



Department of
Design and
Construction

Eric Adams
Mayor

Thomas Foley, P.E.
Commissioner



2025 Strategic Blueprint



Letter from the Commissioner

To My Fellow New Yorkers,



As the Department of Design and Construction approaches its 30th year of delivering world-class projects in every neighborhood of the five boroughs, we are leading the reforms that will speed up project timelines dramatically and bring down costs. This couldn’t happen soon enough, as the need for upgraded infrastructure and public buildings across the City continues to grow.

The wall of red tape is starting to give way, in large part because of what DDC has been able to deliver when given the right tools. So far in 2025 we have completed two major design-build projects for NYC Parks on time and on budget, the \$35.9 million Orchard Beach Maintenance & Operations Center in the Bronx and the \$141 million Shirley Chisholm Recreation Center in Brooklyn. Both projects were completed in half the time they would have required under the old system of lowest bidder contracting, and with roughly ten percent cost savings to taxpayers in the tens of millions of dollars.

And we’re building on our design-build success. Just last year we successfully worked with the legislature in Albany to allow us to use CM-Build for projects involving libraries and cultural institutions. We also received authorization to use progressive design-build on future resiliency projects. We have hit the ground running on both reforms, with procurements for both CM-Build already out on the street to rebuild Chinatown’s 70 Mulberry Street community cultural hub, and a Progressive Design Build public solicitation later this year.

While demonstrating the success of new delivery methods, we remain committed to time and cost savings on each and every project. Two other reforms that originated at DDC were also expanded this year after we proved that they work. Advanced Capital Planning and Expanded Work Allowance have been made permanent after successful pilot programs, and Expanded Work Allowance has also been made available to several other City agencies with large capital budgets. These programs are game changers for capital delivery, with dividends to be paid for years to come.

DDC’s amazing team of 1,200 are among the most experienced and knowledgeable design and construction professionals in the country. But the system of rules, law, and requirements that has evolved over decades holds us back. Since our original *Strategic Blueprint* we have consistently identified ways to improve project delivery listening closely to our vendors and leaders in the AEC industry. It’s very gratifying to see many of those proposals being enacted. We look forward to the years ahead with continued success.

Thomas Foley, P.E.
Commissioner

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The new
40th Precinct
in The Bronx



Introduction

The Department of Design and Construction (DDC) is New York City's chief design and construction manager, delivering public works to every neighborhood across the five boroughs. Created in 1996 to centralize expertise in capital project delivery, today DDC is home to over 1,200 dedicated professionals — from engineers and architects to budget and procurement specialists, safety experts, construction managers, and many others.

Partnering with a world-class community of vendors that include architects, engineers, expert subconsultants, and builders, DDC delivers extraordinary public buildings and infrastructure that transform the fabric of New York City, improving daily life for more than 8.5 million New Yorkers.

DDC builds and upgrades the essential infrastructure that makes New York City work: from the watermain that deliver over a billion gallons of water per day to the 7,000 miles of sewers that remove wastewater and stormwater from city streets. DDC builds the streets and sidewalks, plazas, and pedestrian bridges that help New Yorkers get around while providing the backdrop for daily life.

We build and renovate the libraries and cultural institutions that anchor communities. And we provide the critical operational facilities, like police and fire stations, sanitation garages and city office buildings, that help agencies serve the public.

In 2025, New York City faces the urgent need to upgrade its aging infrastructure and buildings to meet present-day challenges and adapt to future demands.

Decades-old watermain must be upgraded to serve the city's growing population, accommodating ambitious plans to build more affordable housing. The sewer system must handle more rainwater from intensifying storms that flood the city's streets and subways more frequently, aided by new green infrastructure that helps absorb this

stormwater on the spot. Shorelines and buildings must be bolstered from flooding and extreme heat, while providing New Yorkers with the vital 'social infrastructure' that strengthens communities. And this work must be done quickly, with limited funding.

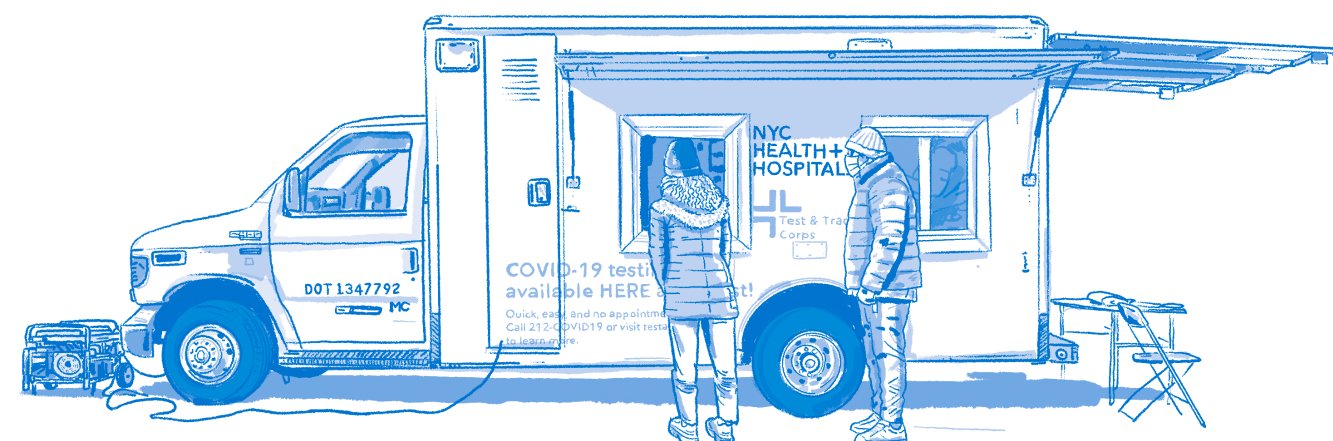
To meet the challenge, DDC's team of professionals needs a modern project delivery toolbox with greater flexibility and less red tape.

Since the publication of our first Strategic Blueprint, DDC has fought hand in hand with our partners in the industry for the tools we need to build better, faster, and cheaper. We have advocated for State legislation to expand our toolbox with alternative delivery methods, then put those tools to work — building award-winning facilities literally years faster. We have partnered with city agencies and oversights to slash through decades-old bureaucratic processes. And we have refreshed our own business practices, listening closely to our vendors and exchanging ideas with other forward-thinking owners.

As we strive for transformative change, we also hew closely to a few core values. Design and Construction Excellence, a core principle for DDC for over 20 years, means building world-class civic facilities that uplift their communities, contribute to a sustainable future, and last the ages to serve future generations as well as our own. It means embracing the realities of construction to deliver facilities that are readily constructable, on time and on budget, so we can turn them over to their communities as efficiently as possible. DDC embraces listening as a core principle, because we know that our staff and our partners are the experts. And we champion a culture of continuous improvement, learning from experience and constantly updating our practices to make the process work better for everyone.

DDC's Blueprint 2025 is a roadmap to the progress we've made and the work that still lies ahead.

It also provides a roadmap to the capital process itself, since it will take everyone involved in delivering public works — from designers and builders to city agencies, advocates, elected officials and legislators — working together to transform the system. Through partnership and a willingness to embrace transformative change, we can meet the challenges ahead to build a better New York City.



As the City's primary capital construction project manager, DDC builds and renovates facilities on behalf of over two dozen different city agencies, called **Sponsor Agencies**.

Capital design and construction in New York City is governed by many State and local laws and rules that include the New York City Charter, Administrative Code, Comptroller's directives, and others. Requirements for procurement and contract administration, laid out in the Procurement Policy Board (PPB) rules, have immense implications for how DDC procures, designs, and builds public works. The City's capital budget process, and the associated difference between capital and expense dollars, also shape the process at multiple steps.

A LINEAR PROCESS

DDC and other New York City capital agencies are generally required to use design-bid-build delivery, in which the agency procures a design team, completes design, procures construction through a low-bid process, and then completes construction. Alternative Delivery legislation first passed in 2018 and described in detail in *Expanding our Toolbox* has upended this process for a subset of DDC's projects, saving years by allowing DDC to procure design and construction teams in a single step or in parallel. However, the majority of projects utilize the design-bid-build process described here.

Public design and construction is further governed by local law and building codes and overseen by many different regulatory and permitting agencies, like the Department of Buildings and Public Design Commission. Local elected leaders, community boards, and communities themselves also provide input that shapes public projects.

The result is a complex ecosystem of rules, processes, and oversights that shape the process of capital project delivery in New York City. Since the publication of its first Strategic Blueprint, **DDC has sought to uphold the values of these oversights while drastically simplifying and streamlining the process.**

PLANNING

The multi-stage capital construction process starts long before a project comes under DDC's management. Each Sponsor Agency considers their needs based on their own set of requirements and planning capacity. Sponsor Agencies request project funding from the Office of Management and Budget. Once approved, a **Project Initiation (PI)** request is sent to DDC.

With the launch of the **Advanced Capital Planning (ACP)** program at DDC, we are reimagining the Planning stage of the process to provide Sponsor Agencies with the data and technical expertise they need to comprehensively plan and scope their projects and align with Citywide priorities. We explain the initiative in more detail in later sections.

FRONT END PLANNING

Once DDC receives a Project Initiation request, the project is reviewed by the agency's **Front End Planning (FEP)** teams. DDC's dedicated teams of architects, landscape architects, and engineers assess the proposed project to ensure its scope is viable, funding is sufficient, and regulatory requirements and risks have been identified upfront. If a project is feasible with the existing funding, FEP identifies a project delivery method and schedule and develops detailed goals and requirements. If the funding is insufficient for the proposed project, or the scope lacks needed items, DDC returns the project to the Sponsor for changes. Because funding has already been secured, this step can cause months or even years of delay as Sponsors must reallocate or request additional funding from OMB.

Once a viable scope, budget, and schedule have been determined, the **Managing Agency Switch (MAS)** occurs, and the project and funding formally fall under DDC's management.

INITIATION

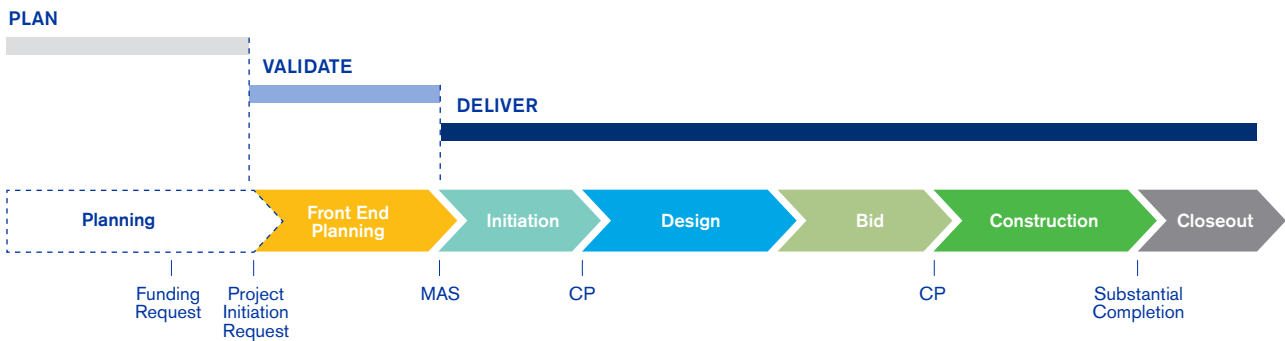
During the Initiation step, DDC must secure funding approval, onboard a design team, and seek approval for the associated contract. This work and the related oversight approvals can take many months.

For funding approval, DDC submits details of the requested project scope and budget to OMB, who reviews the project to ensure it is eligible for capital funding. Once reviewed, OMB issues a **Certificate to Proceed (CP)**. This step recurs throughout the project's lifecycle, including at the start of construction and again when any change orders exceed the previously approved CP. The CP process can take months, often driving the critical path schedule at this step.

To onboard a design team, DDC generally makes use of requirements contracts, which are term-based agreements held by a pool of eligible vendors awarded through a competitive RFP using **quality-based selection**. Holding such contracts allows DDC to go through contract negotiation and several oversight steps only once, instead of at the start of each project, saving months in the initiation stage. DDC may then award the project to one of its contract-holders through rotational assignment or by mini-RFP, if the project is especially complex. With the design team identified and funding approval secured, DDC submits a **task order** to the Comptroller for **registration**.

In DDC's **Alternative Delivery** program, this and subsequent steps may differ, with design and construction awarded through a single procurement or concurrently. This process is described under the agency's expanded toolbox of delivery methods.

CAPITAL PLANNING: DELIVERY



DESIGN

With funding approved and the design consultant on board, the project begins **Design**, progressing through a pre-determined set of industry standard milestones that vary according to project type and complexity. For some projects, primarily infrastructure work, the design is developed by DDC directly, but generally DDC relies on an outside design consultant team that works with DDC and the Sponsor Agency. A typical project will go through schematic design, design development and construction documents phases, with each adding detail and specificity to the project drawings and specifications, alongside cost estimating, compliance checks, and regulatory approvals from oversights like the Public Design Commission and Landmarks Preservation Commission. The **Bid Packaging** stage ensures that the final construction documents and specifications meet stringent requirements for the low bid procurement.

PROCUREMENT

During the **Procurement** step, DDC conducts a legal review to further ensure that the package can be properly bid. The project is publicly advertised for bid, and any contractor is invited to submit a proposal. Based on State law, DDC must select the lowest qualified bidder to award the project, without consideration for experience, qualifications, or work quality. This requirement can create challenges during construction, described further in *Expanding our Toolkit*.

Upon award, the contract passes through a series of oversight approvals that culminate in submission to the Comptroller for registration. Once registered, DDC issues a **Notice to Proceed**, allowing construction to begin.

CONSTRUCTION

During **Construction**, DDC manages the project on behalf of the Sponsor Agency, working closely with the contractor and design consultant. At the start of construction and ongoing throughout, the project team of DDC, contractor, and design consultant review submittals and

monitor construction progress, with the contractor securing permits (which may be issued by the Department of Buildings, FDNY, DEP, and others) for various scopes of work.

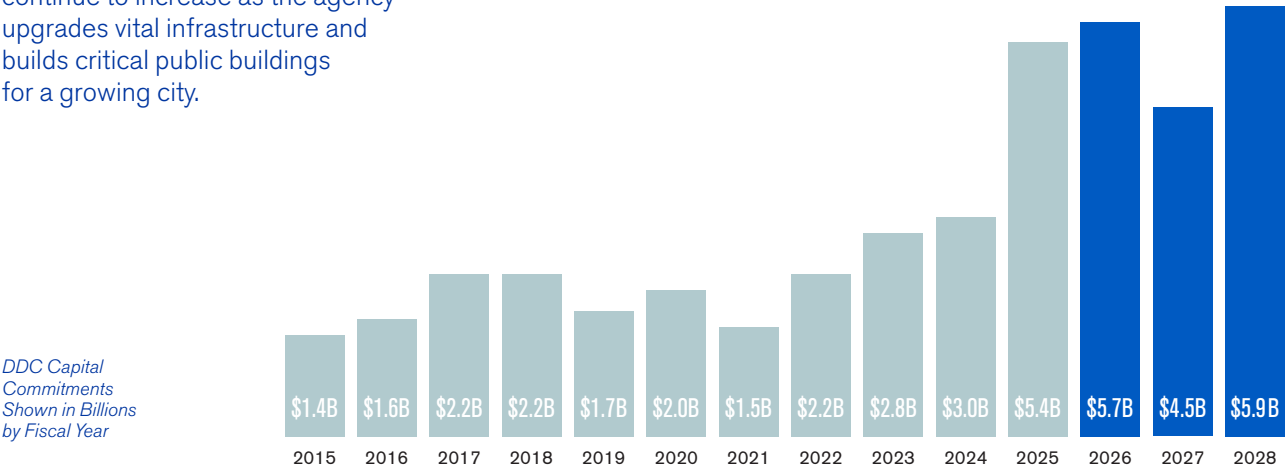
In case of any unforeseen conditions that impact cost, schedule, or scope, deviations are handled via change orders, a process described in further detail in *Building Better*.

Community members can learn more about the project by reaching out to DDC's **Office of Community Outreach and Notification (OCON)** and most projects are assigned a **Community Construction Liaison** who works directly with residents and local businesses impacted by the work.

The end of the construction phase is marked by **Substantial Completion**, after which during Closeout any final regulatory signoffs and the Certificate of Occupancy is obtained. The new asset is handed over to the Sponsor Agency for their use, operation, and maintenance.

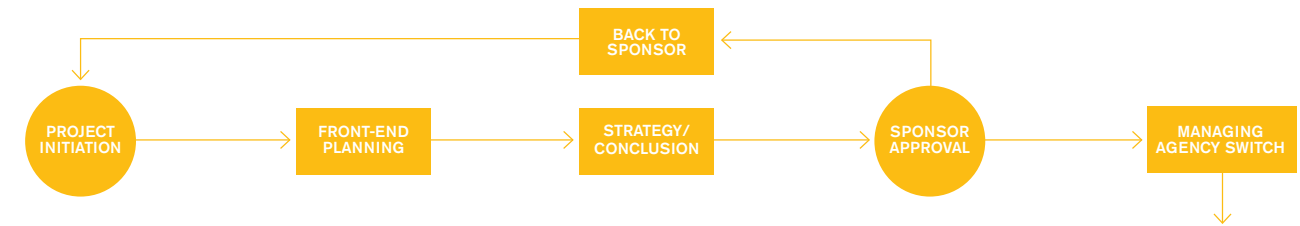
A GROWING PORTFOLIO

DDC's capital commitments continue to increase as the agency upgrades vital infrastructure and builds critical public buildings for a growing city.

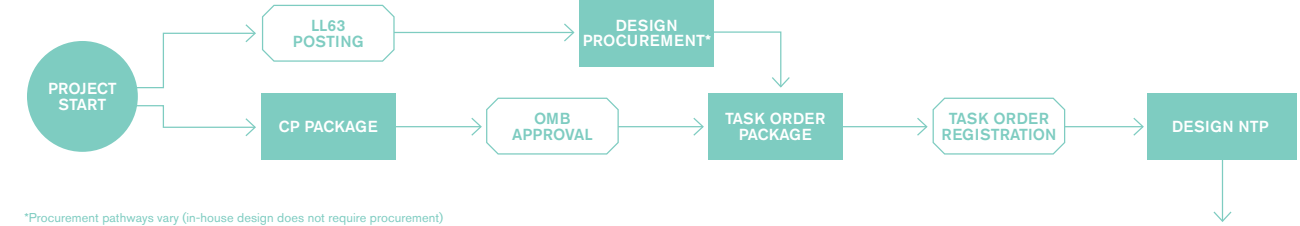


CAPITAL PROJECT ROADMAP

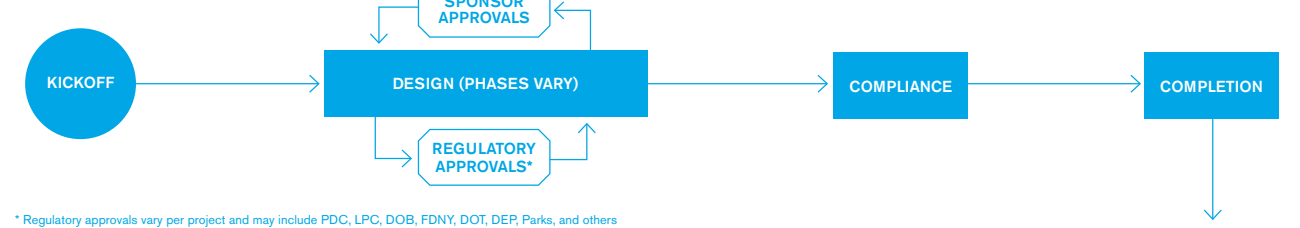
Front End Planning



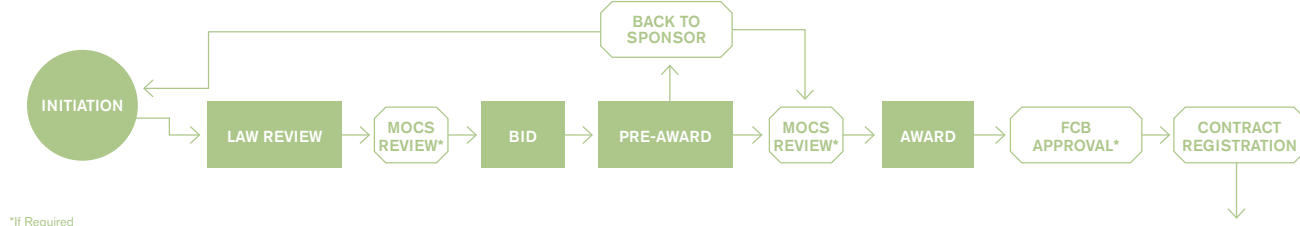
Initiation



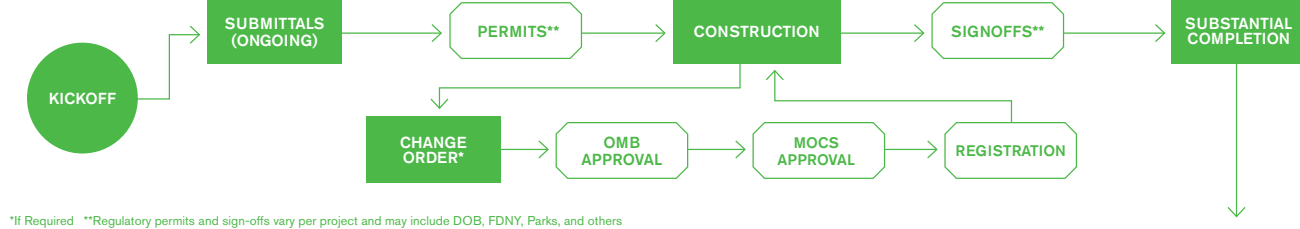
Design



Bid



Construction



Closeout



LEGEND

- CP: Certificate to Proceed
- DEP: Department of Environmental Protection
- DOB: Department of Buildings
- FCB: Financial Control Board
- FDNY: Fire Department
- LL63: Local law requiring 60-day public notice of procurements
- LPC: Landmarks Preservation Commission
- MOCS: Mayor's Office of Contract Services
- NTP: Notice to Proceed
- OMB: Office of Management and Budget
- PDC: Public Design Commission



BMCR, Manhattan

Transforming the City's Capital Delivery Process

Upgrading NYC's aging public facilities demands speed and agility, yet the layers of approval and oversight mean that DDC can't build fast enough to meet the need. New York City's complex capital delivery process has failed to keep pace with rapid advances in project delivery and building technology, governed by decades-old rules that can be slow to change.

DDC is leading the way to transform the way the City plans, budgets, procures, designs and builds public projects to make the process work better and faster, with fewer redundant steps. This includes partnering with industry leaders, oversight agencies, and legislators to modernize processes, replace outdated rules, and pass new legislation to improve each step.

Planning Better

Good early planning is essential to successful design and construction. Over nearly a decade, DDC has transformed the process through which New York City plans its capital work to ensure that every project is set up to succeed. In 2025, the agency is taking the next steps to launch a comprehensive new capital planning program with tools to support City agencies in creating holistic, long-term capital plans. These efforts will get the right projects started faster, with fewer delays in planning and design.

Taking Steps to Reform the Process

To begin a capital project, DDC's sponsor agencies assess their needs, develop a preliminary scope, and request project funding from the City's Office of Management and Budget (OMB). With funding approved, they bring the planned project to DDC to onboard a design consultant and manage design and construction. Previously, any missing scope or funding deficit would be discovered during design, leading to years of delay as sponsors sought additional funding.

Recognizing the need to validate scope, schedule, budget, risks, and other considerations from the start, DDC launched its **Front End Planning** program in 2017 to vet every project before starting

the work. Front End Planning has transformed DDC's ability to set and maintain realistic design schedules by ensuring projects have the ingredients to be successful before initiating them. But, in FY 2025, DDC returned around 40% of project requests for public buildings back to sponsors for additional scope or funding. DDC's sponsor agencies should be provided with better data and technical support earlier in the process, before making their funding request, so that projects can be appropriately planned and initiated faster.



Advanced Capital Planning

DDC is launching an ambitious program to transform how New York City plans public buildings capital projects by leveraging the City's buildings data to support comprehensive, long-term capital planning. Advanced Capital Planning (ACP) includes three related components:

- A new data portal that will bring together information on New York City's public buildings
- A building assessment tool and program to augment the data the City already gathers
- A comprehensive planning program to provide sponsors with planning support earlier in the process

DDC kicked off a pilot program in 2022 to test all three components, building a proof-of-concept data portal and building assessment tool and leveraging the available data to conduct capital planning studies for Queens Public Library and Brooklyn Public Library. The agency

partnered with the Mayor's Office of Operations and Department of City Planning to link the program to existing citywide tools and resources.

In 2025, building on the success of the pilot, DDC secured \$4.5 million in capital funding and new staffing to build out the full program. When fully launched, ACP will provide New York City agencies with the tools they need to meet citywide strategic goals, like decarbonizing the City's buildings portfolio and making every building accessible. It will allow City agencies to better scope, plan, and budget their capital projects, and it will enable DDC to start projects faster, with less time elapsed between funding and initiation.

Advanced Capital Planning will give New York City the tools to plan holistically and collaboratively for the future.

Improving
the City's
Buildings Data

Good planning demands good data, and New York City lacks a central database of information on its public buildings. While City agencies possess many different kinds of data that can support capital planning, like state of repair, flood and heat risk, and information from past capital projects, it is stored in separate agency systems and not easily accessible on a portfolio-wide basis. For example, DDC conducts hundreds of building assessments each year to establish state of repair for OMB's **Asset Information Management System (AIMS)** program, yet the information is not stored or shared in a way that makes it accessible for planning. Other key information, like building code compliance and fuel source, is not gathered systematically at all. As a result, City agencies lack the data they need to comprehensively assess and plan for their capital needs.

In addition, the City lacks the tools to plan for strategic change, like phasing out fossil fuel equipment.

As part of its Advanced Capital Planning program, DDC is developing two new tools that will leverage and augment the City's public buildings data. Developed in coordination with DCP, the **ACP data portal** will bring together public buildings information from many different sources into a single, GIS-based interface where it can be viewed and analyzed comprehensively. The building assessment tool, a mobile application, will allow DDC to augment this information with new data gathered by building assessors on site. Together, these tools will provide City agencies with a comprehensive snapshot of the City's public buildings portfolio.

A New Planning
Program for
New York City

DDC's **Advanced Capital Planning** program will utilize this information to provide sponsor agencies with comprehensive support in assessing, planning, and prioritizing their capital needs. In the year-long pilot study for BPL and QPL, DDC developed a data-driven planning methodology that integrated factors like state of repair, programmatic need, climate risk, building code compliance and accessibility to rank the level of capital need at every library in the two systems.

With these needs established, the team guided the library systems through different strategic approaches to funding and phasing the work. For example, a given amount of funding can support a small number of major projects like new buildings or major renovations,

a large number of small projects like window replacements, or a moderate number of medium complexity projects like energy upgrades.

In 2025, with funding secured, DDC will build out a technical team to further develop this methodology and provide sponsor agencies with better data and technical support during the planning stage.



NYPD 116th
Precinct, Queens

Capital Planning for New York City's Infrastructure

DDC's infrastructure projects face distinct but similar challenges during the planning stage. DDC builds the city's water mains and sewers on behalf of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), streets and plazas on behalf of the Department of Transportation (DOT), and some of the city's parks on behalf of the Parks Department – agencies whose jurisdictions literally overlap within the right-of-way.

While each agency conducts capital planning for its own portfolio, there is no current mechanism for the agencies to share data, integrate long-range climate considerations, and coordinate their capital projects early in the planning stage. The result is that infrastructure projects can take years to initiate as DDC undertakes this coordination for the first time during Front End Planning. Interagency scope added later, during design, can cause even longer delays and cost overruns.

To support coordinated early planning that integrates climate goals, DDC has proposed an Enhanced Front End Planning program for infrastructure that includes:

- Enhanced, GIS-based data to create comprehensive, accurate maps of existing conditions that all agencies can use.
- Detailed areawide planning studies to test assumptions and explore approaches to phasing capital work.
- Coordinated capital planning among DEP, DOT, and Parks to integrate all needed scope upfront, including climate considerations like stormwater management and sea level rise.

DDC continues to advocate for the support and funding to develop these needed tools. The result will be better coordinated, climate-ready projects that can be started faster and advanced through design without incremental scope additions or changes.



Pugsley Creek
Infrastructure
The Bronx

Coordinated Capital Planning

New York City's siloed method of planning capital work — which is undertaken separately by City agencies based on their individual needs and budgets — means that communities miss out on the value of coordinated planning. Any given neighborhood may include multiple projects at different levels of planning or completion, such as a redesigned streetscape or new plaza, a stormwater project, and a library renovation. Planned separately, these improvements can disrupt neighborhoods through years of construction. A lack of coordination can overlook potential co-benefits like shared programming.

By bringing together available data and providing a broad picture of different capital investment scenarios, Advanced Capital Planning will lay the groundwork for coordination during planning and design.

Advancing Data Analytics

Beginning at the Front End Planning stage and continuing throughout the project lifecycle, DDC has advanced a rigorous, data-driven approach to project delivery. Using clear and measurable data alongside ambitious targets, DDC continually monitors performance to chart our progress. Analysis of historical data helps DDC identify opportunities for improvement and advance our planning process.

In 2024, DDC launched a data science practice elevating our capabilities to develop advanced data analytics. For example, in 2025, using machine learning techniques, DDC rolled out a

risk identification tool that helps project teams identify risks on their projects by leveraging historical data from other similar projects. As DDC develops its Advanced Capital Planning program, the agency will explore advanced approaches to analyzing buildings data.

Better Procurement

Once planning is complete and DDC becomes the managing agency, the next steps are to secure funding approval and conduct a procurement to onboard a design team. After design, DDC must again secure construction funding approval and conduct a procurement to award the construction contract.

These budget and procurement steps are highly regulated by State and local laws and rules, and for good reason: City agencies must protect the integrity of public procurements and make responsible use of taxpayer dollars. But years of accumulated process have led these steps to be some of the most time-consuming in the life of a project. The result is that months and even years can elapse between project funding and the start of design, and again between design and the start of construction.

DDC works closely with OMB, MOCS, City Hall, and the Comptroller’s office to streamline capital budget and procurement processes, advancing rule changes and State legislation where needed. The agency also partners extensively with architects, engineers, builders and industry associations to continuously update and improve its own procurement practices and contracts with business-friendly terms that meet industry best practices.

Mayor’s Capital Reform Task Force



In 2022, Mayor Adams convened a task force of leaders in the AEC industry and City government to undertake a comprehensive review of the City’s capital process with the goal of developing concrete, actionable recommendations for reform. With DDC as a leading member, the **Capital Process Reform Task Force** advanced several changes to City- and State-level rules and laws to improve the City’s budget and procurement processes, including:

- Passing State legislation to allow contractors to submit their bids electronically (passed in 2023) and replace the outdated public hearing process for contracts with a new, transparent and accessible process for public notice and comment (passed in 2024);
- Enacting a five-fold increase to the threshold for Financial Control Board contract review, a threshold that had not been updated since 1987;
- Expanding the rules for capital eligibility under Comptroller’s Directive 10 to include certain common scenarios, like expanding the radius for eligible street work and allowing different types of renovation work in a single building to be combined for capital eligibility purposes;
- Resetting the threshold for Capital Approval Standards, a standardized Certificate to Proceed (CP) for certain types of frequently occurring project types, and updating the thresholds biannually based on industry standard construction cost indices;
- Repealing Executive Order 102, an outdated process for verifying prevailing wage compliance that has been replaced by the city’s standard construction contract and agency compliance requirements.

Together, these reforms will save months on every capital project. DDC also partnered with the Task Force to expand the agency’s successful construction phase pilots to other capital agencies, expand access to alternative delivery tools, and expand tools for M/WBEs, discussed in detail in the sections that follow.

Yet with all this progress, there is more work to be done to simplify and streamline the City’s budget and procurement processes. DDC will continue to work closely its partners and oversights to replace outdated bureaucratic steps with modern, technology-driven processes. Needed improvements include:

- Continuing to partner with OMB to streamline the CP process, which occurs at multiple steps;
- Passing changes to the Procurement Policy Board (PPB) rules to take best advantage of alternative delivery, and separately to allow DDC to replace a failing contractor;
- Longer term, writing dedicated, flexible PPB rules tailored to design and construction that provide the agility to adapt to changing conditions and delivery approaches.

These changes will allow DDC and other agencies to get projects started faster and keep them moving.

Leading Continuous Improvement

While many changes to procurement require City- and State-level rule change, DDC continuously reviews and assess its own procurement practices and contracts in partnership with the industry to ensure that the agency's terms make it an owner of choice. This includes fostering clear, transparent, and responsive procurement processes that make it easy for vendors to participate — including those who have never done business with the City.

Delivering Design Excellence

Since 2004, DDC's **Design and Construction Excellence** program has brought some of the best designers to the table to build New York City's public buildings, and in the twenty years of the program DDC has partnered with over 100 architecture firms. A bedrock principle of the program — and of every one of DDC's professional service contracts — is **quality-based selection (QBS)**. Through QBS, DDC selects vendors based on qualifications, experience, approach, and other considerations — not the cost of their services. Instead, DDC uses a combination of fixed fee curves and direct salary rates to ensure firms are compensated fairly.

DDC awards most professional service contracts through on-call or “requirements” contracts, in which a pool of vendors holds a contract for a set period in which they are eligible for project assignments. This enables DDC to start project months faster because many of the procurement oversight steps can be completed once, at the start of the contract period, rather than at the start of each project.

Partnering to Improve the Process

For each new contract solicitation, DDC incorporates changes based on lessons learned and feedback from the industry. In DDC's last round of design solicitations in 2020, major updates included higher fixed fee curves, rotational project assignments, and compensating for construction administration based on time spent rather than percentage of a fixed fee.

In preparation for the agency's 2025 design contract solicitations, **DDC partnered with AIANY and nycoba|NOMA** in a comprehensive yearlong process to review the agency's public buildings design contracts, identify the barriers to participation for small and MBE firms, and develop a list of meaningful changes. This collaboration was complemented by engagement with ACEC, building on a strong foundation of partnership between DDC and industry associations.

The discussions led to several changes. DDC will award **three types of contracts** based on the type of professional best suited to lead the work: Architectural Design contracts for new buildings and major renovations, Technical Design contracts for multi-system upgrades, and Engineering Design contracts for single-system upgrades. During procurement, each contract will be further subdivided into **firm size**

categories that have been adjusted according to AIA standards. Once on board for a contract term of four years, firms will be eligible for project assignments according to their size category, with some **categories combined** to ensure that opportunities are broadly distributed. Building on prior lessons learned, project assignments will continue to be **rotational** except when projects are especially large or complex.

For the first time on a design solicitation, DDC will use a **two-step procurement process**. In the first step, vendors will respond to a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) with a limited set of requirements that minimize the upfront work required to respond. In the second step, a shortlist of vendors will be invited to provide a more detailed proposal. This process is designed to make it easier and less burdensome to apply.

In 2024, DDC launched an agency-wide **Contracts Steering Group** to share best practices and lessons learned among over twenty professional service contracts overseen by several different agency divisions. The steering group will help to level contract terms and requirements across the agency, coordinating improvements to DDC's Infrastructure Design contracts in the coming year.

DDC Authority

Many of the reforms outlined here could be accomplished in a single legislative action to turn DDC from a mayoral agency into a new public authority.

Creating a DDC Authority (DDC+) would eliminate many of the administrative challenges faced by Charter-authorized City agencies by leveraging the expertise of DDC's professional staff. Key benefits include procurement and contract administration rules that are tailored to design and construction, fewer administrative burdens and oversight steps during procurement, and flexibility to use a full suite of alternative delivery tools.

DDC laid the groundwork in 2022, partnering with the Capital Process Reform Task Force and Law Department to draft legislation. But the effort requires significant advocacy in Albany by a broad coalition of champions in the AEC industry, labor, and City and State government. The result would be a purpose-built design and construction authority equipped to build better, faster, and cheaper with the agility to respond to changing needs and conditions.



Making it Easier
to Participate
in DDC's
Procurements

While all procurements in New York City are conducted via a citywide system called PASSPort, managed by the Mayor's Office of Contract Services (MOCS), DDC heard from vendors that relevant opportunities can be difficult to find. In response, DDC made comprehensive updates to its **Work with DDC** website to make it easier to understand the types of contracts the agency awards and provide up-to-date information on how to apply and to partner.

The agency now publishes a list of all **current on-call contracts and contract-holders** to make it easier for subconsultants to reach out and partner on individual project

opportunities. The updated website includes a **12-month lookahead** of open solicitations, as well as lists of projects currently in initiation and design. DDC also began posting samples of **current contracts**, like those for design and resident engineering services, to orient vendors to the agency's contract terms.

In 2025, DDC is partnering with the Office of Technology and Innovation (OTI) to launch a comprehensive overhaul to its website on the new nyc.gov platform that will make it even easier to participate in DDC's work.



Front Street
Cobblestone
Replacement,
Brooklyn

Designing
Better

DDC works with some of the country's best design firms to create world-class public buildings and infrastructure across the five boroughs. The agency's goal for the design stage is to set clear expectations, clear the roadblocks, and get designers the tools they need to deliver high-quality designs on time and budget.

The agency defines **Design Excellence** broadly: projects must reflect and enrich their communities and make daily life better for New Yorkers. They must be inclusive, welcoming users of all ages, abilities, and identities. They must contribute to building a more sustainable, resilient city. They must be buildable in a low-bid construction environment, on budget, without creating undue complexity during construction. And they must be designed to last for decades, standing up to heavy use without specialty maintenance practices.

While design of public projects can be complex, DDC is taking several steps to ease the design process, streamline needed approvals, and maintain scope, schedule, and budget throughout design.

Setting Clear Expectations

DDC communicates expectations for the design phase in the **Design Consultant Guide** for public buildings and the **Design Guidelines** for infrastructure, which comprise part of DDC's consultant design contracts. These guides establish clear milestones, deliverables, and data-driven design phase durations developed in coordination with DDC's Project Controls team. These durations represent a significant improvement over DDC's pre-Blueprint design performance.

In 2025, DDC launched a major revision to the Design Consultant Guide to make several design phase improvements. The new guide clarifies expected

processes, tasks, and deliverables and aligns these with an optimized but realistic schedule. It cross-references DDC's own milestone deliverables with those of oversight agencies, including the Public Design Commission (PDC), to provide design consultants with a comprehensive roadmap. And it delineates clear and transparent evaluation criteria for DDC's review of milestone submissions. The Guide is accompanied by updated **schedule** and **cost estimating templates**.

DDC is undertaking similarly extensive changes to its Design Guidelines for infrastructure, expected to be released in 2025.

Limiting Changes

While Front End Planning aligns scope, schedule, and budget, DDC also implements project controls measures to support project delivery on time and budget throughout design and construction. Each project starts with a detailed schedule, updated monthly, and a cost baseline. Since centralizing **project controls** in 2019, DDC has also developed multiple analytical dashboards for project teams to monitor cost and schedule, and in 2025 rolled out updated templates for cost, schedule and risks.

Some changes remain inevitable due to unknown existing conditions, changing requirements, or other unforeseen conditions. These scope changes remain one of the most persistent sources of delay.

In 2024, DDC launched comprehensive changes to its scope change process to proactively assess the cost and schedule impacts of any scope changes. The new process requires DDC and Sponsor agency leadership to sign off on the changes before they are made, ensuring that all parties understand the risks and impact. The result has been fewer and better-managed changes.

In 2025, DDC will launch additional resources for sponsor agencies, including updates to DDC's Sponsor Agency Portal.

Streamlining Regulatory Approvals

New York City capital projects require review and approval by multiple agencies that can include, depending on scope, the Department of Buildings (DOB), Fire Department (FDNY), NYC and NYS Departments of Transportation (DOT and NYSDOT), Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), Public Design Commission (PDC), Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA), among others. In addition, DDC's in-house teams of technical and subject matter experts review the design at multiple milestones to ensure it meets city requirements and strategic goals.

To keep projects moving while getting designers the input they need, DDC has launched several initiatives to improve collaboration with its partner and oversight agencies during the design phase:

- DDC hired a **Department of Buildings project advocate** to manage the agency's permits and approvals. In 2024, DDC partnered with DOB in their launch of the **Central Development Program**, which centrally processes City projects to maintain a degree of consistency across reviews. Together, these strategies have streamlined the project review process at DOB, from initial filing to final signoff.

- DDC partnered with the **Public Design Commission** through a yearlong process to overhaul the interagency design review process, described in further detail in the section that follows.
 - DDC centralized communications related to the **New York State Department of Environmental Conservation** and **US Army Corps of Engineers** (USACE) and holds bi-monthly project review meetings to proactively address open actions.
 - DDC partnered with FDNY on a streamlined process for expediting priority approvals, coordinating directly with **FDNY's Special Projects team** within the Bureau of Fire Prevention.
- But the work is not done. Interagency approvals add months to project timelines, even though the teams providing those approvals often possess the same qualifications as DDC's own staff.** DDC and its partner and oversight agencies must continue to find creative ways to meet the goals of oversight while drastically simplifying and speeding the process, including by delegating certain approvals to DDC's own staff of licensed professional engineers and architects.



Partnering with the Public Design Commission to Reform Interagency Design Review

New York City's Public Design Commission (PDC) has design review jurisdiction over all works on City-owned land, including buildings, landscape and street-scape, artworks and others.

Above:
Percent for Art
installation at
the NYPD 40th
Precinct Community
Room, The Bronx

PDC reviews 700-1,000 submissions from City agencies each year, including approximately 150 submissions from DDC. With their stated mission to "advocate for innovative, sustainable, and equitable design of public spaces and civic structures, with a goal of improving the public realm and therefore related services for all New Yorkers throughout the five boroughs," PDC provides an independent, trusted critique.

Yet the process of interagency design review can be lengthy and lead to schedule risks that can arise from unexpected feedback or lengthy pencils-down times.

In 2023, DDC and PDC undertook an intensive yearlong process to streamline and simplify design review while upholding the agencies' core values and the value of design review. A team of DDC staff, PDC staff, PDC Commissioners, and Deputy Mayor teams met regularly across the course of several deep-dive workshops to examine the process of design review on all sides. The team identified both the successes and challenges in the process and gathered input from New York City's design professionals and DDC staff through a comprehensive survey.

The result is a series of **six overarching recommendations**, each with actionable steps:

1. Establish a recurring process for evidence-based change;
2. Make the design review process clear and accessible;
3. Clarify the approval path for different project types;
4. Streamline the process for non-complex projects;
5. Ease the approval path for complex projects; and
6. Amplify opportunities for design input during the process.

In 2025, after PDC expanded their engagement to include all capital agencies, the agencies are well underway in implementing the recommendations. PDC released a comprehensive overhaul of their requirements **check-lists**, reducing 21 unique checklists down to five. They published new **resources** on their website, including a searchable collection of sample presentations. DDC and PDC are partnering on a clear, comprehensive **guide to the design review process**, and DDC's updated **Design Consultant Guide** delineates how the agencies' milestones align. DDC's **updated website**, being developed in coordination with OTI for launch in late 2025, will outline opportunities for members of the public to participate.

Simplifying the Specifications Process

Part of a construction bid package, construction specifications are essential to securing accurate, comprehensive bids that minimize the risk of change orders during construction. Detailing the standards of care and quality in materials, installation, and construction for every material and assembly on the project, they have historically required a labor-intensive manual process that adds months to the design phase. Specifications often require extensive review and revision to meet the agency's stringent standards for bidding.

In 2021, DDC launched its **Office Master Specifications** to provide consultants with a cloud-based master document that incorporates agency standards. This approach has decreased DDC's specifications and legal review process from nine months to three months – with some projects now completing

legal review with no comments. With continued improvements, DDC anticipates further time savings.

DDC regularly looks for ways to integrate industry best practices into its specifications, incorporating innovative materials and techniques. DDC recently introduced a bulletin allowing helical piles as an alternate to timber or Continuous Flight Auger (CFA) piles and plans to release an updated DEP Trunk Main specification in the next year. Additionally, the agency is currently piloting a performance-based specification for asphalt and exploring a performance-based specification for concrete that will result in a higher quality, lower environmental impact, and more cost-effective product due to a lower quantity of cement in the mix design. These efforts are being coordinated with other city agencies to streamline specifications for City work and align with current State-level standards.

Brooklyn-Montgomery
Coastal Resiliency
Project, Manhattan



Sustainability at DDC

DDC builds essential public works that will shape the city for decades to come. We stand firmly committed to building sustainable public buildings and infrastructure that foster vibrant and resilient communities, mitigate the greatest climate risks, and reduce the pollution caused by building and operating city facilities.

By integrating sustainability into every step of planning, design, and construction, DDC's projects serve their communities and improve daily life for all New Yorkers — including future generations as well as our own.

DDC's projects provide vital green space, improve air quality, reduce sewer overflows into waterways, and protect our most vulnerable communities against extreme weather. In FY 25 alone, DDC constructed over 4,400 linear feet linear feet of coastal flood protection. We improved water quality with over 20,000 square feet of new porous pavement and 1,200 rain gardens and infiltration basins. We replaced fossil-fuel burning equipment with new clean energy systems, installed green roofs and PV arrays in place of under-utilized rooftops, and completed projects that achieve the highest levels of LEED and Envision certification.

As the City's primary capital delivery agency, DDC turns New York City's ambitious climate goals into reality, integrating new climate policies at every stage. DDC also leverages project delivery to drive sustainability performance beyond local law requirements. We are piloting new sustainability incentives in our construction contracts that will result in less waste and improved efficiency. We are partnering with public owners in New York State to integrate low carbon concrete specifications. And we are incentivizing the highest levels of sustainability performance and innovation through best value selection in our alternative delivery contracts.

BUILDING RESILIENCY

In 2024 and 2025, DDC reopened Stuyvesant Cove Park and major new portions of East River Park as part of the East Side Coastal Resiliency project (ESCR) that will protect over 110,000 New Yorkers from coastal flooding. ESCR is one of the most technically complex infrastructure projects in New York City's history and one of the largest coastal resiliency

projects in the western hemisphere. Envisioned as part of the "Rebuild by Design" competition for lower Manhattan after Hurricane Sandy, the system connects with the Brooklyn Bridge-Montgomery Coastal Resiliency project to its south, currently under construction, and the East Midtown Coastal Resiliency project being designed to its north.

ESCR provides flood protection through an integrated 2.4-mile system of floodwalls, moveable flood gates, raised parkland, and enhanced inland drainage to form a continuous line of protection against sea level rise and worsening coastal storms. By raising the park grade by eight to ten feet, the project creates welcoming new public spaces along the waterfront accessed by generous, accessible new pedestrian bridges over the FDR highway. The project introduces thousands of new native trees and plants to bolster the local ecosystem.

ESCR was honored with an Envision Gold Award from the Institute of Sustainable Infrastructure (ISI), who cited the project for its cohesive and comprehensive approach to climate resiliency, enhanced public space and amenities, and robust community engagement program that considers the diversity of stakeholders. The project remains on track for completion in 2027. In 2025, DDC released a design-build RFQ for the ESCR East Side Greenway 14th Street Connector, leveraging alternative delivery to close a key link in the pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure around Manhattan. Together, these projects will transform New York City's waterfront for generations.

Learning from Past Performance

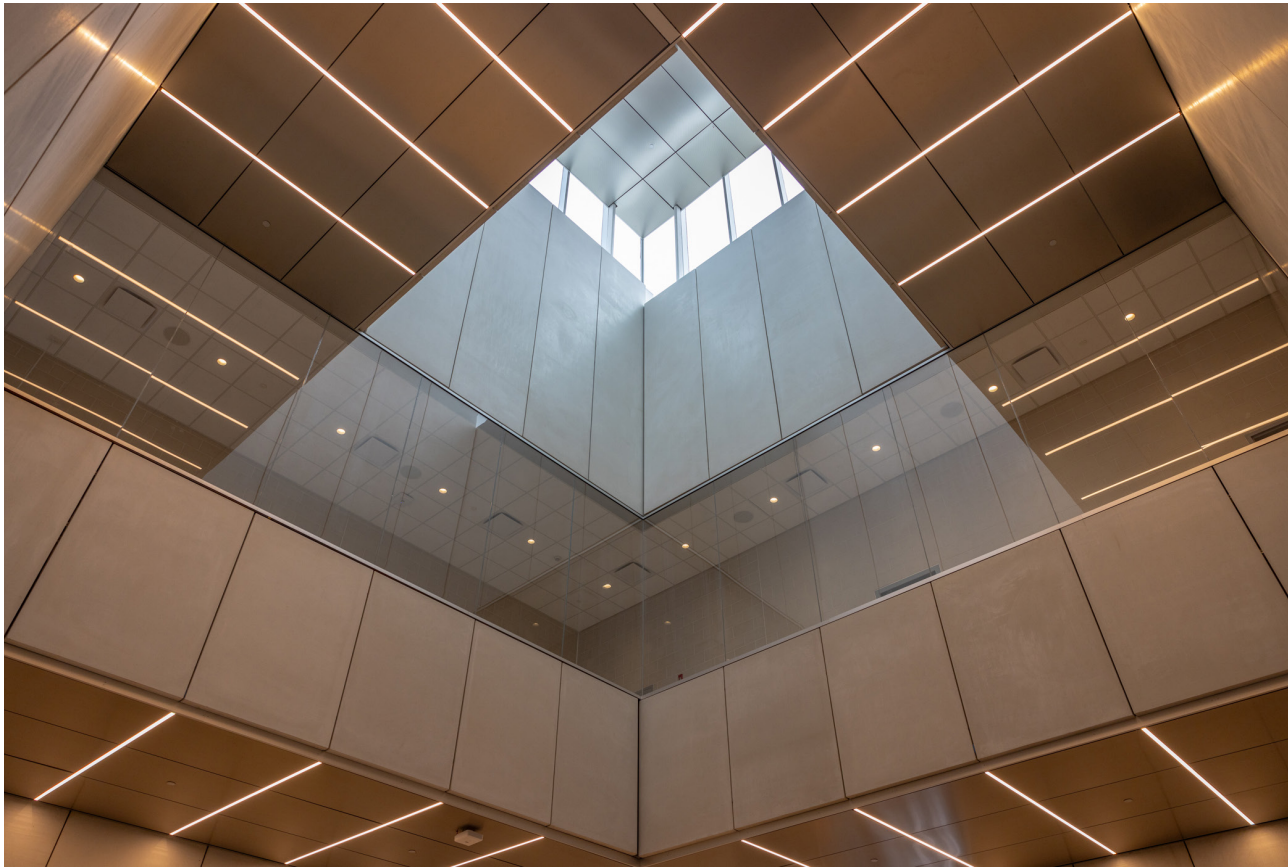
DDC recognizes the value of learning from past performance and exchanging lessons learned among its community of staff, consultants, and contractors. The agency has launched several initiatives to enable past experience to shape future changes, described in detail in Strengthening Industry Partnerships. DDC is also taking steps to translate past project performance into future requirements and business practices.

In 2025, DDC is launching the first post-occupancy user surveys for a pilot cohort of public buildings, infrastructure, and design-build projects. Completed on site by the projects' end users using a simple web form, the surveys will cast a

wide net to gather input into the project's performance, with the option to provide more detailed input where desired. DDC will turn the results of the pilot into a portfolio-wide post-occupancy survey program that directly informs future project planning.

DDC has also launched sponsor agency design standards for certain common building types that, in the future, will incorporate the findings from post-occupancy assessments. DDC published the Recreation Center Design Manual with NYC Parks in 2022 and will update the manual with lessons learned as the first recreation centers in this portfolio are completed.

NYPD 40th Precinct Interior, The Bronx



Building Better

Once design is complete and the construction contract awarded, construction begins. In the design-bid-build model, this stage can often be contentious and prone to delays and change orders that result from the requirement to award to the lowest qualified bidder. Yet DDC has made significant strides in improving construction, alongside advocating for the alternative delivery tools that promote a more collaborative model.

During construction, DDC’s goal is to give teams the tools they need to work proactively and collaboratively to deliver the project on time and on budget with the same level of quality that was envisioned during the design stage. Many of these constructive changes have arisen directly from dialogue with the builders, subcontractors, and CMs who build DDC’s projects. Updates include changes to the agency’s own contracts and business practices, as well as changes to the rules and laws that govern how City agencies can build.



Idlewild Park
Storm Sewer,
Queens

Managing Changes with the Expanded Work Allowance

Changes during construction are a normal part of doing business, especially in a dense urban environment like New York City where unknown field conditions are common. Yet change orders remain one of the most persistent and challenging sources of constructions delay on public projects.

Because they require all the same oversight approvals as construction contracts themselves, it can take up to twelve months for change orders to be approved for payment. During this time, construction can slow or stop. Since 2019, DDC has partnered with oversight agencies to pilot, expand, and institutionalize a practice that has revolutionized the change management process. Called Expanded Work Allowance, or EWA, the program allows certain types of expected changes to be compensated almost immediately, saving months or even years over the lifecycle of a project. Today, EWA can be used by capital agencies for many kinds of expected changes.

A REGISTERED CONTINGENCY FUND

Expanded Work Allowance functions as a registered contingency fund built into capital project contracts that can be drawn upon immediately when certain types of changes are encountered. With EWA, once the extra work is identified and determined to be eligible, the work is estimated and construction can proceed immediately. Eighty percent of the estimated cost is eligible for payment immediately upon completion of the work while negotiations are still underway.

This model represents a transformative change because work can proceed immediately and be compensated without further oversight approvals, even before negotiations are complete. This gives teams the tools to keep construction moving in the face of common changes.

PILOTING THE PROGRAM

In 2019, following publication of DDC’s first Strategic Blueprint, DDC, OMB and the Comptroller’s Office agreed to pilot the Expanded Work Allowance across a small cohort of public buildings and infrastructure projects. The pilot included 25 projects, 15 of which proceeded with EWA with an average of \$3 million in EWA funds encumbered. The pilot allowed DDC to track field decisions, monitor usage patterns, and evaluate impacts on project delivery. Early findings revealed that EWA significantly reduced processing time for changes—often

from several months to a matter of days—without compromising fiscal oversight. Project managers reported improved responsiveness and site continuity, while contractors experienced fewer disruptions. The pilot also strengthened trust between field staff and contractors, demonstrating that increased autonomy could be balanced with accountability. These outcomes formed the foundation for broader implementation.

EXPANDING EWA CITYWIDE

Following the successful pilot, DDC expanded the use of EWA across its entire portfolio for projects with eligible types of work. The agency launched internal guidance and training programs to ensure consistency and created tracking dashboards to monitor EWA usage in real time. In 2022, DDC made EWA standard practice on all contracts, using data on past projects to allocate an appropriate amount of funding.

DDC also partnered with the Mayor’s Capital Process Reform Task Force, OMB, and the Comptroller’s Office beginning in 2022 to expand the types of work that are eligible for EWA, and broaden the use of the program to NYC DEP, DOT, and Parks. These changes were formalized with an MOU in 2025 that makes Expanded Work Allowance a permanent part of the City’s capital process.

A RECORD OF TRANSFORMATION

As of mid-2025, DDC has used EWA on over 100 active projects, totaling more than \$21 million in authorized work. DDC’s ability to pay for the associated work dropped from an average of 220 days for change order payments to 15 days for EWA. These metrics underscore EWA’s effectiveness as a strategic tool to enhance delivery timelines, reduce administrative burden, and better serve communities awaiting critical infrastructure and public facilities. DDC will continue tracking performance and exploring additional reforms to expand EWA’s impact.

Enhancing Performance with Better Construction Contracts

In 2022, in response to input from vendors and industry groups, DDC piloted several changes to its **construction contracts** to drive performance and innovation during the construction phase. In 2025, these changes have demonstrated clear value in collaboration, time and cost savings, and have been instituted across DDC's portfolio wherever appropriate. DDC shared its contract language with DOT, DEP, and Parks as part of the Capital Process Reform Task Force.

To help manage the impact of material price volatility, DDC incorporated **Cost Adjustments** into construction contracts to offset unanticipated fluctuations within fuel, asphalt, and steel indexes. Drawing on a model utilized by New York State DOT (NYSDOT) for its highway projects, this allowance enables contractors to price their bids competitively without accounting for future risk. Utilized on over 20 construction contracts for infrastructure and public buildings since 2022, this term protects the City from budget overruns while creating a transparent and fair path to address inflation-related fluctuations.

To compensate contractors for the upfront work associated with starting construction, DDC launched **Enhanced Mobilization** across all construction contracts beginning in 2023. A direct result of input from the industry, this term allows contractors to submit for their first payment of 1% of the contract value immediately upon Notice to Proceed (NTP). Contractors remain eligible for an additional 7% mobilization payment when the remainder of mobilization activities are complete.

To leverage contractors' problem-solving ingenuity, DDC piloted a **Value Engineering Change Proposal (VECP)** option that allows infrastructure contractors to propose design alternatives that reduce cost, improve constructability, or shorten schedules. When DDC accepts the proposed change, any cost savings are shared by the City and the contractor. In 2025, this contract term has been used on 11 contracts, resulting in cost and time savings associated with improved site logistics and long lead-time materials.

DDC has also integrated measures to speed construction by incentivizing early completion and compensating contractors for overtime work. With **Early Completion Incentives**, used most frequently on infrastructure projects, contractors are eligible for additional compensation when they complete construction ahead of the contract-mandated duration. With **City Work Acceleration**, DDC can offset delays caused by circumstances like traffic stipulations by compensating contractors through an allowance for overtime work. These two tools have saved months on critical projects like the East Side Coastal Resiliency Project, where Project Area 2 was substantially completed 45 days ahead of schedule and with significant overhead cost savings.

Contract Tools in Action

DDC successfully leveraged Value Engineering and Early Completion Incentives on the East Side Coastal Resiliency (ESCR) project to yield measurable cost benefits and an improved project delivery timeline.

On the East Side Coastal Resiliency project, the City has already realized over \$16 million in savings through Value Engineering Change Proposals. This includes the contractor-led proposal to replace more than a mile of esplanade with precast elements in lieu of specified pour-in-place concrete work. This alternative not only achieved \$875,000 in direct cost savings, but also improved quality assurance, reduced weather-related construction delays, minimized environmental risks by fabricating in a controlled off-site environment, and reduced congestion and emissions in the surrounding neighborhood with the use of barges to transport components, eliminating approximately 1,600 concrete truck trips through local streets.

DDC also employed a two-tiered early completion incentive strategy in ESCR Project Area 2 to accelerate project delivery. This approach led to the substantial completion and public opening of three reconstructed parks by late summer 2024—months ahead of the contractual schedule. The incentive structure included a lump-sum payment for reaching an accelerated milestone and a capped per-day bonus for completing the work up to 45 days ahead of that milestone. The total incentive payout amounted to less than 1.5% of the construction contract value and generated significant savings beyond the incentive amount through reduced project overhead and logistical coordination—demonstrating the agency's commitment to delivering major infrastructure with speed, efficiency, and value.



East Side Coastal Resiliency Project, Manhattan

Integrating Design and Construction

DDC continues to take steps to better integrate design and construction teams to reduce coordination gaps and support real-time decision-making. On several significant programs and projects, DDC is **co-locating** designers with construction teams to tackle challenges as they arise. DDC's Borough-Based Jails and Coastal Resiliency programs have dedicated offices housing staff from the DDC, program management, design and construction teams. On the new 116th Police Precinct in Queens, field staff, designers, and construction managers shared space on the construction site — a step that enhanced coordination, reduced RFIs, and improved response time.

First piloted on the 116th Precinct and subsequently integrated into all design contracts, DDC compensates architects for **construction administration services** based on time spent, not percentage of a fixed fee. This timecard compensation model allows teams to dedicate the needed time and staff to respond quickly during construction.

Construction Management Software

In 2024, DDC launched a significant effort to integrate **Construction Management Software (CMS)** into its public buildings and infrastructure projects. By mid-2025, DDC has successfully integrated CMS into sixteen active capital projects. Within the next two years, the agency anticipates that most construction projects will be equipped with CMS.

Initially introduced to simplify document sharing and task tracking, CMS platforms will play a central role in project administration when fully integrated, enabling real-time communication between DDC project managers, resident engineers, consultants, and contractors. These tools will allow the agency to standardize workflows, reduce duplicative processes, and streamline document management across design and construction phases. The result will be enhanced

collaboration and accountability among project teams, seamless document handoff across project phases, and ready availability of data to improve performance management and reporting.

To build the program, DDC has invested in setting clear standards and templates tailored to its unique requirements and has integrated these standards into its design, CM, and construction contracts. As the rollout continues, DDC will formalize a CMS Governance Framework, standard operating procedures, and an expanded training program for staff and end users. Advanced CMS features like integrated design review, mobile field reporting, and dashboards and analytics will be rolled out in phases as the program expands.

Far Rockaway Library Interior, Queens



New York City’s Underground Infrastructure

Over 6,000 miles of streets and highways connect New York City’s neighborhoods while carrying the vital infrastructure that provides essential services to 8.5 million New Yorkers. The city’s watermains and sewers share space beneath the roadway with private utility lines like gas, electric, and telecommunications.

Built and replaced over decades, City and private utility lines crisscross one another beneath the street, their precise locations often unknown. This complex environment is often known as the “underground spaghetti.”

DDC’s Infrastructure Division is responsible for building and upgrading the nation’s most complex network of streets, watermains and sewers on behalf of the Department of Transportation (DOT) and Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), transforming streetscapes to be safe and inclusive and upgrading pipes that may be over a century old. As neighborhoods grow denser and rainfall becomes more extreme, this critical work only becomes more urgent. Yet construction in the city’s right of way can be time-consuming and disruptive to the daily activities of residents and businesses. In response, over three decades in practice, DDC has honed the tools and strategies to build as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Coordinated Underground Construction

Upgrading the City’s infrastructure requires coordinating with the private utility companies whose lines share space beneath the street. DDC has championed a coordinated approach to street construction authorized through State law.

In New York City, private utility companies are allowed to locate their lines in the city’s right-of-way but must move and protect those lines to facilitate the city’s work, at their own expense. In practice, this work is often completed by the City’s contractors and reimbursed by the utility companies since only one contractor can hold open street permits at a time.

Under an early model, the city’s contractor had to open the street and then negotiate directly with the separate utility companies for the cost to move and protect their lines. To streamline coordination and enhance transparency and oversight, the New York State Legislature passed the first **Joint Bidding** law in 2004 to allow the City to bid public and private utility work under a single contract. The private

utility companies would continue to pay for the work to protect their lines, but the City would now be able to set the terms by including this work in its contracts.

Since the original authorization in 2004, DDC has continued to refine the terms and process of Joint Bidding to get work completed faster and more effectively. In the 20 years of the program, DDC has launched five distinct iterations of Joint Bidding that utilize different approaches to pricing and coordinating the utility work. In parallel, DDC has secured several extensions to the authorizing legislation. In 2024, DDC published the first comprehensive analysis of the Joint Bidding program and found that it saves New York City taxpayers over \$107 million per year.

JB OPEN COMPETITIVE

In Fall 2024, in response to concerns from contractors, DDC kicked off an intensive, 10-month process to completely overhaul its approach to Joint Bidding. DDC engaged a working group of contractors and private utility companies to develop updates to the program that would protect New York City residents and taxpayers by keeping project schedules and costs down while balancing the needs and perspectives of the utilities and the construction industry. Over dozens of working meetings, the group developed the key terms of the new program, called JB Open Competitive (JB-OC).

JB Open Competitive eliminates the fixed utility price list of prior Joint Bidding programs in favor of open competitive bidding on the utility items, just like on the city’s work, with the low bidder calculated on the overall total. The program lays out clear roles and responsibilities for all three parties, including provisions for timely decision-making and better pre-engineering by the utility companies during design. It also includes provisions for annual reporting by DDC and regular recurring meetings with the working group to assess the program and approach.

JB-OC has been piloted on 10 contracts since the start of 2025, with ongoing updates to the contract language as terms were resolved with the working group. Final language will be integrated into all appropriate contracts starting in mid-2025. Early bid results have been promising, with most bids falling below the engineer’s estimates and limited bid variance on either the city or private utility items. DDC will continue to monitor bid results and publish them as part of its second annual report in late 2025.

EXTENDING THE STATE AUTHORIZATION

Joint Bidding was authorized under State law with a ten-year sunset in 2004 and upon reauthorization in 2014. In 2024 and 2025, the New York State Legislature granted one-year extensions, with authorization now expected to expire in 2026. To efficiently manage the City’s growing capital program, Joint Bidding must be made permanent or extended for a minimum of 10 years in 2026.



Leaders in the Underground Environment

With hundreds of years of collective experience building in the nation’s most complex underground environment, DDC’s engineers, consulting engineers, and contractors are the pre-eminent experts in upgrading urban infrastructure.

To minimize impacts on communities, DDC has piloted new approaches to trenchless construction, installing and upgrading decades-old pipes without opening up the street.

On the East Side Coastal Resiliency project, **DDC used micro-tunneling** technology to install new sewer lines from East 10th Street into East River Park beneath the FDR highway. This technique allowed the work to be done during the day, avoiding noisy and costly overnight work that would have required closing the highway. In Maspeth, Queens, this same technology was used to install new sewers without digging trenches for over 3,700 linear feet.

Beneath one of the oldest streets in Manhattan, DDC is deploying New York City’s first use of **Spiral Wound Lining (SPR)** to rehabilitate an old, flood-prone deep interceptor sewer. An innovative trenchless construction method designed for wet conditions, SPR entails relining an existing sewer that is still in operation with a continuous four-inch-wide coil of PVC and steel reinforcement. DDC deployed this technology beneath South Street from Fulton Street to Dover Street to repair the aging sewer without extensive excavation, significantly reducing construction time, minimizing noise and safety risks, and avoiding disruptive street closures.

Through an agreement between the two cities, DDC’s infrastructure engineers are exchanging lessons learned and best practices on **trenchless technology and utility mapping** with their counterparts in the City of Tokyo.

To share our team’s firsthand knowledge, DDC also develops detailed trainings. In partnership with ACEC, we have trained over 2,600 professionals as part of a **watermain certification course** to aid field inspectors in identifying the proper techniques for watermain installation.

Coordinated Mapping

Lack of coordinated, up-to-date records is one of the leading sources of delays on DDC’s infrastructure projects as the agency must piece together often inaccurate or insufficient historic drawings from each of the individual utilities. When DDC’s contractors open the streets to start construction, they often find facilities that were not even shown in the utilities’ records at all.

To vastly improve the data available for capital construction and emergency response, the NYC Mayor’s Office of Operations (Ops) is leading an effort to improve and collect this information within a single portal. When launched, the 3D Underground project will save months in planning, design, and construction. DDC is partnering with Ops and other capital agencies to support the launch of this critical tool.

2026 and Beyond

DDC needs the tools to continue to improve coordination of the many underground utilities to get infrastructure projects completed faster and at lower cost to taxpayers. In 2026, this should include passing a long-term extension to the Joint Bidding law and requiring the utility companies with the greatest interference work, like Con Ed, to pre-pay a set amount that the City can draw from when completing this work on their behalf. It must include continued support for coordinated mapping as part of the **3D Underground** project. And it should include the resources for information exchange with other major global cities to identify the most innovative solutions.



South Street Infrastructure, Manhattan

DDC Emergency Response

Since DDC’s creation in 1996, the agency has played a critical – and often unseen – role in responding to the City’s toughest challenges. A testament to the professionalism and dedication of DDC’s team, these efforts have also laid the groundwork for lasting change.

Following the attacks on the World Trade Center in 2001, DDC took the lead in managing the successful site cleanup and restoration at Ground Zero in lower Manhattan. DDC and its contractors worked 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to remove 1.8 million tons of contaminated debris in only 8 months — a process that had been estimated to take years. The tireless efforts of the 293 DDC staff members who aided the City’s recovery were captured in a recently released documentary that was broadcast nationally on PBS and is now on public view at the National September 11 Memorial & Museum. The agency’s subsequent efforts to rapidly rebuild portions of lower Manhattan demonstrated the need for better coordination with the private utility companies, setting the stage for the first Joint Bidding law.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit New York City in March 2020, DDC sprang into immediate action building critical facilities to keep New Yorkers safe. Under extraordinarily compressed schedules, DDC built field hospitals and testing sites, upgraded four DOHMH laboratories, and built three permanent, state-of-the-art COVID Centers of Excellence for Health + Hospitals. When COVID-19 vaccines became available, DDC quickly pivoted to building vaccination sites, opening some locations in as little as four days with over 50% M/WBE participation.

DDC’s rapid response was made possible by the City- and State-level emergency declarations that suspended normal procurement rules and allowed DDC to use CM-Build delivery. DDC quickly onboarded CM-Builders to work hand in hand with design teams, immediately conducting

site assessments, adapting designs to available materials and equipment, and starting construction while design was still ongoing. In addition, DDC worked closely with oversight and regulatory agencies to provide streamlined reviews, often in parallel to the work underway.

DDC’s COVID-19 response showed what the agency could with the right tools — showing up for New Yorkers and building critical facilities in months instead of years. These same lessons formed the foundation of DDC’s Blueprint 2022, the many City-level capital reforms currently underway, and the advocacy that ultimately led to passing new CM-Build legislation in 2024.

Innovation in a Crisis: Mobile Testing Trucks

In 2020, Health + Hospitals recognized the need for a mobile testing solution to serve New Yorkers who could not easily get to a testing site. DDC saw an opportunity to repurpose existing ice cream trucks — an available resource already equipped with a service window, refrigeration, and ventilation. DDC created design requirements, released an RFP, and selected two vendors to retrofit the vehicles with office space, generating capacity, and full heating and cooling. Eight trucks served as mobile testing facilities that brought testing directly into underserved areas, a program that H+H subsequently expanded. The trucks demonstrated DDC’s ability to adapt and respond quickly under pressure, leveraging all the tools in its toolkit to serve New Yorkers in crisis.



Office of Emergency Management Headquarters



COVID-19 Mobile Testing Truck

Streamlining Payments to Contractors

Timely payments are essential to supporting our vendors and keeping jobs moving. In response to industry feedback, DDC undertook an intensive, 18-month process to make it faster and easier for contractors to get paid. As of 2025, the agency has released new standardized, simplified payment forms with fewer requirements for contractor payments and commenced a similar effort to streamline consultant payments.

In 2023, the agency kicked off this effort by convening an internal task force to diagnose barriers in the payment process. The team conducted extensive cross-divisional reviews, engaged field staff and project managers, sought input from DDC vendors, and mapped the payment lifecycle from draft requisition to audit and release. The team also partnered with the Mayor's Capital Process Reform Task Force to assess requirements across the capital agencies. The analysis uncovered key challenges including excessive and outdated requirements, inconsistent interpretation of standards, and missed opportunities to keep payments moving while addressing concerns.

These findings laid the groundwork for major reforms. DDC drastically reduced the number of requirements, resulting in a unified construction payment checklist that standardizes expectations across Public Buildings, Infrastructure, and Alternative Delivery projects and reduces the number of different forms by two-thirds. The agency eliminated requirements for notarization except where still required by outside oversight agencies, minimized the number of required signatures, and eliminated the need for paper copies.

DDC also strove to rationalize the process from pencil copy through payment to make the steps consistent, transparent and accessible. The agency published a step-by-step payments guide and forms glossary to clarify the role and requirements for each item, and integrated guidance directly into the payment forms themselves. These tools not only enable faster resolution of errors but also reduce the burden on vendors by creating predictable review cycles. The result is a process that encourages compliance through clarity and consistency rather than retroactive corrections. DDC will continue to assess its forms and policies to identify further opportunities to streamline and align payment practices across the capital delivery system.

Construction Safety and Environmental Compliance

DDC remains committed to construction safety and environmental compliance through the independent programs overseen by the Safety & Site Support Division. These initiatives ensure that all DDC projects uphold the highest standards across all phases of construction.

With an emphasis on worker safety, site maintenance, and public protection, the division plays a vital role in maintaining safe job sites. The Office of Construction Safety investigates every accident and incident to identify root causes and implement corrective measures aimed at preventing recurrence.

During the past fiscal year, the division conducted more than 2,500 **safety audits**. These assessments are instrumental in identifying risks, prompting corrective action, and addressing potentially hazardous conditions. Thanks to these efforts, the number of reportable accidents dropped from 27 in the previous fiscal year to 18.

The successful implementation of **Scorecard Plus (SCP)**, a mobile auditing application, has transformed the inspection process. Auditors can now document safety observations, annotate photos, and submit paperless audit reports directly from their mobile devices. Reports are transmitted to supervisors and project staff in near real-time, which has improved responsiveness to safety and quality issues in the field.

To further reinforce safety and environmental awareness, the division conducts regular outreach activities, including **monthly job site visits** with contractors and project teams. These visits provide a platform for open dialogue about safety and

quality topics and have expanded to include dedicated discussions on environmental issues. Additionally, the **annual Safety Summit** brings together DDC staff, construction managers, and contractors to reinforce hazard recognition and accident prevention through workshops and training sessions. The division continues to play an active role in pre-construction meetings and construction site walkthroughs to ensure compliance with protocols and to assist in the development of **Project-Specific Safety Plans**.

On the environmental side, the Safety & Site Support Division recently launched the **Environmental Code Compliance Unit**, which introduced a dedicated Environmental Audit Program. As a result, more than 500 environmental audits have been conducted to during the last year. The program is designed to ensure regulatory compliance on construction sites while protecting the public, the workforce, natural resources, and wildlife throughout New York City.

In FY 2025, the agency broadened its field advisories to include environmentally focused best practices and observations gathered during site inspections. These efforts have been further enhanced by the introduction of targeted environmental site visits, now a regular component of the division's outreach initiatives.



Providing Project-Level Insurance

On City capital projects, every contractor and subcontractor must purchase project-specific insurance, which offers critical coverage for physical property and construction activities, including workers. However insurance is a costly requirement that places a high burden on vendors as insurance costs continue to rise. This insurance requirement can further disadvantage small and M/WBE vendors who may struggle to secure insurance at attainable rates, driving up the cost of their bids. Additionally, for the City, having multiple individual insurance policies can make compliance tracking more onerous, particularly to ensure there are not gaps in coverage during renewal periods, or, in the case of a safety incident, determining which policy will apply.

To simplify the insurance process, reduce the burden for vendors, and enhance safety oversight, DDC partnered with the Mayor's Capital Process Reform Task Force to successfully advocate for changes to New York State Law to allow **Owner Controlled Insurance Programs (OCIPs)** and **Contractor Controlled Insurance Programs (CCIPs)**.

With the authorization signed into law in late 2023, the City has begun steps to integrate these insurance tools into its capital program. DDC may require CCIPs on major capital projects based on a formula accounting for project value and industry standards. DDC is also onboarding a **risk manager** in 2025 to guide implementation. Currently CCIPs are used in the Borough-Based Jails program.

A centrally managed OCIP would provide tremendous value to the City's capital program, lowering project costs overall and easing barriers to entry for small and M/WBE vendors especially. DDC strongly supports the effort to launch a centralized OCIP program for New York City capital agencies, an effort that is currently being evaluated through a feasibility study led by City Hall and EDC.

Emerging Technology

DDC continues to explore new ways to improve efficiency, reduce risk, and enhance project outcomes through emerging technologies.

By expanding the use of **Virtual Design and Construction (VDC)** tools from broader practice, DDC is building smarter, safer, and more responsively.

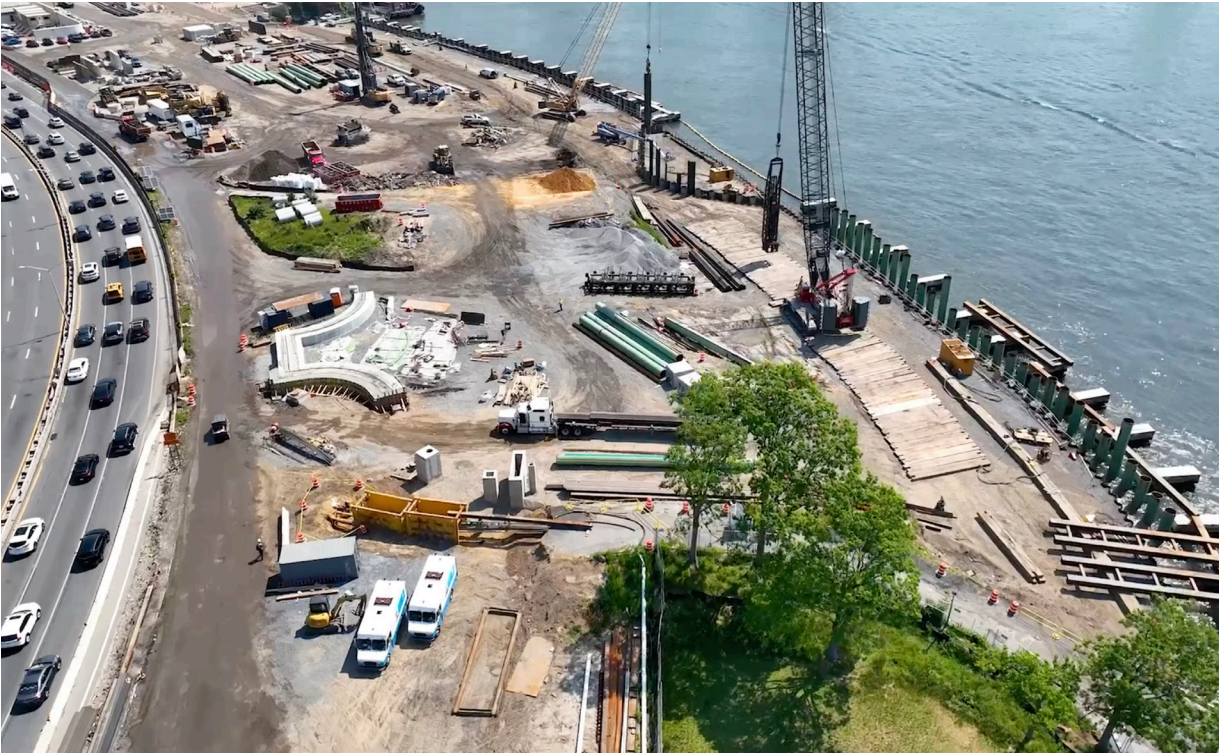
Adoption of **Building Information Modeling (BIM)** has improved design accuracy and reduced coordination conflicts in DDC projects. When utilized alongside reality capture, such as 3D scanning, projects can be developed to a high level of sophistication based on detailed field conditions. At Brooklyn Bridge Montgomery Coastal Resiliency, 3D scanning allowed for utility interferences and other issues to be identified in advance. Layering in time and cost projections to the team's 3D model created 4D and 5D visualizations that accounted for project scope, sequence, schedules and budget impacts over the project duration.

Additional reality capture methods using technologies like **drones, robotic devices**, and 360-degree cameras have generated new approaches to façade renovations, roof inspections, manual surveying, and construction monitoring. At East Side Coastal

Resiliency, aerial drone photography collected vast amounts of data, enabling better decision-making for resource allocation, scheduling, and risk mitigation. This information would have otherwise been hazardous and time-consuming to gather. Piloted at the NYPD 26th Precinct, 360-degree reality capture supported accurate jobsite tracking, reducing manual effort by up to 95%, and streamlined construction management tasks like punch lists and RFIs.

Working with industry partners and academic institutions, the agency continues to launch new research initiatives, like an upcoming BIM change management strategy in collaboration with the Town+Gown program. In 2025, DDC will convene its first **DDC Innovation Summit** bringing together agency expertise with contractors, consultants, and technical experts to explore real-world use cases in planning, safety, and construction coordination. We will also be onboarding a technologist to champion emerging technology across DDC projects.

Drone Footage
ESCR, Manhattan





Brooklyn-Montgomery
Coastal Resiliency
Project, Manhattan

Expanding our Toolbox of Project Delivery Methods

DDC and other New York City agencies have long been bound by State law to a design-bid-build model that requires them to hire a designer, complete design, and award construction to the lowest qualified bidder. In the last days of 2019 — thanks to advocacy by DDC and the industry — New York State passed the first Public Works Investment Act (PWIA), allowing DDC and six other agencies to use design-build delivery.

In the five years since the law was passed, DDC has led the way in using design-build to revolutionize project delivery. The agency has awarded 12 contracts valued at over \$800 million, saving years, meeting the highest standards of quality, and advancing a model of collaboration and innovation impossible with design-bid-build. The agency has already completed all five early works projects in the Borough-Based Jails program and completed the first two projects in its design-build pilot program in 2025 — only three years after issuing a Notice to Proceed (NTP). DDC's procurement and contract terms have been held up as a model of design-build best practices, earning the agency a 2024 I.N.S.P.I.R.E.D. Owner of the Year award from DBIA. And DDC launched its first CM-Build procurements in 2025 following the successful 2024 expansion of the PWIA.

In 2025, DDC is expanding its alternative delivery program with major new projects, including the East Side Greenway 14th Street Connector in Manhattan and Westchester Square Library in the Bronx. And, working closely with partners and champions in the industry, the agency will advocate to expand the State authorization to provide a full alternative delivery toolkit without limitations.

Indoor pool under construction at the Shirley Chisholm Recreation Center



Why Alternative Delivery?

'Alternative Delivery' refers to a suite of tools that allow the designer and builder to work together collaboratively to meet the project goals and requirements for quality, schedule, and budget. In **Design-Build**, the agency awards one contract to a single, integrated design and construction team at the start of the project:

- Traditional design-build utilizes best-value selection as part of a two-step solicitation — an RFQ followed by an RFP.
- Progressive Design-Build utilizes quality-based selection as part of a one-step solicitation.

In **CM-Build**, the agency awards separate contracts to a designer and a CM-builder, bringing the CM-builder on board early in the design phase.

Both models allow DDC to deliver high-quality projects to their communities faster, with fewer schedule delays and cost overruns.

- Partnership between the designer and builder fosters a culture of trust and collaboration throughout a project's lifecycle, enabling real-time innovation and problem-solving.

- This partnership ensures that the builder's construction expertise can help shape design decisions, and that design expertise is integrated into the process when challenges and tradeoffs arise during construction.

- Best value procurement allows the City to select the best team for the work based on a range of establish criteria, not just cost.

- The ability to start certain construction activities, like site preparation and prefabrication, during design means less down time, ultimately delivering facilities years earlier.

- Alternative Delivery methods offer greater opportunities to engage M/WBEs, with significantly higher M/WBE participation than design-bid-build projects.

Alternative Delivery methods leverage the power of collaboration to complete projects better, faster, and more cost-effectively. By allowing the designer, builder, and City to work together earlier in the process, they offer an efficient approach that reduces risk, saves taxpayer money, and gets needed facilities open years sooner while maintaining the highest levels of quality.



Championing Reform

Changing the New York State law that governs design and construction procurement has taken years of advocacy by DDC and leaders in the AEC industry and across City government. DDC has relied on the steadfast partnership of organizations including Building Congress, ACEC, AIANY, Building Congress, BTEA, DBIA, GCA, and STA to champion reform, highlighting the value of alternative delivery tools for the architects, engineers, and builders who deliver City projects and for the communities they serve.

- **2018:** NYS passed a law allowing design-build to be used on certain specific projects, like DDC's Borough-Based Jails (BBJ) program. DDC immediately got to work building out a design-build program for BBJ.
- **2019:** NYS passed the Public Works Investment Act (PWIA) expanding design-build authorization to a range of project types at DDC and six other agencies. When the law went into effect on January 1, 2020, DDC had already begun laying the groundwork to build a pilot program.

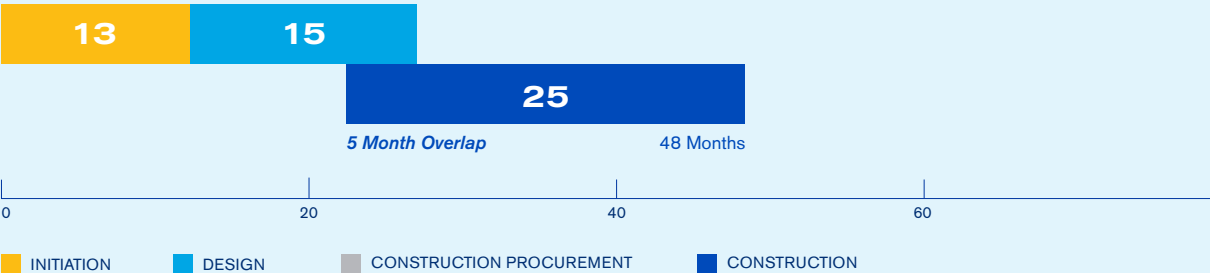
- **2022:** DDC completed its first design-build project in the Borough-Based Jails program, the Queens Garage and Community Space, only 22 months from the time of award. The same year, DDC released the first five procurements in its design-build pilot program.
- **2024:** NYS passed an expansion to the PWIA authorizing CM-build and a limited form of progressive design-build for projects at DDC.
- **2025:** DDC will complete the first three projects in its design-build pilot portfolio just three years after NTP, and released the first CM-build procurements.
- **2026:** In 2026, the agency will complete six design-build projects — every project commenced as part of the initial pilot program. **DDC and its partners will advocate for a broad expansion of the PWIA to include portfolio-wide authorization of design-build, progressive design-build, and CM-build without project type limitations.**

DESIGN-BID-BUILD v. DESIGN-BUILD DELIVERY METHOD FOR RECREATION CENTERS

Comparable Recreation Centers Using Design-Bid Build Delivery Method



Shirley Chisolm Recreation Center Using Design-Build Delivery Method



Building a Program from the Ground Up

To realize the full potential of alternative delivery, DDC recognized from the start that the program would require a new way of doing business, including all-new procurement and contract terms and new interagency processes. The agency immediately got to work building the new program, learning from experts and changing the culture of project delivery across City government.

BUILDING EXPERTISE AND CHANGING THE CULTURE

DDC began by training our team as well as our partner and oversight agencies. The agency partnered with national leaders and experts in design-build delivery, like the Design-Build Institute of America (DBIA), to offer both introductory training and in-depth certification training. As of mid-2025, DDC has trained over 150 of our own staff across several divisions, over 70 of whom have become DBIA-certified, plus staff at partner agencies including OMB, MOCS, PDC, and the Comptroller. The agency has created job aids and standard operating procedures and launched Project Manager training on procurement and contract administration themes, incorporating lessons learned.

In addition to training our oversight agencies, DDC also worked closely to tailor interagency processes to accommodate phased design and construction and faster delivery times. This included tailoring the OMB Certificate to Proceed (CP) process, PDC design review, and sponsor agency design review and decision-making. DDC continues to encourage all our sponsor agencies

and oversights to identify dedicated design-build champions to become immersed in alternative delivery practices and help translate the agencies' business practices to this model.

To develop all-new contract and procurement documents, DDC staffed a program management team, onboarded outside experts, and engaged extensively with practitioners and public owners to solicit best practices. Following its first procurements, the agency engaged with dozens of respondents to seek their feedback on what worked and what didn't. As the program grows, DDC continues to update its procurement and contract terms and business practices based on input from the industry.

In 2024, DDC centralized design-build staff into a single Alternative Delivery team directly responsible for overseeing projects in the portfolio. This transformation, which parallels the recommendations of the 2022 State of Practice Report by ACEC Research Institute, has allowed the agency to build dedicated expertise in all aspects of design-build project delivery. As the program expands, the Alternative Delivery Unit will also take the lead in overseeing CM-Build projects.

BUILDING THE INDUSTRY

Because design-build is new to public works in New York City, DDC has positioned its program to expand the field while building expertise and capacity within the industry.

The agency has welcomed new partners to the table by setting commercially friendly terms and communicating what's different about design-build. The agency releases Notices of Intent (NOIs) and Requests for Expression of Interest (RFEIs) to solicit input and feedback on specific upcoming projects where appropriate. The agency does not require designers and builders to have teamed together in the past, though teams must articulate a thoughtful

approach and clear roles in their partnership. It also does not require respondents to demonstrate past design-build experience, though awarded teams must become DBIA-trained and certified prior to the project start.

As a result of this engagement, DDC has received an average of 11.6 Statement of Qualifications (SOQs) submissions for every design-build procurement in its pilot portfolio. DDC's design-build vendors include both seasoned partners and those who have never done business with the City. And DDC continues to build the industry by partnering with DBIA, AIA, and others to ensure New York City's design and construction professionals have the information and training to take advantage of new opportunities.

CONTINUOUS LEARNING

DDC launched its initial design-build projects as a pilot with the intent to learn and adapt the program as it develops. The agency continues to engage regularly with industry associations and other owners to share challenges, best practices, and lessons learned — engagement that is described further in *Strengthening Industry Partnerships*.



Blueprint for Design-Build

Five years after the passage of the PWIA, DDC is expanding its design-build program past the pilot stage and integrating best practices and lessons learned at each step. The practices described here reflect industry-standard best practices developed by DBIA as well as DDC's experience and lessons learned translating these principles to New York City's public works.

PLANNING

Successful design-build delivery requires selecting the right projects and then conducting the detailed scoping that will set them up for success. During the Front End Planning stage, DDC assesses every project to determine the appropriate delivery method. Projects selected for the two-step design-build originally authorized under State law include new buildings and infrastructure projects with limited unknown conditions like private utilities.

Once projects are selected, DDC dedicates the time needed to fully develop detailed project requirements in coordination with a team of consulting architects and engineers. This step includes in-depth **scoping workshops** with a project's many stakeholders, including **end users**, to ensure that all needs and requirements have been identified. It also includes **detailed site investigations** comprising environmental, hazmat, geotechnical, topographic, and any specialized investigations that may be needed. This phase results in detailed scoping documents that lay out specific performance requirements as part of the design-build RFP and ultimately the contract.

SOLICITATION

DDC's goal during the in-market stage is to communicate our objectives and priorities as an owner and then allow the designer-builder maximum flexibility in delivering on those priorities through innovative design and construction solutions that meet the project budget.

DDC utilizes **scoping documents** with **performance specifications** rather than prescriptive requirements or bridging documents to allow maximum flexibility in meeting the project objectives. In the best value selection process, DDC considers factors including key personnel, teaming approach, design approach, management approach, and the technical proposal. DDC discloses the project budget as part of the solicitation and, while cost is considered in the evaluation, DDC explicitly seeks the best project for the available funding — not a cheaper project. Instead, proposers can offer meaningful **enhancements** to the project that provide greater value to the City.

During the in-market stage, DDC follows DBIA best practices that include **shortlisting three design-build teams** and providing **stipends** to unsuccessful but responsive proposers. DDC hosts **Collaborative Dialogue Meetings (CDMs)** with structured agendas led by the design-build teams to ensure that proposers have the input they need to develop responsive proposals.

As the program develops, DDC has worked hard to rightsize the level of effort during the in-market stage, calibrating both the stipend amount and number of CDMs based on industry standards and experience.



CONTRACT TERMS

DDC has developed all-new contract terms that aim to take full advantage of the potential of alternative delivery, including a collaborative approach that shares the risk and brings new partners to the table. This has required a strong and agile legal team comprising both internal expertise and outside counsel collectively willing to test novel approaches and respond to feedback.

Once the project is awarded, DDC's contract terms lay the groundwork for a strong start. DDC uses the **limited negotiations** step to address any outstanding questions or concerns from the in-market stage, including technical or pricing considerations. A contractually obligated **site validation period** requires the design-builder to conduct their own detailed investigations and diligence within a specific timeframe to uncover any unknowns that may impact the price, schedule, or approach.

DDC's contracts proactively anticipate 'known unknowns' including unforeseen conditions, regulatory changes, and disputes. DDC defines set categories of work that will qualify as Relief Events, or built-in contractual mechanisms to provide relief in time or cost. For **Compensable Relief Events**, meaning those events that qualify for additional funding, DDC utilizes a pre-registered contingency fund that the agency can access without additional regulatory steps, provided that all requirements are met.

When disputes arise, DDC's design-build contracts lay out a specific escalation path that aims to resolve those disputes collaboratively by the project team. When disputes cannot be resolved, the contract provides for a one- or three-member **Dispute Resolution Board** comprised of impartial legal, design, and/or construction professionals selected by both DDC and the design-builder.

To take full advantage of the collaborative potential of design-build, DDC plans to pilot an **award fee** based on the successful federal design-build program. An incentive for exemplary performance, the award fee provides additional compensation at specific milestones when predetermined targets are met, such as exemplary teamwork and exceedance of sustainability goals.

POST-AWARD PRACTICES

After award and site validation, DDC's goal is to ensure design-builders are set up for success by streamlining City regulatory approvals, coordinating design feedback, and fostering strong partnerships.

Public design and construction involves many stakeholders and oversight steps that can collectively add months to the design phase, and standard review procedures may not be compatible with phased design and construction. DDC has partnered with many of its oversight agencies and sponsors to ensure that they are prepared to provide **timely reviews** and feedback at the appropriate milestones. DDC's submittal schedule indicates

which submittals by the design-builder that require City approval versus those that may be resolved between the designer and builder. DDC authorizes certain site preparation work to begin after Schematic Design and certain early works upon completion of Design Development.

Strong partnership is essential to the success of any design-build project, and DDC's procurement and contract terms explicitly seek to build collaborative relationships. During the procurement stage, DDC seeks out coordinated teams that work well together as demonstrated in their proposal and Collaborative Dialogue Meetings. Proposers must identify certain key roles, including a **Design-Build Project Manager** whose role is to bridge project management

and design coordination, and must stipulate the percent of time they are allocating to the project. After award, DDC organizes **Principals Meetings** to proactively address challenges and ensure the organizations remained aligned at the highest levels of leadership. DDC's contract also requires **partnering sessions** that ensure DDC and the design-build team are aligned on project goals in order to tackle day-to-day challenges and assess team dynamics to improve collaboration and teamwork .

M/WBE PARTICIPATION

Alternative Delivery tools dramatically expand the City's ability to engage M/WBEs and local workforce, with clear results: DDC's M/WBE participation rate for design-build and CM-build projects is over10 percent higher than the rate for design-bid-build. DDC drives M/WBE participation in its design-build projects through a few key strategies.

DDC sets mandatory **thirty percent M/WBE participation goals** for both the design and construction phase, with **disaggregated goals** for Black (10%), Hispanic (10%), and unspecified vendors. Via the enabling legislation, both **City- and State-certified M/WBEs** are eligible. Multiple tiers of subcontractors can be considered

towards meeting the project's M/WBE goals, allowing the agency to drive participation for a broader range of subcontractors.

Using best value selection, DDC evaluates teams on both their past **performance** and proposed **approach** to engaging M/WBEs, as well as other factors. Teams are now required to include an **M/WBE and Community Engagement Executive** as part of the Key Personnel.

Early partnership among the designer, builder, and agency also means that engagement starts earlier, with more transparency into subcontracting. During the solicitation, DDC publishes the shortlisted design-build teams on its website to facilitate partnering during the RFP step.

After award, the agency requires design-builders to include specific community engagement activities related to hiring local and diverse businesses, particularly within the area. For example, in 2023, DDC held a "Construction Career & M/WBE Expo" in Brownsville, Brooklyn that introduced participants to training in skilled construction trades and anticipation of an upcoming design-build project. Building on lessons learned, design-builders are now required to host **"Meet the Teams"** events for each project, which highlight subcontracting and workforce opportunities. In 2025, teams started these outreach efforts just two days after Notice to Proceed was issued.

Blueprint for Design-Build

Planning

- Choose the right projects
- Engage stakeholders upfront, including end users
- Conduct detailed site investigations
- Be thoughtful in sharing the risk by taking responsibility for existing conditions and City-side approvals

Solicitation

- Provide performance specifications, not prescriptive requirements
- Use best value selection to reward performance and innovation, not the cheapest solution
- Disclose the budget, then design to budget
- Shortlist to three teams
- Provide a stipend for unsuccessful but responsive teams
- Hold Collaborative Dialogue Meetings with decision-makers at the table

Contract Terms

- Identify a creative and solutions-oriented legal team, not "business as usual"
- Use limited negotiations phase to proactively address concerns
- Pay mobilization to allow a strong start
- Use the site validation period after NTP to uncover 'known unknowns' in a timely manner
- Define justifiable Compensable Relief Events payable from a registered contingency fund
- Manage disputes collaboratively through a Dispute Resolution Board
- Next: Incentivize performance through 'award fees' that reward exemplary performance

Post-Award Practices

- Partner with oversights for streamlined design review and regulatory approvals
- Tie site preparation and early works authorization to design milestones
- Require key teaming roles and teaming approach to be evaluated during solicitation to support a collaborative approach upon award
- Principals meetings and partnering sessions to support strong teams

M/WBE Participation

- 30% M/WBE participation goals for design and construction
- Disaggregated goals to address the 'disparity within the disparity'
- Best value selection includes criteria for M/WBE performance and approach
- Published shortlist allows opportunities for teaming
- "Meet the Teams" events hosted in the local community provide access to upcoming opportunities

DDC's
Design-Build
Projects

As of July 2025, DDC has awarded all ten Borough-Based Jails contracts and 12 contracts in its design-build program for Public Buildings and Infrastructure, collectively valued at over \$16 billion.

Rendering of the new BBJ facility in Brooklyn
Tutor Perini/HOK

PROJECT FEATURE
BBJ Brooklyn Facility

DDC is delivering on the City's commitment to close Rikers Island by overseeing the design and construction for the Borough-Based Jail program. Built on principles of criminal justice reform, the four new facilities will be smaller, safer, and fairer, grounded in dignity and respect for their occupants and staff. Designed to contribute to civic life, the Brooklyn facility will create supportive environments that foster safety, autonomy and well-being, encourage ongoing connections to the networks that support people in custody, and relate to the neighborhood context. This approach unfolds in the surrounding public realm, with broad sidewalks and a therapeutic landscape design supportive of neurodiverse and multi-generational users.

With a Notice to Proceed in June 2023 for the design and construction of the new facility, Phase 1 Design and Site Validation was completed one month early, and Phase 2 Design Completion and Construction is well underway with the start of structural steel erection. During Phase 2, the contract was negotiated

from a Guaranteed Maximum Price to a Lump Sum, easing project management and budget oversight. The Brooklyn facility will be completed in 2029 — at least four years faster than would have been possible with design-bid-build.

Throughout the process, the team has remained focused on delivering the best outcomes through design and construction. Internally, the team has focused on learning from best practices in justice design and human experience design and utilized a range of tools to drive productive dialogue. Externally, public engagement has been critical. Starting before RFQs were released, DDC regularly met with and presented to local elected officials, Community Boards, community-based organizations, and Neighborhood Advisory Committees (NACs). From targeted workshops, the team gained design input from community members and insights from justice advocates focused on the visiting experience and rehabilitative environment. This focus on community and stakeholder engagement continues with those groups today and dedicated Community Construction Liaisons are on site daily, available and ready to keep community members up to date on project progress.



PROJECT FEATURE
Shirley Chisholm
Recreation Center

Rendering of the new Shirley Chisholm Recreation Center in Brooklyn
Consigli/Studio Gang

Named for the Brooklyn-born and first African American U.S. Congresswoman, Shirley Chisholm, the new \$140 million recreation center for NYC Parks is sited in the heart of Brooklyn at the Nostrand Playground in the East Flatbush neighborhood. A new civic hub, the 74,000 square foot facility is the only public recreation center in the area. With a programmatic mix that encourages health and wellbeing, the community will have access to a public plaza, indoor swimming pool,

fitness amenities (including strength and cardio equipment, gymnasium, and walking track), and a teaching kitchen. Design-build delivery allowed the team to nimbly navigate utility re-routing and easement conflicts with minimal schedule impacts, taking weeks instead of months to resolve.

Anticipated to achieve LEED Gold certification, the Shirley Chisholm Recreation Center reached substantial completion in July, less than three years from NTP, and will open to the public later in 2025.



PROJECT FEATURE

**Orchard Beach
Maintenance and
Operations Facility**

Orchard Beach
Maintenance Facility
Green Roof and Exterior
Gilbane /nARCHITECTS

The first project in DDC's design-build pilot program, the new \$35.9 million Orchard Beach Maintenance and Operations facility serves as the headquarters for NYC Parks staff responsible for the care of Orchard Beach, a 122-acre, 1.1-mile public beach in the Bronx. In response to flooding of the original building after Hurricane Sandy in 2012, the new building is strategically sited on a hilltop above the flood zone, which also enables the headquarters to serve as an interagency emergency response center for the Bronx. The two-story, 11,500 square foot structure is expected to achieve LEED Gold certification.

Design-build provided significant benefits thanks to a deeply collaborative team. The building is clad in a robust and enduring insulated precast concrete panel system with an undulating form that takes inspiration

from the historic Orchard Beach Pavilion. With the original design exceeding the anticipated budget, this innovative solution eliminated potential cost and schedule overruns and mitigated safety hazards while delivering on aesthetic and performance requirements.

The Orchard Beach Maintenance and Operations facility reached substantial completion in April 2025, just three years from NTP, and was handed over to Parks staff in time for the 2025 beach season. The project received a 2024 Excellence in Design Award from the NYC Public Design Commission.



PROJECT FEATURE

Raised Crosswalks

Part of the Vision Zero program to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries, NYC DOT launched an ambitious plan in 2022 to install hundreds of new raised crosswalks throughout the five boroughs. By elevating the crosswalk to the level of the sidewalk, the new raised crosswalks will slow cars, increase pedestrian visibility, and make it easier and safer to cross the street. To deliver on the City's commitment, DDC identified design-build with a guaranteed maximum price as the best delivery approach, leveraging innovation to get more crosswalks built faster.

DDC launched the solicitation for the Raised Crosswalks projects in 2023, with project requirements that include installation of ADA-accessible pedestrian ramps,

audible crossing signals, and coordination with stormwater and private utility lines. DDC's project requirements stipulated a minimum of 100 locations, but innovation during the procurement phase meant that the awarded design-build team will provide 127 locations. The team proposed technical innovations like precast forms to standardize fabrication, enhance quality control, and hasten construction. Unlike traditional delivery methods, the work will be done concurrently in packages, with the first sites starting construction in 2026 while other sites are still in design. This method will further reduce the construction schedule and allow the design-builder to integrate lessons learned into subsequent construction packages.

Strengthening Industry Partnerships and Expanding Opportunities for M/WBEs

DDC endeavors to be an owner of choice for the architects, engineers, contractors, construction managers, and other allied professionals who deliver New York City's public works. By engaging proactively with industry leaders, we continuously improve our own business practices while advocating hand in hand with our industry partners for the tools we need to build better. And we leverage our capital portfolio to expand opportunities for M/WBEs, building their capacity to win and excel on City contracts.

Expanding the Toolkit



Rendering of 70 Mulberry Street, Manhattan

In 2024, New York State passed an expansion to the Public Works Investment Act authorizing DDC to use CM-Build for libraries and cultural institutions on City-owned land, and a limited version of Progressive Design-Build for resiliency infrastructure.

DDC set to work developing an all-new CM-build contract and solicitation materials and released its first RFQ in Spring 2025, with preparations underway to release additional solicitations. As with design-build, the agency will advance the first CM-Build projects as part of a pilot program designed to respond to input from the industry and lessons learned.

DDC is also preparing to release design-build procurements for resiliency infrastructure that take advantage of the progressive model, though additional changes are required to the law to allow true progressive design-build.

In 2026, DDC and partners will continue to advocate to expand the PWIA to allow broad authorization without project type limitations.

Strengthening Industry Partnerships



LISTENING TO OUR VENDORS
DDC partners with some of the world's top design and construction professionals, and we constantly seek opportunities for open dialogue with our vendors to improve how we do business. Acknowledging that our partner firms are the experts, DDC has built several opportunities to exchange feedback and lessons learned.

DDC hosts regular **roundtable discussions** with architects, engineers, and contractors in partnership with the industry associations that represent them. These discussions have led to tangible changes to our design and construction contracts, described at length in the corresponding sections.

In 2025, DDC launched a **Consultant Engagement Program** that brings DDC's on-call architects into direct discussion with one another and with DDC's staff and leadership. Through recurring roundtable discussions and field visits to active and completed projects, the program provides a forum to exchange experiences and lessons learned in tackling the challenges — and creative solutions — of delivering public works. These discussions will shape teams' approach to future projects as well as changes to DDC's business practices.

SHARING OPPORTUNITIES AND BUILDING CAPACITY
To raise awareness about upcoming projects, DDC regularly hosts events to highlight anticipated contract solicitations for the next calendar year.

Industry Forums create opportunities for contractors and consultants to network and partner, as well as preview the project pipeline. These events are open to the public and are often also targeted specifically to M/WBE firms, designers, contractors, and alternative delivery teams. For specific programs or projects, DDC also hosts pre-solicitation conferences, issues notices of intent, and engages with industry groups to communicate about these opportunities.

DDC also focuses on readying vendors to work with us, by having the tools to deliver City projects effectively. During the last round of design requirements contract for public buildings, DDC implemented consultant onboarding workshops to improve project delivery. Additionally, the Infrastructure division has developed workshops for small and emerging design firms that support the expansion of the pool of firms that apply for and win City contracts. DDC also offers workshops with industry groups like ACEC on Water Main Training to uplevel project management.

DDC is advancing inclusive economic growth and strengthening New York City's workforce through its continued support of Community Hiring across its project portfolio. In alignment with the goals of the City's Project Labor Agreements (PLAs) and the Office of

Community Hiring, DDC embeds workforce development into its contracts by setting employment and apprenticeship goals that prioritize low-income individuals and residents from underserved communities. Building on the foundation of the HireNYC program, as of Spring 2025 DDC has incorporated Community Hiring provisions into all its contracts, including several recently awarded, creating direct pathways to union careers in construction

New to DDC through the Alternative Delivery portfolio are **"Meet the Teams"** events. Piloted and now included in the Design-Build Agreement, these sessions are hosted within the community to drive local hiring in the project geography, raise interest in upcoming opportunities, and prepare businesses to work with the design-builder and DDC.



BUILDING STRONG COALITIONS
DDC maintains robust relationships with major **industry associations** to gain valuable feedback and advocate for the tools we need to improve the capital delivery process. We partner closely with groups including ACEC, AIANY, Building Congress, BTEA, DBIA, GCA, nycoba|NOMA, and STA on roundtables, professional events, and legislative advocacy. The agency also partnered with the Mayor's Capital Process Reform Task Force alongside many of these same organizations to drive major City- and State-level changes to capital delivery.

In 2022, DDC launched a quarterly **Public Owners Roundtable** to bring together major New York City design and construction entities including the Port Authority, MTA, School Construction Authority, and the NYC Economic Development Corporation. These meetings serve as a vital touch point to discuss industry trends and exchange best practices. DDC has hosted similar engagement sessions with capital teams in the federal government, Princeton University, and others.

DDC is also partnering with local universities and civic organizations like Open House New York (OHNY) to sponsor **learning tours** of DDC project sites, expanding the conversation to the broader design and advocacy community.

MANAGING PERFORMANCE
To foster accountability and drive improvements in project delivery, DDC has implemented a standardized **performance evaluation framework** for general contractors, design consultants and construction managers. Developed collaboratively across DDC divisions and informed by AEC industry best practices, this process complements PASSPort evaluations from the Mayor's Office of Contract Services (MOCS) and builds upon the same core evaluation areas, including

Timeliness of Performance, Fiscal Administration and Accountability, and Overall Performance and Quality.

Evaluations are conducted at multiple milestones throughout the project lifecycle such as design submissions, construction phases, and project close out, and they assess performance across additional criteria such as schedule adherence, quality, responsiveness, and overall collaboration. This structured, data-driven approach establishes a rigorous performance record

that supports both recognition and remedial action, if necessary. The framework provides consistent, objective feedback to all vendors while equipping DDC with critical insights to strengthen internal quality control and inform future vendor selection.

Embedded into standard operating procedures, the program is being integrated into CMS platforms for automated tracking, with plans to expand to subcontractor assessments in future phases

Expanding Opportunities for M/WBEs

Over 6,000 miles of streets and highways connect New York City’s neighborhoods while carrying the vital infrastructure that provides essential services to 8.5 million New Yorkers. The city’s watermains and sewers share space beneath the roadway with private utility lines like gas, electric, and telecommunications.

SUPPORTING MINORITY- AND WOMEN-OWNED FIRMS
DDC continues to raise the bar for contract awards for minority- and women-owned business enterprises (M/WBEs). In the last five years, DDC has awarded over \$3.2 billion in contracts to M/WBEs across project types and delivery methods. Also, over the past 8 years, DDC has focused on addressing the “disparity within the disparity” by setting ethnicity-specific participation contract goals. This initiative is intended to increase equality and focuses on City-certified M/WBEs that have been found to be underrepresented in the City’s contracting opportunities. DDC continues to advocate for **State and City reciprocity** for M/WBE certifications, with either being accepted for our Design-Build procurements.

By convening a quarterly **M/WBE Advisory Board**, DDC keeps firms updated on programmatic news and upcoming opportunities and solicits input into how we can build M/WBE participation in DDC projects.

GROWING CAPACITY AND FOSTERING MENTORSHIP
In 2021, DDC launched a new Construction Mentoring Program for qualified M/WBE construction firms and small businesses, the first of its kind for a City agency. The program set a new standard for mentoring and allowed firms to gain valuable experience that would allow them to grow their capacity, ultimately competing for larger contracts. DDC launched its initial two cohorts and awarded the first contract to a program participant in 2023. In 2024, following successful State legislation, DDC transitioned its program to become part of the new Citywide program.

LEVERAGING ALTERNATIVE DELIVERY TO EXPAND PARTICIPATION
Alternative Delivery has given DDC the tools to increase M/WBE engagement and utilization well beyond the performance on our design-bid-build portfolio. Through the strategies described in *Expanding our Toolbox*, M/WBE utilization on DDC’s alternative delivery projects remain strong at approximately 37% participation rate with approximately \$810 million awarded to M/WBEs to date from DDC’s Alternative Delivery portfolio.

ENCOURAGING PROSPERITY THROUGH ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITIES
DDC continues to find innovative ways to support M/WBE participation. In partnership with DOT, DDC is working to install and upgrade more than 185,000 curb ramps throughout New York City. To ready businesses for opportunities on this 30-year, \$6 billion Pedestrian Ramp Program,

SBS, DDC, and DOT developed the NYC Construction Ramp-Up Program in 2023, which offers intensive education, training, and mentorship on the requirements of the City’s rehabilitation projects and contracts. In addition to encouraging participation via the PQL, DDC also works to highlight subcontracting opportunities for program participants.

Additionally, DDC has continued to advocate for changes to State legislation for M/WBEs. In partnership with the Capital Reform Task Force, DDC helped secure an increase in the maximum contract value for procurements via the M/WBE Small Purchase method, capped at \$500,000 prior to 2022 and increased to \$1.5M in 2023. With the higher threshold, DDC is able to leverage new contracts using this method, including recent awards for special inspections, air quality monitoring, and construction safety monitoring. DDC is also seeing success with M/WBE

Small Purchase method awardees successfully competing for prime contracts, with one firm navigating a time and program-sensitive project awarded using the M/WBE small purchase method and recently awarded a prime contract for a design-build project.

Cost of insurance is also often a major barrier to market entry, and DDC-supported State legislation in 2023 that authorized owner-controlled and contractor-controlled insurance programs (OCIP / CCIP), described in detail in Building Better.



M/WBE Utilization (FY 2021 to FY 2025 Q3)			
	M/WBE AWARD, \$	M/WBE, %	BLACK/HISPANIC, %
DDC Overall (per LL1)	\$1,536,038,182	22.6%	8.3%
DESIGN-BUILD	\$158,201,328	46.6%	12.5%
CM-BUILD*	\$187,830,070	53.7%	27.7%
Competitive Sealed Bid**	\$720,484,450	18.1%	6.7%

*This section reflects all prime contracts and subcontracts awarded per Local Law 1, including the Competitive Sealed Bid (CSB) method which is used in traditional design-bid-build delivery. Alternative delivery methods are not included.

**At the time of publishing, CM-Build contracts include only those awarded in limited circumstances, including under emergency declaration. With the expansion of the Public Works Investment Act, DDC will have expanded ability to use CM-Build.

DDC in Communities

DDC works on projects in every borough and neighborhood in the New York City and strives to keep residents, elected officials, businesses, and institutions informed through a team of dedicated community outreach professionals.

DDC's **Office of Community Outreach & Notification (OCON)** keeps the public informed and works to resolve community concerns that inevitably arise. Construction can be complex and disruptive, but DDC works hard to limit inconveniences through thoughtful and safe accommodations for residents, advance notifications of service interruptions, maintenance of essential City services, and support for small businesses.

During the design process and prior to the start of construction, DDC partners with local stakeholders, including elected officials, Community Boards, and Business Improvement Districts. This might take the form of Community Design Charettes, pre-construction meetings, or presentations and site walkthroughs that can deepen DDC's understanding of community needs as well as explain project impacts and overall benefits to the community.

A **Community Construction Liaison (CCL)** is assigned to most DDC construction projects and serves as the primary point of contact for the public—they can be found distributing project notices and informational materials, meeting with residents, or speaking with other local stakeholders. Originally exclusive to DDC's Infrastructure portfolio, an expanded CCL program was developed to include Public Buildings projects in 2021. To maximize the number of projects that have CCLs, DDC started a pilot program to staff additional projects under a part-time model. After demonstrated success, DDC expanded the part-time model in 2024 with CCLs staffed through rotational contract holders, a majority of whom are M/WBE firms.

CCLs represent a cross-section of New Yorkers, from younger people to retirees, and many become interested in pursuing design and construction professions through the experience. The agency has conducted outreach through the Department of the Aging to encourage local hiring and hosted numerous job fairs for large-scale projects like East Side Coastal Resiliency and Borough-Based Jails in the neighborhoods where DDC is working. Close to 100 CCLs are working at any given time on DDC projects across the City.

DDC has also actively pursued new technology to supplement community outreach. To better engage with the business community, DDC, in partnership with the NYC Department of Small Business Services (SBS), is leveraging **Live XYZ**, an up-to-date geospatial database of local businesses, to keep proprietors better informed of construction disruptions to better understand the business impacts of projects. **Language Line** further enhances DDC communications, allowing for on-demand translation services, particularly in diverse neighborhoods with potential language barriers. Finally, at the Roy Wilkins Recreation Center project, DDC is piloting inCitu, an AR visualization tool that allows community members to see and experience a 3D model on site, simply by scanning a QR code. DDC also plans to pilot the use of QR codes on project signage to directly provide contact information for the project CCL.

DDC also engages with youth and young adults throughout the capital delivery process. The **Neighborhood Infrastructure Curbside Education (NICE)** program allows students to visit select DDC projects to learn about the construction of public works, brings to classrooms in-person presentations on engineering and architecture, and provides educational materials for students to learn more about careers in design and construction.

Construction sites are also notorious for their temporary protective structures, and DDC works with local organizations, like schools or Business Improvement Districts, to install illustrated **construction mesh fencing**, often using artworks by local children. During the reconstruction of NYC City Hall's steps, elementary school students from PS 130M Hernando De Soto provided art featuring their favorite parts of NYC.

Every DDC project is meant to bolster the surrounding neighborhood, whether improving air quality, providing resilience to climate change, or providing the buildings that bring communities together. It can sometimes take a while to get there, but we continually strive to be transparent and communicate what is happening with the community.

Building, Supporting, and Empowering Our Team

As an agency created to centralize expertise in public design and construction, DDC's team of over 1,200 professionals possess enormous collective knowledge and experience in all aspects of capital project delivery. The agency aims to support and empower its staff with the tools they need to successfully deliver the nation's largest municipal capital program.

Cultivating Collective Expertise

DDC's dedicated team of professionals bring deep expertise in all areas pertaining to capital project delivery — from design and construction to procurement and contracts, to safety, accessibility, sustainability, community engagement and other areas. DDC's goal is to leverage this enormous wealth of collective expertise to support the professional development of every team member.

DDC's team includes hundreds of licensed engineers, architects, and landscape architects, and the agency supports its staff in securing and maintaining **professional licensure** through continuing education courses. DDC also provides a range of formal training and **certification** programs and has trained hundreds of its staff for certification by DBIA, Envision, and LEED. The agency's in-house **Project Management Training Program** has supported over 250 design and construction professionals since 2018. Additionally, DDC supports **staff-led workshops and training**, including dozens of workshops hosted by DDC's own staff on topics like cost estimating, accessibility, and bid packaging. These opportunities elevate and recognize DDC's subject matter experts and encourage collaboration across the teams.

DDC recognizes the value of learning from past performance and exchanging lessons learned among its community of staff, consultants, and contractors. The agency launched a program of **Lessons Learned Site Visits** for its public buildings staff and expanded these visits agency-wide in 2022. These site visits provide an opportunity for DDC staff to reflect on the successes and challenges of delivering their projects, sharing what they've learned and providing a forum for open discussion with professionals across the agency. The insights from these tours encourage an improved understanding of constructability, risk management, and environmental and community impacts.

Since 2022, DDC has hosted over 35 lectures and panel discussions as part of its monthly **DDC Talks** lecture series. Bringing in practitioners and experts from all over the world—as well as from DDC's own community of partners—the series offers an in-depth exploration of topics as varied as mass timber, child-friendly design, and 21st century resilient waterfronts, among many others. The program offers continuing education credits through AIA Continuing Education.



Sharing Our Knowledge

In recognition of the agency's leadership and expertise, DDC staff frequently present the agency's work at local, regional and national convenings of professional organizations like AIA, ACEC, ASHE, CMAA, and DBIA, and have received award recognition for their professional expertise, advocacy, and leadership. In 2023, DDC received an "Award of Merit" from ACEC New York for the agency's leadership and initiative in the built environment, and in 2024 was honored by DBIA as the "I.N.S.P.I.R.E.D. Owner of the Year" for the agency's inaugural design-build program. DDC's projects

have earned dozens of awards in recognition of their design and construction excellence and the contributions of their expert teams.

In partnership with the School Construction Authority, DDC staff volunteer their time to introduce local high school students to careers in architecture, construction, and engineering through the **ACE Mentor Program**. Meeting weekly after school, students participate in various activities, field trips, and the national Construction Industry Round Table (CIRT) Competition. In 2024, the DDC-SCA team was a top finalist.

Building the Tools We Need

To equip DDC's staff with the tools they need to deliver increasingly complex projects in a changing world, DDC regularly evaluates its business practices for areas of improvement. Since 2020, the agency has developed hundreds of **Standard Operating Procedures** (SOPs) to improve communications, project workflows, and organizational practices. SOPs are regularly updated as processes are modernized to meet current business needs.

Additionally, the agency pursues tools to support staff as technology continues to evolve and improve. The agency is building the new Advanced Capital Planning portal and rolling out Construction Management Software, described in detail in *Transforming Capital Delivery*. DDC regularly builds and improves in-house tools like the **DDC Anywhere** portal, a cloud-based knowledge and productivity application. DDC also encourages its staff and vendors to explore the use of emerging technology in design and construction.

Expanding
the Team

DDC has worked hard to expand our team to meet our growing capital portfolio, which has more than tripled in the last ten years. DDC continues to look for opportunities to simplify the hiring process and onboard new staff as efficiently as possible. The **DDC Rapid Hiring Initiative** is a pilot effort designed to accelerate the agency's hiring process by embracing a solution-oriented

mindset. While currently focused on specific roles, the goal is to embed this sense of urgency and adaptability into DDC's overall hiring culture. Nearly 30 staff are anticipated to start in within the next few months, and the initiative is a model for what responsive, cross-functional hiring can look like at DDC—quick, strategic, and committed to attracting the best talent.

Celebrating our
Diversity

DDC is one of the most diverse City agencies, representing five generations within our workforce, speaking over 40 languages and dialects, and hailing from over 65 countries of origin. This diversity contributes directly to the communities we serve, and DDC works hard to foster a sense of community among our own team. An installation in the agency's main lobby visually celebrates this diversity, with employees welcomed to add a pin to the map to show where they were born.

At DDC, diversity is woven into the culture of the agency through vibrant programming and active employee

engagement. Seven **Cultural Committees**—celebrating Lunar New Year, Black History Month, AANHPI Heritage, Eid, Caribbean Heritage, Hispanic Heritage, and Diwali—lead thoughtful events that highlight the richness of global traditions. From dance performances and cultural presentations to themed luncheons, these events create opportunities to connect, learn, and celebrate together. DDC also supports nine active **Employee Clubs**, including People of Color Network, Pride + Allies, and Women Empowering Women, that foster community and creativity through events and workshops.



Borough-Based
Jails Brooklyn
Facility



Blueprint Accomplishments

SINCE 2022

Over the past four years, DDC has made tremendous strides to build better, faster, cheaper, and more inclusively.

Planning Better

- ✓ Launched pilot Advanced Capital Planning (ACP) data portal for public buildings and built a proof-of-concept building assessment tool
- ✓ Completed ACP pilot study for Brooklyn Public Library and Queens Public Library
- ✓ Secured \$4.5 million in capital funding and new staff to launch the Advanced Capital Planning program and build permanent software and data tools with the Department of City Planning (DCP)

Better Procurement

- ✓ Launched 2025 design contract solicitation for Public Buildings with updated terms from direct engagement with the industry
- ✓ Launched updates to DDC's website to make opportunities easier to find and understand
- ✓ Launched DDC Contracts Steering Group to share best practices and level requirements across the agency

Designing Better

- ✓ Launched comprehensive Sponsor Scope Change process to limit changes during design
- ✓ Published new Design Consultant Guide for Public Buildings, with infrastructure Design Guidelines to follow

- ✓ Partnered with the Public Design Commission to streamline interagency design review
- ✓ Hired a DOB project advocate and partnered with DOB in their launch of the Central Development Program to centralize DDC project approvals
- ✓ Partnered with FDNY on a streamlined process for expediting priority approvals
- ✓ Launched post-occupancy user surveys

Building Better

- ✓ Rolled out Expanded Work Allowance on all applicable projects and partnered with the Task Force to expand citywide with additional types of eligible work
- ✓ Launched updated construction contracts with:
 - Cost adjustments for fuel, steel, and asphalt
 - Enhanced mobilization
 - Early completion incentives
 - Value engineering and substitutions
 - City work acceleration
 - Executive Order 23 clean construction
- ✓ Completed a comprehensive review of DDC's contractor payment process and launched all-new streamlined requirements and forms
- ✓ Fostered partnering during construction by co-locating teams on site and compensating construction services based on time spent
- ✓ Launched Construction Management software with goal to expand across the agency's portfolio
- ✓ Piloted use of drones, robotic devices, and 360-degree cameras for site investigations and construction monitoring

Expanding our Toolbox of Delivery Methods

- ✓ Built out full-scale design-build programs, the first for any NYC agency, for the Borough-Based Jails (BBJ) and for DDC's Public Buildings and Infrastructure projects
- ✓ In the BBJ program, completed all five early works projects on time and on budget and awarded all four facilities contracts, collectively valued at over \$15 billion—the country's largest vertical design-build program for public works
- ✓ In the Design-Build Pilot program, awarded 12 contracts valued at over \$800 million and completed the first two projects, the Orchard Beach Maintenance and Operations Building and Shirley Chisholm Recreation Center less than three years from NTP—on time and on budget
- ✓ Developed all-new CM-Build contracts and solicitation materials and released the first procurements in the pilot program
- ✓ Trained over 150 staff in design-build delivery, with over 70 becoming DBIA-certified
- ✓ Received the DBIA I.N.S.P.I.R.E.D. Owner of the Year Award
- ✓ Secured an expansion of the NYS enabling legislation to include CM-Build for libraries and cultural institutions and a limited form of Progressive Design-Build for resiliency infrastructure

Transforming the City's Capital Delivery Process

- ✓ Partnered with the Mayor's Capital Process Reform Task Force to achieve major gains:
 - Electronic bidding to replace paper bids (NYS legislation)
 - New public notice and comment process to replace public hearing (NYS legislation)
 - Five-fold increase to the threshold for Financial Control Board contract review
 - Expanded rules for capital eligibility under Comptroller's Directive 10
 - Reset threshold for Capital Approval Standards ('blanket CPs), with biannual updates
 - Repeal of Executive Order 102, replaced with agencies' own process
 - Reset the threshold for Local Law 63 from \$200k to \$1m and the public notice period from 60 days to 10 days
- ✓ Partnered with City Hall and the Law Department to draft DDC Authority legislation

Strengthening Industry Partnerships and Expanding Opportunities for M/WBEs

- ✓ Launched the NYC Public Owners Roundtable with principals from MTA, Port Authority, SCA, EDC, and others
- ✓ Strengthened partnerships with industry associations including ACEC, AIANY, Building Congress, BTEA, DBIA, GCA, nycoba|NOMA, and STA to improve DDC's business practices and advance State legislation to streamline capital project delivery
- ✓ Hosted regular roundtable discussions with DDC's architects, engineers, CMs, and contractors, and launched the Consultant Engagement Program to formalize these efforts

- ✓ Piloted "Meet the Teams" events for alternative delivery contracts and then integrated them into all alternative delivery contracts
- ✓ Awarded over \$3.2 billion to M/WBEs in the past five years, achieving over 37% participation in our alternative delivery portfolio
- ✓ Launched the successful M/WBE mentoring program and transitioned it to the new Citywide program
- ✓ Supported an increase in maximum contract values for M/WBE Small Purchase method procurements from \$500,000 prior to 2022 to \$1.5 million in 2023.
- ✓ Incorporated Community Hiring into all solicitations beginning in spring 2025

Building, Supporting, and Empowering our Team

- ✓ Built out dedicated teams to lead Recruitment, Training and Staff Development, and Employee Engagement
- ✓ Hosted hiring fairs and career days and launched a Rapid Hiring Initiative where we interviewed over 70 qualified applicants, and selected nearly 30 candidates since March 2025 through an expedited process
- ✓ Established monthly agencywide Lessons Learned Site Visits, touring over 20 sites since 2022

Blueprint Strategic Goals

FOR THE ROAD AHEAD

Looking forward, DDC will continue to lead transformative change to the capital delivery process in partnership with the AEC industry, partner and oversight agencies, and State and local elected leaders.

Expand our Project Delivery Toolbox

- ☐ Pass State legislation to expand DDC's access to alternative delivery tools without restrictions for project type
- ☐ Complete every project in the first round Design-Build pilot program in 2026 and expand the program with major new infrastructure and public buildings projects
- ☐ Award the first projects in DDC's pilot CM-Build pilot program and build the pipeline with projects beginning in Front End Planning
- ☐ Extend and expand the successful procurement and contract terms that have made DDC an owner of choice, and pilot the use of Award Fees to incentivize exemplary performance
- ☐ Continue to build the field of vendors participating in DDC's Alternative Delivery contracts, partnering with DBIA, AIA, and others to foster awareness and education

DDC State Legislative Agenda

- Pass long-term Joint Bidding extension
- Expand and extend Alternative Delivery authorization
- Advance legislation to make DDC a new public Authority

Enable Long-Term Capital Planning

- ☐ Fully build out the ACP data portal and building assessment tool to give agencies the data they need to support comprehensive, long range capital planning
- ☐ Fully staff and launch the Advanced Capital Planning program for public buildings, expanding the program to all major sponsor agency portfolios
- ☐ Secure funding to launch Enhanced Front End Planning for Infrastructure to enable better coordinated, climate conscious, long range planning for NYC's infrastructure
- ☐ Support a coordinated, city-level approach to capital planning that meets NYC's strategic goals for resiliency, decarbonization, accessibility, and other priorities

Streamline Interagency Permits and Approvals

- ☐ Delegate approval, inspection, and signoff authority to DDC's licensed professionals wherever possible
- ☐ Continue and expand the use of dedicated agency approval teams and liaisons at oversight agencies like DOB and FDNY
- ☐ Fully implement the DDC-PDC Reform Recommendations

Reform the NYC Capital Process

- ☐ Pass State legislation to transform DDC into a new public Authority
- ☐ Continue to work with OMB to streamline the CP process, getting design and construction started faster
- ☐ Pass revisions to the Procurement Policy Board (PPB) to:
 - Standardize rules for design-build (and CM-build in future) that capture best practices from DDC's successful pilot
 - Allow DDC to replace a failing contractor (Rule 4-08)
- ☐ Replace prescriptive PPB rules rendered redundant by DDC staff with dedicated, flexible rules tailored to design and construction
- ☐ Continue to expand capital eligibility rules for certain common types of work, like façade renovations and areawide infrastructure improvements

Streamline Infrastructure Coordination

- ☐ Pass State legislation providing permanent or long-term (10-year) extension of the Joint Bidding Law
- ☐ Fully launch JB Open Competitive and continue to refine the program in partnership with contractors and private utilities
- ☐ Require private utilities to pay full anticipated project costs upfront, on an annual basis, to be drawn down by DDC during construction
- ☐ Support negotiation of a Citywide force account agreement with MTA
- ☐ Support full launch of the 3D Underground project (by Mayor's Office of Operations) to provide DDC and other agencies with better information on underground infrastructure

Support our Community of Vendors

- ☐ Fully roll out DDC's streamlined contractor payment forms and processes for all projects agency-wide
- ☐ Launch streamlined payment requirements for professional services contracts
- ☐ Continue to sponsor opportunities to hear directly from our architects, engineers, contractors and CMs, folding lessons learned into agency processes and contracts

Expand Opportunities for M/WBEs

- ☐ Continue to lead the City in subcontract awards to M/WBEs, addressing the 'disparity within the disparity' through disaggregated goal-setting
- ☐ Leverage alternative delivery to drive higher M/WBE participation
- ☐ Continue and expand the use of "Meet the Teams" events in communities to drive local hiring
- ☐ Support the creation of Citywide Owner Controlled Insurance Program (OCIP) to reduce insurance barriers to participating in City contracts
- ☐ Advocate at the state legislature for State and City reciprocity for M/WBE certifications

Leverage Innovation

- ☐ Release standard specifications for low carbon concrete and drive sustainability performance through contract incentives and other measures
- ☐ Expand the use of Construction Management Software and BIM across DDC's portfolio
- ☐ Leverage emerging technology to enhance site investigations, construction oversight, and project management
- ☐ Host the agency's first Innovation Summit

Build Strong Partnerships

- ☐ Contribute to NYC's community of world-class design and construction professionals by sharing DDC's leadership, expertise, and projects
- ☐ Foster strong coalitions with design and construction industry leaders and associations, collectively advocating for the tools NYC needs to deliver better, faster, and cheaper
- ☐ Partner closely with other public owners to exchange lessons learned and raise the bar for capital project delivery

Special Thanks

Thank you to DDC staff and all our agency partners. Successfully improving delivery for NYC requires outstanding professionals and continued dedication to our shared mission. We greatly appreciate the ongoing efforts of our hardworking team members as well as all participating vendors and industry partners. Thank you as well to our colleagues in City government, including at our sponsor agencies, for your collegial partnership. Together, we are reshaping the city for the next generation.





Delancey Street
Bridge Installation,
East Side Coastal
Resiliency Project,
Manhattan