



**The Public Dialogue
Phase I**

**John C. Whitehead, Chairman
Louis R. Tomson, President**

**Preliminary Report
October 24, 2002**

Introduction

The Lower Manhattan Development Corporation (LMDC), in close collaboration with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ), is committed to a continuing dialogue with the public regarding the revitalization of Lower Manhattan, the creation of an appropriate memorial to the victims of September 11, 2001, and the redevelopment of the World Trade Center site. In fact, the LMDC's *Principles and Revised Blueprint for the Future of Lower Manhattan*, which was drafted and then revised based on public input, states that LMDC's first Principle for Action is to "make decisions based on an inclusive and open public process." Consistent with this principle, the LMDC formed Advisory Councils that represent the wide array of stakeholders in Lower Manhattan. In addition, the LMDC provides the public with numerous opportunities to express their viewpoints, through public hearings, the official website, and regular mail.

On July 16, 2002, the LMDC and the PANYNJ released six concept plans for the future of the World Trade Center site and adjacent areas. These plans represent the first phase in a three-phase planning study. With the release of these initial concept plans, the LMDC launched an extensive public outreach campaign with a focus on both the plans and the creation of an appropriate memorial to the victims of September 11th. This public dialogue is unprecedented with respect both to its scope and the intensity with which it was conducted. This is a preliminary report of this public dialogue. A more complete report of the public dialogue will accompany the release of concept plans as part of Phase II of the planning study. This report will include a comprehensive analysis of the comments received and how they were reflected in the planning process. The public comment period for Phase I of the planning study concluded on September 30, 2002; however, comments relating to the memorial, the LMDC Families Advisory Council draft Memorial Mission Statement, and preliminary memorial program are still being accepted.

The following is a summary of opportunities for public participation.

- **Listening to the City**

The LMDC and the Port Authority sponsored a 4,300-person town hall meeting on Saturday, July 20, 2002 and a second 200-person event was held on Monday, July 22, 2002. These events, both held at the Jacob Javits Convention Center, gave participants from the New York metropolitan area an opportunity to provide feedback on the six concept plans. The event on July 20th was the largest public urban planning dialogue of its kind in history. Participants in these forums came from all over the region and represented a variety of backgrounds. Another 800 people participated in an on-line dialogue held between July 29, 2002 and August 12, 2002.

- **Public Meetings**

The LMDC and the PANYNJ held public meetings in each of the five boroughs of New York City between August 20, 2002 and September 5, 2002. A public meeting was also held in New Jersey on September 25, 2002. The public meetings included presentations on two topics, each followed by a comment period. The first presentation was on the draft Memorial Mission Statement and preliminary program ideas for the memorial, and the second presentation addressed the various planning elements associated with the rebuilding of the World Trade Center site and adjacent areas. The public was invited to provide feedback in two ways at these public meetings – through oral comments and through written comment cards that were provided to each attendee.

- **Federal Hall exhibit**

The six concept plans were displayed at Federal Hall in Lower Manhattan from July 24, 2002 to August 30, 2002. Visitors to the Federal Hall exhibit were encouraged to submit a public comment brochure. The exhibit provided the LMDC and the PANYNJ with feedback from a broad range of stakeholders from all over the United States and abroad. An estimated 17,000 people visited the exhibit.¹

- **Advisory Council Meetings**

The LMDC convened meetings between July 18, 2002 and August 27, 2002 with the Advisory Councils to present the six concept plans and discuss preliminary program ideas for the memorial. On August 19, 2002, the LMDC convened a meeting for all Advisory Councils and Ex-Officio members to introduce Anita Contini, Vice President for Memorial, Cultural, and Civic Programs, and to solicit comments on the draft Memorial Mission Statement and the preliminary program ideas for the memorial. Other meetings were also held with the Families Advisory Council to discuss the concept plans and the memorial.

- **Mailing to the Families of Victims**

The LMDC sent a mailing to the families of the World Trade Center victims. The mailing included a letter from LMDC President Lou Tomson introducing the LMDC, the Families Advisory Council draft Memorial Mission Statement and preliminary program ideas for the memorial, and a brief questionnaire that allowed families to provide feedback on the draft Memorial Mission Statement. As of October 21, 2002, the LMDC has received over 480 responses and feedback from family members.

- **New Jersey Families Meeting**

The LMDC participated in a meeting convened by Governor James E. McGreevey on August 28, 2002 for families of New Jersey victims. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the Families Advisory Council draft Memorial Mission Statement, preliminary program, and other planning elements that will be included as part of Phase II of the planning study.

- **Civic Groups, Elected Officials, and Government Officials Briefing and Mailing**

Approximately 150 people, including elected officials and representatives from various civic groups, government agencies and Advisory Council members, attended a presentation at Pace University on the six concept plans on the afternoon of July 16, 2002, the day the plans were released. Additionally, the LMDC sent the Preliminary Urban Design Study to over 200 civic leaders and elected and government officials.

- **LMDC's official website email, and regular mail**

The LMDC received thousands of emails through its web site between July 16, 2002 and September 30, 2002, in addition to letters sent via regular mail and fax. These emails and letters were reviewed and sorted based on topic by members of the LMDC staff.

¹ According to the contact information provided on the Federal Hall exhibit public comment brochure, over half of the 895 respondents were from the tri-state area. 28 percent were from the United States outside of the tri-state region, and 7 percent were from abroad. Five percent filled out the brochure without indicating where they were from.

Preliminary Feedback

The Creation of an Appropriate Memorial

In June, the Families Advisory Council established two committees to discuss ideas for the memorial process and the program elements to be included in the permanent memorial. These committees drafted a Memorial Mission Statement as well as a preliminary program for the memorial. This draft Memorial Mission Statement and preliminary program were included in the mailing to the victims' families for review and comment. Ideas and suggestions regarding an appropriate memorial were discussed at all Advisory Council meetings during July and August. The draft Memorial Mission Statement was also read at the Listening to the City events.

In early August, Anita Contini, Vice President for Memorial, Cultural, and Civic Programs, developed a preliminary program for the memorial based on the families comments, comments from the Advisory Councils, and others. This preliminary program, along with the draft Memorial Mission Statement, were presented in all of the public meetings held in late August and September.

Draft Memorial Mission Statement

The following is a preliminary record of comments that were received regarding the draft Memorial Mission Statement:

- The mission statement should reflect more emotion and be more spiritual – it “needs more heart.”
- Keep it simple.
- The mission statement should reflect more emotion and less detail.
- The mission statement should honor the global nature of the WTC and those from other countries that died.
- The mission statement should not include the names of the airlines.
- It should state who carried out the attacks and why they did it.
- The mission statement should not say that victims were “lost,” rather that they were murdered.
- It should have a theme of never forgetting what happened on that day.
- It should be more powerful.
- The mission statement should convey themes such as healing and inspiration.

Proposed Memorial Program Elements

Families Advisory Council members and the public have also provided program suggestions for the memorial. The following are some of the themes and program ideas for the memorial that have been suggested:

- The memorial must convey the magnitude and enormity of the event.
- Each victim should be honored individually by name, with a plaque or physical symbol, etc.
- All victims should be honored equally; they were all heroes. There should be no distinction between civilians and uniformed services.
- There should be a private area within the memorial for family members.
- The memorial should be a place to reflect in a serene setting.
- The unidentified remains should be returned to the 16-acre site and should be interred there.
- The memorial should reflect that the victims were engaged in commerce – it should highlight America's democratic and capitalist spirit and system.
- It should be a living memorial with elements like water, light, trees, an eternal flame, and pictures. It should be interactive.
- It would honor the victims to replace their death with events that celebrate the spirit and joy of life.

- The memorial needs to honor New York City and what the City endured and should portray themes such as bravery, compassion, resilience, civility, and it should make a statement about the American way of life in terms of freedom, democracy, tolerance, etc.
- The memorial should have cultural and educational components.
- There should be a museum and other cultural institutions. These should reflect global democracy and multi-cultural ideals. World peace should be promoted.
- It should include a children's museum and learning center.
- Mourning and sadness should not dominate the memorial; it needs to be a place that portrays hope and peace.
- Preserve the footprints of the Twin Towers.
- Preserve the footprints of the Twin Towers, all the way down to the bedrock.
- Preserve the entire area west of the de-mapped Greenwich Street and east of West Street.
- There should be no commercial building at all on the 16-acre site. The entire site should be a memorial.
- Rebuilding is the best way to honor the victims. If the whole site is a memorial, it will not honor those who died.

The Initial Concept Plans and Planning Elements

The Listening to the City events enabled people from the entire New York metropolitan area to participate in the public dialogue regarding the future of World Trade Center site and adjacent areas and the creation of a fitting memorial. Approximately 4,500 people attended the Listening to the City events on July 20, 2002 and July 22, 2002, representing a diverse demographic and geographic population. In addition to reviewing and discussing the six concept plans, participants were asked to discuss a variety of issues related to Lower Manhattan and its revitalization. The participants were also asked to provide comments on the draft Memorial Mission Statement. At these events, 80 percent of the participants felt very satisfied or satisfied with the quality of the dialogue.

In addition to the Listening to the City events, the LMDC convened Advisory Council meetings during July and August to discuss the initial six concept plans. At these meetings, each Advisory Council was given a presentation on the six concept plans and had an opportunity to ask questions and make comments. The LMDC also held six public hearings throughout New York and New Jersey in August and September to discuss the planning elements, such as open space, commercial and retail space, the street grid, the restoration of the skyline, a West Street promenade, transportation, and others. In addition to the many oral comments received at these meetings, the LMDC received 115 written comment cards. The six concept plans were also presented to the Executive Committee of Community Board 1 in July. Additionally, thousands of comments, opinions, and suggestions on the six concept plans have been sent to the LMDC. And, finally, the LMDC received 895 public comment brochures that were submitted by visitors to the Federal Hall exhibit. The public comment brochure posed a series of questions pertaining to various planning elements to which the public could rank as “very important,” “important,” “somewhat important,” “not important,” “no preference,” or “not prepared to respond at this time.”

The following is a summary of the main topics that emerged in the public process:

Restoration of the Skyline

The restoration of the Lower Manhattan skyline has been a consistent theme throughout the public dialogue. Nearly 60 percent of attendees at the Listening to the City events believed it is very important to add a major symbol to the skyline. Visitors to the Federal Hall exhibit were asked, “How important is it to add a major symbol to the skyline?” Of the respondents, 84 percent stated that is “Very Important” or “Important.” In comments the LMDC has reviewed, a large proportion related to restoring the skyline. There are numerous comments and several grassroots organizations that support rebuilding the Twin Towers as they originally stood.

Preserve the Footprints of the Twin Towers

Participants in the Advisory Council meetings and in the citywide public meetings stated that it is important to “preserve” the footprints of the Twin Towers. At the Listening to the City event on July 20th, when polled about specific features of the six concept plans, 36 percent said preserving the footprints was most important, the highest percentage of the features polled. A Quinnipiac poll released in July stated that 42 percent of people feel that the footprints should be preserved, versus 41 percent saying there should be development on them. Some family members and participants at public meetings have expressed not only a desire to preserve the footprints, but to leave the entire 16-acre site undeveloped as “hallowed ground.”

West Street

Creating better pedestrian connections between the World Trade Center site, Battery Park City, the World Financial Center, and the waterfront has been raised at numerous public forums. Eliminating West Street as a barrier between the Financial District and Battery Park City was rated “Very Important” or “Important” by 88 percent of Listening to the City participants. Participants said that removing the West Street barrier and creating a promenade would be a good way to use green space to connect the community, and create more public access to the waterfront.

Public comment brochures submitted at the Federal Hall exhibit also supported the creation of a promenade. Seventy-six percent of the people who responded to this question on the Federal Hall exhibit brochure said that this suggestion is “Very Important” or “Important.” In response to whether or not it is important for the permanent memorial to be linked to Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty, 30 percent of the people who responded said this is “Very Important,” or “Important,” with another 20 percent saying it is “Somewhat Important.”

Some people, and in particular residents of Battery Park City, have expressed concerns about tunneling West Street because of the potential disruption to the neighborhood that it would create during construction. Participants in Advisory Council meetings have also asked questions and have expressed concerns regarding the timeline and costs that would be associated with such a large-scale project.

Transportation

The presentation of six concept plans at each Advisory Council meeting included a presentation by the PANYNJ of proposed transportation projects downtown that would link the PATH, the New York City subways, the ferry terminals, and more. These projects would link 14 subway lines and would provide better East-West connections for commuters to Lower Manhattan. Each of the public meetings also included a discussion on transportation as a planning element. Participants at many of the Advisory Council meetings have said that transportation improvements are essential to the revitalization of Lower Manhattan. At the Listening to the City event, participants supported building an interconnected transportation hub. There was a strong consensus that transportation improvements are critical if Lower Manhattan is to recover and thrive as a business center. Beyond the transportation improvements presented at the public forums, some participants in various meetings have called for regional rail and airport access directly into downtown in addition to connections between existing ferries and subway lines.

Street Grid

Restoration of all or part of the street grid throughout the World Trade Center site has emerged as a central issue. Over 50 percent of participants at the Listening to the City events said restoring part or all of the street grid was “Very Important” or “Important.” When responding to the question at the Federal Hall exhibit, 55 percent of the respondents said it is “Very Important” or “Important.” Participants at numerous public forums have also expressed an interest in improved pedestrian access throughout downtown. Some people have expressed concern about vehicular traffic near the permanent memorial.

Commercial Space and Retail

The mix of commercial and retail space that was included in each of the six concept plans has been widely discussed. The LMDC and The Port Authority have received mixed reactions to the amount of commercial and retail space. Discussions during Advisory Council meetings often focused on the 99-year lease between the Port Authority and a private developer, which requires rebuilding. Many felt that the six concept plans included too much office space on the 16-acre site. Many participants also raised concerns regarding whether or not the original amount of 11 million square feet was economically feasible in current economic conditions. At the Listening to the City events, participants expressed

concerns that the World Trade Center site would be overdeveloped, with too much commercial space on the site. However, others, in particular people who work and/or own businesses downtown, stated that restoration of commercial space and creating jobs is essential to a thriving economy and that redevelopment will help the businesses that were most affected by September 11th to rebound, as expressed at Financial Firms, Professional Firms, and Restaurants, Retailers, and Small Businesses Advisory Council meetings.

Members of the LMDC Advisory Councils and the public have expressed a desire to see more retail in the neighborhood, and, in particular, more street-level retail. The shopping center that was lost at the World Trade Center served as one of the only areas in Lower Manhattan that filled many of the residents' needs, although much of it was below street level and some residents felt the hours of operation were geared more toward commuters. Residents of the area have expressed a desire to develop retail that is open on nights and weekends. The retail space, in addition to commercial office space, is considered an important element to revitalizing Lower Manhattan. When responding to the question, "how important is it that new retail areas at the WTC site be located below ground and above ground," 56 percent of respondents on the Federal Hall exhibit public comment brochure indicated that it is "Very Important" or "Important."

Civic and Cultural Uses

Participants in the various LMDC Advisory Council meetings have consistently indicated a desire to create a true mixed-use community in Lower Manhattan. Part of this effort includes expanding the number of cultural and civic institutions in the area. In particular, the residents of the area have expressed the need for more cultural institutions and civic amenities. Other participants have indicated that educational institutions should be included in the plans, and some have suggested exploring the creation of an international learning center.

Many people have expressed a desire for the memorial and memorial-related buildings to promote international understanding, which could be accomplished through the creation of additional cultural uses such as museums on or around the site. When responding to the question, "how important is it to include cultural uses on the WTC Site and adjacent areas?" 64 percent of the people who responded to this question on the Federal Hall Exhibit brochure said it is "Very Important" or "Important." At the Listening to the City event, one of the desires of participants was to see more non-office uses, including cultural institutions and affordable housing, incorporated into the plans.

Parks and Open Space

The need for open space and parks in Lower Manhattan is a recurring theme in Advisory Council meetings and other public forums. In particular, the residents of Lower Manhattan are interested in not only public spaces, but also additional recreational parkland. The Memorial Promenade concept plan was hailed by some specifically because of the amount of and variety of new open spaces it would create. When asked about open space, over 50 percent of the participants at the Listening to the City events preferred a variety of open spaces. The Federal Hall exhibit public comment brochure posed the question, "Do you prefer one large open space or a variety of differently sized open spaces?" Of the respondents, 51 percent preferred a variety of spaces.

Housing

At the Listening to the City events, participants indicated that they wanted more non-commercial uses, including affordable housing. When asked to select the most important theme from their discussion, 55 percent of the participants at the July 20th Listening to the City event identified housing for all income levels as most important, saying that it would create a 24-hour neighborhood, attract businesses, and help those in need. Participants in Advisory Council meetings have also discussed the importance of housing in the area to continue to grow the downtown area as a residential community.

Additional Planning Issues and Elements

In Advisory Council meetings and other public forums, individuals have expressed that the six concept plans looked too similar, were “too crowded” and were not as magnificent as they imagined. The public also expressed favorable opinions regarding a number of key elements, from the promenade to the street grid, as described above. People have called upon the LMDC to open up the process to additional architects and planners, and to strive for architectural excellence. The public in various forums has also expressed a desire to see the memorial planning and the overall site planning more closely linked. At the Listening to the City events, 64 percent ranked linking the planning of the memorial to the planning of the rest of the site as “Very Important.”

Other topics that have arisen include: 1) the issue of safety, both in terms of building and skyscraper safety, and security associated with the proposed transportation center and the memorial itself, 2) environmentally-friendly buildings, and 3) ensuring that new buildings and complexes are handicapped-accessible.

Moving Forward

In response to public feedback, the LMDC, with the support of PANYNJ, released a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to seek input from talented and creative designers from around the world to assist with the planning efforts. On September 26th, the LMDC and the Port Authority announced six firms that will be part of the next phase of the planning study. Some of the world's most talented architects and planners will come together this fall to participate in a design study of the World Trade Center site and adjacent areas. Six teams were chosen from over 400 submissions, representing 34 nations. The six teams include a total of 27 different firms, individual architects and artists who count among their accomplishments such works as the Getty Center in Los Angeles; the Jewish Museum in Berlin; the Morgan Stanley World Headquarters in New York; the Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art in Helsinki; MoMa Queens in Long Island City; and the Yokohama International Port Terminal in Japan. Combined with existing LMDC and PANYNJ designers' ongoing work, the LMDC will use this study to move forward with the planning process and develop new ideas for the World Trade Center site and adjacent areas.

Additionally, the LMDC and the Port Authority developed a new flexible program, which was provided for those six new teams. The program elements include memorial-related space, cultural uses, retail amenities and a range of commercial space on the site -- up to 40 percent less than what existed prior to September 11th. The range of commercial space of 6.5 million to 10 million square feet on the site will allow for more creativity in the next set of plans. The main program elements include the following:

- **Distinctive Skyline**

New York City lost a critical part of its identity when the World Trade Center towers were destroyed. A tall symbol or structure that would be recognized around the world is crucial to restoring the spirit of the city.

- **Preference for Recognition of the Towers**

Based on public input, there is a preference for preserving the footprints of the Twin Towers for memorial space and precluding commercial development on those locations.

- **Grand Promenade on West Street**

Connect the future World Trade Center memorial with the ferries in Battery Park to Liberty and Ellis Islands. This grand promenade could reinvent West Street as a wide public boulevard and living memorial and might include depressing some or all of West Street south of Vesey Street.

- **New Street Grid**

Partially restore the street grid within the former World Trade Center site, which integrates walking and/or driving routes on and to the site.

- **Central Transit Center**

Create an integrated transit center serving Lower Manhattan for PATH and subway passengers. A grand and visible station is needed to orient travelers and provide a spectacular point of arrival for commuters, tourists, and residents.

- **Residential Housing**

There is significant demand for residential housing in Lower Manhattan. Planners will explore the possibility of residential housing off the site.

- **Cultural Elements**

Utilize the unique opportunity for building major cultural institutions or a complex. Sites for a museum, performing arts center, or other spaces should be part of the plan.

- **Sequence of Public Open Space of Different Sizes**

In addition to the main memorial space, plans should include public open spaces, eg. Parks and plazas, of different sizes and configurations.

The complete text of the program can be found on the LMDC website at www.renewnyc.com.

Housing and Fulton Street Corridor

The LMDC recently announced two studies, one of the housing market south of Chambers Street and the other of the Fulton Street Corridor. The Housing Study will examine how to encourage the creation of mixed housing types, including affordable housing. The Fulton Study will examine how to transform this vital east west commercial strip into a prime destination for retail, arts, and entertainment, stretching from the South Street Seaport to the World Financial Center.

Conclusion

This is a preliminary report on the public dialogue for Phase I of the planning study. A more comprehensive report on the Phase I public dialogue will accompany the release of plans as part of Phase II. The LMDC's commitment to public dialogue will continue in Phase II with public meetings, Advisory Council meetings, solicitation of feedback via the website, and other means.