June 8, 2020

Mayor Bill de Blasio
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor de Blasio,

Nowhere has the impact of COVID-19 been felt more than in New York City. During this crisis, we understand that difficult decisions must be made and thank the City and your administration for its tireless efforts in keeping the public safe and informed. We trust that the City will meet the ensuing challenges in the short term, while considering the steps necessary to support the long-term vitality of its citizens and businesses.

In this regard, the signatories of this letter are raising our deep concerns with the drastic cuts that have been proposed to the capital budget in a cost-saving effort. We believe these budget cuts will in fact only delay our recovery and postpone New York City’s resurgence. History shows that investing in infrastructure now rather than later will jumpstart our economy. Large investments in public works during times of emergency have a track record of transforming our city for the better, creating good-paying, local jobs and spurring additional economic growth.

That is why we must keep New York building. Infrastructure, public works and the City’s capital projects are not only at the heart of the economy, but they are critical to maintaining our city’s status as a global leader, from well-maintained parks and reliable public transportation to quality schools and libraries, world-class public hospitals and access to affordable housing.

For the betterment of our city, we cannot allow the capital budget to be cut, and this coalition requests the FY 2021 Capital Budget be funded at pre-COVID 19 levels. Unlike the operating budget, capital funding is not needed in the immediate, but is instead deployed over multiple years, only being spent upon reaching the next phase in design or construction.

Behind each phase of the capital process are local vendors relying on these contracts to keep their staff on payroll and their businesses afloat; this is particularly true for many small businesses and minority and women-owned business enterprises that are hoping to diversify our city’s building and construction industries.

This is a very difficult time for all New Yorkers, and we understand the gravity of the City’s circumstances. As we continue to grapple with this devastating pandemic, we must also look toward our future. That begins with significant investment in 21st century infrastructure to prepare for the challenges ahead. Supporting this critical work today will help prepare New York for recovery once this crisis is over.

Sincerely,

Alliance of Resident Theatres/New York
American Council of Engineering Companies of New York
American Institute of Architects New York
Associated General Contractors of New York State
Bronx Chamber of Commerce
Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce
Brooklyn Public Library
Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York
Building Trades Employers’ Association
Citizens Housing and Planning Council
City Parks Foundation
Design Trust for Public Space
Downtown Brooklyn Partnership
General Contractors Association of New York
Grand Central Partnership
Hudson River Park Friends
Hudson Yards Hell's Kitchen Alliance
Long Island City Partnership
Madison Square Park Conservancy
National Association of Minority Contractors, NY Tri-State Chapter
New York Building Congress
New York City Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO
New York Metropolitan Trucking Association
New York Public Library
New York Restoration Project
New York State Association for Affordable Housing
New Yorkers for Parks
Queens Chamber of Commerce
Queens Public Library
Riverside Park Conservancy
Staten Island Economic Development Corporation
Waterfront Alliance

Cc:
Corey Johnson, New York City Council Speaker
Scott Stringer, New York City Comptroller
Jumaane Williams, New York City Public Advocate
Vicki Been, Deputy Mayor for Housing and Economic Development
Lorraine Grillo, President & CEO, NYC School Construction Authority and Commissioner, NYC Department of Design & Construction