

## Committed To New York City

An Interview with Christine Lucaj, Vice President, Construction, SL Green

**EDITORS' NOTE** *Christine Lucaj serves as Vice President, Construction for SL Green. She has grown alongside the company's construction and development arm and has contributed to projects of every scale, from a three-story retail core and shell in Herald Square to cutting-edge LED signage in Times Square, and the landmark 1.7 million-square-foot One Vanderbilt tower in East Midtown. Lucaj has been a key asset to the construction group, recognized for her ability to distill complex industry concepts into clear, compelling presentations and deliverables. She has led the development of efficient procedures and overseen portfolio-wide initiatives to keep contractors and professionals accountable, including a site safety inspection program. In addition, she oversees the Construction Accounting Group, ensuring project controls are followed and consistently reinforced to support evolving project and reporting needs. Lucaj graduated with a BS degree in marketing and international business from Manhattan College and holds a Real Estate Development continuing education certificate from NYU.*



Christine Lucaj

from a traditional owner and manager into one of the most recognized developers in New York City.

**What interested you in the real estate industry and construction business?**

There's something genuinely satisfying about working on a tangible asset. This business is as old as civilization, and it isn't going anywhere. I can stand in front of a building and say, with real conviction, I had a part in that. While some bet against office space during COVID, the market has

proven its resilience. SL Green posted some of its strongest leasing activity ever earlier this year and I'd say the reports of the office's demise were greatly overstated. Of course, much of our success is a credit to our Chairman and CEO, Marc Holliday, and our Executive team for their long-term vision and confidence in New York City.

**Will you provide an overview of your role and areas of focus?**

My role covers a lot of ground, and similar to SL Green, has evolved over the years.

I oversee our Construction Accounting Group, ensuring project controls are adhered to consistently across \$300 million of tenant improvement and capital projects that flow through our construction group. I've led the development of procedures and programs designed to keep our construction team, contractors, and consultants equally accountable. Most recently, I oversaw the redesign of our in-house labor program which delivers cost efficiencies by self-performing scopes of work with our in-house skilled labor while also offering those services directly to tenants, creating a new revenue stream. On any given day, it's a mix of strategy, operations, and problem-solving. If there's one thing I've become known for, it's taking complex concepts and translating them into something clear and digestible, whether the audience is a coworker, an executive, an investor, or a consultant.

**What are some of the ground-up developments and redevelopments that you have had the opportunity to be involved with?**

In some capacity, I've had exposure to nearly every major project SL Green has completed or has underway including 1551

**COMPANY BRIEF** *SL Green Realty Corp. (slgreen.com), Manhattan's largest office landlord, is a fully integrated real estate investment trust, or REIT, that is focused primarily on acquiring, managing and maximizing the value of Manhattan commercial properties. As of September 30, 2025, SL Green held interests in 53 buildings totaling 30.7 million square feet. This included ownership interests in 27.1 million square feet of Manhattan buildings and 2.7 million square feet securing debt and preferred equity investments.*

**Will you discuss your career journey?**

My entry into the industry was a bit of a happy accident. I had applied for an internship, but the timing coincided with SL Green acquiring the \$6 billion Reckson portfolio, and I was offered a permanent position in the construction group before I ever got the chance to be an intern.

That was nearly 19 years ago. I've been lucky enough to grow alongside the company ever since. From working on low-rise retail projects in Times Square to supporting landmark developments like One Vanderbilt and One Madison, I've had a front row seat to SL Green growing



One Vanderbilt on the 4th of July



*One Madison*

Broadway, 180 Broadway, 1552 Broadway, One Vanderbilt, 760 Madison, 750 Third, and most recently 346 Madison. The nature of my involvement has varied widely across projects whether it be early diligence, preconstruction coordination, budget tracking, investor presentations, loan administration, labor relations, or schedule abstracts, among other things. I may not be in the field as much as I once was, but as they say: the hardest part of construction is everything that happens before the building ever comes out of the ground.

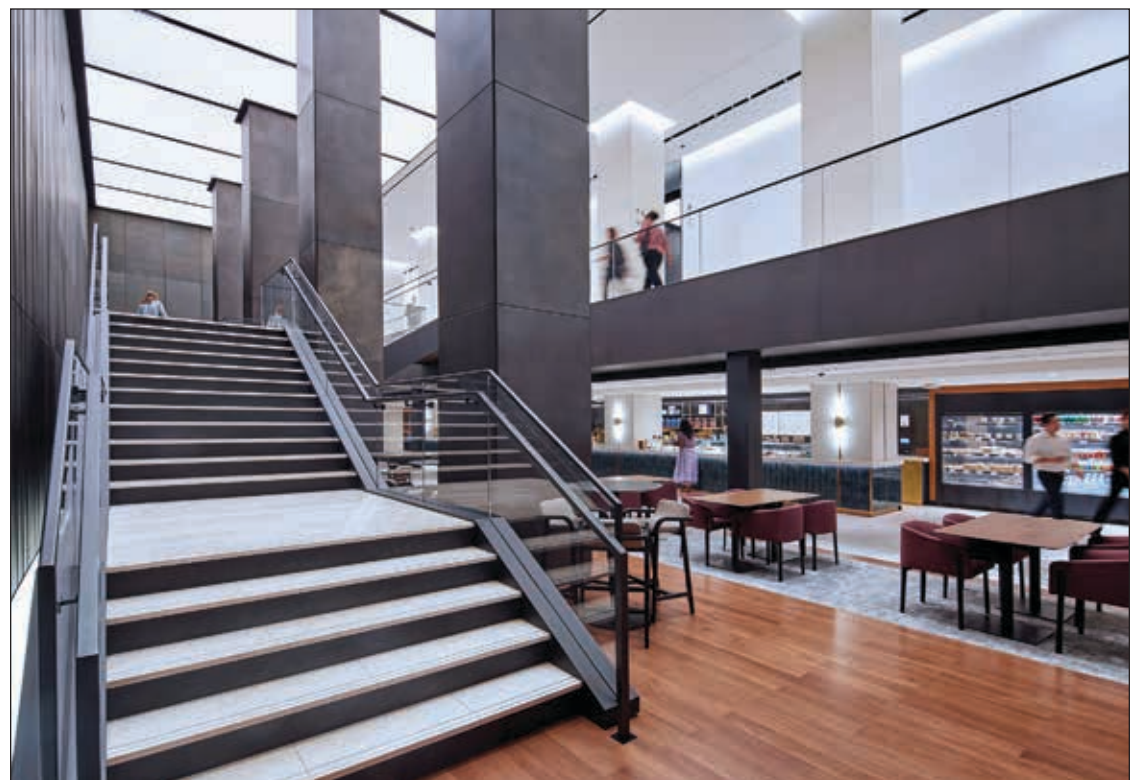
**How critical is sustainability as part of SL Green's construction projects?**

From a design standpoint, sustainability is not optional; it's become a standard as the only way to build in New York City. But beyond the technical aspects, we also look for practical ways to embed sustainable practices into our work. We repurpose materials and use existing layouts wherever we can, and we donate gently used furniture from vacant tenant spaces to the New York Police Department for reuse within their precincts, providing over 500 in-kind pieces to date. We are big supporters of the police department and prioritize any opportunity to give back to our community.

**What has made SL Green a place where you have wanted to spend your career?**

Above all else, it is the people. Having spent nearly half of my life at SL Green, I have come to think of my colleagues as family in every sense. They have watched me evolve from a Manhattan University graduate into a department leader and a working mother of two girls, who inspire me every day to show them what is possible for women in Real Estate.

I would be remiss if I did not mention Edward Piccinich, Chief Operating Officer. Quite simply, I would not have this role, the opportunity to grow with the company, or the chance to write this profile if not for him. Ed saw something in me early on and gave me a shot to be a part of a great team and trusted me to work across all his business verticals.



*Stairs from One Madison's lobby to L'Épicerie*

More than that initial opportunity, Ed has consistently encouraged me to take on new challenges, often with a confidence in my abilities that sometimes exceeded my own. I am deeply grateful for his support and belief in me over the years.

**Do you feel that there are strong opportunities for women to grow and lead in the construction business?**

I will admit there was a time, not so long ago, when I would regularly be mistaken for an interior designer because that was often the role people assumed for a woman. What I've witnessed since then is a genuine shift, with more women entering the industry with strong technical credentials and moving into positions of leadership. In fact, there are now more women than men in leadership roles within the construction department at SL Green. The industry has changed, and it continues to evolve. My honest take? If you have the talent, drive, and business sense, there is always room. The door is open wider than it has ever been.

**What advice do you offer to young people interested in pursuing a career in the industry?**

They say nothing in this world can take the place of persistence and I've found that to be very true. Show up, be present, and be dependable. There's a growing emphasis among younger professionals on flexibility and balance, which are important, but I believe those opportunities are best built on a foundation of consistency and reliability. The "hustle" culture may be going out of style, but that just means the people who still have it will stand out that much more. You don't always have to be the smartest person in the room; you just have to be the most reliable one. ●