



**WRITTEN TESTIMONY FROM THE ASSOCIATION FOR A BETTER NEW YORK SUBMITTED TO THE  
NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL LAND USE COMMITTEE SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING AND FRANCHISES  
REGARDING 175 PARK AVENUE**

November 9, 2021

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on behalf of the Association for a Better New York (ABNY). My name is Melva M. Miller, and I am the Chief Executive Officer of ABNY.

ABNY is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the healthy growth and renewal of New York City's people, businesses, and communities. We are a 50-year-old civic organization representing corporations, nonprofits, unions, government authorities, and educational, cultural, and health institutions. We strive to promote connections between the public and private sectors to make New York City a better place to live, work, and visit for all.

The development at 175 Park will help New York City in its economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic by creating good paying jobs, adding open space, and implementing needed transit improvements. This project is estimated to generate more than 24,000 jobs, achieve \$1.8 billion in earnings, and provide an annual output of roughly \$3.8 billion into New York City's economy.

Beyond the modern, in-demand Class-A office space proposed, the project will provide approximately 25,000 square feet of elevated, publicly accessible space that provides new vantage points to take in Grand Central Terminal, the Chrysler Building, and other Midtown icons, as well as space for public programming and activities, delivering huge value for workers, residents, and tourists alike.

The transit improvements proposed for Grand Central Terminal and the Grand Central-42<sup>nd</sup> Street subway station will ease crowding, improve ADA accessibility, and provide new intermodal connections between commuter rails and subway. The new transit hall, dedicated subway entrance, expanded connections to the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street Passage, and new fare control area relocated at street level will fundamentally improve the experience for transit passengers and commuters. Increased circulation and connectivity as well as enhanced amenities will make traveling in the neighborhood more efficient and convenient.

As evidenced by support from the Landmarks Committee, Community Board 5, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, and the City Planning Commission, this project signals that New York is open for business and ready to meet the demands of the modern workforce in the wake of the global pandemic. We support the actions necessary to make this transformational project a reality.

Thank you so much for your consideration.



# **BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL OF GREATER NEW YORK**

**GARY LaBARBERA**  
PRESIDENT

AFFILIATED WITH THE  
BUILDING CONSTRUCTION TRADES DEPARTMENT  
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—  
BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL  
OF NEW YORK STATE  
—  
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR OF CONGRESS  
OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATION

## TESTIMONY

On behalf

BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL OF GREATER NEW YORK AND  
VICINITY

In Support of the Grand Hyatt Project at 175 Park Avenue

November 9, 2021

Good morning. I am Santos Rodriguez, I am here to testify on behalf of Gary LaBarbera, President of the Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York & Vicinity. We testified in support of the of the Grand Hyatt project at 175 Park Avenue in June 2021, September 2021, and we are here to testify in support of this project today.

The Building and Construction Trades Council is an organization of local building and construction trade unions that are affiliated with 15 International Unions in the North American Building Trades Union. Our local union affiliates represent approximately 100,000 union construction workers. The Building Trades mission is to raise the standard of living for all workers, to advocate for safe work conditions and to collectively advance working conditions for our affiliates' members, as well as all workers in New York City.

Time and again it has been demonstrated that construction work is a catalyst for the City's economic recovery and I believe that the situation we face today is no different. New Yorkers need jobs to make ends meet; the city needs investment to drive recovery; and there are few better ways to catalyze both than by building. Construction is a critical source of good-paying, stable jobs. 175 Park Avenue will create new public open space in midtown and improve the transportation infrastructure around Grand Central station. RXR and TF Cornerstone's proposed redevelopment will create thousands of construction jobs that provide benefits and a steady paycheck. This project will create opportunities for New Yorkers of all walks of life through our Apprenticeship Readiness Collective. The programs within the Apprenticeship Readiness Collective provide entry level access to work in the construction industry, training, and preparation for a career and a future in construction work. For individuals to participate in these programs, there needs to be construction work to perform. The development of the Grand Hyatt project will provide opportunities for New Yorkers throughout our City to begin a career in construction and generate an influx of economic activity to the City at an important time.

The Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York and Vicinity supports projects like the Grand Hyatt project that will improve the lives of many New Yorkers, expand

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capacity and improve transportation infrastructure, and create middle class jobs for our members in the process.

We thank you again for this opportunity to testify in support of this project.

**From:** [Felicia Park-Rogers](#)  
**To:** [Land Use Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] 175 Park Ave  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 9, 2021 11:15:17 AM

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Tri-State Transportation Campaign comments on 175 Park Ave  
November 9, 2021

Good morning. My name is Felicia Park-Rogers, I am the Director of Regional Infrastructure Projects for Tri-State Transportation Campaign, a regional advocacy and policy organization working to reduce congestion, pollution, and to improve commutes. Thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of 175 Park Ave.

I'd like to focus my comments on the transit improvements included in the project's scope.

As you know, complicated transit connections within the Grand Central complex along with serious congestion at the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street subway entrance have been persistent issues at this important transit hub. Tri-State appreciates the thoughtful approach that RXR and TF Cornerstone have developed in partnership with the MTA to maximize the opportunities that this project provides for addressing structural issues which have previously prevented major upgrades to Grand Central.

In the coming years, as ridership returns and eventually exceeds pre-COVID levels and as East Side Access brings Long Island Railroad service to Grand Central, it will be critical that we ensure our transit infrastructure is prepared to handle higher passenger volumes while promoting the health, safety, and ease of travel for riders. This project includes a number of investments which will greatly improve rider's and pedestrian's experience moving through the area. Improving riders' experience with transit helps reduce car use to the city center which is vital for combating climate change and bringing economic opportunities back to this critical business and tourist district.

The plan's public improvements go far beyond cosmetic upgrades and create a sizable upgrade to the city's and region's public transit infrastructure.

The transit improvements that this project will deliver will come at no cost to the MTA as the improvements will be privately funded by the developers. This is important for our city's underfunded transit system, even more so during the COVID-19 budget crisis which has severely impacted the MTA budget, including its ability to fully fund better ADA accessibility across the system.

Improvements we are especially pleased to see include:

- Creating desperately needed increased sidewalk widths, by re-locating stairs to the mezzanine level of the subway station. The Lexington Passage entrance would be redesigned with higher ceiling heights to improve the pedestrian experience and the passage which would include retail on both sides of the corridor as well as access to the Grand Central Market.
- The expansion of passenger circulation areas, a new transit hall, reconfigured subway entrances, and an innovative, intermodal connection between the subway and commuter rail lines will all reduce congestion and improve the daily commute for hundreds of thousands of passengers. The new transit hall provides much more circulation space at the entrance to the 42<sup>nd</sup> St subway as well as moving the turnstiles upstairs which will free up space on the mezzanine.
- New stairs and the widening of the existing stairs – with the new stairs better aligned with the middle of the train platform which will reduce the crowding that currently exists there.
- The use of the currently dis-used loop track as a new pedestrian passageway for the lower level of Metro North and new East Side Access LIRR passengers directly into the subway.
- Adding well more than the 10,000 square feet of required open space which will have a 360 degree public terrace circumnavigating the entire building.
- The ADA and accessibility improvements are especially critical. The new ADA elevator at 42<sup>nd</sup> St and a new ADA elevator on Lexington that is within the covered vestibule so that people can wait and stay dry in the rain.

In closing, we support the proposal for 175 Park Ave. Thank you for your time and attention.

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Felicia Park-Rogers, Director of Regional Infrastructure Projects  
Tri-State Transportation Campaign  
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[www.tstc.org](http://www.tstc.org)

Twitter: @Tri-State

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## CONSTRUCTION AND GENERAL BUILDING LABORERS' LOCAL 79

November 9, 2021

Topic: 175 Park Ave

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*Executive Board Member*

**LUIS MONTALVO**  
*Executive Board Member*

Good morning and thank you for the opportunity to voice support for this project. My name is Gilfredo Valentin, I am a New York City resident and a member of the Laborers Local 79. With almost 10,000 members, we are the largest Laborers local in North America.

Our industry provides opportunities to uplift those that have been most impacted by the pandemic, including low-income New Yorkers, People of Color, and outer-borough residents. RXR and TF Cornerstone's project 175 Park Ave will create thousands of good construction jobs that provide benefits and family-sustaining wages. I got an opportunity for a union career through Pathways 2 Apprenticeship and then Local 79's apprenticeship program. I want other people from my community to have that same opportunity to change their lives, and this project can provide those pathways.

175 Park Ave will also bring thousands of permanent jobs once completed, new open space, and an influx of economic activity. Thank you again for the opportunity to lend our support to this important project.

Gilfredo Valentin,  
Laborers Local 79 member



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November 9, 2021

## TESTIMONY TO THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL, REGARDING 175 PARK AVE CEQR#21DCP057M

To Chair Moya and the members of the Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises, the New York Building Congress is pleased to testify in support of the 175 Park Ave proposal in Midtown Manhattan. The Building Congress has, for 100 years, advocated for investment in infrastructure, pursued job creation and promoted preservation and growth in the New York City area. Our association is made up of over 525 organizations comprised of more than 250,000 skilled professionals and tradespeople. Through our members, events and various committees, we seek to address the critical issues of the building industry and promote the economic and social advancement of our city and its constituents.

We believe 175 Park Avenue is the right type of investment for New York at this critical moment in history. Our road to recovery must follow a path based on public and private investments that will build New York back better and have an impact that can be felt across the five boroughs. As New York rebuilds following the COVID-19 pandemic, the building industry will provide an immediate and essential boost to the economies of our city and state while bringing thousands of people back to work, as evidenced by the fact that construction spending was \$61 billion in 2019 and is a key driver of employment throughout the metropolitan area. We are proud to support 175 Park Ave as it will generate more than 18,000 construction jobs, equating to \$1.5 billion in earnings during the construction phase, and provide an annual economic impact of \$7.9 billion to the city's economy after completion.

175 Park Ave is a milestone in the continued evolution of one of New York's most iconic neighborhoods – delivering on the promise of the East Midtown Rezoning and responding appropriately to Grand Central Terminal. The design responds to Grand Central's role as a catalyst for density, which was first demonstrated in the historic vision for Terminal City and more recently through the East Midtown Rezoning.

Much like One Vanderbilt, 175 Park Avenue will replace an outdated structure with a new, sustainable tower that provides for significant private investment in public infrastructure. The project will deliver large-scale improvements to the streetscape and transportation network that enhance circulation, reduce congestion and provide for additional ADA accessibility. It will also create a brand-new transit hall, a new dedicated subway entrance, expanded connections to the 42nd Street Passage and a new fare control area relocated at street level. In short, the experience of commuting to and from Grand Central Station will be greatly improved.

Moreover, 175 Park Avenue will add significantly more public open space to the Grand Central area. Approximately 25,000 square feet of public plazas starting on the viaduct level will open Grand Central's eastern façade to the public and finally allow New Yorkers and visitors alike to appreciate Grand Central up close. The project will also provide new vantage points to the Chrysler Building and other Midtown icons. There will also be new opportunities to accommodate a wide range of programming and activities to ensure the public space provides real benefits to the local community.

In closing, 175 Park Avenue echoes the ethos of Grand Central and the neighborhood. It respectfully increases density by transforming an underused site into a state-of-the-art building and enhances the public realm with transit improvements and new open space. The Building Congress proudly supports this project, and we urge you to approve 175 Park Avenue – a key step in the reimagining of East Midtown.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carlo Scissura', written in a cursive style.

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



**Statement of the Partnership for New York City  
New York City Council  
Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises  
175 Park Avenue  
November 9, 2021**

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Thank you, Chair Moya and members of the subcommittee for the opportunity to testify in support of the proposed development at 175 Park Avenue. The Partnership for New York City represents private sector employers of more than one million New Yorkers. We work together with government, labor and the nonprofit sector to maintain the city's position as the preeminent global center of commerce, innovation and economic opportunity.

175 Park Avenue is a critical project for redefining New York City's post-pandemic economy, which must incorporate creative public-private partnerships that integrate modernization of both our infrastructure and commercial spaces. The project design reflects a vision of New York's future that is both practical and inspirational. It is certainly the quality of design that the City Council and the community had in mind in the rezoning of Midtown East. Given the negative impact that COVID-19 has had on utilization of mass transit and commuter rail, this project's ability to turn a development into a new premiere destination for residents, visitors and commuters is essential to recovery.

In the short term, the project is expected to generate more than 24,000 construction jobs, an industry where 27% of workers earn more than \$80,000 and where employment is 17% below pre-pandemic levels. Longer term, creation of a new generation of commercial and retail space at the city's most important transit hub will help ensure resumption of high occupancy offices and strong retail activity as well as restoring MTA ridership.

The development of 175 Park Avenue will accelerate the revitalization and improvement of Manhattan's Central Business District. It will feature a series of interconnected public terraces that will be magnets for tourists as well as venues for a range of programming and public activities.

We urge you to approve 175 Park Avenue.