



GCA

The GENERAL
CONTRACTORS
ASSOCIATION
of NEW YORK, Inc.

**The time to
think about
infrastructure
is while it's
still working.**



“If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it,” should not be an infrastructure policy. Nonetheless, it is how we treat our deteriorating transit, bridge, road, and water systems – the very foundations of our economic health and quality of life.

We have ignored multiple warnings. From the collapse of the Minneapolis I-35 bridge in 2007, damage to the MTA tunnels from Superstorm Sandy in 2012, the Harlem gas explosion earlier this year, to this summer’s massive water main break in Los Angeles, major infrastructure failures are becoming more frequent – and deadly.

All agree that infrastructure is important, but competing budget priorities and a lack of political will have thwarted agreement on how to systematically replace and upgrade our obsolete systems. Instead, we lurch from crisis to crisis.

Amtrak’s announcement that its two Hudson River tunnels will require year-long closures to address structural damage caused by flooding during Superstorm Sandy is just the latest example of our failure to invest and build for the future. Rail travel along the Northeast Corridor exceeds air travel and is the critical link for the Boston-New York-Washington mega-economy. Built in 1910, these tunnels should have been supplemented years ago with new capacity. While funding for new tunnels remains elusive, it is a certainty that the economic impact of the tunnel closures will far exceed any construction cost.

New York’s preeminence in global finance, commerce and culture was founded on bold and visionary infrastructure investments. As Congress considers a new transportation bill next year, and as the MTA and NYSDOT five-year capital programs are debated in Albany, we need to recapture that same spirit. The City is beginning to address its backlog of needed upgrades with its recent announcement to allocate \$300 million to accelerate the replacement of water and sewer mains that were originally installed in the 1920s. This is a good start and one that the federal and state government must emulate if we are to catch up from decades of neglect.

Since 1909, the GCA has actively participated in the public discussion about the condition of our infrastructure. We will continue to do so in 2015 and beyond.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Denise M. Richardson".

DENISE M. RICHARDSON EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Dilouie".

RICHARD DILOUIE PRESIDENT

AVERAGE AGE

Water Mains 69

- > **15% are over 100 years old**
- > **REPLACEMENT CYCLE**
Recommended: 68 miles/yr.
(a 100 year replacement cycle)
Average 2003–2013: 34 miles/yr.
- > 411 miles need to be replaced next fiscal year to address deficit

AVERAGE AGE

Sewers 84

- > **1100+ miles over 100 years old;**
2/3 installed prior to 1940
- > **REPLACEMENT CYCLE**
Recommended: 64 miles/yr.
(a 300 year replacement cycle)
Average 2003–2013: 21 miles/yr.

AVERAGE AGE

Gas Mains 56

- > **6,362 miles** of gas mains in New York City

AVERAGE AGE

Steam Pipes 60

- > **105 miles** of steam pipes in New York City

Out of sight cannot be out of mind

After decades of making little or no investment in its core infrastructure in the mid-20th century, New York made tangible progress in reversing that trend as the millennium came to a close, reclaiming and restoring parks, and transportation and water systems that were failing in place.

However, the lessons we learned seem to have eluded us in the first decade of the 21st century, as a geriatric infrastructure ages far faster than it is being replaced.

While much of the deterioration is largely indiscernible to the untrained eye, weakened water, gas and sewer mains, rusting bridges, pock-marked roadways, and crumbling subway stations and tunnels are increasingly showing their hand.

The reasons for this are far more visible. New York City's 6,785 miles of water mains should be replaced at a rate of 68 miles a year. Instead we are barely above a third of that goal – a mere 27 miles a year. The 6,437 miles of sewers should be replaced at a rate of 64 miles a year, yet last year the City replaced only 18.7 miles – an even more anemic 29% of the need.

While reconstructing the 6,000 miles of city streets fares slightly better – rebuilding 50 lane miles a year, as opposed to the recommended 100 miles a year – their dilapidated condition is becoming increasingly evident to even the most casual observer.

Full subway station rehabilitations, perhaps the most tangible sign of progress in reclaiming the subway system from its darkest days in the early '80s, have effectively been abandoned in the MTA's most recent capital plans. Despite the fact that only 17% of subway stations are in a state of good repair, going forward, only station "components" in poor condition will be fixed.

We must do better. We must also do so as we simultaneously expand our vision for the future of the region's infrastructure.

Subways 83%

STATIONS
NOT IN
GOOD REPAIR

- > **37% of MTA's mainline signals have exceeded their useful life**
- > **Original goal to have all stations in a state of good repair: 2022**
Revised goal: no projected completion date

Roads 30.4%

IN FAIR TO POOR
CONDITION

- > **RESURFACING**
Recommended:
1000 lane miles/yr.
Current average:
852 lane miles/yr.
- > 3,067 lane miles needed to make up deficit

AVERAGE AGE

Bridges 63

- > **11% are over 100 years old**
- > **39% are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete**

**Inter-City
Rail**

- > **Hudson River Passenger Rail Tunnels** serving Amtrak and NJ Transit are **104 years old** and need to be shut due to Sandy salt water intrusion

A creeping culture of negativity has led many to turn a blind eye to financial and structural needs.

Expansion projects like the Third Water Tunnel, the Second Avenue Subway and East Side Access are critical to address the needs of a growing population, but keep in mind that when completed, they will allow us only to catch up with needs that were identified in the 1930s and the 1960s.

In order for our state, our region, and our city to remain attractive for job growth and opportunity, it will take a host of additional strategic investments to both rebuild and expand the essential elements of our core infrastructure

A creeping culture of negativity has led many to turn a blind eye to these needs, both financial and structural. Leaders at all levels of government are paralyzed by the challenge of identifying the funding resources necessary to support sustained capital investment in all our essential water, transportation, and power systems. At the same time, layers of new requirements and regulations add additional costs and time to build core infrastructure projects.

For the past 105 years, the GCA members have made New York a better place by not only building essential civil infrastructure, but by educating the public about the importance of our infrastructure to our economy and way of life. We have always been there to help shape the vision for New York. As New Yorkers ourselves, we are committed to continuing to do so for the next generation and beyond.

we need to:

- **Complete the Third Water Tunnel** and begin repairs on Tunnels 1 and 2, built more than 100 years ago;
- **Continue construction of the Second Avenue Subway** to open up transportation and economic opportunities for underserved residents and one of the city's major employers – the health care sector – concentrated along the far East Side.
- **Complete the Moynihan Station redevelopment project.**
- **Build Amtrak's Gateway tunnel** under the Hudson River to address not only desperately needed capacity but allow for critical Sandy related repairs on the existing tunnels that must be completed soon.
- **Fully fund** the MTA and NYSDOT five-year capital plans.

and we must:

- Forge **new ways to plan and deliver** projects.
- **Do more than just talk about streamlining** the process used to design and build major new projects.
- Facilitate **better and freer dialogue** and exchange of ideas between the public and private sectors, which will lead to more cost efficient projects and better physical outcomes.
- **Coordinate** major projects across agencies to increase efficiency and minimize start up costs.
- Better **leverage private investment** to help bridge the public funding gap.
- Do so with a **renewed focus on safety** to protect our workforce, while providing a new generation of builders with the skills and the opportunities to step up and build the future New York.

Education & Advocacy



The GCA organized a forum at Fordham University on the Future of New York's Infrastructure. Panelists included former NYC Budget Director, Abe Lackman, Citizens Budget Commission President, Carol Kellerman, Regional Plan Association President, Robert Yaro, former Lt. Governor, Richard Ravitch.

**As a percentage
of the U.S. GDP,
investment in
infrastructure today
is half of what it
was in 1960.**

The New York region relies on over \$2.5 billion a year in federal highway and transit funding and another \$4-\$6 billion from the State and localities. In addition, federally-seeded state-run Clean Water revolving loans help fund hundreds of millions of dollars of essential water and sewer projects.

Those monies are in serious jeopardy as the political atmosphere, both nationally and locally, has been increasingly unable to produce stable, multi-year infrastructure funding over the last 5-10 years.

Once robust five and six-year water and transportation plans have limped along in one or two-year increments at flat or reduced levels. Even at that, larger portions of those plans have become more heavily reliant on borrowing, unfairly passing the burden on to future generations.

There are multiple reasons for this. It seems our infrastructure has fallen victim to an environment that rewards candidates who promise never to increase revenues, no matter how worthy the reason. It is a prescription for disinvestment and disaster.



Additionally troubling, though, is the fact that many in the current Congress and State Legislature have had little personal experience with the long-term implications of neglecting essential infrastructure.

In fact, fewer than half of the current House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee were even serving in Congress when the last six-year federal transportation bill, SAFETEA-LU, was put in place in a bi-partisan fashion in 2005.

Albany's once admirable support of serious capital investment because it was "the right thing to do," has been replaced by a cynical siphoning of monies from capital programs like the MTA's to facilitate general budget relief or fund political expediences.

It is therefore incumbent on infrastructure advocates and knowledgeable industry professionals like the GCA to regularly remind and educate the public and our elected officials about what such complacency can mean in terms of the impact on jobs, the economy, and our quality of life.

The alternative to not investing in our core infrastructure is continued deterioration with the significant economic costs of road congestion, unreliable mass transit service, and the very real costs of damages from water and sewer service disruptions.

The GCA is committed to not let that happen and we continue to develop positive working relationships with strategic partners to emphasize the need.

Above, left: The GCA, along with AAA, NY League of Conservation Voters, NY Building Congress, and TRIP, held a press conference at the foot of the Queensboro Bridge to highlight the cost to motorists and safety impact of poor road conditions.

Above, right: Senator Schumer at the groundbreaking ceremony for the Gateway project concrete casing, with Rep. Nadler, Assemblyman Gottfried, former USDOT Undersecretary (now NYCDOT Commissioner) Polly Trottenberg, PANYNJ Executive Director Patrick Foye, and Amtrak Chairman of the Board Anthony Coscia.

Below: The GCA's Frank DiMenna discusses the need for infrastructure funding with Rep. Peter King at the annual NYRIC reception in Washington.



A New Generation of Builders



Most of the GCA's member firms started as small, family-run businesses. Many have been passed down from generation to generation. Some were started by employees of other contractors who learned the trade and launched out on their own, working nights and weekends, often from their own kitchen tables. Their successes did not come easily. While some flourished, others floundered and failed. Construction is a high-risk enterprise, with 70% of all construction businesses failing within seven years.

Not everyone who works in the construction industry is suited to the risk-taking realm of business ownership, so the GCA, using our own 105 years of experience working with and watching our members, helps companies, both large and small, increase their competitive advantage in the industry through mentorships and education.

In addition to sponsoring in-house training, the GCA partners with a number of regional institutions, such as Manhattan College's School of Environmental and Civil Engineering, offering a three-day intensive construction management course for disadvantaged, minority and women-owned businesses. The GCA's training focuses on the practical skills necessary to be a successful heavy civil contractor in New York. Participants gain an understanding of how to

successfully estimate projects, the importance of project documentation, and how to efficiently and accurately complete essential paperwork. In addition, critical safe work practices and how they protect a contractor's bottom line are covered.

"Being in a small intimate setting with my peers and hearing from the best of the best gave me the additional confidence I need to succeed in what's becoming an increasingly competitive bidding environment," said one of the course attendees.

Minimizing cost overruns, ensuring the safest possible worksite, complying with all contract scope and specifications requirements, and coordinating and ensuring proper document controls were key themes that impressed course participants.

Through board membership and financial support of groups like NEW (Non-Traditional Employment for Women), ACE Mentor Program, and other school year and summer engineering programs for high school students, the GCA encourages women and minorities to seek opportunities in the construction industry. Company internships and scholarships are also available for civil engineering students interested in pursuing careers in the heavy civil construction field.

The GCA also helps build relationships with disadvantaged, minority and women-owned businesses through our various networking events that bring together the largest group of heavy construction contractors and government agencies in one venue to discuss active business and contracting opportunities. For firms that specialize in the public sector infrastructure market, the GCA's events are the key to obtaining opportunities for future work.

Above: John Kolaya of Yonkers Contracting providing guidance to students at the Manhattan College Summer Engineering Program sponsored by the GCA.

Below: The fifth annual GCA DBE and MWBE networking event brought together the construction industry, government agencies and the subcontracting community.



Working safely benefits everyone

Not only do we need to build a better New York, we need to do so safely.

Safety is, and has always been, the number one priority for all GCA members. They work hard to protect our workforce and the general public. The dividend is that safety is simply a good and cost-effective business practice.

At the GCA, our role is to support and enhance the efforts of our individual members to make their work places accident free through a host of educational endeavors.

Recent training classes covered topics such as Federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards, new safety requirements, best practices, and safety certifications.

The GCA also offers safety training to disadvantaged, minority and women-owned heavy construction firms to help growing companies that have limited resources and training budgets master the best-in-class safety practices employed in the industry as a whole. A safe business is a successful business.

In addition to regular safety seminars and classes, our annual "Safety Week" allows our members to refocus their own safety programs and coalesce around a common workplace safety theme.

The "Awareness—Look Up, Look Out, Look Around!" campaign provided a reminder for all workers to be attentive and aware of their surroundings and to incorporate best practices into everything they do. Safety must be planned and ingrained in every aspect of a construction job so it becomes part of the fabric of every work activity. Safety is a commitment for every worker and employer on the job.

The GCA shares our members' goal of having zero accidents on every construction project.



Everyday Infrastructure: The Foundation of New York

Mega Projects are all around us – projects you can ride, walk on, and climb; projects that glitter and stand out and command attention.

But the routine road, transit, water system, park and bridge projects are the ones that make a difference in the lives of all New Yorkers. These are the projects that form the fabric of our region. These are the projects that guarantee quality of life for 8.5 million New York City residents. These are the projects that get us to work and back, protect public health and broaden opportunities.

Rehabilitating the City's wastewater treatment plants to keep New York's waterways clean, building the infrastructure to support new residential and commercial development, building the parks and restoring the beaches to improve communities, constructing the infrastructure to expand New York's top universities, and building and rehabilitating the region's iconic bridges are part of the complex work GCA members perform every day.

Everyday infrastructure projects – they showcase the skill and expertise, vision and competence that GCA members bring to building and rebuilding New York – every day.



High Line Phase 3

C.A.C. INDUSTRIES constructed the third and final portion of the High Line Park atop the elevated former freight rail line.



Rockaway Beach

WILLIAM A. GROSS CONSTRUCTION installed wall and flood protection at Rockaway Beach to protect the community and the beach from future storms. The challenging work was performed on an active beach near adjacent housing. Minimizing the impact on the community while efficiently building the project are the hallmarks of a skilled contractor.



Amtrak Gateway Passenger Rail Tunnel

TUTOR PERINI is constructing the tunnel box for Amtrak's Gateway passenger rail tunnel under the Hudson Yards development. The tunnel box will preserve the right of way for a new passenger rail tunnel into Penn Station serving the Northeast Corridor.



Hunts Point Wastewater Treatment Plant

KIEWIT INFRASTRUCTURE refurbished the Hunts Point Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) digester and polymer facility. The project is part of the upgrades to the Hunts Point facility, first opened in 1952, that will enhance water quality in the East River. As a result of work in NYC's WWTPs, the City's waters are the cleanest they have been in over 100 years.



Bridge over Van Wyck Expressway near JFK Airport

ECCO III ENTERPRISES replaced a bridge spanning the Van Wyck Expressway by JFK Airport. The demolition and replacement of a bridge spanning the Van Wyck, carrying 150,000 cars a day, alongside the AirTrain and an active runway are examples of the challenges contractors face every day.



High Bridge

SCHIAVONE CONSTRUCTION is rehabilitating the High Bridge connecting Upper Manhattan with the Bronx. The High Bridge, New York's oldest standing bridge and part of the Old Croton Aqueduct, is an essential link in New York City's waterfront Greenway.



Belt Parkway Bridges

Building bridges in New York City requires the skills and expertise of many different trades. The construction of seven bridges carrying the Belt Parkway has included work by several GCA members including the specialty work of marine contractor JT CLEARY INC and pile driving contractor FALCO CONSTRUCTION.



Bronx River Parkway Bridges at Crane Road

EE CRUZ & COMPANY is replacing the Bronx River Parkway Bridges over the Bronx River and Metro-North Railroad.



East Side Access Train Caverns and Tunnels

MICHELS CORPORATION is building the permanent concrete structures and lining of the East Side Access caverns and tunnels from Grand Central Terminal south to 37th Street.

The GCA is...

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