



Urban Agenda

Convener of NYC Apollo Alliance



February 23, 2009

Mayor Michael Bloomberg
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor Bloomberg,

Now that President Obama has signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, an historic opportunity exists to strengthen New York's economy in a way that ensures long-term, equitable economic development and environmental sustainability. The New York City Apollo Alliance applauds the Governor's creation of the New York State Economic Recovery and Reinvestment Cabinet, headed by Timothy Gilchrist, to oversee stimulus spending.

We recognize the need to act quickly, but we must also act responsibly. The opportunity to rebuild our economy in a just and sustainable manner should not be squandered. Creating low-paying jobs that force families to live in poverty with no benefits is not an economic stimulus and, in the long run, will bring another economic crisis.

On the other hand, creating good paying green-collar jobs that provide benefits and pathways out of poverty protects workers and opens the door to economic and career advancement. For funds that come directly to New York City, we urge you to adopt the following principles when evaluating which projects to fund with stimulus monies to ensure that the stimulus creates good jobs in green industries and helps rebuild our rapidly disappearing middle class.

Adopting these principles will ensure that stimulus money is spent in a manner that supports a new economy and avoids the mistakes of the past. These principles will advance our collective vision of a new green economy and demonstrate a true commitment to creating a more just, sustainable and prosperous city for **all** New Yorkers, values that are also articulated in the ambitious PlaNYC 2030 agenda.

New York City Apollo Alliance Principles for Effective Stimulus Fund Disbursement

1. Transparency

Stimulus funds must be disbursed with complete transparency. The City should comply with Federal reporting requirements, as well as track collateral benefits, such as job creation and energy use reduction. Tracking and disseminating this information will help engage partners for advancing your ambitious green agenda for the City.



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2. Prioritize Projects with Green Principles across all Areas of Stimulus Spending

To fully realize the economic and environmental benefits, every infrastructure project receiving stimulus funds should meet relevant green standards. While a significant amount of money in the stimulus bill has been dedicated specifically for environmentally sustainable programs, infrastructure projects that adhere to green standards should be the priority in every category. For example, energy efficiency programs and projects should be prioritized because they reduce energy use, lower costs, increase consumer liquidity, enhance safety and comfort, and decrease emissions.

3. Maximize New York City's share

a. Fully fund public transit

As you know, New York City's transit authority is in a profound financial crisis. Severe cuts coupled with drastic fare increases will hit the working class the hardest and delay economic recovery. While large projects, like the 2nd Avenue Subway line, are in need of federal funds, there are several smaller projects, such as rehabilitating subway stations, which also need to be funded. Rehabilitating subway stations and modernizing signal systems ensures safer, more environmentally sound stations and also employs union labor, guaranteeing family sustaining wages and benefits.

b. Prioritize the repair of existing transit infrastructure

It is **not** required that highway funds from the stimulus be allocated to building new highways. New York City's vast infrastructure system is in desperate need of repair. New York City must adopt a "fix it first" approach that repairs and rehabilitates existing infrastructure before looking to build completely new systems.

Road and bridge repair and maintenance create over 47,000 jobs for every \$1.25 billion invested, in contrast to building new roads and bridges, which creates only 43,200 jobs for every \$1.25 billion spent. Repairing existing infrastructure not only creates and maintains good jobs, it also encourages smart growth and sustainable communities.

4. Create local green collar jobs

As we all know, it is a sad reality that New York City's middle class is rapidly disappearing. Creating green jobs is not enough. We must ensure that the jobs we create are good green collar jobs providing healthy and safe work environments, family sustaining wages, benefits, and pathways out of poverty. In order to build our green economy, the City should prioritize projects that include:



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- a. Job Standards- Ensure that the jobs created pay prevailing wage and prioritize contractors that offer family sustaining wages, benefits, and career opportunities.
- b. Local Purchasing- Promoting local purchasing brings money and jobs in communities by creating jobs locally and encouraging the growth of local manufacturing and businesses.
- c. Links with job-training programs- We must ensure that the workers that we train are able to be placed. Coordinating green jobs training programs with programs that receive stimulus funds will link potential employees with employers.
- d. Lifecycle Sustainability Standards- We must meet standards of social, health and environmental performance with attention to full lifecycle concerns.

Thank you for your continued leadership. We look forward to working with you to ensure that New York City is rebuilt in a manner that is sustainable, prosperous, and just.

With best regards,

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