



Office of General Services

Joint Legislative Committee on Economic Development
Testimony by Commissioner RoAnn Destito
February 23, 2021

Good morning Chairs Krueger and Weinstein, ranking members O'Mara and Ra, and distinguished members of the committees. I am pleased to be here today to provide testimony about the Office of General Services.

As all of us know, the past year has been challenging for all residents of New York State as well as the world. COVID-19 has changed the way we live, work, and interact with one another. At OGS, the pandemic has presented unprecedented demands on our services and our time.

I would like to offer you some details on the efforts OGS employed to support the state's ongoing response to the pandemic.

Competing in a global market where essential supplies suddenly became scarce, OGS was able to focus the full weight of our expertise to get New York State to the front of the line.

OGS facilitated the sourcing, ordering, tracking, delivery coordination, and reconciliation of more than 200 million items of durable medical equipment and PPE. We partnered in multi-agency efforts to contract for products and services for test sites, alternate care, agency PPE, and vaccines while supporting local government sourcing through statewide contracts. OGS was also responsible for the financial processing required to secure the State's PPE and hospital build-out inventory.

We worked with DOCCS on facility modifications to support the NYS Clean hand sanitizer program. OGS managed warehouse operations for storage, distribution, inventory, and delivery of NYS Clean hand sanitizer, PPE, and other supplies.

OGS accepted responsibility for three alternative care facilities from the Army Corps of Engineers and FEMA. The facilities, located at Stonybrook, Old Westbury, and the Westchester Convention Center, continue to be operationally maintained by OGS. We also provided real estate services to establish laboratory, warehouse, call center, and COVID-19 testing sites and made alterations to occupied space to comply with CDC and NYS DOH guidelines. OGS also delivered mailing and printing support for the Department of Labor and Office of Temporary Disability Assistance, provided contracting support for Javits Center operations, as well as broadcast support for daily COVID briefings.

We were also responsible for the development and maintenance of NY-Forward and COVID-19 websites in conjunction with ITS, created Return to Work plans for state office buildings to ensure employees were aware of and following COVID protocols, and established enhanced cleaning procedures and air filtration. OGS kept powerplant, maintenance, and custodial operations fully functioning, allowing for state employees to provide coordinated responses to the COVID 19 pandemic.

My agency's staff also participated in volunteer efforts, helping to meet state needs related to unemployment insurance, contract tracing, PPE distribution, and vaccinations.

As New York implemented its phased reopening and employees began returning to work at OGS owned and managed buildings, including the Legislative Office Building, our facilities team increased the frequency of

cleaning and disinfection of high-density and high-touch areas. My staff coordinated with HR representatives to assist with supplemental cleanings as part of contract tracing and suspected infected employee protocols. We installed signage, reminding people to practice social distancing, wear a face covering, and wash or sanitize their hands. We also increased fresh airflow and continued to ensure air filtration and HVAC systems were properly maintained and operating in accordance with appropriate guidance.

In addition to our COVID-related activities, OGS continues delivering the services and support our customers depend on us to provide.

OGS provides enterprise-wide operational services and programs that allow other agencies to focus on and fulfill their own diverse missions on behalf of the people of New York State. This agency provides a myriad of services in support of state agencies, local governments, not-for-profits, businesses, and citizens.

OGS manages and maintains 20 million square feet of state-owned space and leases 11.8 million square feet of office, warehouse, and other required space on behalf of Executive Department agencies throughout the state.

OGS provides architectural, engineering, contracting, and construction management services to over 50 state agency clients with a current workload of \$1.2 billion in active construction projects and another \$1 billion in design development.

Additionally, OGS provides vital emergency response and recovery support following floods, fires, weather disasters, and more, 24/7/365.

We manage a portfolio of approximately 1,500 centralized contracts for commodities, services, and technology valued at \$26.8 billion used by state agencies and more than 7,500 authorized users made up of local governments, schools, and not-for-profits.

We also provide transactional back-office administration services for nearly all Executive agencies for finance and human resources through the Business Services Center and administer the Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business program.

In addition, OGS delivers support services for agencies, including fleet management, printing and mail services, food distribution, warehousing, and surplus property disposition. We aggregate and manage the purchase of energy resources and insurance. We also administer the visitor experience at the Capitol and Empire State Plaza, and we issue easements and grant licenses and permits for the use of uplands and lands under water.

Currently, we have staff supporting OGS operations in each of the state's 10 regions.

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The BSC serves 53 agencies for HR services and 65 agencies for finance services, supporting nearly 45,000 state employees. The BSC has been working closely with the Statewide Financial System and Department of Transportation and will begin providing finance services to them in April 2021. Putting new technology in place will be key to service delivery for the BSC, which will begin serving new HR customers after the state's human resource management system (HRMS) is implemented. In addition to the transactional HR services provided by the BSC, OGS-HR delivers strategic HR services to more than 6,500 employees at OGS and 10 hosted agencies.

Our Procurement Services group continues to lead the way in new and innovative procurements. This year, OGS procurement received the national Achievement of Excellence in Procurement Award for the fourth year

in a row and is the only large state to accomplish this recognition. We maintain the largest Information Technology catalog contracts in the country, attracting both New York State-based small, MWBE, and SDVOB businesses as well as many of the largest technology companies in the world. We have approximately 500 MWBE and SDVOB vendors in the IT space alone. Last year we maintained approximately 1,500 statewide contracts representing over \$1.6 billion in spend for state agencies alone.

In 2020, OGS conducted more than 20 virtual trainings, training sessions, and outreaches, educating more than 2,500 government employees on our contracts and 1,000 businesses on how to do business with the state. We maintained an electronic catalog of over 10 million items to purchase from and facilitated the employment of individuals with disabilities on approximately 216 service and commodity projects across the state. We maintained contracts for community solar, intelligent security systems and solutions, statewide laundry and linen services, and telecommunications connectivity services, to name a few. OGS also continued our success with contracts such as centralized contracts for translation services across state agencies and local governments. The OGS IT and telecommunication contract suites supported agencies as they rapidly moved to telework, and the contract managers worked with vendors on unprecedented supply chain and transportation issues. All of this was in addition to the added work of supporting the supply and logistics functions associated with COVID.

Moving on to real estate, OGS is responsible for the administration and daily operations of 176 state-owned buildings and structures totaling over \$7 billion in assets serving approximately 30,000 tenants and thousands of visitors statewide. Since the beginning of this administration, the agency has performed more than 1,200 capital projects and over 3,200 preventive-maintenance and rehabilitation/improvement projects at properties and buildings that had significant deferred maintenance.

Throughout the state, the agency has made improvements to its real estate assets. In Binghamton and Utica, new state-of-the-art windows were installed throughout both state office buildings. At the Watertown State Office Building, the agency is embarking on a full renovation of the auditorium with upgrades to the restrooms, changing rooms, seating, and ADA accessibility. Here in Albany, we have reached substantial completion of the renovation of Building 4 on the Harriman State Office Building Campus, which will serve as the new home of the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision.

Continuing our pledge from previous years to meet the Governor's clean energy goals, NYPA and OGS have begun projects to replace old and obsolete equipment at the Sheridan Hollow steam plant and the Empire State Plaza chill plant. We are finalizing the contract to replace the existing outdated emergency generators in Sheridan Hollow with quiet, state-of-the-art emission-controlled units. Our project to replace an on-site, steam-driven chiller with a new electrical one is already underway at the Empire State chill plant. As part of this project, we opened the almost 50-year-old roof hatch on the plaza deck so that new equipment, including transformers, could be lowered into the plant below, and obsolete equipment could be lifted out. Electrifying this one chiller will reduce local gas use and emissions at our steam plant by 18%. Additionally, our project to install LED lighting technology throughout the entire plaza complex to reduce energy usage has also begun. We are also in the process of establishing a 38-megawatt solar photovoltaic project at the former Oriskany Airport, a property now owned by OGS. This project would be financed through a solar power purchase agreement and would generate over 50% of the electricity used at the Empire State Plaza.

In conjunction with other agency partners, OGS continues the Employee Zero Emissions Vehicle (ZEV) Charging Pilot Program in targeted OGS parking facilities throughout downtown Albany and the Harriman State Office Building Campus with a total of 64 charging ports. In addition, we have completed the installation of fleet charging stations at our building on Wolf Road in Albany, and we will complete a similar installation at the Eleanor Roosevelt Office Building in Poughkeepsie. The results of the pilot program will guide the development of future charging station projects.

OGS Parking has also begun a cashless pay system to make it easier for visitors at the Empire State Plaza and surrounding visitor lots to park and enjoy the many cultural attractions or conduct business at the plaza.

In addition to managing space, we also build it and conduct project permitting with the OGS Design and Construction team, which serves state agencies, including DOCCS, OMH, State Police, DMNA, and Ag & Markets. Design and Construction typically responds to 300 vital agency construction emergency declarations each year with payments averaging \$40 million.

The Office of General Services is also participating in the Governor's Resiliency and Economic Development Initiative (REDI) program. In addition to serving on the REDI committee and advancing multiple projects for the initiative, OGS is directly managing the \$15M navigation dredging initiative, which is part of the Governor's efforts to dredge up to 20 sites in navigable waterways and harbors and keep them operational.

OGS also does an excellent job growing businesses. In 2011, the OGS eligible MWBE utilization rate was just 14%, and we are very proud to say that we have now exceeded the Governor's goal of 30 percent. In that time, MWBEs have received in excess of \$842 million from contracts associated with our Design & Construction Group alone, up from \$702 million at this time last year.

Our success in implementing the Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Act continues. We now have approximately 855 certified businesses in a wide range of categories, from construction and financial services to commodities. Over the 12 months ending September 30, New York State disbursed nearly \$149 million to SDVOBs, representing a 43.5% growth over last year.

Providing an exceptional visitor experience is a source of pride for the OGS team. Since 2011, OGS has managed nearly 10,000 events, and more than half a million people have taken tours of the Capitol, Executive Mansion and visited the Corning Tower Observation Deck. We have also welcomed just shy of 100,000 skaters since reopening the plaza rink after it was closed for three years. Efforts to prevent the spread of COVID required us to severely curtail our cultural and recreational programs, including the pausing of our in-person tours. We pivoted to a successful Virtual Visit online series where guests from all over the world can tour the majestic halls of our Capitol and both the Empire State Plaza and Harlem art collections. We were also unable to conduct our annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Day observance at the Empire State Plaza Convention Center. We honored Dr. King with a 1-hour pre-produced broadcast that for the first time aired on PBS stations statewide and featured fantastic music from choirs based all over the state as well as compelling profiles of New Yorkers who embrace Dr. King's principles by making a difference in their communities and pushing for social change. We continued with our outdoor and indoor farmers markets, which were deemed essential. We also reopened the plaza's Visitor Center and began selling New York Tough face masks to help stop the spread.

As Commissioner, I am honored to lead the hard-working and dedicated team at the Office of General Services. Their service to the people of New York State never wavers and can be counted on at all times. Thank you for listening to my testimony, and I am happy to take any questions that you may have.