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**STATE OF #OURCITY: MAYOR DE BLASIO ANNOUNCES TRANSFORMATION OF GOVERNORS ISLAND INTO A YEAR-ROUND DESTINATION**

*Revitalized historic district, unparalleled open spaces*

*21st Century innovation cluster will bring together entrepreneurs, inventors, scholars and institutions to position New York City as global leader in the new economy*



**NEW YORK**—In tonight’s State of the City address, Mayor de Blasio will announce that the City will be embarking on a comprehensive activation of Governors Island that will transform it into a dynamic, year-round destination for New Yorkers. The Island will boast unparalleled open spaces, a reanimated historic district and a 21st century ‘Innovation Cluster’ that will bring together innovators, entrepreneurs and educators to generate new ideas, economic activity and jobs.

“Governors Island is a treasure for the whole city, and it’s ready for its next great chapter. It’s going to be an incredible year-round magnet for culture and innovation,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**.

“A once-forlorn vestige of our colonial past, Governors Island today attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors drawn to its verdant parks, expanded recreational opportunities, and rich history,” said **Council Member Margaret Chin**. “This announcement is a huge step forward in our City’s ongoing efforts to make Governors Island a year-round destination for arts, culture,

and education. I would like to thank Mayor de Blasio for his commitment to securing Governors Island's future, and for his efforts to expand greenspaces throughout our city."

"The Trust welcomes Mayor Bill de Blasio's leadership in advancing Governors Island's development as an Innovation District as well as a place for the general public's year round enjoyment. In 2010 Mayor Michael Bloomberg led the City in assuming full responsibility for the Island's operations and development; major capital investments were made by the City and private funders under his leadership. Thousands of New Yorkers have discovered the Island during its summer season. It is now part of the city's DNA, and we are ready for its next chapter. The Island offers investors in technology, research and development, and incubator businesses the space and updated infrastructure they need, as well as a setting that will inspire innovation," said **Ronay Menschel, Chair of the Trust for Governors Island.**

"Mayor de Blasio's announcement creates an exciting vision for the Island's next chapter. Governors Island is an extraordinary resource for the city, region, and world that offers unparalleled opportunity for innovation. This announcement will unlock the Island's long term potential," said **Leslie Koch, President of the Trust for Governors Island.**

"The Mayor's proposal is exactly in keeping with our organization's founding vision. Governors Island was always meant to bring spectacular parks together with innovative nonprofit and commercial facilities, while preserving the Island's unique historic structures. We salute Mayor de Blasio for this terrific step in the evolution of the Island as a year-round center for culture, technology, education and business for all New Yorkers," said **Merritt Birnbaum, Executive Director of the Governors Island Alliance.**

"Creative reuse of landmarked historic buildings by becoming the home for the latest in STEM innovation is the best of both worlds. What is a more inspiring place for work and education than on a gorgeous island with a view of the Statue of Liberty, our greatest symbol of American aspiration?" said **Catherine McVay Hughes, Chair of Manhattan Community Board 1.**

"The Mayor's proposal to bring technology, cultural, educational, retail and conference spaces to Governors Island will further establish New York City as the place for innovation and creativity," said **Bill Rudin, Chairman of the Association for a Better New York.** "The investments the City has made are the necessary foundation for new institutions to transform Governors Island into a year-round destination, fulfilling its potential."

The City has invested more than \$300 million to ready the 150 acres of Governors Island that are under City control for the next great chapter, bringing new infrastructure and ferry service to the Island. The vision for Governor's Island will include the activation of up to 900,000 square feet of existing space in protected historic buildings, waterfront promenades with sweeping views of New York Harbor, 48 acres of new parkland that will be fully open to the public this year, and 33 acres on the south side of the island for the new "Innovation Cluster."

Building on the success of the emerging Roosevelt Island Cornell-Technion campus, the Governors Island Innovation Cluster will bring together educational institutions with growing

firms, start-ups, inventors and thought-leaders, sparking new ideas, inventions and companies that will help position New York City as the worldwide leader in technology and innovation.

This plan has the potential to create several million square feet of educational, commercial, cultural, research and retail uses; catalyze tens of thousands of permanent and construction jobs; and generate tens of billions of dollars in new economic activity and tax revenue over the next 30 years.

Following public engagement, the Trust for Governors Island (TGI) will release a RFEI this summer. By the end of 2016, TGI plans to release a RFP seeking formal proposals for activation of the vacant space and historic district on Governors Island. After one or more proposals are selected and environmental review and ULURP are complete, construction could begin on the first phase of a development as early as 2019.

Since the City took ownership in 2010, Governors Island has undergone a dramatic transformation and is now primed for more robust activation:

- There have been \$307 million in capital improvements made in the last six years, including potable water, utilities and upgraded electrical systems.
- 33 acres of new open space were completed in 2014, with the second phase of the park slated to open this summer.
- Visitorship has grown, with more than 450,000 people enjoyed programming from more than 60 organizations in 2015 alone.
- Governors Islands is now home to two year-round tenants: Urban Assembly New York Harbor School, a public high school that serves 430 students; and the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's Arts Center, an artist studio residency program.
- The first commercial tenant is scheduled to open in 2017, utilizing 80,000 square feet in three buildings in the Historic District.

Serving as a military facility for more than two centuries, Governors Island was used as a self-contained residential community under control of the U.S. Coast Guard from 1966 to 1995. After spending years as one of our city's most underutilized resources, the Island will now enter the next phase of its existence as a unique destination for New Yorkers from every borough.

Mayor de Blasio will deliver the State of the City address tonight at 7 P.M.



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