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MAYOR BLOOMBERG ANNOUNCES NEW INITIATIVES TO EXPAND WIRELESS AND BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY

Free Public Wi-Fi Networks Coming to 10 Commercial Districts in All Five Boroughs

WiredNYC Creates a "LEED for Broadband" Certification; Launches with 150 New York City Office Buildings

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg today announced new initiatives to further expand wireless and broadband connectivity in New York City by addressing key challenges to ensure the city continues to grow as a global hub of technology and innovation in the 21st Century. Free public WiFi will be launched in Brooklyn along the Fulton Street corridor, BAM Cultural District, Brownsville, and Downtown Brooklyn; in Manhattan in the Flatiron District, along the Water Street Corridor and the East River waterfront in Lower Manhattan, the 125th Street corridor in Harlem and on Roosevelt Island; in Queens in Long Island City; in Staten Island in the St. George commercial district; and in the Bronx on Fordham Road, as well as other areas citywide. Today also marks the launch of *WiredNYC*, a rating platform that evaluates the broadband connectivity and infrastructure of office buildings. The program is designed to encourage and accelerate deployment of broadband technologies and create transparency about broadband infrastructure in the commercial real estate market by creating a "LEED for broadband" certification, giving businesses information about a building's connectivity, and allowing landlords to better market a building's assets. *WiredNYC*, which is being operated on behalf of the City by Jared Kushner, CEO of Kushner Companies, has enlisted the participation of ten of the city's largest real estate owners, including Rudin Management, SL Green Realty, Forest City Ratner and Vornado, with over 150 buildings currently signed up for the program representing approximately 100 million square feet of office space. The announcement is part of the latest technology summit with the City of San Francisco, hosted by Bloomberg Philanthropies, which brings together civic and industry leaders in order to address key issues facing the industry and cities. The Mayor made the announcement in Downtown Brooklyn at MetroTech Center, which has a platinum Wired Certification rating from *WiredNYC*.

"If New York City is going remain competitive in the global economy, we must find ways to support the entrepreneurs who are driving technological advances and creating jobs," said Mayor Bloomberg. "With these new initiatives, we are making targeted investments to improve our city's wireless infrastructure and expand Internet access. We're also measuring how

(more)

connected our city's buildings are and sharing that information, so that entrepreneurs are empowered to make the best decisions about where to open a business."

"Staying connected is critical to success in the 21st Century knowledge economy – whether you are building an office for your tech start-up or trying to take your small business to the next level," said Deputy Mayor for Economic Development Robert K. Steel. "The Bloomberg Administration has prioritized connectivity infrastructure so that all New Yorkers can have access to the networks of information that make our economy run. These initiatives move us forward on the path to constant connectivity."

"Free public wireless networks in neighborhoods across the five boroughs, along with the new broadband rating program, will advance our goal of equipping all New Yorkers with the tools they need to participate in the innovation economy," said New York City Economic Development Corporation President Kyle Kimball. "At the same time, in order to develop and attract the talented workforce that our economy depends upon, we are training New Yorkers of all ages and backgrounds in technology and entrepreneurship, which will strengthen our economy for decades to come."

The *Wireless Corridor Challenge,* which was led by the City's Economic Development Corporation*,* was awarded to five organizations known for achievements in improving quality of life throughout the City, including the Downtown Brooklyn Partnership, Alliance for Downtown New York, Brooklyn Academy of Music, GOWEX, and Flatiron 23rd Street Partnership. The challenge was initially announced in the Mayor's State of the City address and involved a competitive process that began in the spring of 2013. The program will increase wireless connectivity in New York City commercial and residential districts, which is a critical step in attracting new businesses to a neighborhood, increasing foot traffic and marketing within a business district**,** connecting residents and visitors within a neighborhood**,** improving quality of life, and bridging the digital divide. The selected consultants are responsible for developing a neighborhood plan to identify commercial corridor area, potential users in the area, and projected impact on populations such as businesses, residents and visitors; designing, installing, and launching a wireless network by obtaining requisite approvals for installation, partnering with sponsors, and marketing the program to users**;** and operating and maintaining the free, public access wireless network for a minimum of three years.

The *Wireless Corridor Challenge* will leverage private-sector partnerships to maximize the reach of the program. Targeted impact areas include growing technology centers such as Downtown Brooklyn and Long Island City, more established technology centers like the Flatiron district, cultural and educational centers such as BAM, as well as low- and middle-income areas and NYCHA housing in Fort Greene and Brownsville. All of the corridors are expected to launch in December of 2013. The City's investment will be leveraged by private sector commitments totaling over $3.4 million dollars, with the City providing a total of $900,000 in additional funding to assist with the implementation. Each of the selected consultants have developed sustainability plans to insure the continuation of these corridors beyond the City's initial investment. The selected consultants and areas throughout the City include:

- **Downtown Brooklyn Partnership**: Downtown Brooklyn, the area bordered by Schermerhorn St, Cadman Plaza West, Flatbush Ave and Tillary St, and anticipated select public spaces in the NYCHA Ingersoll and Whitman houses

- **Alliance for Downtown New York/LaunchLM**: Lower Manhattan, along the Water Street corridor between Whitehall and Fulton Streets, extending to lively neighboring side streets including Stone Street and Front Street, and along the East River waterfront and piers in Lower Manhattan.

- **Brooklyn Academy of Music:** Fort Greene and Clinton Hill, Fulton Street between Rockwell Place to Classon Avenue

- **GOWEX:** Long Island City - Area bordered by Queens Plaza, Jackson Blvd and Vernon Blvd; Brownsville - area bordered by Sutter Avenue, Mother Gaston Boulevard, Pitkin Avenue and Howard Avenue; Harlem - 125th Street from Broadway to Second Avenue; Roosevelt Island, between the Ed Koch Queensboro Bridge and Roosevelt Island Bridge; Staten Island - Hyatt Street between St. Marks Place and Stuyvesant Place; the Bronx - East Fordham Road from Grand Concourse to Arthur Avenue.

- **Flatiron 23rd St. Partnership:** Flatiron District - 23rd Street from Sixth Avenue to Third Avenue.

"Dramatically expanding public WiFi throughout Downtown Brooklyn and bridging the cost of the 'last mile' needed to bring fiber connectivity to office buildings in the district were key priorities outlined in the recent Brooklyn Tech Triangle Strategic Plan," said Downtown Brooklyn Partnership President Tucker Reed. "The City's visionary commitment to expanding access to wireless and broadband in commercial districts not only helps to support the growth of the innovation economy in Downtown Brooklyn, but also ensure that the entire Brooklyn Tech Triangle is a dynamic, engaging place for residents, workers, and students alike."

"With over 103,000 workers and 12,000 residents working and living upstairs, the Water Street commercial corridor is vital to the economic pulse of Lower Manhattan," said Downtown Alliance acting President William Bernstein. "As we nourish and grow Lower Manhattan's tech sectors through our newly announced LaunchLM initiative, expanding connectivity and free public Wi-Fi is a tremendous step forward in advancing Lower Manhattan as a global hub of technology and innovation. Thank you to Mayor Bloomberg, Deputy Mayor Steel and EDC President Kyle Kimball for their leadership in providing free, public Wi-Fi across our city."

"As the BAM Cultural District continues to evolve into the model of a 21st century cultural center, we are excited to provide this Wi-Fi access to our neighborhood and those who visit our community each day," said BAM President Karen Brooks Hopkins. "We're grateful to Mayor Bloomberg and the City for including us in this project and look forward to the advancements that this free wireless network will foster."

"GOWEX is excited to partner with New York City to bring free WiFi to all. WiFi is like water: it is essential to modern life and everybody should be able to benefit from it" said Jenaro

Garcia, CEO of GOWEX. "New York understands how free WiFi leads to Smart Citizens and how Smart City services lead to better quality of life and opportunities for all."

"The Flatiron/23rd Street Partnership is thrilled to be part of this exciting initiative," said BID Executive Director Jennifer Brown. "Expanding the wireless network in our district will further enhance the vibrancy of the neighborhood for those who live, work, and visit here. The Flatiron BID already offers free WiFi in our public plazas, but this new initiative broadens the services we provide, and right in the heart of the district that is increasingly home to tech entrepreneurs and creative services. On behalf of my board and all of our constituents, I thank Mayor Bloomberg for his vision and EDC for selecting us for this important venture."

"The City's 67 Business Improvement Districts help keep neighborhoods in all five boroughs clean, safe, and attractive, but BIDs are going even further and the Wireless Corridor Challenge is a great example of that," said Rob Walsh, Commissioner of the NYC Department of Small Business Services. "Increasing wireless connectivity in commercial districts will help strengthen neighborhoods by attracting even more businesses, visitors, and residents to the City's vibrant commercial corridors."

"NYCHA is working on many levels to help our residents bridge the digital divide," said New York City Housing Authority Chairman John B. Rhea. "We look forward to working with our partners to make wireless access more available for public housing residents."

WiredNYC, part of the City's suite of broadband initiatives announced last year, is a building certification program that evaluates the broadband connectivity and infrastructure of New York City buildings in order to encourage and accelerate deployment of leading broadband technologies. This program will create transparency about broadband infrastructure in the commercial real estate market, giving businesses information about a building's connectivity when choosing where to locate, and allowing landlords to market their buildings' assets and compete for tenants. This program, and the associated grading standards, was developed by leaders in the real estate, technology, and telecommunications communities, and launched by Jared Kushner, CEO of Kushner Companies, who is overseeing the program's rollout and operations. Rudin Management, SL Green Realty, Forest City Ratner and Vornado Realty Trust are among *WiredNYC*'s first adopters – using the certification system to evaluate their buildings.

The certification rating system, titled "Wired Certification," will include grades of Platinum, Gold, Silver, and Connected, and broadband information will be shared publicly through a web platform, *WiredScore.com*. Presently, ten of the City's largest real estate owners have committed to participating in WiredNYC, with more than 150 buildings signed up for the program, comprising approximately 100 million square feet of office space, including 50 City-owned buildings. Other participating owners include Tishman Speyer, The Feil Organization, RXR Realty, Jamestown Properties, and Shorenstein. Many additional real estate companies are currently in the process of finalizing their participation, with a goal of over 500 participating buildings throughout New York City. The program has received the official endorsement from the Real Estate Board of New York, Building Owners and Managers Association of New York, and the Association for a Better New York. It is also supported by a number of technology-

focused institutions, including the Telecommunications Industry Association, NY Tech Meetup and General Assembly.

Wired NYC is also designed to serve as a template for other cities across the country, with a goal to expand the program into additional cities by the end of 2014. Other participating buildings are located in emerging technology centers across the City's five boroughs, including Long Island City, Downtown Brooklyn, Lower Manhattan, Chelsea, Midtown Manhattan, and Hudson Square.

 "Mayor Bloomberg has done an incredible job transforming New York City into a center of technology and innovation," said Jared Kushner, CEO of Kushner Companies. "Every day it becomes clearer that tech is the future economy of our city and in that economy, we fundamentally rely on connectivity to operate our businesses. I am excited to work with the Mayor on uniting the real estate and tech worlds through *WiredNYC* which will bring transparency to broadband connectivity in NYC commercial buildings."

"World-class infrastructure has fueled the enormous growth of innovation companies at MetroTech and throughout the Tech Triangle, and these new programs will provide even more momentum," said Forest City Ratner CEO MaryAnne Gilmartin. "We are thrilled to receive a Platinum broadband designation for MetroTech and proud to be playing a role in the broader growth of New York's tech sector, including our partnership with Cornell Tech to construct its new campus on Roosevelt Island."

"Expanding wireless and wired connectivity across the five boroughs is a key component of the Bloomberg Administration's strategy to enhance digital inclusion and ensure our city becomes an even greater center for technology and innovation," said New York City Chief Information and Innovation Officer Rahul Merchant. "The initiatives announced today will benefit residents, businesses, and visitors, and help enhance New York City's position in today's competitive marketplace."

In addition to *WiredNYC*, the City's suite of larger broadband initiatives features a variety of other innovative programs that have previously been launched or will continue to be implemented in the future. These include: *ConnectNYC*, a competition to build out fiber connectivity for commercial and industrial buildings across the five boroughs; *NYC Broadband Connect Map,* a crowd-sourced, dynamic website in which businesses can learn about connectivity availability and capabilities in a given building or neighborhood; *Broadband Express,* an initiative led by Deputy Mayor Steel in partnership with the Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications (DoITT) and the NYC Department of Transportation, designed to simplify operational issues as well as regulatory hurdles for Internet Service Providers (ISPs); and *CitizenConnect*, a competition to be led by NYCEDC and DoITT - to develop mobile applications that will help City residents access workforce development opportunities, jobs listings and worker support programs such as childcare, healthcare and transportation.

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