

THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 22, 2021

CONTACT: pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov, (212) 788-2958

MAYOR DE BLASIO APPOINTS RECOVERY CZAR LORRAINE GRILLO

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio today named Lorraine Grillo as the Senior Advisor for Recovery. Grillo, who will serve as New York City’s “Recovery Czar,” will coordinate across City government to supercharge Mayor de Blasio’s recovery agenda, as detailed on [RecoveryForAll.nyc.gov](https://www.cityhall.nyc.gov/RecoveryForAll).

“New York City was hit with an unprecedented health care and economic crisis. Together, we’re taking unprecedented steps to drive a recovery for all of us,” said **Mayor de Blasio**. “As New York City’s first-ever Recovery Czar, Lorraine will cut through bureaucracy, coordinate across all agencies, and reach out to non-profit and private partners to make sure our recovery is felt in every borough, every neighborhood, and every block.”

“I build things. That’s what I do. And together, we are going to build a recovery that lifts up every New Yorker,” said **Senior Advisor for Recovery Lorraine Grillo**. “Every job I’ve had serving the people of New York City, from responding to Hurricane Sandy to expanding universal Pre-K, has required an intense coordination across different agencies, companies and non-profits. That’s the same aggressive approach I’m going to take to lead a recovery for all of us.”

“We are leading an economic recovery that involves everything from vaccine distribution to reopening schools to attracting new jobs,” said **Deputy Mayor of Housing and Economic Development Vicki Been**. “With Lorraine serving as our Recovery Czar, this effort on all fronts will have a dedicated, centralized leader to make sure we’re leveraging every last bit of effort to bring our city back fairer and stronger than ever before.”

In this new position, Grillo will coordinate across government agencies, non-profits and the private sector to ensure everyone is working together for New York City’s recovery. Working with the New York City Taskforce on Racial Inclusion and Equity, Grillo will build on her work championing minority-and women-owned businesses (MWBE) and push for economic justice across all recovery efforts. Grillo will work directly with Mayor de Blasio to lead a recovery war room that will convene leaders across government for regular progress on recovery efforts.

Grillo’s appointment as Recovery Czar is effective immediately, and she will begin a transition from her roles as Commissioner of the Department of Design and Construction and CEO of the New York City School Construction Authority. Grillo, who has served at the School Construction Authority since 1994 and serving as its president since 2010, brings unmatched experience in building physical infrastructure, fair and equitable contracting, and putting the concerns of low-income New Yorkers first.

"Lorraine and I have worked closely for decades on all things school construction-related. Her diverse experiences as a civil servant have positioned her well for this new responsibility, and I look forward to working together with her in this exciting role as we all pitch in to help our City recover from COVID-19," said **State Senator Robert Jackson**.

"Lorraine Grillo has a long and distinguished track record as a public servant dedicated to improving the lives of New Yorkers. I look forward to working with Lorraine to ensure our city comes back from this pandemic as quickly and equitably as possible. We are at a pivotal moment in our city's history and we must get this recovery right," said **Speaker Corey Johnson**.

"Mayor de Blasio has made an excellent choice by appointing Lorraine Grillo to the position of Senior Advisor for Recovery," said **Council Member Daniel Dromm**. "I have worked closely with Lorraine over the years and know she is a competent professional that city government is lucky to have. I have no doubt that she will turn NYC around and put us on the path to a full recovery. Congratulations, Lorraine. I'm so happy you have our backs."

"New York City's recovery from COVID-19 will take years, but we have to start now. Lorraine is someone with the depth of experience and passion for New York City to take the lead. Her track record proves she can tackle big problems and get things done, which is what we need right now. I look forward to working together with her as we bring our city back," said **Council Member Keith Powers**.

"Lorraine Grillo is one of the most qualified, competent public servants in our city. I look forward to working with her to ensure that all neighborhoods of New York, including the outer boroughs, receive the attention they need to fully recover," said **Council Member Mark Treyger**.

"As a daughter of Queens, Lorraine Grillo is uniquely qualified to understand the needs of Queens and the entire City of New York. We applaud Mayor de Blasio for this move which we have been advocating for quite some time. The Queen's Chamber of Commerce is at the ready to continue to support the City and our recovery in any way needed," said **Thomas J. Grech, President and CEO of the Queen's Chamber of Commerce**.

"Lorraine's track record in getting things done makes her the ideal candidate to lead New York City's recovery efforts," said **Sharon Greenberger, President and CEO of the YMCA of Greater New York**. "She's spent three decades working with community leaders, elected officials, and neighborhood partners to improve opportunities for New Yorkers. She'll bring the same sense of excellence, coalition-building and urgency to this essential work."

"It is excellent news for New York City and working people across the five boroughs that Lorraine Grillo will serve as the city's Recovery Czar," said **Gary LaBarbera, President of the Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York**. "Lorraine's honest and meticulous approach to her work, and the determination, drive, and passion she brings to every project or job she's tasked with is what New York City needs to recover from this economic crisis. We look forward to closely partnering with Lorraine as we work towards lifting our great city out from the many challenges and hardships created by the pandemic."

“Lorraine Grillo has earned the respect of everyone she has dealt with at every stage in her impactful career serving this city, so much of it based right here in Queens. We are thrilled that the Mayor has created this urgently needed position, and chosen so wisely to fill it. Lorraine is a highly effective, experienced government executive who brings to this work deep understanding of the city and its inner workings, as well as empathy for its residents and businesses. We look forward to working with her to bring the greatest city in the world quickly back stronger, and better,” said **Elizabeth Lusskin, President, LIC Partnership and Executive Director LIC Business Improvement District.**

“The appointment of Lorraine Grillo as Recovery Czar for New York City is a critical step toward rebuilding our economy and getting the five boroughs back on track. Having worked with Lorraine for the past 20 years and given her tremendous record of success, I can think of no better choice for this important role – her strength, tenacity and expertise will be invaluable to the resurgence of our city. The New York Building Congress and its members are committed to assisting in this recovery and helping get New York City open and ready for business in the months ahead,” said **Carlo A. Scissura, President and CEO, New York Building Congress.**

“Lorraine is an excellent choice for leading the city’s recovery effort, given her strong management skills and deep knowledge of city government. She is uniquely qualified to forge the type of working relationships with the private and nonprofit sectors that will be required to restore jobs and those industry sectors that have been badly damaged during the pandemic,” said **Kathryn Wylde, President & CEO, Partnership for New York City.**

About Recovery Czar Lorraine Grillo

Lorraine Grillo began her career at the New York City School Construction Authority (SCA) over 25 years ago as a Community Relations specialist. Over the years, she held a variety of positions within the agency including Director of Government and Community Relations, Senior Director of Real Estate Services and then Executive Director/Chief of Staff to the President.

In May of 2010, Lorraine took over as Acting President and CEO. After successfully opening 26 new schools, at the time, the single most successful year in SCA history, she was appointed President and CEO. In February 2014, Mayor Bill de Blasio reappointed Lorraine to her position making her one of only two re-appointments from the prior administration and the longest serving SCA president.

Over the past ten years, Grillo has built over 80,000 K-12 school seats and over 9,000 universal Pre-K seats. Grillo has coordinated almost 4,000 capital improvement projects in New York City buildings and has managed a total of \$28 billion in budgets. She has led the SCA in its effort to find new and innovative ways to address school overcrowding including developing strong public/private partnerships with major developers.

Grillo’s team was responsible for the reopening of 71 schools damaged by Hurricane Sandy in record time. In addition, in 2015, under her leadership, the SCA met the administration’s mandate opening 35 Universal PreK centers for the city’s four-year-old children in less than six months. Throughout her career, she continues to be a tireless advocate for the MWBE community, maintaining the SCA’s reputation for the best MWBE program in New York state, and as a national model.

#