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MAYOR BLOOMBERG LOOKS BACK AT NEW YORK CITY ON SEPTEMBER 12, 2001, AND OUTLINES PROGRESS ON ECONOMIC RECOVERY, MAJOR GROWTH IN POPULATION AND HISTORIC DECREASES IN CRIME

The following are Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg's remarks as delivered today at 7 World Trade Center:

"I want to thank the Downtown Alliance for sponsoring this breakfast – but let me begin by taking a moment to remember someone who did such an outstanding job of leading this organization, and who did so much for the city that she loved: Liz Berger.

"Liz was a passionate believer in Lower Manhattan and in its future – through both good times and bad times. Last year, after Hurricane Sandy hit, Liz played a crucial role in helping the downtown community get back on its feet – in part by creating a loan and grant program for small businesses. We all miss her energy, her drive, her commitment – but also her personality.

"She was a wonderful person that everybody loved, and she made an enormous difference in the city. And we really will miss her, but what we can do as I kept saying yesterday to a number of family members on the plaza of the memorial, we can't bring back anybody but we can build the future in their memory and do what they would have wanted to do if they had survived. And I commit that we will all do that to take what Liz was building and make it even better. And we will benefit from her good work for many, many years. We just have to make sure that we leverage her work and not just sit back and enjoy it.

"This morning is an opportunity for us reflect on the progress we've made downtown – and across our city – since that tragic Tuesday morning when we suffered what I think is fair to say is the most deadly foreign attack in U.S. history, and it is a chance to recommit ourselves to the work we've done to honor all those we've lost.

"This week's primary election day got me thinking about another primary election twelve years ago. It began in anticipation, but it was quickly drowned out in tears. When we awoke on September 12th, 2001 we were a city in a state of total shock.

"The horror of the previous day was still just sinking in. In the days that followed, the black pall that shrouded Lower Manhattan in darkness left all of us in mourning, and the future of our city in doubt.

“As the wakes and funerals stretched on for weeks and months, many people wondered whether the final eulogy would be for the city itself, and at least we know now that that was not the case.

“There were so many questions about the city’s survival back then. Could New York remain an economic powerhouse and a global financial center, or would large companies and Wall Street firms relocate to the suburbs?

“Could small businesses survive the fallout, or would they have to fold up and close down?

“Could New York remain a magnet for dreamers, or would people pack up and move out, and would tourists stop coming?

“Could New York weather a severe fiscal crisis and a deep recession, or would the grime and crime of the bad old days return?

“It’s just easy at our age to forget that 12 years later, but that was the world that was going on. There were serious people with serious discussions about whether we had any future at all.

“A week after I was elected mayor in 2001, the *New York Times* ran an A1 story entitled, ‘Recalling the 70s, Warily.’

“Let me quote you what it said: ‘The slowing economy, the collapse of the dot-com bubble and the impact of September 11 have raised the specter of the city’s enduring another period of austerity, a return to the days of dirtier streets, legions of the homeless, an increase in the welfare population, a rise in crime, a plummet in the quality of life so sharp that people fled town. Those days seem so distant. Could they come back?’

“Or what the *Daily News* said in a story that October: ‘The real question – a quarter-century later – is: Can this urban nightmare happen again? Eight million New Yorkers are about to find out.’

“Twelve years ago, no one knew the answer to these questions. New Yorkers were lucky enough, or I was lucky enough, or we were lucky enough I guess is the way to phrase it to be elected, this administration. In no small measure the requirement, the promise, the hope was that we could rebuild our city, that we could recover, we could rebuild it, we could begin anew. Many were fearful and hesitant, but we did what New Yorkers do best: we came together, we rolled up our sleeves, and we got back to work.

“On my first day in office, immediately after being sworn in, I came here to the World Trade Center site – which was still smoldering – to thank and encourage the recovery workers. From the beginning, our goal was not only to recover and rebuild this site, but to begin restoring

a sense of normalcy to our city's life, and to begin restoring the faith that New Yorkers had developed in our city's future.

“Today, I think it's safe to say together we succeeded beyond what anyone thought was possible.

“This morning, a stone's throw from here, parents lead their children by the hand to school. Commuters emerge from subways. Trucks deliver produce. Signs of everyday life everywhere, and the tangible sign of success. Normalcy.

“The overwhelming sense of anxiety that once filled the air here in Lower Manhattan – and all across the city – has been replaced by a sense of energy and renewal. Of course, the everyday worries have long-since returned – and that's a good thing. That's normal, as well.

“But today, I think it's fair to say, we can declare that the post-9/11 uncertainty is over.

“We will never forget those we lost; the Memorial and the Museum right here will help ensure that. And we must never forget the lessons of that day. Freedom is not free. We have young men and women around the world fighting to prevent what happened here 12 years ago.

“But we're always going to be attacked, there are always people who don't like the fact that here everyone can vote, here everyone can say what they want to say, here everyone can practice their religion the way they want to do so.

“But the time has come to recognize that our city has emerged from the shadow of 9/11 stronger than ever, and that we have entered a new era.

“It is an era that is not defined by 9/11 anymore, or the questions that followed it, or anything else in our past. It is defined by our hopes for the future – and by the extraordinary promise of a city that is, more than ever, the global capital of freedom and opportunity.

“Today, we see evidence of this new era all around us, and nowhere I think is the view more powerful than here at the World Trade Center, where thousands of men and women have been working – earning union wages – to rebuild this site.

“The 9/11 Memorial pools, where the Twin Towers once stood, are a global symbol of our spirit. They have already welcomed nearly 10 million visitors since they opened just two years ago.

“The Museum being built under the Memorial Plaza will open next year, ensuring that the stories of that day are not forgotten.

“7 World Trade Center – where we are today – is 100 percent full.

“Later this year, 4 World Trade Center, the big building over there, will open its doors for business.

“And next year, 1 World Trade right here – the tallest building in the Western Hemisphere – will open for business.

“Tower 3 is going up right now. The new Calatrava PATH station right down there. It’s all happening here. And you can see from these windows World Trade Center 3 rising and the PATH tube designed by Calatrava will come close to getting this no longer a construction site but a place where people come and work and live and enjoy and remember.

“All together, this has probably been the most complicated development project in the history of the world. Just think about it: We are building the hemisphere’s tallest building and numerous other skyscrapers, the world’s largest memorial, and two major transit centers on a site that has two working railroads running through it, that must be fortified against a major river and the possibility of a future terrorist attack, that generates passionate and conflicting views among a wide range of people and organizations, and that is governed jointly by two states that have had nine different governors over the past 12 years, each with a different idea about the site.

“As a result of all those factors and more, including the 2008 financial crash and the credit freeze that resulted, progress here, in all fairness we have to admit it, has not followed a straight line. But that’s the real world.

“Today, however, let me put it in perspective, how many people talk about the fact that Central Park took three decades to complete? Or that it was expensive and over budget? Or that people sued to stop it? Or that its design process was complicated by politics? Or that the City Council then passed a law reducing its size by a third?

“The answer is no one remembers that. Not one person talks about those obstacles today, because none of it matters now.

“What matters is not Central Park’s cost or timeline. What matters is that it was done right, and it has stood the test of time. And so it will be for the World Trade Center site.

“The rebuilding that is happening here at the Trade Center is a reflection of the renewal that’s happening across Lower Manhattan. Back in 2002, I gave a speech outlining a new vision for Lower Manhattan as a 24/7 community – with more housing, more parks, more shops, more schools, and more arts and cultural opportunities.

“Over the past 11 years, thanks to so many people and many different government agencies at the state, city and federal levels, that vision has come to life in spectacular fashion.

“I can’t possibly mention everyone who played a role in that work, but I would be remiss if I did not mention a few, including the LMDC and its founding chairman, John Whitehead; Larry Silverstein, who was an early believer in the idea of downtown as a residential and commercial district; Senators Schumer and Clinton; Governor Pataki, and everyone else who was back then so instrumental in securing federal aid; Governor Cuomo, Speaker Silver, and all the elected officials on both sides of the Hudson who have supported this area so strongly, along

with Governor Christie; All the Port Authority's leaders past and present, including its current Chairman Samson and Vice Chairman Scott Rechler; And of course, all the members of our Administration who worked so hard on this, including Deputy Mayors Bob Steel, Bob Lieber, Dan Doctoroff, First Deputy Mayor Patti Harris, and Commissioners Kate Levin, Amanda Burden, Rob Walsh, and so many others.

“Thanks to all of them and many others, the ghost town that was Lower Manhattan on weekends when I used to work here back in the late 60s and after 6 pm on weekdays has been replaced by a dynamic neighborhood that is now one of the most sought-after places to live in our city.

“On September 10th, 2001, there were about 23,000 people living downtown. Today, there are more than 60,000 residents – and that number is steadily growing. Many of these new residents are children – and their parents are moving and staying downtown in part because of the quality public school options that we've created.

“Back in 2001, there were 14 public schools in Lower Manhattan. Since then, we've opened five new school buildings, with more than 4,300 new classroom seats. And over the next two years, Lower Manhattan will see another new school building with another 700 seats.

“New schools have helped reshape Lower Manhattan as a family-friendly neighborhood – and so have the parks and open spaces along the Hudson and East Rivers, and on Governors Island.

“Lower Manhattan is now home to baseball and soccer fields, basketball and beach volleyball courts, playgrounds and picnic gardens, bicycle lanes, pedestrian plazas, riverfront esplanades, kayaking programs, outdoor concerts and public art, even miniature golf is down here now.

“The Lower Manhattan waterfront is more alive today than at any point since its heyday as a commercial shipping port more than 50 years ago.

“Lower Manhattan has also become one of the most sought-after places to work and visit. There were six hotels in Lower Manhattan back in 2001. Today, there are 18 – and within two years, there will be 30 hotels in Lower Manhattan. Just think about that, from 6 to 30 hotels in Lower Manhattan.

“One of them will be in the old Battery Maritime Building, and another will be at 346 Broadway, a building the City acquired in the 1960s but no longer needs. I think both are great examples of how we are turning City properties that went underused for decades into productive assets that will generate jobs and tax revenue.

“There are also more jobs in Lower Manhattan than there were on September 10th, 2001, and those new jobs are not in finance; the financial service industry has shrunk since 2001.

“When I came into office, for example, there were plans for the City to spend \$1 billion on a new home for the New York Stock Exchange – because of the fear that it would move to New Jersey. Offering subsidies and incentives to retain and attract businesses was the primary form of government-sponsored economic development for decades.

“But go to the New York Stock Exchange today and you’ll see why we canceled the deal: The three floors are down to one, and that’s mostly empty. Trading has gone electronic and I don’t even know where the computer is. It could be in Cleveland, it could be in New Jersey, it could be in Europe for all we know. That’s the real world today. We didn’t need a billion dollar building, and it’s a good thing that we didn’t spend our money on it.

“We haven’t spent the past 12 years trying to protect the financial industry – or any other industry – from the rising tide of globalization and technological change. That’s what the marketplace should do.

“Instead we created the conditions that would allow a broad range of industries and entrepreneurs to capitalize on those market changes – and help us build a stronger and more diverse economy.

“The rise of the tech industry is a great example of that. Here in Lower Manhattan, we’ve supported and funded the Downtown Alliance’s tech incubator – the Hive it’s called – at 55 Broad Street, which has been a huge success. We’ve created competitive grants to encourage tech companies to move or expand downtown – and many have.

“We’ve created the kind of community where the young people who dominate the tech industry want to come and work. And we have Bob Steel to thank for all of that, and Seth Pinsky together. You guys have made an enormous difference in the future of this city.

“There are now more than 600 tech companies in Lower Manhattan, employing thousands of people. And today, I’m pleased to announce a new initiative that the Downtown Alliance is undertaking in partnership with tech entrepreneurs and innovators, and with the full support of our Administration.

“It’s called ‘Launch LM’ – and it’s designed to advance the tech community here in Lower Manhattan by creating venues for those in the industry to congregate, collaborate, and share resources and ideas. It will also provide programming and marketing support for tech start-ups, to help them develop and grow.

“The growth of the tech industry here in Lower Manhattan reflects the tech growth that we’ve seen across the city, and that’s not surprising. Because the renewal of Lower Manhattan as a community of schools and parks and small businesses also reflects the community revival that we’ve seen across our city over the past 12 years.

“The reason for that is simple: We took the same approach that has worked so well here in Lower Manhattan – investing in the conditions that create safe, vibrant, and attractive places to live, work, and visit – and we’ve applied it to neighborhoods across the five boroughs.

“After all, when I came into office, Lower Manhattan was not the only neighborhood in need of investment. There were many other neighborhoods across the city that still lacked quality school options, green parks, and waterfront access.

“There were many other neighborhoods that still lacked the vibrant small business districts and cultural organizations. And there were many other neighborhoods that still lacked safe and clean streets.

“Today, while the work is not done – it never is – the question that hung heavy in the air after 9/11 has been answered.

“Could we recover economically and remain a global economic powerhouse? In the year after 9/11, our city lost more than 100,000 private sector jobs. But today, we have a record number of private sector jobs – up more than 400,000 from that time. And the majority of those jobs have been created outside of Manhattan.

“We have not only remained a global financial capital, but more than ever, we are a global capital for tech, for tourism, fashion, film, arts, culture, higher education, health care, entrepreneurialism of every kind.

“Could we remain a magnet for people with big dreams, and for tourists from around the world? That was a question being asked back then.

“Well let me just tell you what’s happened: Over the past 12 years, our population has grown by about 300,000 people – that’s bigger than almost all the cities in America – and for the first time since 1950, more people are moving into New York City than moving out of it. In the past our growth came from people being born here, but people that came in were less than the people that left. Today, more people are coming here as well as being born here.

“In addition, tourism has grown at an incredible pace; it’s up more than 40 percent since 2000, and we reached our goal of attracting 50 million visitors a year four years ahead of schedule. This year we think we’ll have 53 million tourists come to this city, and we need the kind of jobs that they create for the diverse population that we have here.

“Could we survive a fiscal crisis that some called worse than the one we endured in 1970s? A question everybody asked.

“By making the hard choices, and finding ways to do more with less, we protected the core services that are essential for our economy and we prepared for the next downturn, something governments rarely do. That allowed us to weather the recent national recession in far better shape than the rest of the country.

“In fact, while the country as whole has still not gained back all of the jobs that were lost during the recent recession, I’m happy to say that New York City has gained back three times the number of jobs we lost back then.

“Finally, and most importantly, people wanted to know could we hold onto the public safety gains that had been made over the prior decade?”

“In 2001, most people worried about crime going back up. Few had hopes that it could go down any further. In Mayor Giuliani’s second term, the number of murders in our city seemed to hit rock bottom: There were 633 murders in 1998, then the number went up to 673 in 2000, and then seemed to level out in 2001 at 649.

“The legendary news columnist Jack Newfield said that if murders ever fell below 600 a year, the members of the New York Police Department should get a ticker tape parade up Broadway.

“Well, thanks to Commissioner Kelly and all of the people that work at the NYPD, I’m happy to say that in 2002 we cut it below 600. Then in our second term we cut it to below 500. Now we are on pace to cut it below 400 murders a year – that was something absolutely unthinkable a decade ago.

“We haven’t thrown the members of the NYPD a ticker tape parade – most of them really don’t want the spotlight. But I will say that they deserve our respect and gratitude for putting their lives on the line every day as so many others do, just like our great Fire Department that was so much in evidence around yesterday when they were memorializing the terrible tragedy of 343 firefighters that were killed on 9/11.

“Our police officers have also helped keep our city safe from terrorism thanks to the strong partnerships the NYPD has forged with state and federal agencies, and thanks to investments we’ve made in creating the largest, most sophisticated counter-terrorism operation of any city in the world. That’s what’s keeping us safe, that’s what we have to continue.

“Of course, our city remains a prime target for terrorists. It represents everything about the United States to people around the world as Commissioner Kelly explained earlier this week, and the work of protecting against future attacks we all know will require continued vigilance. That’s the message of 9/11.

“For instance, you should know, we hammered out a very comprehensive security plan with the Port Authority for the redeveloped World Trade Center, which we think will protect it, while also allowing it to become the center of a great new commercial district, fully integrated into the neighborhood that’s around it.

“In the months and years ahead, it’s crucial that all parties continue working together to ensure the safety of Lower Manhattan. And across the city, it’s critical that we continue investing in counterterrorism operations that are guided by the bounds of the law. The threat we continue to face is not abstract, and it is not going away.

“The truth is, we have answered the questions about New York City’s post-9/11 future – but only for now. Because the day that we believe that our progress is inevitable, the day we take

our safety and security for granted, the day that we believe that the past cannot repeat itself is the day those questions will return.

“Of course, our job is not only to avoid the mistakes of the past – but to anticipate the changes of the future. Hurricane Sandy dealt us a terrible blow in many communities in our city, including here in Lower Manhattan.

“As part of *PlaNYC*, we have been working to make our city more resilient – but Sandy certainly raised the bar, and increased the level of urgency. In June, if you remember, we released a detailed blueprint for protecting all five boroughs from the increased likelihood of extreme weather events. From building dune and levees and localized surge barriers, to building what we call Seaport City here in Lower Manhattan, there is an enormous amount of work that remains ahead.

“It won’t be easy – but I think it’s fair to say we’ve laid the groundwork for success, and for making New York City a global leader in resiliency.

“Whether it is extreme weather, or terrorism, or crime, or a national recession, we can never forget the lessons that we have learned.

“The future is not preordained. It is ours to shape and to strengthen as best we can.

“That’s what we’ve been doing for the past 12 years, that’s what we will keep doing for the next 110 days. And then it will be up to a new administration and all of you to keep our progress going so that we can keep making this great city of ours even greater.

“God bless America and thank you very much.”

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