102nd year, is committed to promoting the growth and success of the construction industry in New York City and its environs.

**CHAIR**

Ralph J. Esposito

**FIRST VICE CHAIR**

Gregory A. Kelly, P.E.

**VICE-CHAIRS**

Joseph J. Aliotta, FAIA; Franklin R. Alvarado; Louis J. Coletti; Maureen A. Henegan; Cyrus J. Izzo, P.E.; Gary LaBarbera; Christopher Larsen; George E. Leventis, P.E., F.ASCE; Anthony E. Mann; Joseph G. Mizzi; Ehab Shehata; Elise Wagner

**PRESIDENT & CEO**

Carlo A. Scissura, Esq.

**TREASURER**

Peter DiMaggio, P.E., SECB

**SECRETARY**

Sabrina Kanner

**GENERAL COUNSEL**

Michael S. Zetlin

**NEW YORK BUILDING**

Cheryl McKissack Daniel

**FOUNDATION CHAIR**

**PAST CHAIR**

Elizabeth Velez



@bdgcongress



[linkedin.com/company/new-york-building-congress](https://www.linkedin.com/company/new-york-building-congress)

[www.buildingcongress.com](http://www.buildingcongress.com) | Email: [info@buildingcongress.com](mailto:info@buildingcongress.com) | Phone: 212-481-9230

\*All images: Shutterstock