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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO HOLDS MEDIA AVAILABILITY

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Good morning, everybody. You know, it's so important just to lay out what's going on to all of you every day to give you a sense of what's happening in our city as we go through so much together. And that means good news, and that means bad news as well. I definitely have some good news I'm going to share with you in a few minutes. But first I have to deal with some very tough news because we are dealing with the greatest economic crisis this city has known in almost 90 years, and we're dealing with the greatest fiscal crisis that we've seen in generations. And all of this is coming together on top of all the pain and all the challenges in the city because of the health care crisis, because of all that we have lost to the coronavirus, all we're still struggling through. So, we've got a lot we have to deal with, but it's important to talk about the plain truth about the City budget, because we're getting to the point, in a matter of days, where we have to, by law, passed the budget for next year. And we're dealing with some very big challenges and I want to lay them out to you now.

First of all, what we have lost, I've been very transparent about – originally the estimate after the coronavirus hit, the economy started to shut down, the initial estimate coming from the Office of Management and Budget was that we would lose \$7.4 billion in revenue. Think about it. Tourism, basically gone at this point. The hotel industry, decimated. Office buildings, shut down, travel – all the things that were crucial. Obviously, restaurants, thank God they're coming back now. But think about all that was lost for those months, think about people's livelihood, but also think about the income that they generated for themselves, their families, but also what they provided, every New Yorker provided, to help this whole city to run. \$7.4 billion originally, and then just a few weeks ago, an updated number – \$9 billion is now the minimum amount of lost revenue because of this crisis.

And I think it's so important to understand – I hate having to say it, brings me no joy, but it's really important to level with all of you. This is just the beginning of what will be a prolonged challenge in terms of both our economic situation and our budget situation. This is not just one year or two years. This is probably more like three or four years to bring everything back to the level it should be. And we're going to be dealing with those challenges profoundly. And we've got a lot of unknowns up ahead, including what will happen with the disease. So, right now at this moment, \$9 billion in lost revenue. And, unfortunately, the possibility it could end up being much more than that. In the beginning, after the coronavirus hit, not so many weeks later, we had to provide an executive budget. In that budget, we found about \$2 billion in cuts to our agencies, nothing anybody wanted to do, but we had to find ways to save.

Now we're in the process of finding another billion dollars, and we're working with the City Council on that. The administration has ways of finding savings in agencies. The Council has offered good ideas as well. Together, we have to find a billion dollars, just meaning we're going to no longer do some of the things that we used to do. On top of that \$2 billion before, another billion. So, that gets us part of the way, but it doesn't get us far enough. And here's a simple way to think about it. We had a proposal in February – as recent as February, for a \$95 billion plus City budget. When the crisis hit that fell to an \$89 billion budget. Now we have to take it down again to an \$87 billion budget. So, as we lose revenue, we have to keep moving with that reality. It's tough for all of us, but that's what we have to do.

So, even with the savings I've just delineated, there's still a billion dollars more that we have to find. And the only way we can find that kind of money is by working with the labor movement, those who represent City workers. We need to find savings of a billion dollars from our workforce. There've been very, very substantial conversations for weeks now about how to address the situation. But also, for weeks and weeks, we all had the hope that there would be a federal stimulus plan by now. It's quite clear that's not happening. The earliest that could happen is the second half of July. And we don't know if, how, when it ever happens. We had hoped we would get borrowing authority from Albany. That has not happened. If that is going to happen in time for this City budget, there's only a few days left, and we have no guarantees it will happen.

Right now, we have to make decisions based on the facts and the numbers that we have. That means we're a billion dollars short. That means we have to turn to very, very difficult choices. So, if we can find a billion dollars in savings from the labor movement together, that is the ideal. But, unfortunately, now we have to talk about the last resort. The last resort would be layoffs and furloughs. The last resort would be the thing I don't want to do and none of us should want to see happen. Taking away the jobs of City workers, who we depend on, and their families depend on them for their livelihood, but we are running out of options here. That is the blunt truth. Here is a way to think about it – for every hundred-million dollars in the City budget, that's about 2,200 City employees on average. To close a \$1 billion gap would mean laying off 22,000 City employees, which is a staggering number.

We are prepared, if we have to, to initiate this type of plan with time given to hopefully find alternatives from Washington or Albany. If we have to put a layoff plan in place, again, it would mean that other efforts to find savings from labor had not succeeded. And it would mean that we would not be getting the help that we had to from Albany or Washington. Any such plan would take effect in the fall so we would give ourselves time to work it through and hopefully avert it. But it is really important to understand how tough the situation is. And it's not going to get better in the short term. It's going to take a while for our economy to come back. It's going to take quite a while for our revenue to come back. So, that is the blunt reality today. There's still time to address it and avert it, but that's what we're looking at as we have only a few days left before we have to finish the City budget.

So, with that sober news, let me go now to the better news that I was talking about. And you know, I always tell people, no matter how tough the challenges, that New Yorkers find the way through, New Yorkers make a way. And this has been an extraordinary crisis, maybe the toughest crisis, New York City has ever faced in our history, but New Yorkers have found a way

to work together, to fight back, to create. All sorts of things that are happening now couldn't have been imaginable before. You know, if I said to you, we were going to take an entire school system, 1.1 million kids, put it online in a matter of weeks, you would've said that's physically impossible, but our educators did it. Our parents did it. Our kids did it. If I said to you, we were going to bring back the most vibrant restaurant scene on Earth in just weeks. Let it come back again and be outdoors from scratch. You would have said, how on Earth could that happen? And yet it's happening before our very eyes. So many things have happened because New Yorkers have made it happen. And we have to keep finding those creative solutions and bringing out that ingenuity, that energy, that incredible New York spirit as we go through these next days ahead.

So, let's talk about something that came out of this crisis. That's been a very, very good thing. Open Streets. We had to find a way to make it work. It is working and it's now a very big deal. So, far there's 44 miles of Open Streets around the city. People love it and are getting so much good out of it. Today, we're announcing a huge expansion of the Open Streets. We're going to add today 23 new miles of Open Streets, all five boroughs, and all types, working with local, civic organizations, BIDs, our precincts. Some of them will be in areas around parks. Some of them will be in the middle of the community. Some of them will be protected bike lanes. We've got all different kinds of models, but there'll now be 67 miles overall. And it'll be the most operational Open Streets in the nation. So, this is going to be great for people looking just for a break this summer, with all the things going on, a place to exercise, a place for the kids to run around. It's growing, and we're going to keep adding to it. We said a few days ago when we talked about our Open Restaurants initiative, that Open Streets is also going to connect with Open Restaurants. And we'll have more to say on that in the next few days. And that's going to be an exciting additional piece.

We also are going to work with so many organizations in the city that are finding new ways to do things. So, you know, we need every conceivable way to help people through the summer, particularly our kids who have been through so much. Our parks have been such a crucial part of the equation, keeping people going, keeping our spirits up, giving people a chance to get some exercise. Well, now it's time for summer camps to begin again. And the Parks Department is going to work with private and nonprofit camps to find space in our parks so they can come back and provide support to kids. We're going to be doing that literally in the next few days to get them up and running so they can have, you know, a different kind of programming than they might have done if they had a lot of indoor space, but they're going to make it work and we're going to make it work with them to give our kids a great outdoor experience.

Now you talk about outdoors. It's going to be hot and we need to keep everyone protected, everyone cool. We know, last summer, very, very hot. This summer predicted to be real hot, we got to be ready to keep people cool. So, the Cool It NYC initiative, this one's excellent. This is going to help a lot of kids and families to stay cool. First of all, we'll be reopening 950 existing cooling elements. So, a lot of things that have been waiting to come online that are coming back now – sprinklers, spray showers, misting stations, they'll all be set up in – they have been set up, I'm sorry, over the last few days. They'll all be up and running shortly. You're starting to see them. And on top of that, another 250 new cooling elements will be in place in the next few weeks. So, we're going to come back better with more and more ways for kids and families to keep cool in the parks.

Also, FDNY and the Department of Environmental Protection are proactively adding up to 320 spray caps on fire hydrants during heat advisories to make sure that folks can take advantage of the fire hydrants the right way, the safe way on their block. And we'll be focusing all of this on the neighborhoods hardest hit by this disease, where the disparities have been deepest. That includes places like Highbridge, Morrisania, Bed-Stuy, a lot of communities that need extra focus. They're going to get it as part of this initiative. To find out what's being activated near you as part of this initiative, go to nyc.gov/parks/coolitnyc. And if you want to request a spray cap for a hydrant on your block, call 3-1-1.

Now we're going to focus on our kids and families, but we're always going to focus on our seniors as well. Our seniors need to stay cool. They are particularly vulnerable to the heat. They've been so vulnerable during this pandemic. We got to take care of them. So, one of the things we've been doing is giving out free air conditioners to low income seniors. So, those who need it the most. So far, 37,000 senior households have registered to get a free air conditioner. 23,000 of those, private homes. 14,000 in NYCHA, public housing. And to date 18,000 units have been installed, about half already installed. And now we're installing new ones at a rate of 1,500 air conditioning units per day. So, it's moving real fast ahead of the big heat that's coming up to make sure our seniors can stay cool.

Okay. Well, the news has started to spread about my next announcement, and it's such a good one. And it's something we've all been waiting for. And I want to just give credit where credit is due. We are able to make this announcement today because of you, because of all you did to fight through the coronavirus, to take the right precautions, to show a lot of toughness and discipline. It has brought us to this day. So, New York City, our beaches will be open July 1st. July 1st, beaches open around New York City. Lifeguards, ready to go. Training is being completed. It'll be a great day for New York City. Another part of our comeback to have our beaches up again. And it's going to be a great opportunity for people to stay cool. Now, remember, it will be wonderful to be able to go back in the water. It'll be wonderful to have the beach experience again, we're able to do it because this city got healthier and healthier over recent weeks. You see it in the indicators we've been talking about every day because of your hard work. Let's keep in mind we have to do this the right way. So, there's social distancing still on the beach, there's face covering still on the beach. We got to be smart. The State has issued a lot of guidelines that are very, very clear about how we don't make the mistake of allowing the coronavirus to spread again. And I don't have to remind you all. I think you've seen it in the news. We've seen in too many states in this country, a huge, horrible resurgence of this disease. We're not going to let it happen here. We're going to be smart. We can do that. So, you have earned another big step. You know, we went through phase one, so far, very effectively. Phase two has begun great. The restaurants are opening outdoors because of you. Now, the beaches are opening because of you.

Let's go over the indicators for today. And again, overall, a very good story. One, daily number of people admitted to hospitals for suspected COVID-19. Again, the threshold is 200 patients. Today's report is 75. Now that number is up and I'm noting that, it is not up a huge amount, but it's up. But I want to give you the information that the last data we have from just two days ago, that the percentage of people who are going into the hospitals for suspected COVID-19, who

actually test positive is only seven percent. So, within that 75 patients, only seven percent of them, a very small number, actually have COVID-19 based on the information we have now. So, that makes me feel better for sure. On the – indicator two, daily number of people in Health + Hospitals ICUs – threshold 375 – a good number today, 315. And indicator three, percentage of people citywide who are positive for COVID-19 – threshold of 15 percent. Again, today it's been consistent for a while now, good number, two percent. Let's keep it that way. Let me do a few words in Spanish –

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

With that, let's turn to our colleagues in the media and please let me know the name and outlet of each journalist.

Moderator: Good morning, everyone. We'll now begin our Q-and-A. As a reminder, we're joined in person by Commissioner Polly Trottenberg and we're joined on the line by Commissioner Criswell, Dr. Barbot, Commissioner Silver, Commissioner Doris, Sheriff Fucito, and Senior Advisor Dr. Jay Varma. First question today, it goes to Andrew Siff from NBC.

Question: Hi, good morning, everyone. I have two questions. The first one, Mayor, have you been in touch with the Governor's Office about quarantining visitors from other states? To what degree is your, either, Health Department or Health + Hospitals coordinating with them to enforce a quarantine for folks from other states visiting New York in the coming days and weeks?

Mayor: Yeah, we're talking to the Governor's Office about it and obviously trying to figure out what makes sense. I mean, it's clear, Andrew, there is a problem in a number of other states and we have to be very careful about the impact that would have on New York. And we certainly know a lot about how to support a quarantine and we have much more capacity to do that now. So, that's something we're in dialogue with the State on, and we'll have more to say on that soon.

Question: My second question is from my colleague, Chris Glorioso. This has to do with 50-a. Recently, Chris FOILED several police disciplinary records, but the NYPD said it would not even respond to the request until Halloween. Is that delay acceptable under the repeal of 50-a? And can you guarantee a future database of disciplinary records will truly be open data so they can be downloaded all at once with no redactions or restrictions? It sounds like the 50-a repeal hasn't taken root yet.

Mayor: Yeah, Andrew, the 50-a repeal happened just days ago, to be clear. But I absolutely – I made a public announcement, we are going to publish. It'll take some time to get it all out there. We're going to publish all the trial results. We're going to publish the disciplinary actions that are underway. We're going to publish disciplinary records for all officers on the force. It will come in waves, but it's all going to happen quickly and it's all going to happen this year. I don't understand why you got that response. We'll follow up on that. It doesn't make sense to me because we want all this information out. There are still elements that would be redacted as a matter of security. And I want to make that clear. As far as everything I understand, Andrew, there's still always – the 50-a law change makes clear, for example, you would never divulge a

home address of an officer or other information that would be sensitive, if there's issues in terms of an ongoing investigation, things like that. But overwhelmingly the information will be provided, provided proactively, and there would not be a need to FOIL it, it would just be provided.

Moderator: Next question is Katie from the Wall Street Journal.

Question: Hey, good morning, Mr. Mayor. I have a question about the budget outlook and particularly layoffs. The first is, I know that this is sort of the last resort, it would come in the fall, but which agencies do you foresee? Will it be across the board? Where do you see the layoffs coming from and what percentage of the layoffs would come from the Mayor's Office?

Mayor: Katie, if we get to that level – and again, we're deep in conversations with the labor unions trying to find better alternatives, but if we ever got to the point of having to activate that layoff plan for the fall, we're talking 22,000 employees. That's a vast, vast number of people. It would be literally every single agency and the Mayor's Office.

Question: And do you have a projection of like the average savings per employee you would project with layoffs?

Mayor: Well, again, that number that I gave you from OMB – average, a very broad average, across many different types of agencies and employees, but the rule of thumb, and this is about, you know, I don't want to, for a moment miss the fact we're talking about human beings, their families, their livelihood, and what they do that serves the people in New York City. All of that would be lost if we have to go to layoffs, it would be horrible. But as I said, it's about 2,200 employees per hundred-million on an annualized basis. So, we can get you the math on how that breaks out, but that's the number we're using.

Moderator: Next is Christine Veiga from Chalkbeat.

Question: Hi, Mr. Mayor. Thanks for taking my question. The Health Commissioner may also want to weigh in on this. There's been a big focus on helping small businesses, such as restaurants reopen, but childcare programs in New York City are also small businesses and they've been ordered to close. Those that are regulated by the City. Since April providers are struggling financially and don't understand what the requirements are for them to reopen. The State is making \$65 million in federal CARES money available to childcare centers to reopen, but they have to actually be open to receive that money by the end of July. So, when will centers know when they can reopen and what's required of them?

Mayor: Yeah. Christina, great, great question, so important. This one is a very tough piece of the equation. One of the toughest, in fact. I've worked on childcare issues for years and years and years. So, what you're – I think your frame is exactly right. We want to take advantage of all federal funding we can get. We want to help save these community organizations that provide childcare. We have kept some of them moving throughout because we've been providing childcare for essential workers, but the challenge has been the health dynamics. Now, I'll turn to the Commissioner in a moment, but you know, you're talking, overwhelming, of course, indoor

activity, indoor space, and limited space. And it's been really tough to figure out how we can do that in a healthy manner, but we've got to crack the code. We've got to figure it out going forward because it's also going to be necessary for a lot of people to get back to work and their livelihoods to have childcare. So, this is – you know, we've been sort of working through a series of challenges. This is one of the next frontiers. We have to resolve this quickly. I'm very concerned about it, but it's also one of the toughest pieces of the equation, but we'll have more to say on it soon for sure. Commissioner, do you want to add?

Commissioner Oxiris Barbot, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene: Certainly. Thank you, Mr. Mayor. I will echo what you highlighted that the paramount for us is ensuring the safety of children and workers in these centers, to ensure that we don't have ongoing transmission there. So, we have been communicating with the childcare community to make sure that they are up to date on the requirements from New York State. And we anticipate that the Board of Health will be looking at lifting the restrictions and we want providers to be ready once that is lifted.

Question: My understanding is that across New York State, childcare centers have been allowed to remain open and what makes these centers different than summer camps that are now being able to – allowed to operate?

Mayor: I'll start and then pass back to the Commissioner. Yeah, the summer camps are outdoors, is the central difference. That what we need from all summer camps is either exclusively outdoors or very, very minimal indoors, like, you know, using bathroom facilities, things like that. But they have to focus outdoors to stay safe. And the fact is, you know, we want to figure out how to do this, but our conditions compared to the rest of New York State, as you referenced, we have – this is one of the cases, Christina, that it is the toughest of any example because a lot of the rest of the state, you know, the number of kids in the childcare center, often fewer, more space. Our childcare centers, I've been to a lot of them, are often very crowded. A lot of kids, very little space. That's the reality in New York City. It's the toughest environment to keep healthy. So, we really need to do this in a smart way. We've had this good run – and I'm knocking on wood as I say it – this good run of keeping those indicators down, keeping the city healthy, not allowing the disease to come back. But these are the kinds of decisions that have to be made very carefully to not allow a resurgence of the disease. Commissioner, do you want to jump in?

Commissioner Barbot: Yeah, I'll add that in summer camps, the children tend to be older and better able to comply with the use of face coverings, social distancing, hand-washing. And again, it goes back to tracking the degree to which we might see increased COVID activity. And so, we're looking at those summer camp situations very closely. And I think that it will further help inform how we provide additional guidance to the childcare centers so that when they're ready to be open, they do so in the safest manner possible.

Mayor: Go ahead.

Moderator: The next question is Matt Chayes from Newsday.

Question: Good morning, all. Mr. Mayor, I'm wondering whether you think that Long Island municipalities should repeal laws that were passed in May restricting beach attendance to locals only. And I have a follow up.

Mayor: Yeah. Matt, look, again, I have spoken with the County Executives of Nassau and Suffolk County. I understand they're dealing with a lot of challenges of their own and obviously restrictions on space. I respect the decisions they made, but I think it's important as we all as a region try and work this through together, we all try and, you know, give maximum opportunity for people to have as much of a normal summer as they can. So, I'm not going to tell them how to do their work. I'm just happy we can open our beaches now on July 1st and provide relief to New Yorkers.

Question: And my second question is, there is an occupation of activists outside City Hall, who are promising to stay until a billion dollars is cut from the NYPD's budget. So, first will you allow them to stay no matter how big the crowd goes? And second, you've said that you'd shifted money from the NYPD budget to youth and social services. Will you cut anywhere close to \$1 billion? Is that realistic?

Mayor: You know, it's an important question, Matt, so I'm going to talk about the budget and then the gathering at the park. The budget situation, you know, daily, hourly conversations going on with the City Council. And the issue here is to look at all of the pieces of the equation. The essence where we all agree is money is going to come out of the NYPD budget. It's going to go into youth services, social services. That's not going to reduce the total impact on the budget. That's taking money from one place and moving it to another place, but we believe, absolutely, all of us, the Council and I, believe in common that that reprioritization has to happen. What amount of money, how, is still being worked through. There's another set of discussions, as you've heard about whether some work that's done within the NYPD should be moved to another agency, and that's an ongoing conversation. But even that means taking the same function, taking the same personnel, taking the same cost, and moving it from one agency to another, obviously, not reducing the total budget impact. Both those pieces are under discussion. I cannot tell you what the final dollar figure will be. I think the important thing here is to get it right, meaning I want to see reprioritization to young people, for sure. And I want to make sure we're safe. And I've talked a lot in the last few days about the challenges of safety that are growing in the city right now, got to make sure we strike the right balance. That's what should lead to discussion.

On the park – look, this is a city that for generations has respected the right of people to peacefully protest, but again, it has to be done safely, it has to be done with rules that make sense. And so, NYPD will address the situation. They're very familiar with how to handle something like this the right way, respect people's rights, but also make sure public safety and other public needs are addressed. They'll work this through as the days go ahead.

Moderator: The next is Gersh from Streetsblog.

Mayor: Gersh, are you out there? He's usually not shy. Gersh?

Moderator: We can circle back to Gersh.

Mayor: Alright.

Moderator: The next is Rich Lamb from WCBS 880.

Mayor: Rich?

Question: Hi – hi, there. How are you?

Mayor: How are you doing, man?

Question: Good. I wanted to follow up on Andrew's question, you know, in regard to the possibility of quarantining people from other states where COVID is going up. Do you see yourself leaning toward that? And do you find that the State is leaning towards that? Is that – I mean, given the numbers that are coming out of some of these places, it seems like it would be a danger to let them into New York.

Mayor: I do. That's certainly my impression from all the conversations that we've had with the State, certainly from what the Governor said publicly, but it's a real issue. Look, we never want to be negative towards people. And that's the thing I think that I bristle at a little bit when it's like, let's treat people like they're the problem. They didn't come up with – you know, they didn't create the coronavirus, right? So, some people used to try and treat New Yorkers negatively. What a twist of fate that now it's the other way around. So, let's take away any stigma or bias. But that being said, Rich, we have to keep our people safe. It's clear the disease is spreading rapidly in a number of states. If people are coming here, you know, with no fault of their own, not even necessarily knowing they might be carrying the disease, we have to address it. So, I think there's a smart way to do that, some kind of smart, effective quarantine approach, but again, that's something we'll formalize in discussions with the State.

Question: And my second one is not – it's not a follow-up if that's okay.

Mayor: You can do whatever you like.

[Laughter]

Question: So, when the beach is open, do you plan to get into a bathing suit and go down there and take a dip?

Mayor: Well, I'm certainly going to go to the beach. Whether I'm going to take a dip, that's going to be an important issue. The – look, I love all of our beaches and particularly Coney Island, as I've said. So, I'm certainly going to visit. And if I decide I'm going to take a dip, you will be the first to know, Rich

Moderator: Let's try Gersh again. Gersh, do we have you?

Mayor: Gersh, are you out there? What's up with Gersh?

Moderator: No luck with Gersh.

Mayor: Come on, Gersh, get some technology. All right, we'll give him another chance before –

Moderator: [Inaudible] again, later. Next is Joe Anuta from Politico.

Question: Hi, Mr. Mayor. My first question is just to confirm something you said earlier, are you trying to get \$1 billion dollars out of some Labor concessions? Could you talk a little bit about, you know, is that the upper amount and what sort of concessions would these be?

Mayor: So, Joe, yes, we need \$1 billion dollars. It's just pure math. As I said, the budget, if you go back to February, which seems like a century ago – I, in this room, presented a budget over \$95 billion to address a whole host of needs in the city and keep us moving forward. And, you know, things were in the scheme of things, really strong. We had the highest number of jobs ever. We were growing, you know, a lot of good things happening. It seems like a long time ago, \$95 billion turned into \$89 billion. \$89 billion is now \$87 billion. And we are not out of the woods yet. There are many challenges ahead. So, I want to emphasize, Joe, as I answer your question, we've done our best to estimate the revenue dynamics going forward and be cautious and conservative. So, when we say \$87 billion, we think that makes sense.

But that number may have to go down again in the course of the new fiscal year, if revenue gets even worse than we suspect. The following fiscal year, Fiscal '22, we're talking about a \$5 billion deficit, right this minute for the following fiscal year and no way to cover that. Because we obviously do not have reserves to put into play anymore. So, this is a really sober situation and it's time for everyone to sort of look it in the eye. The billion dollars we would need from Labor is the only way that we can close this budget gap. Because we're all struggling to find more and more savings from agencies. And again, I said, we've been working with the Council, it's been cooperative, it's been a good process, but we're still trying to finish out an additional billion in savings from agencies before you get to the billion we need from Labor savings.

So, historically Labor has worked with us, whether it's health care savings or other types of efficiencies, to find ways to save money. And these are things that have to be done through a collective bargaining process. We are hopeful we can keep finding solutions. But if we can't, by the time we have to vote this budget by law, if it's not there, then we are going to have to book those layoffs. And again, last resort to say the least, but we would have them take effect in the fall with the hope and the prayer that either stimulus money or borrowing capacity or both would come into play to help us now and in the following fiscal year to just get through. So, that's the way we're thinking about it. Did you have a follow up?

Question: I did. I was wondering – we're now in late June, do you have a sense of whether the protests, you know, have any sort of effect on the COVID numbers or – it kind of seems like they don't, I'm curious if you have an opinion on that?

Mayor: Yeah. Great question, Joe. Let me remind people because I totally understand why the focus – health focus, has been on the protests, but I – and I've even talked about that. But the more I've talked to the health folks, the more I've looked at the real focus should be on phase one. Phase one, you know, was a couple hundred thousand people going back to work every single day for a whole workday and coming in contact with lots of customers and all that. Much, much more profound impact than protests that went on for X number of hours, were outdoors by

definition. Folks, actually, I will say I was impressed that most of the protestors seemed to be wearing face coverings. That's a good thing. So, we certainly were looking for what the protest impact would be, but much more what would the impact would be a phase one on our overall health dynamics?

And as you saw with today's indicators, pretty good as of this hour. We are never out of the woods, Joe, but what we've seen so far is encouraging. Now big asterisk, phase two is much bigger. The potential of phase two – it's going to start slow, but it has the potential to be much, much bigger in terms of number of people. So, you know, we've been trying to be deliberate about each move, the decision about the beaches, the decision about the parks permits. Each thing has been talked about in the context of the health dynamics. And do we feel secure enough about the health dynamics to take a step and take a step and take a next step? That's an everyday thing we're watching, but so far so good.

Moderator: We have time for two more today. The next is Aundrea from CBS.

Mayor: Is Gersh still out there or is he gone? Gersh – he gets one more chance?

Moderator: We're going to try and get to Gersh after Aundrea.

Mayor: Okay. Aundrea first.

Question: Good morning. Mr. Mayor, what are your plans to address a spike in violence and does that complicate or inform the discussions that you all are having in terms of reallocating money from the NYPD?

Mayor: It's a great question, Aundrea, and it is the central question. Look, we need safety and we need fairness. We need safety and we need justice. We have to do both. This has been the issue from the beginning. I just want to frame it quickly. When I ran for mayor, when I came into office, I said, we were going to get rid of stop-and-frisk. And you know there were many voices said, Oh, we were going to become unsafe. There'd be chaos, there'll be more crime. I said, and I believed that there was a way to become safer and more fair. And we have shown it, ending stop-and-frisk, reducing arrests, neighborhood policing, reducing incarceration, de-escalation training, implicit bias training. All of these things worked together to reduce crime and simultaneously to make us more fair. We have to strike the balance again. The difference now, Aundrea is we're seeing a really troubling uptick in shootings in particular. And obviously troubling numbers in terms of murder and other crucial crime categories. But I'm looking at that shooting number because that's the one that's been particularly fast in the increase. And we've got to get ahead of that. So, as we talk things through with the City Council, my message has been throughout we've got to figure out what will keep our neighborhoods safe, what we'll keep our people safe while continuing the work of addressing the issues of fairness. While focusing more on our young people, we have to strike a balance. But at the end of the day, I've got to believe that people will be safe.

Question: And just as a follow up. So, what is the plan to address the spike in shootings?

Mayor: The plan is a couple of different things to begin. And then, you know, I'll say more about it as we go along. And certainly, Commissioner Shea will as well. Summer All Out was activated. That moved hundreds of officers, not only out of desk jobs onto the streets, but to targeted areas where there are problems. We're going to be adding to that. We're going to be focusing on the places where we're seeing the biggest shooting increases. That includes Brooklyn North and parts of the Bronx. We're going to be focusing on more efforts by the Cure Violence movement, the resources we just gave them a few weeks ago. Every single Cure Violence movement, crisis management system organization got additional resources. We want to keep adding to that because they've been particularly effective at reducing violence. I think a lot of the efforts to help young people, where there's a strong agreement with the Council, now that the health situation is improving we can do a lot more to help young people. I think that will help as well. It's a lot of pieces, but it's the classic CompStat question Aundrea, as you see developments, how do you use precision policing? How do you focus on where the problem is greatest and start to fight it back? That's what we will do.

Now, I'll finish by saying other people have to do things too. We need real help. We need the court system to get going again. We need, because right now, you know, someone's arrested, in a lot of cases, there's nothing that happens next. So, we need the court system to get functioning. We need the DA's to get into gear, particularly in addressing gun offenses. We need to address some bigger issues. I talked about this on NY1 the other night, including the parole system and what happens to people returning from prison and going back to their communities who don't have a lot of support. There's a lot of pieces that we have to start to address foundationally, to keep us safe. But right now, the NYPD is taking actions to address this crisis in the here and now.

Moderator: Last question for today is Gersh from Streetsblog.

Mayor: Is he really there this time?

Question: Hello, Mr. Mayor. I am really here.

Mayor: Gersh, what was that? Were you're trying to – I mean, trying to build up dramatic effect there? What was that man?

Question: Well, Mr. Mayor, I had shoulder surgery yesterday, so I'm not at a hundred percent, but I appreciate you taking the call.

Mayor: All right.

Question: So, I've got two questions, both of them quick. Yesterday, you made a pretty historic announcement about alternate side of the street parking, which will make it far easier for people to own cars in the city. Given all you've said over the last few weeks about how the future of the city must be less about the car and more about transit, why would you do something to make it easier and more convenient and indeed cheaper to own a car and store it on the streets of New York City?

Mayor: Gersh, you are always ideologically consistent. I commend you, but I disagree with you. You respectfully sometimes present a world where there's only one factor. There's multiple factors. I believe the future is mass transit and that's where we're going to focus our first energies for the future in terms of how people get around. And that's what we've been doing. I remind you how much has been moving in recent years in terms of expansion of bus service, select bus service. What we've announced recently with the busways, which is historic. What we've done with creating a citywide ferry system, the expansion of CitiBike, all of that has to happen more. And a year ago, it seems like ancient history, finally, having a mechanism to properly fund the MTA and fix our subways. And we do see a big and impressive comeback in subway usage now. The glass is more than half full and our ability to make this a city that's going to be more and more about mass transit.

But guess what Gersh, a lot of people still have cars. And it's not fair to ask them to keep moving their cars around if it's not necessary. We've learned a lot in these last months about alternate side parking and what's necessary and what's not. And also, in the middle of all the struggles people are going through, I want to lighten the burden whenever I can. So, I don't agree with the way you're putting the pieces together. As long as people do have cars I don't want to make it artificially harder on them to live in their own neighborhood. You have a follow up?

Question: Okay. No, I won't follow up that, it speaks for itself. I have the second question which may be for you or the Commissioner of DOT. today. Today former DOT official Sam Schwartz, and others put out a report calling for two bike and pedestrian only bridges, one from Queens and one from Brooklyn into Manhattan. I would ask what you think of the idea, but also in the context of the existing Brooklyn and Queensborough bridges have the capacity now, if you wanted to repurpose one of the many car lanes for more sustainable transportation, such as walking and biking. So, you could save a lot of money by just doing that.

Mayor: Yeah. I'll turn to the Commissioner. In terms of new bridges -- I mean, we should look at anything and everything it's, you know, given the crisis we're in right now and what I just told you about our budget, it's kind of hard to conceptualize new bridges at this point. But Sam is certainly a visionary and it's worth thinking about any idea he puts forward. But to your point, which I think is the good practical question. What can we do with what we have now, if there's a way to safely do more, I'm always listening. But I think the Commissioner knows a lot more about it than I do. Commissioner Trottenberg?

Commissioner Polly Trottenberg, Department of Transportation: Well, you know a lot too Mr. Mayor. And look, I saw Sam's report. I thought it was great. It was creative. And I've certainly said publicly, Gersh, you and I have talked about this. Clearly, we have some pinch points at the East River bridges and particularly the Brooklyn and the Queensborough where bikes don't have their own separate space. As you know, we've been looking at that and you know, one challenge we have with both those bridges is they're very old bridges. The lanes are very narrow. The engineering to create enough space for bikes safely is just, it's challenging. And certainly, that's why I sort of like, Sam. I think he acknowledges to some degree, a hundred plus year old bridges are hard to retrofit and sort of perhaps we need some new pedestrian bike crossings. We have budget challenges right now, but I think it's exciting what he's put forward and will be engaging with my leadership on it.

Mayor: Thank you, Commissioner. And as we close out today again, this day kind of exemplifies what we've been through now for over a hundred days together. A lot of challenges, a lot of things we haven't seen in generations, a lot of things we're going to have to fight our way through. But also, the extraordinary ingenuity, creativity, spirit of New Yorkers to find a way where there is no way. And that's what this city is so good at. And so now I want to just give you a frame of reference. You know, when this horrible crisis hit us and you remember those weeks in March into April, where the disease just got worse and worse. At one point, the number of people being tested around the city – it was a lot less testing and that's one of the big problems here. There was a lot less testing at the beginning, but the testing we did have was coming back at one point 70 percent, 70 percent positive.

Now we're testing to the tune of 30,000 New Yorkers or more a day. And what are we seeing for days and days? Two percent positive. That is because of what you did. And I know it wasn't easy. No one likes to put on a face covering, no one likes to stay indoors. It's a hassle to always try and think about those six feet, but you did it. And the fact that we've gotten this far so that now we can open up beaches, we can open up summer camps. We can have restaurants outdoors, so much is happening that you fought for and earned. So, thank you. New York City, you got us this far. Let's keep going farther together. Thanks so much.

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