

**TESTIMONY OF
ANDREW S. HOLLWECK, VICE PRESIDENT
NEW YORK BUILDING CONGRESS
BEFORE THE
NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING AND FRANCHISES**



**PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED
CORNELL UNIVERSITY NYC TECH CAMPUS**

APRIL 30, 2013

AS A MEMBERSHIP COALITION SERVING THE DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION AND REAL ESTATE INDUSTRY, THE NEW YORK BUILDING CONGRESS IS PLEASED TO OFFER ITS SUPPORT FOR CORNELL UNIVERSITY'S AMBITIOUS AND IMPORTANT NYC TECH CAMPUS PROJECT ON ROOSEVELT ISLAND.

FOR THE LAST DECADE, THE CITY HAS PURSUED AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY THAT REDUCES ITS TRADITIONAL RELIANCE ON THE FINANCIAL AND REAL ESTATE SECTORS. THE STRATEGY HAS SEEN NOTABLE SUCCESS WITH SUBSTANTIAL EXPANSION OF THE CITY'S HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR, PROPELLING A WAVE OF INNOVATION AND INVESTMENT AND POSITIONING THE CITY AS A WORLD-CLASS LEADER IN HIGH-TECH EDUCATION AND RESEARCH.

CORNELL IS A LYNCHPIN OF THIS STRATEGY.

CONSTRUCTION OF CORNELL'S NEW ROOSEVELT ISLAND CAMPUS WILL CREATE THOUSANDS OF DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION JOBS. AS IT COMES ON LINE, THOUSANDS OF PERMANENT JOBS ACROSS THE ECONOMIC SPECTRUM WILL BOOST EMPLOYMENT AND OPPORTUNITY AT ALL SKILL LEVELS. THE CREATION OF NEW CONSTRUCTION, SERVICE AND SUPPORT JOBS ARE A LESS-WELL-NOTED BUT ESSENTIAL BENEFIT OF THE HIGH-TECH BOOM IN NEW YORK.

BUT IT IS THE LONGER-TERM IMPACT THIS PROJECT WILL HAVE, MAKING THE CITY A HUB FOR HIGH-TECH RESEARCH AND INVESTMENT, THAT MAKES THIS PROJECT TRULY TRANSFORMATIONAL. THE NEW CAMPUS WILL CREATE A “VIRTUOUS CIRCLE,” EDUCATING THE TALENT, FOSTERING COLLABORATION AND INVESTMENT FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR, AND FINALLY THE CREATION AND SUPPORT OF TECHNOLOGY AND RELATED BUSINESSES THAT WILL BUTTRESS THE CITY’S ECONOMY.

THE CITY HAS ALREADY BEGUN TO REAP THE BENEFITS OF CORNELL NYC TECH. CORNELL HAS WELCOMED ITS FIRST CLASS OF ENGINEERING STUDENTS AND, FORTUITOUSLY, IS USING SPACE DONATED BY GOOGLE AT THEIR NEW YORK HEADQUARTERS. CORNELL HAS ALSO AGREED TO SEVERAL COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS THAT WILL LEAD TO EXPANDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR THOUSANDS OF NEW YORK CITY SCHOOL CHILDREN. AND A VARIETY OF CRITICAL-PATH DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS ARE ALREADY UNDERWAY IN PREPARATION FOR THE OFFICIAL GROUNDBREAKING NEXT YEAR.

THE COUNCIL IS CONSIDERING SEVERAL LAND USE ACTIONS TODAY NECESSARY TO BUILD CORNELL’S NEW ROOSEVELT ISLAND CAMPUS. THESE INCLUDE THE MAPPING OF NEW ROADS, PERMITTING NEW ACADEMIC, COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL USES, THE CREATION OF A SPECIAL DISTRICT, AND OTHER ACTIONS.

THE COUNCIL’S APPROVAL OF THESE ACTIONS WILL ENABLE CORNELL TO CONSTRUCT A NEW CAMPUS WITH INNOVATIVE DESIGN, PUBLIC OPEN SPACES, AND ADVANCED LEARNING FACILITIES, ALL AT THE CENTER OF NEW YORK CITY.

THE BUILDING CONGRESS URGES THE COMMITTEE AND THE FULL COUNCIL TO APPROVE CORNELL’S APPLICATION SO THAT IT CAN PROCEED ON DEVELOPMENT OF ITS VISIONARY ROOSEVELT ISLAND CAMPUS.