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GOVERNOR ANDREW M. CUOMO

GOVERNOR CUOMO ANNOUNCES STATE'S FIRST "WOMEN'S BUILDING" TO UNITE MORE THAN A DOZEN WOMEN-FOCUSED ORGANIZATIONS TO EMPOWER GENERATIONS OF WOMEN TO COME

NoVo Foundation Chosen to Redevelop Correctional Bayview Facility in Manhattan's Chelsea Neighborhood

The Women's Building to Create 300 Jobs, Generate \$43 Million in Annual Economic Activity

View Video of the Future Women's Building [Here](#); Renderings [Here](#) and [Here](#)

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced the state's first-ever "Women's Building" will be developed to unite more than a dozen women-focused organizations, empowering generations of women to come. The former Bayview Correctional Facility, a 100,000 square-foot space in Manhattan's Chelsea neighborhood, will be renovated by the NoVo Foundation and Goren Group to include dedicated working space for women-centric community service organizations, as well as a restaurant, art gallery, and additional office space for technology and innovation tenants. The Women's Building will create more than 300 new jobs and generate an estimated \$43 million in annual economic activity.

"Today we are continuing our efforts to shatter the glass ceiling by taking down an institution of defeat and turning it into opportunity and social reform for women," **Governor Cuomo said.** "The Women's Building is an example of our strength and leadership as the capital of progressivism in this nation – and when other states and look to New York, they will see yet another symbol of a community coming together to enhance the future and potential of its people."

The NoVo Foundation will enter a long-term lease of up to 99 years with the State for the Bayview facility, located at 550 West 20th Street in Manhattan, valued at up to \$200 million. The NoVo Foundation will redevelop the building into the innovative Women's Building, including:

- Office space for women-focused activists, organizations, events and programs;
- Anticipated community spaces such as a female adolescent wellness clinic and public atrium;
- A ground-floor "International Women's Art Gallery" and restaurant; and
- Commercial tenants in technology and creative-focused industries, further strengthening Chelsea's creative economy and cross-subsidizing non-profit rents.

The plan for the Women's Building was chosen through a competitive RFP process by Empire State Development, which worked with the local community to better understand their preferences for the facility's future in the Chelsea neighborhood. As a result of the feedback, Empire State Development sought a plan that: preserves the building's historic facade; provides opportunities for community facility use; and stays within the general zoning character of the Special West Chelsea District.

The Novo Foundation, a New York-based organization that dedicates itself to advancing several community issues including women's progress, has offered 100 percent equity commitment, minority and women-owned business participation, and architectural design sustainability and distinction. The NoVo Foundation is chaired by Peter and Jennifer Buffett, son and daughter-in-law of investor and philanthropist Warren Buffett. The Goren Group, a women-owned development firm led by Lela Goren, has partnered with the NoVo Foundation to lead the redevelopment of the Bayview facility.

A video of the future Women's Building is available [here](#). Renderings of the building are available [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#). More information about the Women's Building is available at <http://womensbuildingnyc.org>.

Empire State Development President, CEO, and Commissioner Howard Zemsky said: "The NoVo Foundation and Goren Group have won the rights to redevelop Bayview with an exciting proposal. The Women's Building will be a transformational resource for all non-profits working together toward the advancement of women, and the team has proposed a project that will preserve and rehabilitate a historic building while maximizing its economic impact and opportunities for community facility use."

Acting Department of Corrections and Community Supervision Commissioner Anthony J. Annucci said: "The Department of Corrections and Community Supervision has worked diligently to help fulfill Governor's Cuomo's vision of reforming the state's prison system while saving taxpayer dollars and keeping all New Yorker safe. With a plummeting crime rate, effective correctional programming and the tireless efforts of our staff, fewer prison beds are needed as the prison population now stands at a 25 year low. DOCCS is pleased to see a facility that was formerly used to incarcerate female offenders, being transformed instead into the state's first "Women's Building" to help advance the global interests of all women."

Senator Brad Hoylman said: "When Sandy hit in 2012, the Bayview Correctional Facility was evacuated and practically destroyed. The Governor's announcement today gives this building a noble new purpose. I commend Governor Cuomo, the NoVo Foundation, and the Goren Group for this forward-thinking proposal, which seems to respect both the history of the facility and the character of the community while also providing ample opportunity for community use. I look forward to working with Assembly Member Gottfried, Council Member Johnson, Community Board 4 and the participating organizations to advance the cause of women's progress throughout the state."

Assemblyman Richard Gottfried said: "The conversion of the Bayview Women's Correctional Facility into a 'Women's Building' to house non-profits that work on women's issues, with space for community use, while preserving and restoring special architectural details of this building is an inspired and superb plan. I thank Empire State Development for listening to the community and responding to our concerns by picking the esteemed Novo and Goren Group plan, which has pledged attention to the historic details of the building as well as uses and programming that are important and contextual to the community."

NoVo Foundation Co-Presidents Jennifer and Peter Buffett said: "The Women's Building is an important step forward for the NoVo Foundation and its partners across New York. A landmark presence in the Chelsea neighborhood – one which is defined by innovation and social progress – will not only help advance the rights of girls and women and the progress to which our partners work so hard to achieve, but New York and beyond. We are proud to be a part of this important announcement and thank the dedicated organizations who worked tirelessly and the Governor for his leadership in making this a reality."

NoVo Foundation Executive Director Pamela Shifman said: “By establishing the state’s first and only Women’s Building, today we are bringing women-focused community services to innovative new heights. The NoVo Foundation is excited for redevelopment to get underway so that we can accelerate the important work of our partners and continue to make history for women across the globe.”

Goren Group Founder and President Lela Goren said: “Bringing together so many groups dedicated to the common good – with a central goal to lift women everywhere – is an exciting undertaking that I am proud to be a part of. I am honored to play a central role in the redevelopment of this storied building and thank Governor Cuomo for the opportunity to make history by establishing the state’s first Women’s Building.”

The preliminary agreement between the NoVo Foundation and Empire State Development is subject to a 60-day diligence period and required public approvals.

About the Bayview Correctional Facility

Bayview Correctional Facility was formally decommissioned in the fall of 2013 as part of Governor Cuomo’s efforts to save taxpayer dollars by closing costly, underutilized facilities throughout New York State. Additionally, the closure is part of the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision’s plans to improve the efficiency of its real estate footprint following the substantial reduction in state crime rates and drug offenses, which has caused the inmate population to shrink dramatically. Since Governor Cuomo took office in 2011, he has closed a total of 13 correctional facilities and eliminated more than 5,500 prison beds, resulting in annual savings of approximately \$162 million.

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