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NEW YORK, NY 10007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 23, 2022

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MAYOR ADAMS SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER TO CUT GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS FROM CITY CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

Action Will Improve Local Air Quality and Reduce Noise Pollution, Waste From Construction to Support Climate and Health Goals

NEW YORK – New York City Mayor Eric Adams signed [Clean Construction Executive Order 23](#), which requires the city’s capital project agencies to commit to actions that will lower embodied carbon — greenhouse gas emissions arising from the manufacturing, transportation, installation, maintenance, and disposal of building materials — from municipal construction projects. The actions taken by EO 23 will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution, and noise pollution citywide. They will also ensure that any construction funded by new federal infrastructure and climate bill funding will use sustainable materials, equipment, and practices.

“As extreme weather intensifies, it is clear that we are in the midst of a climate crisis in this city and across the world,” said **Mayor Adams**. “My administration is committed to delivering New Yorkers a future free of these chronic threats, and, with construction being responsible for nearly a quarter of global greenhouse gas emissions, it is imperative that we use every tool in our toolbox to lower embodied carbon. This executive order is a massive stride towards doing just that and giving all of us a more breathable, livable home.”

“The city is leading by example by reducing the use of the most carbon-intensive materials in our construction,” said **Deputy Mayor of Operations Meera Joshi**. “With a new approach to how the city builds, today’s executive order will reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and improve neighborhood air quality.”

“New York City has been at the forefront of environmental and sustainable construction practices, and our agencies have been piloting many different carbon reduction initiatives in support of our 80x50 goal,” said **Chief Climate Officer and New York City Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Rohit T. Aggarwala**. “Expanding these clean construction initiatives citywide will help to further reduce our contributions to climate change.”

“We are thrilled that Mayor Adams has signed this executive order — a major step to reduce the air and noise pollution of construction in our city,” said **Mayor’s Office of Climate and**

Environmental Justice Executive Director Kizzy Charles-Guzman. “New York City needs to keep growing, but we must also continue to lead by example to address the climate crisis. That’s why we are committing to reduce the carbon impact of city construction projects and drive the market towards cleaner construction machinery. This executive order will reduce the environmental impact of our \$16 billion average annual city capital project spending and provide much-needed impact data on the city buildings completed each year.”

“DDC is one of the leading agencies for addressing climate change, and the construction industry itself is a significant source of emissions that we can help manage,” said **New York City Department of Design and Construction (DDC) Commissioner Thomas Foley.** “We’re reviewing our specifications to reduce the embedded carbon in the concrete that we use, and we’re going to require our suppliers to disclose the environmental effects of their steel and concrete manufacturing processes so we can work with them on ways to adjust it downward. We’re also going to review emissions from engines and other motorized equipment at our sites and determine where we can electrify. Climate change is a major challenge., and modifying construction techniques and materials is another important component of the city’s comprehensive effort to address it.”

“Mayor Adams is setting an example for other cities to follow on how to confront climate change,” said **New York City Department of Buildings Commissioner Eric Ulrich.** “By raising our standards on building practices for city projects, every new capital development will contribute to a more resilient and sustainable New York City.”

“This executive order is a significant step forward as we work to ensure that New York City buildings and infrastructure are high-performing from the ground up,” said **New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services Commissioner Dawn Pinnock.** “We are striving towards a transformative climate goal of reducing emissions from city government operations 40 percent by 2025 and 50 percent by 2030. We all have a critical role to play in preserving our environment, and improving the impacts of construction activity can be the cornerstone of building a greener New York.”

“We are excited to already be doing our part in support of this ambitious initiative by this administration to decrease the greenhouse gas footprint of our capital construction projects,” said **New York City Department of Parks and Recreation Commissioner Sue Donoghue.** “This initiative aligns with our energy management and conservation, and in our sustainability efforts — from contractors reducing their carbon emissions through sustainable vehicles and equipment use to our slag specs — we are always looking for ways to innovate in this space.”

“New York City government has taken a lead-by-example approach to the climate crisis,” said **DCAS Deputy Commissioner for Energy Management and Chief Decarbonization Officer Anthony Fiore.** “We are reducing emissions from government operations further and faster than the private sector to pave the way to deep, economy-wide carbon reductions. And fortunately, what happens in New York City does not stay in New York City. As a global leader on climate, our work has a multiplier effect as other municipalities around the world replicate the actions we take here. This executive order expands the city’s multiplier effect and leverages its purchasing power to drive deep decarbonization further and wider to ensure suppliers,

contractors, manufacturers, and others that do business with the city reduce their own emissions.”

Construction is responsible for an estimated 23 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions, with large portions of those emissions coming from carbon emissions from the manufacturing, transportation, installation, maintenance, and disposal of building materials, especially concrete, iron, and steel. Construction equipment that burns fossil fuels also emits pollutants, such as carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, and particulate matter, which endanger residents’ health and the surrounding environment.

EO 23 directs agencies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with the embodied carbon of building materials and construction equipment through:

- **Low-carbon concrete specifications:** Capital project agencies will set specifications for low-carbon concrete for concrete used in capital projects to directly reduce the environmental impact of construction.
- **Environmental product declarations:** Capital project agencies will submit environmental product declarations for structural steel and concrete, in order to quantify the environmental impact of these materials in city work.
- **Low-emission vehicles and equipment:** Capital project agencies will include specifications in capital project construction contracts for low-emission vehicles and equipment, with a preference for all-electric equipment to reduce air and noise pollution.
- **Life cycle assessments:** Capital project agencies shall complete a Life Cycle Assessment for applicable projects to quantify the environmental impact of the whole project and reduce the impact where possible.

New York City is committed to carbon neutrality by 2050 and reaching the goals set forth in the Paris Agreement, and the actions required by today’s EO will help protect the planet, fellow human beings, and future generations. New York City is also demonstrating climate leadership by promoting the market development and uptake of low-embodied carbon and clean construction strategies through the incorporation of these principles into publicly funded projects.

The Mayor’s Office of Climate and Environmental Justice will also incorporate milestones into the city’s long-term strategic sustainability plan, to be released on Earth Day 2023.

“Managing emissions and pollution from the construction sector is critical in our efforts to address climate change and build healthy communities,” said **New York City Comptroller Brad Lander**. “With EO23, New York City is once again leading on the issue of climate change by taking serious actions relative to the scope of the challenge.”

“I commend Mayor Adams for taking this bold step toward a more sustainable city,” said **New York State Senator Roxanne J. Persaud**. “It is important that we reduce New York’s carbon footprint and mitigate other environmental impacts that have lasting effects in our communities.”

“Our city has been suffering for far too long with the harmful emissions crisis,” said **New York State Assemblymember Brian Cunningham**. “Our air quality and noise pollution are unhealthy and are a prime culprit to long-term effects on our communities. The best thing we can do for our city is to remove the gas emissions from our transportation and municipal construction projects. My family has made a conscious decision to go electric and use mass transportation to aid in this crisis. This initiative led by the Mayor’s Office of Climate and Environmental Justice to create this strategic sustainability plan is the right step to save our city.”

“Reducing greenhouse gases to combat climate change needs to be a goal of municipalities all across the country and New York City.” said **Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson**. “With asthma, diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease linked to air pollution caused primarily by diesel fuel from trucks and cars, I strongly support the signing of the Clean Construction Executive Order 23, which mandates the regulation of city construction projects that could cause further harm to communities of color. I want to thank Mayor Adams for his leadership on this issue that will send a clear message to the rest of the world that New York City is committed to environmental justice.”

“It’s critical that making New York City more sustainable is a key pillar in our pandemic recovery efforts,” said **Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine**. “Today’s executive order ensures that emissions-reducing practices will not fall by the wayside as construction rebounds to pre-pandemic levels. Reaching our 2050 emissions goals will require bold action and collaboration between all government agencies, as well as the private sector.”

“It’s impossible to build a better city if we’re damaging our environment at the same time. The Clean Construction EO 23 recognizes that making this city a safe, healthy home for everyone requires acting on the initiatives that foster harmony between our built and natural environments,” said **Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso**. “Cutting greenhouse gas emissions at our city construction projects is a great start, but we cannot let this action stand alone. There’s lots of more work to be done in making our city a leading green urban space, and I look forward to continuing to collaborate with Mayor Adams and more to do just that.”

“New York City must be a global leader in the effort to combat climate change however possible,” said **Queens Borough President Donovan Richards Jr.** “This clean construction executive order will be greatly beneficial in and of itself and will also set a necessary example for other municipalities to follow. Thank you to Mayor Adams and his administration for continuing to ensure we remain at the forefront of our shared global fight against climate change and the catastrophic impacts it has already inflicted on our city and others.”

“Unfortunately, city construction projects are often the source of harmful greenhouse gases, noise pollution, and air pollution,” said **New York City Councilmember James F. Gennaro**. “That is why the city needs to lead by example and take all the necessary steps to reduce our carbon footprint. I applaud Mayor Adams for signing this executive order, which will improve our local air quality and ensure that new construction throughout the city prioritizes climate solutions.”

“Climate change represents an existential threat to humanity, and we need to use every tool possible to fight it,” said **New York City Councilmember Rita Joseph**. “This executive order is a positive step in the right direction, and I look forward to continuing to work towards a Green New Deal to achieve climate justice.”

“Many of our health and climate issues are directly related to high levels of carbon emissions generated daily,” said **New York City Councilmember Kevin C. Riley**. “The mayor’s Clean Construction Executive Order 23 is a hopeful step in the right direction to supporting a cleaner and healthier New York City. With 23 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions produced from the construction industry alone, this initiative solidifies our city’s leadership to hold capital projects agencies accountable, encourage transparency, as well as encourage a standard of low-carbon and low-emission materials and equipment. This is vital to creating a higher quality of life for New Yorkers and for our future.”

“Construction is responsible for nearly a quarter of global greenhouse gas emissions,” said **New York City Councilmember Carlina Rivera**. “By committing to lowering carbon emissions for municipal construction projects, Clean Construction Executive Order 23 represents a critical step towards safeguarding the health and future of New Yorkers, especially those who live in environmental justice communities. The path to a climate resilient and equitable future is difficult, but we owe it to New Yorkers to take bold stances that will protect both our communities now and for generations to come.”

“New York City’s initiatives to reduce the environmental impacts of construction align closely with the Port Authority’s own Clean Construction Program — heralding a healthier, lower-carbon future for our region and sending an important signal nationwide,” said **James Starace, chief engineer, Port Authority of New York and New Jersey**. “We look forward to continuing to collaborate with the city to achieve our shared commitment to carbon neutrality.”

“The homes, offices, schools, pavements, and many more of the urban landscapes we rely upon daily have a large climate impact that remains largely unknown,” said **Cecile Faraud, clean construction lead, C40**. “I applaud New York City’s Clean Construction Executive Order for leading by example with this set of pioneering climate actions. New York City is driving the transformational change needed to cut emissions and pollution from the construction sector, shifting the market in the right direction. This will have profound local and global influence and impact.”

“New York has raised the bar once again with this far-sighted executive action,” said **Chris Neidl, co-founder, Open Air Collective**. “By introducing embodied carbon-based specifications and accounting for concrete, the most common and emissions-intensive building material, the city has opened up a significant new pathway for achieving its world-leading climate targets. And the move will have far-reaching consequences. Because City agencies are the single biggest purchasers of concrete in the five boroughs, the new program will bring lower-carbon concrete into the local marketplace, increasing availability for private sector developers. And no doubt New York’s standing as a preeminent global city will influence policymaking in other municipalities, far beyond its borders.”

“Embodied carbon is the next step in building decarbonization,” said **John Mandyck, CEO, Urban Green Council**. “We applaud Mayor Adams’ leadership with this executive order to ensure the city’s capital projects help drive a new generation of clean construction for a low-carbon, healthy and resilient New York.”

“Lendlease strongly supports the signing of this executive order by Mayor Adams,” said **Steven Sommer, executive general manager and president, New York Construction at Lendlease and Amanda Kaminsky, director, Sustainable Construction – Americas at Lendlease** “As a 1.5°C-aligned company with our own corporate goal of achieving absolute zero carbon across our business activities by 2040, Lendlease is already proactively leading implementation of the greenhouse gas emissions reduction measures called for here. We believe this Executive Order will help drive the transformation of construction and development in New York City and beyond, to benefit all of our communities.”

“The construction and use of buildings contribute about 40 percent to global greenhouse gas emissions, so slashing these emissions is essential to meet our climate goals and protect vulnerable communities,” said **Cullen Howe, senior renewable energy advocate, Natural Resources Defense Council**. “Because federal, state, and local governments are such large purchasers of concrete and other widely used construction materials, public procurement is a powerful mechanism to encourage the use of cleaner building materials in the construction process. New York City is taking an important step in adopting this executive order by using public sector purchasing as a tool to reduce the emissions from building materials, which helps to create a market for cleaner alternatives.”

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