



Michael R. Bloomberg  
Mayor

## **Progress at Work 2011 State of the City Address**

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg today outlined his State of the City agenda for 2011 at Staten Island's St. George Theatre, which was saved from the wrecking ball and brought back to life. The Mayor spoke about the need to continue breathing new life into the economy, finding savings in the budget, and modernizing City government. The city has weathered the national recession better than other cities by spurring new jobs in growing industries and by showing fiscal discipline at City Hall. The Mayor pledged to continue and expand those efforts – and not raise taxes, despite pressures on next year's budget that will be greater than ever.

“We can look back, and continue funding a government operating system that was built for another era,” said the Mayor. “Or we can look forward and continue rebounding, continue growing, continue forging ahead and leading the nation. But we cannot do both. That is the choice we face. The State of our City is strong. But to remain strong, we must make the right choice. We must embrace the future. If you stand with me, I promise you we will look forward – and move forward – together.”

### **Recovering Economy, Balanced Budget**

Last year, at the State of the City, the Mayor spoke of twin challenges: creating jobs in the midst of a national economic downturn and balancing our budget in a way that protected vital services and taxpayers. Over the past 12 months New York City has met both of those challenges better than almost any other city in the nation, creating jobs at nearly twice the national rate by adding 51,000 private sector jobs.

Over the past three years, New York City has cut spending nine times and by approximately \$5 billion, including \$1.6 billion in budget gap closing actions this year. Mayor Bloomberg pledged that he will not raise taxes to balance the budget this year. Instead, the focus will be on growing our way out of these tough times by shrinking the costs of government.

### **When You Stop Investing In The Future, The Future Disappears**

#### **Attracting the Next Generation of Entrepreneurs**

To continue attracting the next generation of entrepreneurs, the City will hatch more business incubators in growing industries. The Mayor also pledged to push for federal immigration reform that would help attract more innovators to New York City. The City continues to attract leaders in education and medicine to our academic institutions and bioscience firms; New York City is looking to partner with a top university to build a new applied science and engineering institution.

#### **Ensuring Continued Livability for Current New Yorkers**

The City will create new reasons for people and companies to invest their futures in New York. It will take the next steps in creating the next great neighborhoods in Willet's Point, Hunters Point South, Coney Island and along the Navy Homeport in Staten Island. New parks will continue to emerge at Governor's Island and the Brooklyn waterfront. The Staten Island Museum, the Whitney, the Queens Museum of Art and the Bronx River Arts Center will open new homes or facilities.

## **Modernizing City Government**

Making it easier for businesses to open and expand is just one part of a broader vision for City government called *Simplicity*. This comprehensive vision will make City government smarter and more efficient. *Simplicity* is founded on the belief that government should be organized around the needs of its customers – taxpayers, businesses, and anyone who uses City services.

### **Saving Money**

Over the past year, the Mayor's Office has been working to consolidate the City's real estate holdings, vehicle fleet, accounts receivable, technology and back-office operations – steps that will save taxpayers half-a-billion dollars by 2014 and another half-a-billion dollars every year after that.

### **Improving Customer Service**

The Department of Environmental Protection has begun notifying homeowners about possible water leaks using newly-installed wireless water meters. A new class of livery cars will be established to make on-street pickups outside of Manhattan, just like yellow cabs. Building on the City's New Business Acceleration Team's efforts to help restaurants cut through red tape and open their doors faster, the City will offer those same services to small retail shops. If a restaurant gets a letter-A grade from the Department of Health for overall cleanliness on either inspection or re-inspection, they will not have to pay fines for any violations found on that inspection. The Mayor also announced a new online forum to gather money-saving ideas from all New Yorkers.

### **Taking Charge of Our Destiny**

A critical part of modernizing City government is saving every penny by reducing unfunded mandates such as pension and health care benefits. At the State of the City, the Mayor announced a financial reform package that proposes a set of changes at the State level that would save the City money. This includes modernizing the contracting process, capping the amount of time a teacher can spend in the Absent Teacher Reserve pool, allowing the City's Department of Finance to administer the collection of City income taxes, and reforming the out-of-control pension system. "This year, the average New York City tax filer will be paying \$2,400 more to cover pension costs than they did in 2001," said the Mayor. "And next year, you'll be paying even more." Mayor Bloomberg tapped former Mayor Ed Koch to help lead the push for pension reform. Among the steps that the City hopes the State Legislature will take is consolidating pension systems, creating a new tier for future employees, and permitting pension benefits to be part of the collective bargaining process.

### **Fighting Crime, Creating Opportunity**

Public safety is a centerpiece of the City's efforts to continue growing the economy and creating jobs. Crime is down 35 percent since 2001. To continue reducing crime, the Mayor announced a comprehensive effort to prevent young people from getting off track and keep them connected to family, school, and job opportunities. The City is focusing on truancy, opening a center in Harlem to provide services for children and parents. Three new family centers on Rikers Island also will give incarcerated fathers more opportunities to spend time with their visiting children. To make the nation's safest big city even safer, the City will partner with Governor Cuomo to continue overhauling the state's juvenile detention system. A new partnership between the NYPD and Brooklyn clergy members will be expanded. Because summer jobs improve the odds of students graduating high school and attending college, the City will compensate for cuts in federal funding to summer youth employment programs by raising private money to put thousands of young New Yorkers to work.