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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO HOLDS MEDIA AVAILABILITY

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Well, good morning, everyone. Good morning, and I'm really happy to tell you about the vision that I laid out last night in the State of the City. A vision for how we recover, but this is the most important thing I'm going to say today. It has to be a recovery for all of us. That is the central idea of this vision to bring back New York City strong and to make sure it truly works for everybody. Look, over course of 2020, there was only one word that I think of when I think about how the people of this city handled the coronavirus: the word is heroic. This was a hero city. This was a city of people who did everything they were asked to do to fight back, and this heroic city is going to do great things in 2021, turn the tide and recover and go farther than ever before, and we're going to do things differently. We're going to do things for everyone. So please, if you didn't get a chance to see the State of the City, go to recoveryforall.nyc.gov, and you'll see the State of the City video itself, but also the detailed policy document that goes with it to give you a sense of the specific plans we're going to undertake this year, energetically, forcefully, to bring the city back in 2021. Again, recoveryforall.nyc.gov.

Now, let me go over just high points, real quick, the most important thing: getting this city vaccinated. That is the gateway to everything else, and so we set a goal. The only way you get anything done in life is to set a goal, and if you set a soft goal, an easy goal, you're not really fighting very hard. We're going for an aggressive goal – five million workers vaccinated by June. I am absolutely certain we can do it, so long as we have the vaccine, and I am more and more confident because actions of the Biden administration, because the Johnson and Johnson vaccine is coming, more and more confident that we will have what we need. I'm going to push hard on the federal government to get every pharmaceutical company in America into this work, because they're not right now, and the federal government needs to ensure that they are required to produce vaccine, whether they're the originator of the vaccine or not. So long as we have the supply, we can reach five million New Yorkers in June, get to a point of community immunity. Look, this is crucial that we now know we can do half a million vaccinations in a week. Supply is there. We're going to do something amazing.

We're going to bring back our city workforce in May and after, because obviously so many are on the job right now. But the folks who work in our offices and do so much important work, we want them back. We want to send a signal to this whole city we're moving forward. Want to see the private sector bring workforces back. We are going to have an entirely different situation as we proceed into the spring. By end of the spring, I think you're going to see something very different and we're going to have a great group of folks out there, our Vaccine For All Corps leading the way,

Now, a lot of different pieces matter, and one of the most crucial ones that matters to us for today, for our parents, for our families, for our future tomorrow are schools. One of the things that says most clearly we are back is our schools, and so in September, our schools come back fully. We focus on helping kids overcome that COVID achievement gap. Our 2021 student achievement plan focuses on the academic side, but also the emotional side, the mental health needs of our kids after everything they've been through, and we make transformative efforts starting this year, deepening efforts to diversify our schools, to build new leadership in our school system. This is going to be truly an extraordinary year for the New York City public schools. Look, our schools have proven already. They came back when so many other places couldn't and the safest places in New York City. That's all you need to know about the extraordinary ability of our New York City educators and our New York City school staff, and our parents and our kids. Everyone wants to be back and we're going to be back full strength in September.

The crucial issue of issue, an issue that's been so deeply felt in the last year, changing the relationship between police and community, bringing us forward, more reform, changing the culture of policing. It's all there and can be done because we knew what neighborhood policing. You could change the paradigm and we have, but there's more to do. So we lay out a vision in this recovery for all of us plan that we are going to do, first of all, a battle against gun violence by bringing everyone to the same table, NYPD, district attorneys, folks who do the work on the ground in communities through the Cure Violence Movement and Crisis Management System. We're going to focus on those very, very small number of individuals who commit the violent acts in this city. It's literally a few thousand people out of a city of over 8.5 million. We know how to pinpoint those individuals and go and make sure they are not committing violence, and we need the whole community to be part of that. And in light of that, we need the whole community more involved with the police. This is what neighborhood policing is all about. We're going to supercharge it now, bringing the community into the process for deciding their precinct commanders, a deeper effort to support Cure Violence, doubling the workforce of Cure Violence, an approach that we know has helped to stop violence and that engages community members to solve community problems. And what I'm calling the David Dinkins plan, a plan to deepen trust and accountability by strengthening the CCRB, which is one of the, to me, great examples of the things that actually build trust. When people see accountability, they see transparency, they have more trust. A much stronger CCRB is what we'll achieve, and we'll do it in honor of someone we lost in the last year, and we miss Mayor David Dinkins.

Now, bringing the city forward, it means we've got to feel the changes and the improvements as we come back, as we achieve our recovery. So we're borrowing from the greatest example of recovery in American history, the New Deal. We're taking extraordinary ideas from the New Deal and bringing them right here right now. One example, such a wonderful one in the New Deal was the Civilian Conservation Corps, the CCC. I remember in my family, people would talk about it, the way it changed people's lives, saved people, gave them jobs, gave them hope. We're going to do the City Cleanup Corps, 10,000 New Yorkers who are going to be out there cleaning away graffiti, helping to make sure there's beautification in communities, like community murals, working with community organizations to clean up the neighborhoods, helping us in 2021 to come back strong.

We're also going to focus on – talk about the New Deal – what was the whole concept? The concept was fairness. The concept was a focus on working people, and ensuring that we had a

progressive approach to government, including progressive taxation. So we're going to fight in Albany to tax the wealthy, make them pay their fair share, use those resources as part of our recovery. What do you want to do with that kind of resource? I'll tell you something. What's one of the number one things we can do. Let's go right to the grassroots, to small business. Let's help our small businesses recover. So in this plan, direct recovery effort for small business, tax credits for small businesses to put money back in their pockets and a much bigger vision of that, that we could achieve with stimulus funding. I want to see small businesses incentivized to retain employees and to hire more New Yorkers. That's what we'll do, particularly if we can get that ample stimulus we deserve, we're going to focus a lot of those resources on small business. We have to, in every way, do the things that will supercharge the economy of the city, 5G development in this city, closing the digital divide, and things that affect our community in the way that we live and that we feel the things we believe in, and what is a more clear New York City value than compassion, and decency, and a sense of community. To achieve that, we double down now on our journey home plan to end street homelessness once and for all.

The biggest piece of this vision of where we go in our future, how we recover economically, is the vision of becoming the public health capital of the world. We are perfectly poised to be that, and I literally mean perfectly. The finest universities, the finest hospitals, the finest researchers, entrepreneurs. We have all the component parts to supercharge our economy with a focus on public health, and we're going to take what we have achieved in this year, under very difficult conditions. What our Test and Trace Corps has achieved as just one example, turn it into a permanent Public Health Corps to do public health promotion at the community level. We're also going to build out the life sciences industry, which is crucial to our future. Tens of thousands of jobs, a place where we can shine like few places in the world, and I'll tell you something: a city people want to live in, a city people want to come to, is a city that's dynamic and energetic. We got that. That has talent and creativity and entrepreneurship. We got that. It's a city that also has to be fair and just. People all over the world want to live in a place that they can feel is someplace they belong, is someplace that listens, is someplace that cares, is someplace that is fair. That's what we're going to achieve, and some of the things we're going to do have never been done before in New York City. We're going to make permanent our task force on racial inclusion and equity. This is literally empowering people of color leaders in the city government to be a group of folks who achieve, in a sense, a conscience for the city government who are looking all the time at whether the city government is acting in the spirit of equity who identify the policies we need to implement right now, who make sure that it's actually happening.

Government leaders making government respond to their communities. This is an unprecedented approach. It's been working. We're going to make it permanent. And we're going to have a charter revision commission that not only looks at the City government and our laws, but looks beyond. It will also serve as a commission on racial justice and reconciliation. An international model, we're modifying for use in New York City. Because we know there's structural racism. We know there's institutional racism. But we haven't had a full accounting of it. We haven't had a plan to undo it and overcome it. This charter revision commission, I'm giving them a two-year mandate. They're going to get started in my term and I think with the work they're doing, they will certainly get support to continue into 2022. Because there'll be going at the most essential questions of our day and determining solutions with the people. And that's truly exciting. So much that we're going to be doing to change this city, to make it better here and now.

And we're going to work on the biggest issue of our time, the existential issue, the issue of climate change. We are going to make sure that in everything we do, we support solutions to the climate crisis. This is the biggest city in America, when we act people pay attention and it sets the tone and it changes the reality. So we're going to be focusing in so many ways on renewable energy and getting away from fossil fuels. But we're also going to change the way we live in this city. We're opening up some of our iconic bridges to make sure that they become places for bicyclists and for pedestrians in ways they've never been before. And they're safe and they're inviting. We're going to create bike boulevards to make it safer for bicyclists and make bicyclists -- make this a city that truly becomes more bike-friendly all the time. We're going to make Open Streets permanent. It's been a great program. It's energized communities. We're going to make it permanent. But then we go farther because we have to go to the root cause of the climate crisis. That's fossil fuels. That's the fossil fuel companies. So, by 2030, my plan is to end fossil fuel connections in the city. Literally make it impossible for people to create new fossil fuel connections and therefore create a dynamic where people have to turn to renewable energy. This is the kind of thing that actually gets us to the future we need. And we can do it in New York City. If we do it here, it's going to catch on in so many other places. This is the kind of leadership nationally and globally we have to provide. That's who we are in New York City.

We're going to go farther. We're going to connect to clean energy from Canada. Our whole City government will be based on renewable electricity. We're going to use our pension funds. Ultimately, we're going to be able to invest \$50 billion over the course of the next 15 years to help build renewable energy and speed its development. Our money, we need to put it into saving the lives of our children and grandchildren and building our future. That's what we'll do. So, so many things, so many big ambitious plans, they're going to make a difference for us in 2021 in our recovery. And that's going to ensure its recovery for all of us. And also build a foundation for a much greater future ahead in New York City.

So those are the big strands of the State of the City. And we'll be talking about it for weeks and months to come, a lot of the specifics. So a lot more will be unveiled and a lot of action ahead. I'm very excited and very hopeful what it means for the city. Obviously, I'm going to talk about our indicators in a moment as I do every day. Number one issue of course, every day is fighting the coronavirus. But before I talk about our indicators, we have a really nice thing here in our city today. And it's kind of important to just take a moment and enjoy it and appreciate it. So, a little history being made. We have a special visitor in New York City. For the first time in 130 years in Central Park, a snowy owl has appeared. And this is pretty amazing. And a sign, maybe it's a good omen. Maybe it's something special. So, I just wanted to celebrate this beautiful moment, but also thank our colleagues at the Parks Department because they're doing what they do so well. They're making sure that everyone is safe. They're making sure everything is handled the right way. They're protecting this beautiful snowy owl and making sure our visitor is taken well care of. So a nice moment for New York City.

All right, let's go to update. First of all, vaccine update. Like to tell you regularly, we all know we need, we all know what the central promise with vaccine – supply, supply, supply. We need a lot more. We need a lot more flexibility to use the supply well. But I still think it's important to see the progress that's being made. It is still the month of January. And here's our number from day one of our vaccination effort – 742,025 doses have been given in New York City, 742,000. That is more than the population of Washington, D. C. to give you perspective on just how vast this effort already is, but it's going to be so much more when we get the supply we need.

Okay to our indicators. Number one, daily number of people admitted to New York City hospitals for COVID-19, today's report, 286 patients. The positivity level, almost 70 percent, and the hospitalization rate, 5.19 per 100,000. Number two, number, I'm sorry – number two is the new reported cases on a seven-day average – bless you – today's report is 4,639 cases. And number three, percentage of people testing positive citywide for COVID-19, today's report on a seven-day rolling average, 8.63 percent. To say the least, we've got to keep doing better. We've got to keep our guard up. We're worried about the variants out there. We got a lot more work to do, but it's all about vaccine. It's all about supply, supply, supply. Okay, a few words in Spanish

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

With that, we will turn to our colleagues in the media. Please let me know the name and outlet of each journalist.

Moderator: We'll now begin our Q-and-A. As a reminder, we're joined today by Dr. Chokshi, by Dr. Katz, and by Senior Advisor Dr. Jay Varma. First question today that goes to Jen Peltz from the AP.

Question: Hi, Mr. Mayor, how are you?

Mayor: Good, Jen, how you been?

Question: Okay, thanks. I wanted to ask, as you know, the Governor has suggested that he has an announcement forthcoming today on – for dining at restaurants in New York City. What do you think should happen?

Mayor: You know, I've spoken to the Governor over the last few days, several times, and again, this is the State's call. I know the State cares deeply as I do about data and science and getting this right. So, I continue to say, look, we're in an uncertain situation because of the new variants, because we don't yet have all the supply of vaccine we should. But I also know, and I really feel that folks who are trying to make a livelihood, trying to save their businesses, they're struggling, communities really are trying to support their local restaurants. So, the whole idea here is to try and strike the right balance. I know the Governor is trying to do it. So, whatever decision he makes, we're going to work with it. And the most important part is whenever we do move to indoor dining again, to do it safely, and our Department of Health will be leading the way in terms of doing the inspections and the follow-up to make sure things are handled safely. Go ahead, Jen.

Question: On the vaccination front, any update on when some of the sites that were closed might be able to reopen?

Mayor: Yeah. As you heard yesterday, some of those Department of Health hubs have opened, which is great because we've gotten some more supply, but we need a lot more supply. The bottom line here is we're going to judge by the supply we're getting. And obviously we are very hopeful because the Biden administration has said, they're going to actually create a system where you can see several weeks ahead and have a lot more reliability. That will allow us to be

more definitive about the timelines. But once we have a more secure supply, we want to increase greatly the number of sites down into the grassroots. We want those 24/7 sites going. I'll just turn to Dr. Chokshi and see if he has any new breaking update on sites at this point. Doctor?

Commissioner Dave Chokshi, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene: Thank you so much, Sir. And you covered all of the high points. Our operating model is a flexible one where we can ramp up sites, hours, days depending on the supply that we get. So, we do have eight of our Health Department clinics that are operating in addition to the 15 vaccine hubs. That's in addition to the Health + Hospitals sites that are operating as well. And all of them can continue to expand hours and appointments if we do get the additional supply that you've referred to.

Mayor: Thank you. Go ahead, Jen.

Moderator: [Inaudible] second question.

Mayor: Oh, I'm sorry. My apologies.

Moderator: The next is Bob Hennelly from the Chief Leader.

Question: Yes. Good morning. Mr. Mayor, yesterday, a female FDNY EMT member of DC 37 Local 257 was sexually assaulted while trying to give aid to someone who was [inaudible] a heart attack, a news cycle before that a police officer was shot. Here at the Chief, we've been reporting on a troubling trend of assault on TWU Local 100 members on the front lines of the pandemic and the subways and as bus operators. What's your administration doing to help these essential first responders and workers to stay safe in what appears to be deteriorating street conditions?

Mayor: Yeah. Bob, look, I don't agree with that last piece, but I agree that we've got to protect our public servants. They do so much for us. It's horrible. Each of these situations you've described are horrible and unacceptable. Clearly each is different too. And in the case of our officer, he was out there getting guns off the streets part of a very successful effort in the last months to get more and more guns off the streets. He was one of those brave officers that does that. Thank God he's going to be okay. It's tough work, but it's working. But you're going to see a deepening of the strategies that we talked about last night to identify the folks doing the violence to ensure they are apprehended, to ensure that they are tried, and we got to get our court system back. And that's why, again, I want to see everyone in the court system vaccinated. I want to see jurors coming to do jury duty vaccinated. I want to see DA staff, court staff vaccinated, so we can get the court system going. It's all about reinvigorating the criminal justice system, getting past the COVID impact and bringing communities into the process. And that's how we'll protect everyone, including our public employees. Go ahead, Bob.

Question: Yesterday the City Council passed a measure championed by City Council's Civil Service and Labor Chair Daneek Miller that would create a framework so that we could get a public and private sector essential workers on the same page and have a feedback loop in terms of COVID workplace protections. As you know, unions have been concerned up until the change of administration, OSHA has been missing an action. Is this another place where in New York City can lead the nation in terms of making sure that both private and public sector workers, regardless of immigration status have the best in terms of pandemic projections?

Mayor: Absolutely. I will tell you, first of all, our, you know, we – you remember, we changed the not only the name, but the focus of one of our city departments, it's now the Department of Consumer and Worker Protection. This is something really important that we decided the New York City government, despite the work of OSHA, which historically has been good and important work, or the State, that we needed the New York City government to be actively involved in protecting working people at their workplaces. Department Consumer and Worker Protection has done great, aggressive work and certainly continues to during the pandemic and the comeback, the recovery. So yes, we need to be vigilant. I will say a lot of folks in the private sector, to their credit, have been really great about putting stringent protections in place. So, we've been doing it, obviously, in the public sector. We're going to really push hard to make the public – to make sure the private sector is right there with us.

Moderator: Next is Rich Lamb from WCBS 880.

Question: Good morning, Mr. Mayor, and everybody on the call.

Mayor: Hey, Rich, how are you doing today?

Question: Well, you know, the clock is ticking, what can I tell you.

Mayor: The clock ticking, but I hope you're appreciating the outpouring of feeling for you because you've earned it brother.

Question: You know, thanks so much, and I'm humbled by it. So, you know, just talking about the money from the federal government, what if it doesn't come or it doesn't come at least as much as you want, much as you've been hoping for. I mean it looks like the Republicans are sort of regrouping after what happened at the Capitol. It looks like there, you know, for instance, when they talk about support for looking at the President's responsibility there, it looks like everybody's sort of backing off a little bit. So, you worried about getting that bailout through if you will, if you want to call it a bailout?

Mayor: I am certainly – look in a 50-50 Senate, every vote matters to say the least, and doesn't surprise me. There are going to be folks trying to inhibit a true stimulus, but I think the American people want a real stimulus, again, not just a relief package, a real stimulus to get us back on our feet, and that includes helping work in people directly and that includes helping City and State government to be strong so we can serve people and lead the recovery. I think there's a tremendous amount of support. I think Joe Biden knows better than anyone on this planet that looking back after the recession, more stimulus would have helped a lot and he experienced it, and I think it's one of those cardinal rules for him, to go for a stronger, bigger stimulus. That's obviously the great lesson of the New Deal as well. So, I am very hopeful we'll get there, but Rich to your question, of course we have a plan B. You know, if the stimulus isn't happening because it's taking too long, we're going to have to make budget decisions in the meantime. If it's insufficient, we're going to have to do some things differently and not as well as we want to. But we will keep rolling with it. I think the most important thing now is just maximum pressure on the Senate to provide a true stimulus for this country. Go ahead.

Question: Okay, maybe I could follow up by that. And what would the plan B look like? I mean, it's obviously, it's not going to be pleasant, how bad will things be if this doesn't come through?

Mayor: Rich, look, when we did the preliminary budget a few weeks ago, we laid out a world in which we didn't have a stimulus and we showed the belt tightening that's happened already. We've obviously done a lot to reduce city spending. We did furloughs. We've done all sorts of things. We have a lot more we'd have to do depending on what happens and obviously the biggest concern is without a stimulus, the State has its own fiscal problems and they end up cutting us by billions more, that will take even more severe measures. So, we're ready. We obviously have been thinking about this and we're prepared for wherever this goes. If we don't get a real stimulus, you're talking then about the kind of reality where we – were going to have our recovery undercut, our ability to come back is going to be hurt deeply, people are going to suffer. If we don't get a real stimulus, there's not going to be a real recovery. That's the bottom line.

Moderator: The next is Reuvain from Hamodia.

Question: Good morning, Mr. Mayor. You said you'll be updating the list of what is now the 27 neighborhoods hardest hit by COVID since the original one was based on data from the spring. Most recently it was supposed to be done by last week, and now that didn't happen. So, I'd like to ask when exactly a list will be up to date and if your administration will share now, even before they released the new list, the exact formula that will be used in determining the list data metrics?

Mayor: I know you are focused on your topic. I admire that, and I know you're not patient, and that's makes you a true New Yorker. I want to be clear. I said, we would have that out this week. It's still this week. So, we're going to have that coming out soon, both the methodology, what it shows in terms of the areas of greatest need, how we're moving forward to ensure that our efforts to vaccinate focus on priority, but reach, obviously, everyone. We want to reach everyone. We're going to have aggressive outreach efforts and vaccination efforts in every community with a special focus and concern for the places that bore the brunt, where we saw the most deaths, where we see the least health care being provided historically. We'll lay it all out and plenty of opportunity to talk it through. Go ahead.

Question: Thanks for that. You said generally that the neighbors on that list will get vaccine priority. So, can you please be precise and say exactly what will be different about those neighborhoods as compared to other neighborhoods and exactly what way the priority over any of other neighborhood?

Mayor: Again, when we present the facts, we'll also present how we're going to address those facts and that's the time when we'll lay it out. The important thing is we're going to make sure everyone in this city has the opportunity to get vaccinated and again, my goal is five million New Yorkers vaccinated by June. That will put us in an entirely different reality. So long as the supplies there, we're going to have the ability to do it. Unquestionably, physically, we have extraordinary capacity right now. There is a hesitancy problem. Let's be clear in every community, there is a hesitancy problem. We're particularly seeing hesitancy in communities of color, and we're going to be talking about that. That's a real challenge, but we'll go over both the

data, what it means and what it causes us to do in terms of action to address the challenges. Go ahead.

Moderator: The next is Henry from Bloomberg.

Question: Mr. Mayor, how are you doing today?

Mayor: Good Henry. How you?

Question: I'm okay. Took me a little while to think about it.

Mayor: Yeah, I've got to say, you're the only one with the answer Henry.

Question: Pretty much. Well, my question has to do with the internet. [Inaudible] talked about the digital divide a little bit and this has been an issue in our schools and I'm wondering what the relationship is between your administration in the city and the companies that provide internet? Can the city compel these companies to forgive broadband fees for example? A lot of families can't afford the fees on the internet, as you know, I know you've had some correspondence with these companies. And the city charters these companies, and is that leverage that you can exert on these companies to get free or heavily discounted internet service?

Mayor: Absolutely. I'll make sure we follow up with you on some of the details. I'll give you some quick overview responses, but I think we should have you talked to our Chief Technology Officer John Paul Farmer today and our IT Commissioner Jessie Tisch, those are the folks who've done extraordinary work pushing the spectrum on what we are demanding of companies and how we want to stop business as usual, because what happened? I mean, this is why we had, you know, you remember a few weeks back, we came to a very aggressive settlement with Verizon. I will say politely the previous administration came up with a franchise plan for Verizon that had very unclear goals and very little enforceability. We fought back. We were able to force a settlement that is going to allow us to reach hundreds of thousands of households with service. There's definitely a variety of tools we have to ensure that the services are affordable, we don't have all the tools I'd like us to have. We would really benefit from the federal government leaning in on this point too and using their power, but what we are doing now through the use of the franchise agreements, we're trying to create more competition between the companies and make very clear that we expect intense coverage of the city, including the places that have been left out, which tend to be in the outer boroughs, tend to be lower-income communities, immigrant communities, we don't accept that. And you'll see the details if you go to a recoveryforall.nyc.gov, you'll see some of the details of the plan, but we'll get you further details from our commissioners. Go ahead, Henry.

Question: Okay. I look forward to those details. You've also repeatedly pledged that the schools will be open for all in September. Do you anticipate that middle schools and high schools will be open by the time this school year ends? And if so, do you have a target date? What needs to happen for that to occur?

Mayor: I do anticipate they'll be coming back in this school year. As I said, yesterday, we're about to go into February, during February we'll put the plan on the table for middle schools and move on it as quickly as possible, but we'll make the plan public. Obviously, the big factors here

are what's going on with the coronavirus, in general, what's going on with the variants, what's going on with the vaccine. We want to keep vaccinating teachers, and school staff, and we want to deepen that effort. But also, it's having enough testing capacity, and we're working on that right now to ensure that, as we keep building out and opening up more and more schools in the short-term, that we have the testing to go with it.

Moderator: The next is Gersh from Streetsblog.

Question: Hello, Mr. Mayor, and everyone on the call. I appreciate you taking the call. Last night was a big night for you with the State of the City and the recovery website you mentioned this morning, which I've reviewed, but sort of still lacks some details. So, I'm wondering if you could, for example, tell us what in your mind a bike boulevard is. You know, given that there's a lot of terms that – a lot of definitions for that. Like, the Brooklyn Borough President, for example, has called car-free bike highways. I don't know if that's what you're talking about. Kind of, lay out your vision on that.

Mayor: Gersh, Gersh, Gersh – you know, you could be happy today, Gersh. We've got some really extraordinary things here. So, I will tell you, I think these are going to be really fantastic changes, they're going to help our city profoundly and help us provide more alternatives to people, help us move away from the automobile. The bike boulevards are – I call them super bike friendly. They have a variety of treatments that encourage bicycle use and discourage cars. And they connect – in many cases, the vision is to connect areas that need – you know, where you have different bike lanes that need connections between them, to provide that. So, we'll be having a lot more to say in the coming weeks, as we unveil details. State of the City is the big picture, obviously, and then you're going to see a whole lot more play out in the coming weeks. But I think this is the kind of thing that's going to make it easier to be a bicyclist in New York City, and safer. Go ahead.

Question: Okay. Yeah. To be clear, I wasn't – I wasn't asking [inaudible] for a specific, but okay. So, I do want to follow up with that, on the State of the City, as you said, is the big picture. So, it was an equity speech, it was, you know, recovery all of us, it's a big look to the future to make us a fairer city. There was not a single word in a 3,700 word speech about bus riders. And, as you know, bus riders, typically, are lower income than their car-owning neighbors. So, I'm wondering if that means you probably have a much more important major bus announcement coming soon that maybe you want to preview now.

Mayor: I liked the way you think. Look, we've, obviously, in recent weeks even been talking about busways and the kinds of – we've spent a lot of time in the last few years – select bus service, a lot of changes that we've made in terms of speeding bus service, making it easier for people to use, making people want to – a reality that people will want to use buses more. I'm quite clear how devoted we are to buses. This was one speech, there's a lot more coming. But the bottom line here is, we need a city where there's more and more mass transit options, where there's less and less need to use the automobile, and we make this a city that's cleaner and greener. That's what we're going to do and you're going to see a lot play out in the coming weeks on this front.

Moderator: We have time for two more for today. The next is Nickel from CNN.

Question: Good morning, Mayor. Pleasure to meet you via WebEx.

Mayor: It is a pleasure, but I want to make sure I pronounce your name right. Let me hear it again.

Question: It's Nick-el

Mayor: Nickel, okay. I got you, Nickel.

Question: Yes, you've got it. Yeah, so I have some lawmakers and volunteers telling me that this vaccination site that recently opened in Washington Heights serve mostly white people from outside the city in its first two weeks of operating. Can you confirm this and address the concerns that local residents were left out of the process?

Mayor: Yeah, this is – it's outrageous, Nickel. And it's – you know, the more I learn about this, the angrier I get. As I understand it, here's Columbia Presbyterian, which is obviously a real important institution in the city, and a good one, and one we work with all the time, and generally very involved in the Washington Heights community. And the site was created with the State in New York, and somehow instead of focusing on the Latino community of Washington Heights, a place that really was hit hard by COVID, instead the approach was somehow conducive to folks from outside of the community coming and getting vaccinated, but not folks who live right there in Washington Heights – totally backwards. So, this is what not to do, Nickel – you know, do not create a big mega site divorced from the surrounding community that focuses only on people who have already the greatest access to health care. That's exactly the opposite of what we want to do. What we want to do is very grassroots. We want sites that reach deep into the community, work with community health care providers, work with organizations, work with clergy. We want to have sites in public housing. We're already doing that with great success in public housing developments, in our public health clinics all over the city, with trusted community leaders, speaking multiple languages – that vision is already operating, but we want to deepen it, because if you're not serving the people hardest hit by COVID, then it's not a real effort to stop this crisis. Go ahead, Nickel.

Question: Yeah. Thank you, Mayor. Also, where does the city currently stand on the vaccine supply and its ability to vaccinate everyone who was eligible?

Mayor: Not where we want to be, Nickel. Again, I've said publicly and I fully – I say with total comfort. In February, we will be able to vaccinate at the rate of half-a-million vaccinations a week if we have the supply. We are nowhere near the supply we need. There was progress after the President Biden put out his plan. You can see the details of our supply on the Department of Health website, but we still need several hundred thousand more doses a week to really be able to reach the level that we need to reach to make an impact. So, we're constantly – whatever we get, we're moving. You know, we pushed the federal government for more supply, we got some more supply from them. We want to see a whole lot more than that. We pushed the State to free up some of the supply that was not being used as part of the long-term care facility program.

They're doing that, that's great. What else do we need? We need the freedom to vaccinate, which means loosening up federal and State – the notion of second doses, let's use the second dose supply that's waiting for weeks and put it into play right now to vaccinate people. And most

importantly, what I'm going to be talking about a lot – the federal government has the power to compel private pharmaceutical companies to create vaccine, even if it's not their brand, even if it's not their formula. This is a wartime dynamic. The federal government has to use all its power and the companies should say, of course, we want to participate, because we want to save lives. It's not about profit. This is about saving lives. That's the missing link in my view. Go ahead.

Moderator: Last question for today, it goes to Katie Honan from the Wall Street Journal.

Question: Hey. Good morning, Mayor de Blasio.

Mayor: Hey.

Question: I wanted to ask – oh, hey, how are you doing?

Mayor: Good. How are you doing, Katie?

Question: I'm great. I'm great. I wanted to ask you, I guess, following up on Gersh's question, and, you know, I'll preface it by saying I don't mean this negatively either, but do you have more details on some of the announcements made last night in the State of the City? I saw specifically like the cleanup corps., a lot of it seems as contingent on federal money. So, can you talk a little bit about which of your announcements rely on federal money? Which ones are contingent on that?

Mayor: It's clearly a mix and I think it's in the document at recoveryforallthatnyc.gov. I think it does delineate when something is a planned, we intend to go forward with no matter what versus when it requires federal money. We'll obviously delineate all of that in the executive budget, and hope and pray by then we'll know exactly how much federal money we get. But, for example, we're moving forward with a major piece to help small business. The small business recovery tax credit, that will happen no matter what – \$50 million we believe that will help about 17,000 small businesses. We'll give them direct infusions of resources up to \$10,000 each by simply reducing their taxes. We could go a hell of a lot farther than that if we have stimulus funding. That could be a \$100 million dollar program, that could be a \$200 million program if we have stimulus funding and we can reach a lot more businesses a lot more deeply. One of the examples of something else that I am committed to doing no matter what is doubling the size of the Cure Violence, Crisis Management System workforce. We have found that has been extremely effective and we need to bring police and community into this work together, very crucial to our comeback here. We're going to do that no matter what. But there's other pieces, as you mentioned, with the cleanup corps., that we want to do that, and we think it can make a big impact, but we at this moment only could do that if we get the stimulus funding. So, a lot to play out, and we'll be going into the details on all of these different proposals in the coming days and weeks. But if we get an ample stimulus, we're going to be able to supercharge our recovery, that's the bottom line. Go ahead, Katie.

Question: Thanks. And I know you had said earlier this week that the city would be releasing the demographic data on vaccines by the end of the week, I guess technically it ends tomorrow, but do you know when we can anticipate that?

Mayor: Again, it's going to happen by the end of this week. People do have different interpretations I'm in the Monday to Sunday is a week school. Sometime in the next 48 hours or so we're going to have that out. We're still doing some final work to get that 100 percent ready, but that'll come out and we'll talk about what we're learning from that data and what we're going to be doing about it as well.

So, everybody, look, as we conclude today, I am very excited about what we're going to do in 2021. I just think we have a chance. After the heroic efforts of New Yorkers in 2020, we have a chance in 2021 to come back strong, to come back fairer, to come back better. That's what a recovery for all of us means. Anyone who has an opportunity, please look at the video we put out last night. I think it says so much about the people of this city, their commitment to bringing the city back, their love for this city. That's what's fueling this – New Yorkers love our city. New Yorkers know how to fight back, that's the difference-maker. We lay out a variety of specific elements of a vision that will bring the city back and bring us back fast and bring us back strong. Go to recoveryforall.nyc.gov for all the details. And I look forward to working with everyone this year as we bring New York city back. Thanks, everyone.

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